PAPHA and the Port Aransas Museum offer a winter lecture series every year.

The doors open at 6:30 pm for a social in the Museum with wine, cheese, and fruit prior to the lecture. The public is encouraged to browse the Museum and shop in the Gift Shop.

At 7 pm, everyone moves next door to the Community Center for the lectures. Lectures are alternate Mondays from January 12 through March 9.

- January 26 – Jim Moloney will deliver a presentation on the new book he and historian Murphy Givens have just published that compiles Murphy’s 2009-2011 history columns from the Corpus Christi Caller-Times newspaper. Moloney is a businessman with an interest in the history of South Texas, known for his presentations on local history. His publishing company, Nueces Press, has released five books in partnership with Murphey Givens.

- February 9 – Topic TBA

- February 23 – Alan Peppard, reporter for the Dallas Morning News, will present his award winning 3-part story, Islands of the Oil Kings. The series is a look at how President Franklin Roosevelt’s 1937 visit to the Gulf Coast retreats of legendary oilmen, Clint Murchison Sr. and Sid Richardson, helped launch an era of political influence in the Lone Star state. Peppard will show unseen films and photos of Matagorda and San Jose islands and explain how he pieced together the research that resulted in this account. Peppard, a graduate of Southern Methodist University, was selected for a prestigious 2003 fellowship at Yaddo, a writers’ community in Saratoga Springs, N.Y. His work has appeared in Vanity Fair.

- March 9 – Topic TBA

- Date TBA – Rick Pratt, Port Aransas Museum Director, will give a history of our island community with an emphasis on why we are so resourceful.
Yep, its 2015

This was an interesting month.

Chamber Mixer

The Port Aransas Chamber of Commerce Mixer in December was a grand success and we had a big turnout, way larger than the average according to Ann Vaughn. Folks came early, stayed late and drank lots of wine. The event was planned to re-introduce the museum to the business community of Port A and that was accomplished in spades. Follow-up will include sending out donation forms and membership forms to all that attended. We are developing a nice new mailing list based on the folks who attended this event.

Boat Raffle

The Raffle Boat was successfully given away this time. The winner decided his best option was to give it back to the museum so we now own it without obligation. We are exploring options, including removing the electric outboard for use on one of our livery boats and then selling the hull.

2015 Winter Lecture Series

Our winter lectures will be delivered on alternate Mondays, Jan. 12 & 26, Feb. 9 & 23 and March 9. We may add one more in March if all those invited to speak accept.

International Media star Alan Peppard will present his award winning 3-part story “Islands of the Oil Kings” on Feb. 23. Don’t miss this one.

Date TBA-A brief history of our island community with an emphasis on why we are so resourceful by Rick Pratt, a little known island resident.

On Jan. 26, Jim Moloney will deliver a scintillating presentation his latest literary collaboration with Murphy Givens titled "Columns 2009 - 2011". The book, a compilation of nearly 100 newspaper columns by Givens for the Corpus Christi Caller~Times, documents the people who strove to make South Texas their home. Adventurers, outlaws, settlers, cowboys, ranchers and entrepreneurs from the United States, Europe and Mexico all came to the Coastal Bend of Texas, struggling against nature and their fellow man, to make their homes and livelihoods here. Moloney illustrates his lectures with great historical photos and images documenting the areas past.

Council Appointment

I have accepted an invitation to join the City Council for the remaining term of Councilman Bob Pettit. So I am temporarily going to be the honorable Rick Pratt, Place 1 Port Aransas City Council, but my heart still belongs to PAPHA.

From the FBW ...

December 2014

Flip Flippens and his large family built a beautiful cypress planked pirogue while on vacation in Port Aransas over the Christmas holidays. They built the pirogue in six days with the help of the Boat Works Team; Rick Pratt and volunteers Steve Potter, Mark Muellerweiss and Darryl Lynn made the event a success. Flip’s pirogue is our 31st boat. Some twenty members of his family celebrated the accomplishment on New Year’s Eve. Beth Coletta helped fifteen Flippens children build toy wooden boats during the festivities at the shop. Mr. Flippen and his family had such a wonderful experience they plan to make a donation to the Boat Works over the cost of his boat.

Alex McAlister’s 20-ft custom flats fishing skiff moved to the finish room for completion. Scott Eggleston is making good progress on his 5’ x 18’ skiff. Colby Jones’ skiff progressed slowed with the holidays, as young Colby was out of town with his family. The South Jetty has been invited to see Colby’s boat and interview him and his family for a newspaper article.

Volunteer Steve Potter has taken a lonely little 8-ft donated pram in need of a face-lift under his wing. He has rebuilt the seats and begun painting. We are thinking about making this cute little boat a tender for our scow schooner, Lydia Ann.

David Gillette’s 10-ft dinghy is moving right along, thanks to much help from volunteer Glenn Bonnenburg. It should be finished before the end of January, and then Glenn moves on to build his own lap strake Northeaster Dory kit.

Clay Terrell will begin a 17-ft cat-ketch sailboat from a kit in January. Jay Miller is scheduled to start a 16-ft Port Aransas skiff in late January.

We are on track for developing our education program for 2015. Some of the offerings we are considering include:

• Skiff origins and design     • Woodcarving classes
• Basic navigation rules course
• Surf ski building event tailored for youth
• Family Boat Building event during the plyWooden Boat Festival     • Introduction to rowing
• Methods for fitting breast hooks and inwales     • Using epoxy for boat building

Most of the topics will be offered in the evenings and actual boat building will be multi-day classes.

On Jan. 17, the Boat Works participated in the city-wide garage sale and sold donated items that we cannot use at the Boat Works.

The Boat Works had 56 visitors during December.

Frank Coletta
Boat Works Manager

PAPHA Newsletter January 2015
Limited time left to come visit the beach and enjoy a “Glimpse of Island Life” at the Port Aransas Home Tour Saturday, Jan. 31.

This year’s tour features a diverse collection of nine homes from Island Resort properties to cottages with historical significance showing off island living at its best.

The Port Aransas Home Tour is one of few remaining tours offering a ‘bus tour party’ in the morning as well as a self-guided tour in the afternoon. The bus tours which start at 9am and again at 11am, leaves the driving to the professionals and allows the exceptionally knowledgeable, verbose, and hyperactive Garden Club members to guide you on your journey and provide you with a world of help and entertainment along the way. Any guest, who takes a morning tour, is welcome to return on the afternoon self-guided tour to see the balance of homes not included in the morning tour.

Your $25 ticket covers the bus tour and the self-guided tour making it an all day excursion.

Relax, sit back and enjoy the semi-narrated, sometimes hilarious antics of the Port Aransas Garden Club’s Cruise Staff, while “the wheels on the bus go 'round and 'round...”. The bus agenda also allows you plenty of time to see the town and explore the area’s fine shops and restaurants.

If the bus tour party isn’t your cup of tea, then join us in the afternoon for the self-guided portion where you can see all nine homes from 1-5pm. A map and brochure is provided to keep you on the path to our wonderful homes. Each home will have hostesses/hosts who can answer your questions about the historical and decorating significance. The self-guided tour ticket is $20.

Tickets can be purchased via our website www.portaransasgardenclub.org using PayPal, at both Gratitude and Mustang Island Art Gallery, and on tour day at the Community Center located at 408 N. Alister. For ticket information call the PAGC at 361-813-2508 or email portagardenclub@hotmail.com.

PAGC is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and is a member of the Port Aransas Chamber of Commerce, the Corpus Christi Garden Council and Keep Port Aransas Beautiful.
A Brief History of the Causeway and Ferry System
by Bill Behrens, Museum Docent

1911-1926 Harbor Island was the central Texas port. Since goods had to be transported to and from Harbor Island a channel was dredged from Aransas Pass and a railroad was built on the dredge spoil. Workers were transported to the new port by way of the railroad, the Toonerville Trolley. Sometime in this period auto-carrying railroad cars, pulled by a railroad-wheeled truck, were brought in and a ferry landing was constructed on Harbor Island to the carry cars to Port A. Also, a pipeline was added to the railway to carry crude oil to Harbor Island.

1911 The 1st ferry, the Mitzi (privately owned), took advantage of the newly dredged channel and carried cars from Aransas Pass to Port Aransas.

1912 The first freighter docked at Harbor Island. Our town, once called Tarpon, now Port Aransas, held a week-long celebration after the arrival of the Brinkburn.

1926 The Corpus Christi ship channel was opened, negating the need for a cargo-railroad to Harbor Island.

1931 The railroad tracks were boarded over. Cars could now drive to the Harbor Island ferry landing via a single-lane wooden causeway, with “pull outs” to facilitate passing.

1951 Ferry operations were transferred from private ownership to Nueces County.

1959 A paved roadway replaced the wooden causeway.

1961 Hurricane Carla destroyed some of the new roadway, requiring vehicles to use the old wooden causeway which had been protected by growths of salt cedars and oleanders.

1968 The Texas Department of Transportation took over ownership and operation of the ferries and did away with tolls.

Read Jim Wiggins’ account of traveling along the old causeway in the attached PDF file, taken from his book Hard Heads and Half Gales: Tales from Tarpon, Texas. The book is for sale at the museum gift shop and online here.

FIRST SATURDAY
A February First Saturday has been scheduled for Feb. 7. The Farley Boat Works team will be serving a spaghetti dinner. They are asking for those attending to bring salads, dressing and wine. The Boat Work will provide the garlic bread. It will include live music and dancing, so come have fun with them!