April 29th Spring ACHS Program
“Wish you were here!”
Historic Postcards from Aransas County
A Special Presentation by Kam Wagert and Pam Stranahan
Paws & Taws, 6:30 pm

You will not want to miss this program, which celebrates the publication of the area’s newest history book, *Aransas County in Postcards*, by Kam Wagert and Pam Stranahan.

Published for the Friends of the History Center for Aransas County, the new book features 100 vintage postcards, each with a narrative about the postcard and the history behind the scene. All of the postcards are from the collection of Kam Wagert.

The program will showcase postcards representing the chapters of the book, including depictions of the court house, the Fulton Mansion, early tourist courts and motels, the grand hotels, historic buildings, Key Allegro and other attractions of the county.

The new book will be available for purchase at the presentation. All sales benefit the new History Center for Aransas County, which is scheduled to open in May.

IT’S PHOTO CONTEST TIME!
SEE INSERT FOR DETAILS ON HOW TO ENTER THE 2014 ACHS HISTORICAL PHOTO CONTEST. WINNERS WILL RECEIVE CASH PRIZES AND PROMINENT PLACEMENT IN THE 2015 HISTORICAL CALENDAR! DEADLINE IS MAY 31!
One Hundred Years Ago

Rockport in 1914: Part 2

by Janie White

[Editor’s note: This is the second in a series of article on Rockport in 1914. Utilizing a Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, dated January 1914, newspaper accounts from across the state, and family history material, ACHS trustee and immediate past president Janie White notes how the railroad influenced the development of tourism and Rockport’s “grand hotel” era.]

One hundred years ago, in 1914 Rockport, its citizens were working hard to diversify the local economy. Fishing still remained primary as large quantities of fish from the Gulf of Mexico were shipped by rail from Rockport. But, agriculture was becoming an important part of the county’s economy through the production of melons, vegetables, fruit and dairy products. A January 17, 1914 article in the west Texas newspaper, the Brownwood Daily Bulletin, reported that truck growers “met at Rockport recently and formed a temporary organization” to establish “a co-operative canning factory to take care of the surplus crops of tomatoes and other vegetables produced by Rockport truck growers.” On July 13 the Dallas Morning News noted that Prof. E. E. Schell, entomologist of the State Department of Agriculture was conducting a series of “farmer’s institutes” in the area. One was held in Rockport on July 17 to “discuss diversification, (continued on p. 5)

FROM THE LAB: A message from the President . . .

When I was first elected to the ACHS Board more than ten years ago, never did I dream that it would turn into a decade of interaction with wonderful people who make up the Aransas County Historical Society. People who love history are wonderful and special. They care about preserving the knowledge of the past, so that future generations will know what took place before them.

It is sad that many have no appreciation of history until they live long enough to realize that they are a part of history. I regret so many times that I did not question at length my grandparents about their early lives when I had the chance, and now I have so many questions about how and where they lived when they married more than a hundred years ago.

But thankfully, we have locally a dedicated group of people who collect interviews and pictures, stories and clippings, obituaries and books, all about our past. And, we have a wonderful facility, the ACHS Lab in the old Rockport School, that provides research, work and storage space.

Speaking of the Lab, did you know that we are approaching our tenth anniversary of having the Lab? In the summer of 2004, trustees Phil Albin, Jay Tarkington, Scott Enter, Bob Stone and myself repainted the classroom that the school provided for us, Wells Fargo Bank provided a generous grant for furnishings, and we had our first open house in the Lab on September 16, 2004.

I would like to thank former ACHS president Phil Albin for having the vision and providing the leadership to secure the Lab for ACHS. And, I would like to commend the Aransas County ISD for generously providing us with this space. It has proved to be invaluable to our work and growth.

Finally, I would like to commend the work and dedication of all the presidents under which I have served on the ACHS Board, Phil Albin, Jay Tarkington, Janie White (2 separate tenures) and Kam Wagert. Each brought fresh perspectives and leadership to the Society, and each made major contributions to ACHS’s ongoing programs. Moreover, they left some big shoes for me to fill.

This is going to be an exciting year as we launch still another project, a new full-length history of Aransas County, to include family, business, and institutional histories. We hope you will help us on this very special project, as we would like to preserve a complete history of the county.

———David J. Murrah
Coming in 2015!

A new full-length history of Aransas County!

We need your entry for your family, business, church, school, etc.

The Aransas County Historical Society is collecting stories of our county with the goal of publishing a pictorial history of the county. We want to collect as many stories as possible and we need your help.

We are inviting families, businesses, organizations, and institutions to submit stories along with representative photographs.

This is your opportunity to become a part of the permanent history of Aransas County!

For guidelines for each section, please contact the appropriate person below. A packet will be sent to you with samples. Except for paid memorials and sponsors, there is no charge for inclusion.

FAMILY HISTORIES  Dolly Close (332-6602) or Jo Ann Morgan (729-6411)
NEWCOMER MEMORIES (since 1970)  Joan Bounds (729-7599)
HISTORICAL BUSINESSES  Janie White (729-2133)
CHURCH and NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS  Sandy Garrison (729-3945)
SCHOOL and GOVERNMENTAL HISTORIES  Marsha Hendrix (463-9894)
SPONSORING BUSINESS HISTORIES  Pam Stranahan (727-1766)
PERSONAL & FAMILY MEMORIALS  Janet Taylor (729-2148)

For questions, or if you like to help with this project, please contact Marsha Hendrix at 463-9894 or by email at Marsha.Hendrix@thc.state.tx.us

THE ARANSA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

PRESEVING YOUR HISTORY SINCE 1985


To: Aransas County Historical Society Book Committee, Box 702, Rockport, TX 78381  Date____________________

I would like to submit a historical narrative or narratives in the following category: (check appropriate category and list subject: example Joe Smith Family, or Joe’s Tire Store). Please send me guidelines for checked categories.

____Family__________________  ______School/governmental history__________________
____Historical Business__________________  ______Sponsoring Business History Page__________________
____Newcomer Memories (since 1970)__________________  ______Personal & Family Memorial Page__________________
____Church/non-profit groups__________________

My name______________________________________________________________

Address_____________________________________________________________

Email__________________  Phone No.________________________________
## 2014 ACHS PHOTO CONTEST

Aransas County Historical Society, P.O. Box 702, Rockport TX 78381

Winning images will be featured in the 2015 Calendar of Historical Photographs and will receive a cash prize – 1<sup>st</sup> $100, 2<sup>nd</sup> $50, 3<sup>rd</sup> $25

**Deadline: June 30, 2014**

Submit by mail to the address above, or in person Wednesdays between 2 PM and 4 PM at the ACHS Lab, Room 15, Rockport Community Center, 619 N. Live Oak St.

A copy of this form must be completed and attached to each image. Each form MUST BE SIGNED and DATED.

### Contest Rules

1. Each contestant may submit up to ten (10) entries.
2. Each submitted entry must be a photograph that relates to the history of Aransas County, and must be 25 years old or older. No copyrighted material may be submitted. No xerographic copies will be accepted.
3. Each photograph must be identified, if possible, including the date, place and names of individuals.
4. Entries may be submitted in the following formats:
   a. Original print donated to the ACHS Photograph Collection.
   b. Loan of original print(s) to the ACHS for digital copying.
   c. High resolution (300 dpi or greater) unaltered digital copy of an original. Lower resolution copies will not be accepted.
5. Photographs will be accepted by mail, by physical delivery to the ACHS lab on any Wednesday afternoon between 2 PM and 4 PM, or by appointment. For information call Janie White at (361) 729-3133.

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Credit Line should read:

Example: Courtesy of (of the) YOUR NAME OR COLLECTION HERE.

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I agree that this photograph may be included in the ACHS archives & used in ACHS projects like calendars, books, displays or other endeavors.

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Signature & Date when original photo on loan to ACHS is returned:

My original photo that was on loan to the Aransas County Historical Society for the 2012 Contest has been returned to me.

Owner: |

Date returned: |
ROCKPORT IN 1914, continued from p. 2

rotation, seed selections and control of injurious insects.”
Sparks Colony was important to the agricultural activity.

The San Antonio & Aransas Pass railroad ran three trains daily from San Antonio to Corpus Christi with Pullman accommodations as well as a designated “Tourist Car” to Rockport. In addition, it offered “ninety-day round trip rates into Corpus Christi, Rockport and Aransas Pass.” According to a 1914 advertisement in the Dallas Morning News, the Houston & Texas Central Railway charged $17.05 for a round trip ticket from Dallas to Rockport. By 1914, tourism had become an important to the economy of the county.

Tourists needed entertainment. The Rockport Marine Band had a “regular membership” of thirty pieces, wore white sailor uniforms, and played concerts for summer visitors in Rockport. In 1913, the Band attended Fiesta in San Antonio and became a big hit there. For their 1914 appearance at Fiesta, the Band was accompanied by “two women musicians of unusual ability.” Meanwhile, in Rockport, on Sunday, August 26, promoters hosted a “Musical Carnival” and fish fry at the pavilion on the pier. Community bands from Karnes City, Kenedy, Beeville, Sinton, Taft, Port Aransas and Rockport participated with each playing separately and then together. According to a newspaper account, “Almost all the citizenship was out to hear them.”

The 1914 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map indicates four major hotels: the Bay Side Hotel, the Delmar Hotel, the La Playa Hotel, and the Morris Hotel. The Delmar took up most of the block with Water Street on the east, Main Street on the south, Austin Street on the west and Wharf Street on the north. The main entrance of the Delmar was on Main Street. The La Playa was across Water Street from the Delmar on what was known as Rocky Point. The Morris Hotel was about halfway down the west side of Water Street between Main and Market.

The Bay Side Hotel was on the West side of Water Street with Murray to the south. The March 11, 1914 Brownsville Daily Herald had an advertisement for the “James Sanatorium, Rockport, Texas.” The sanatorium was for the treatment of “drink and drug habits.” The ad described the facility as “beautifully located on the shore of Aransas Bay and in the spacious and comfortable well furnished hotel building known as the Bay Side Inn. All patients obtain the added benefits of the rest and recreation enjoyed at this delightful resort including salt-water bathing, boating, fishing, hunting and automobiling without extra cost.” All communications were to go to P. M. Worley, M.D.

The Oak Shore Club was a resort north of Rockport. It was located on Fulton Beach Road between present-day Traylor Avenue and the Fulton Mansion. It was the site of a near tragic incident. The Dallas Morning News of September 17 tells of the “heroism of Miss Kathleen Doran, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. William Doran.” Mrs. Perry Smith and her daughter, Louise, were staying at the resort. Louise fell “headlong into the water from the Oak Shore Club pier.” Mrs. Smith could not swim, but she “plunged in after her.” Miss Doran “said to be one of the most expert swimmers on the coast, leaped in to the rescue.” Mother and child were saved.

The year 1914 was not a peaceful one for the world. The First World War started in July of 1914, and it hit quickly close to home. The Dallas Morning News reported on August 7, 1914 that E. Gordon Gibson of Rockport had asked the State Department to look into the safety of his wife and daughter, who were visiting in Dresden, Germany. The Atlanta Constitution reported on September 5 that she was safe.

We are sure that there were other incidents like this, and we need more information on the effect that World War I had on Aransas County. Will you help us gather information on this period?
Aransas Pathways

The county-funded program, Aransas Pathways, continues to produce new venues for outdoor activity, nature, and history. A newly revised map is available at the Chamber of Commerce, online at www.aransaspathways.com and on the smart phone app, TourRockport-Fulton. On April 1, the program broke ground for its new interpretation center at Shellcrete Park. Upcoming Pathways-sponsored events include the following:

Spring Fling Kayak Launch Site Opening - April 29, 10 am, at Airport Road site
Linda S. Castro Birding and Nature Site Grand Opening - May 3, 10am, 35 North of Fulton
History Center Grand Opening - May 17, 10 am - 12 pm, 801 E. Cedar St.
Aransas Pathways Center Ribbon Cutting July 2, 10am - 12pm Shellcrete Park.

Friends of the History Center (FHC)

The Friends are excited as the finishing touches are being put on the house at 801 E. Cedar to become the History Center. We appreciate the support we have received from many of you to make this become a reality. Save the date for the ribbon cutting - Saturday the 17th of May from 10:00-12:00 noon.

We invite you and your families to come to this event. The Center will have on display the first of our exhibits - the story of the house move, the owners of the house, artifacts that have been donated to FHC, and the historical markers program. Exhibits will be changed quarterly during the year. The History Center will be open on Friday and Saturday each week, 10-AM - 2 PM. If you would like to volunteer to be a docent, contact Phoebe Wilson (831) 601-0998, or phoebe.wilson911@gmail.com.

Aransas County Historical Commission (ACHC)

New officers for the Aransas County Historical Commission include Collin Jackson, chairman; Janet Taylor, Vice-Chair; Linda Garcia, Secretary and Letha Kieffer, treasurer. Kitty Angel is chair of the Historical Markers committee.

Dedication of the historical marker for the Mc Lester Cemetery will be held May 10 at noon at the Cemetery, located two miles northwest of Rockport: take 1069 to 1781, then north to McLester Road, then east to 406 LcLester Road. The event will be hosted by Ray McLester and Patsy McLester Parr, along with members of the ACHC.

Daughters of the Republic of Texas (DRT)

The restored Patrick O’Conner tombstone was dedicated by DRT on March 17 at the Lamar Cemetery. Current officers for the Stenson-Simpson chapter are Kam Wagert, president; Jackie Shaw, first vice president, Carole Woodman, second vice president; Faynell Harrell, secretary; Shirley Burnett, treasurer; Jean Schindler, registrar; Patsy Parr, Carol Keller and Jean Faye McLead, historians, Alene Mundine, chaplain, and Joan Bounds, parliamentarian. Members of the chapter recently hosted third graders from the Fulton Learning Center at the Fulton Schoolhouse for a tour.

Tropical Trail, Texas Historical Commission

The Texas Historical Commission’s Tropical Trail event was held in Refugio County in March. After gathering at the Refugio County Museum, the group traveled by van to the O'Connor River Ranch where we visited the St. Dennis Chapel, then the 1829 Fagan Ranch to tour the Peter Henry Fagan House and mausoleum (1923). Lunch was served at another Fagan homestead.

The last visit of the day was to the Aransas Wildlife Refuge near Austwell. The Tropical Trails monthly meetings are open to the public.