Calendar Premiere and Party, Contest Winners to be Announced Sept. 16
Gala to be held at Fulton Mansion Education Center

It’s that time of year again for ACHS’s best party of the year, the Premiere of the new Historical Calendar for 2015. This year, the gala will be on Tuesday, September 16 at the Fulton Mansion Education & History Center (located behind the Fulton Mansion) at 6:30 pm.

In addition to announcing the winners of the 2014 Photo Contest, ACHS will also recognize the contest judges and all those who submitted entries.

The new calendar will be available for purchase at the event.
FROM THE LAB: A message from the President . . . . .

I am not sure when the “new” year of the ACHS is supposed to begin, whether it is after our Annual Meeting in February, or in September, to coincide with school starting. As a former teacher for 30 years, I suspect I am regimented to the idea that September is the real beginning of the year.

Regardless, we kick off the “new year” on September 16 with the premiere of our wonderful Historical Calendar with a great event to be held at the Fulton Mansion Education Center. We hope you will attend this celebration party. Every year, the calendar gets better, and we are amazed at the quality and quantity of the historical photos that are submitted each year during the contest.

Calendar sponsorships and sales serve as ACHS’s major fundraising project. Janie White and the calendar committee are to be commended for their work in sponsoring the contest, securing sponsors, restoring faded photos, writing, editing and proofing content, and distributing the calendars to the community at large. One of our members was so pleased that he has ordered in advance a hundred copies to place in his business—in Austin!

A second major event for this fall will be our November 13 program by the official Texas State Historian, Dr. Bill O’Neal. Bill has published almost 40 books, and in 2007 was named best living non-fiction writer by True West Magazine. He is driving all the way from Carthage in deep east Texas just to give this program, and his topic is one that is universal to all of us, Texas music. You will not want to miss his presentation.

We wrapped up our past “year” with a very worthy event on June 28, the dedication of an olive tree in honor and memory of Mary Lucille Jackson at the new History Center for Aransas County. More than 50 family and friends turned out on a hot afternoon to hear Mary Lucille’s brother NF Jackson of Bellingham, Washington, to speak about her contributions to Rockport’s art and history.

The little olive tree, which is already bearing fruit, will grow to be 20 feet tall, serving as an appropriate reminder of Mary Lucille who did so much for history and the arts in this community.

———David J. Murrah
In 2006 Pam Stranahan and I came up with the idea of producing a calendar of historical photographs of Aransas County as a fundraising project. We took the idea to the Board of Trustees and they liked it. Pam agreed to handle the business end (finding sponsors, selling it to merchants, etc.) and I took a big gulp and agreed to do the computer work to produce the actual calendar. Since then, the Calendar of Historical Photographs has become a major annual fundraiser for ACHS.

The first year we selected the photographs from our digital photograph collection, and one or two people let us use some from their private collections. Since I had been doing photo restoration for about 10 years, the photos were fairly easy to deal with. We looked for historical facts about Aransas County to add to dates in the calendar and created captions for the photographs. The first one was a great success and we sold out quickly.

In 2008 we began the tradition of giving a calendar to each of the fourth graders at the ACISD Fulton Learning Center. That practice continues, thanks to the Aransas County Historical Commission which buys them from ACHS at our cost. Dressed in vintage dress, members of the Commission present them annually to the fourth graders. We thank the Commission for using our calendars to promote an understanding and appreciation of Aransas County history.

For the 2009 Calendar, we started having a historical photo contest. It has resulted in wonderful entries, and we always have more photos from which to select than we can publish in the calendar. We are still having the contest and now, nearly all of the photos in the calendar are selected from contest submissions. Our contest judges really enjoy seeing all of the great photos and always have a hard time selecting the winners. These photos are not only great, but they also help tell and preserve the story of Aransas County and the people who live here. Thanks to everyone who has entered the contest. Keep up the great work!

In 2012 we started adding color to the calendar cover. Although we are still using mainly black and white photographs, color makes the cover more dramatic. Thanks to those who entered the contest this year, to the judges who selected the photographs, and to our hard working Calendar Committee, as we have a great calendar again this year. Also, we owe thanks to Ronald Cheng and Wayne White who made very generous donations, and to each of our sponsors who has supported the 2015 Calendar.

We hope to see you at the 2015 Calendar Premiere at the Fulton Mansion Education and History Center. Make sure September 16 is on your calendar and come join us at 6:30 that evening. We’ll announce the winners of the contest and have a good time looking at photographs. It’s free and open to the public. Refreshments will be served.

The cover of the new 2015 ACHS Historical Calendar. Its premiere party will be held at the Fulton Mansion Education & History Center on September 16 at 6:30 pm. The event is free and open to the public.
Friends of the History Center (FHC)

FHC opened its first major exhibit on August 28. Entitled “Connie Hagar - First Lady of Texas Birding,” the all-new showcase will be on display until October 25. It features photographs, artifacts and interviews about Connie who attracted birders to the area beginning in 1935.

The display showcases Connie's early life and adolescence in East Texas as well as her fascination with nature and then will relate the significance of her many years in Rockport. This exhibit was made possible in part by a grant from Humanities Texas, the state affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities. The Center, which will also be a Hummer Home during the Hummer Bird Celebration in mid-September, is open Fridays and Saturdays from 10 until 2 at 801 E. Cedar St.

Upcoming events at FHC:
The Newseum of Aransas County, featuring items from the collection of longtime Rockport Pilot editor Mike Probst - opening November 1, 3:00 pm with a book signing that afternoon;
Tour of Historic Homes, December 6-7, 1-5 pm both days. Details may be found at www.aransashistorycenter.org.

Daughters of the Republic of Texas (DRT)
The Stenson-Simpson Chapter of DRT meets on the fourth Saturday of each month at 4:00 pm, October through May at the Fulton Schoolhouse Museum, located at 7th & Cactus in Fulton. Visitors with an interest in the era of the Texas Republic are welcome to attend the meetings which include short programs on Texas-related topics. Anyone with ancestors who settled in Texas during the Republic 1836-1845 are encouraged to join DRT. Members will assist in researching and documenting that heritage.

The Chapter is also the custodian of the Fulton Schoolhouse Museum. It is open on Saturdays and Sundays from 1 to 4 pm. Private tours may be arranged by calling 729-5725.

Aransas County Historical Commission (ACHC)
The ACHC is an appointed arm of the county government tasked with the preservation of Aransas County's historical and cultural resources. The Commission also promotes appreciation of local and state history. Its major task is nominating sites and subjects for historical markers. If you know of a site or subject, please let the ACHC know by contacting chair Collin Jackson at cjackson@aransascounty.org.

The ACHC meets quarterly. Its agendas are posted on the county web site and the meetings are open to the public. Its next meeting is scheduled for September 18, 5:00 pm in the Commissioners' Court room.

Genealogical Society

The Genealogical Society of Aransas County meets on the fourth Monday of each month at 3:00 pm at the Texas Maritime Museum, and is open to any beginner or advanced genealogist who would like to partner with other people interested in researching and documenting their ancestors. The annual dues are $15 for an individual and $20 for a couple.

The next meeting will be September 22, and will feature discussion on the topic “What We Did Over the Summer.” Each meeting features presentations that relate to genealogical work, i.e. census data, immigration, and military records, as well as how to document research. The Society offers field trips to area libraries to learn about their resources and do research. It will sponsor a workshop in January of 2015; details will be available in the early fall. Members are available and willing to provide any assistance they can to help anyone with their research.

For additional information, contact the president, Sally Reynolds at (361) 729-8839 or visit the Society website at aransashistory.org.

Welcome to our newest members of the Aransas County Historical Society!
Linda Boxberger, Austin
Peter Burke, Rockport
Bonnie Cron Ruble, Tulsa, OK