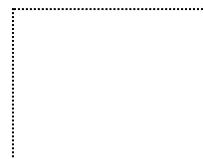


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ACHS NEWSLETTER

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Calendar Premiere Moves to Fulton! Unveiling Set for Sept. 22 at Fulton Mansion Ed. Center

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ACHS Officers & Trustees (year term expires)

- David J. Murrah, President (2019)
- Marsha Hendrix, Vice Pres. (2017)
- Cheryl Livingston, Secretary (2019)
- Janie White, Treasurer (2019)
- Sandy Garrison (2017)
- Ray McLester (2018)
- Jo Ann Morgan (2019)
- Timothy Mullin (2019)
- Pam Stranahan (2018)
- Jeanie Schindler (2018)
- Janet Taylor (2017)

Be sure to save the date of September 22 for ACHS's Calendar Premiere Party. This year, the event will be at the Fulton Mansion Education Center at 6:30 pm.

The new calendar is comprised of all "new" old photographs selected from 37 entries in the 2016 Photo Contest. According to contest chair Janie White, the judges had a very difficult time of selecting the winners due to the quality of this year's submissions. Judges for the contest were Veronika Camehl and James Fox. The contest photos ranged from 1866 to the 1970s.

Contest participants will be recognized and prizes awarded to the winners. The winning photos will be on exhibit and the 2017 calendar will be available for purchase.

As always, refreshments will be served and the event is free and open to the public. Bring a friend and enjoy a walk through the past.

—Janie White



From the Arkansas County Historical Society Digital Photo Collection. Photograph courtesy of Fred Lyle Diederich. All rights reserved.

ACHS's annual photo contests have brought out of closets and albums some wonderful glimpses of Aransas County history. The winner of the 2015 contest, which was published in the 2016 *Aransas County History in Photographs* calendar, was this c. 1942 photo of Fred Diederich and his son Lyle after a duck hunting trip, taken in the back yard of their home on North Ann Street. The 2016 Contest attracted 37 entries, and the winners will be announced at the Calendar Premiere Party on September 22.

FROM THE LAB: A message from the President

Once again, we are having to use this column to say goodbye to another Society member, one who was active on our Board, and one who had worked hard in recent years to help build our membership to record levels. We lost Dolly Hart Close to cancer on June 27, 2016.

Dolly was an ideal board member. She was loyal, faithful, and hard-working. Her knowledge of the community and its people was an irreplaceable asset to the Society. Moreover, she was gracious and caring. We shall miss her very much.

The week of Dolly's passing, I lost two other friends, all of which reminded me that I need to get busy recording some memories for family. All of us need to take time to reflect on those things that brought us to this point in our lives, and then record them in some way. And, it's the little things that count. For my son's information, I want to describe the places where he lived before he could remember. I need to record those watershed times where a single decision made all the difference in the way my life turned out. And, I need to credit those whose counsel and advice helped tremendously along the way.

One of our Society projects for this year is to finish our history of Aransas County, which will contain hundreds of family memories. This book will be one way to help preserve memories for those who will follow us. Dolly was such a big help in getting that project started.

ACHS has big plans for the fall. First is our annual Calendar Premiere Party, scheduled for September 22 at the Fulton Mansion Education Center. Then, we have a major program coming on October 27 when Tamara Saviano of Nashville, Tennessee, will give a presentation on the late song writer and musician, Guy Clark, who spent his formative years in Rockport. Watch for details.

And, as always, the Lab is open Wednesdays from 2 to 4, so stop by and visit. You never know who you might see.

—David J. Murrah



Dolly Hart Close (left) and new ACHS Board member and secretary Cheryl Livingston shared a moment at the Annual Meeting of the Society in February. We shall miss Dolly's big smile. Photo by Veronika Camehl.



Dolly Hart Close

1935 - 2016

ACHS Board Member, 2009-2016

Dolly Hart Close of Rockport Texas, age 81, passed away on June 27, 2016. She is preceded in death by her husband of 56 years, James Frederick Close, Sr., and son Edward Roy Close. She is survived by her children, James Frederick Close, Jr. (Rox Anne), Dennis Hart Close (Anne), and Anne Close Morgan (Kevin); grandchildren Jake Close, John Close, Jessica Bell, Cory Morgan; and four great-grandchildren.

Dolly was born in Rockport, Texas on June 1, 1935 to Roy Lee and Ruby Hart in the home of her grandparents, Stanley and Mabel Bissett. Dolly lived in various small towns throughout Texas and attended Sacred Heart Catholic School in Rockport and graduated from Rockport High School. She attended Incarnate Word Academy in San Antonio and Texas Tech University. Dolly pursued a career in teaching and touched the lives of many generations of children. Later in life, her involvement in the Aransas County Historical Society ensured that the local heritage and personal legacy would be passed onto generations to come. Her smile and sunny disposition will be missed by all who knew her.

Mass was celebrated for Dolly on July 1, 2016 at Sacred Heart Catholic Church.

Welcome to these new ACHS members!

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| Terry Baiamonte | John & Veronica Koenig |
| Kay & Tom Betz | Vickie Merchant |
| Martha Brennan | Bob Mosier |
| Pat & Terry Defalco | Judith Mott |
| David Denham | Veronica and Ernest Camehl |
| Laura & James Fox | Tan Nguyen |
| Jane & Ronnie Jackson | Brenda Oldham |
| Donna Jansma | Rhone Family |
| Fred Krebs | Diane & Steve Strawb |

FROM PORT ROCK TO ROCKPORT

A Brief History of the Linh and Sam Nguyen Family

by
Tan Nguyen

[Editor's note: This family story introduces a whole new chapter in Aransas County history, and one that reminds us that we need to collect more accounts like this. Our thanks to Tan Nguyen for sharing his family history, to former board member Donna Dickinson for collecting it, and to Timothy Mullin for his editorial work.]

Linh Nguyen and his wife Sam left the small fishing village of Ben Da, Vietnam in 1975 with their seven children, with just the clothes on their back. They left all their family belonging and ran for their lives. Linh was in the military in Vietnam and told his family to leave everything behind and meet him at the beach at a fishing boat that evening.

The Nguyen family made their way in this fishing boat to a US Navy ship which was waiting to rescue this family along with other Vietnamese families. They had to climb up a rope ladder into the large Navy ship to carry them to safety away from the advancing North Vietnamese during the Vietnam War.

Twice fortunate, the Nguyens were rescued and didn't have anyone fall off the rope ladder during the climb onto the Navy ship. Sadly, some people fell from the ladder drowned. The North Vietnamese soldiers were shooting at people leaving in their small fishing boats and many died trying to escape the war torn area

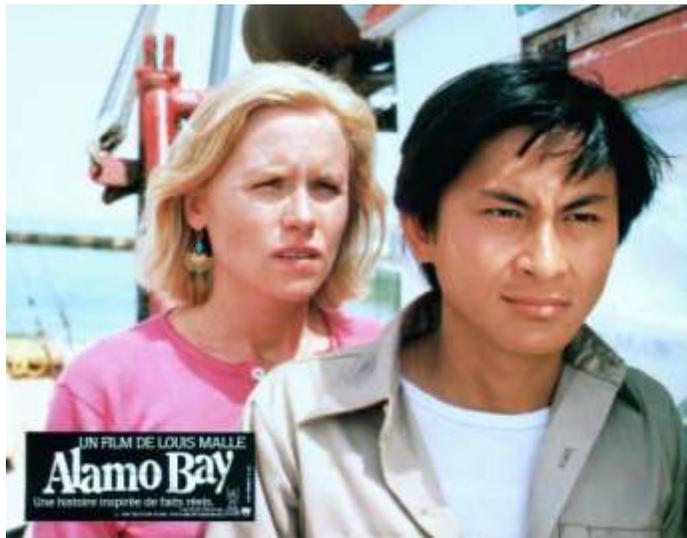
Our family was transported to the Island of Guam and eventually made their way to Ft. Smith Arkansas. There, Linh and Sam became new parents again and named their son Smith, after Ft. Smith. From there, they were sponsored by a Catholic priest named Father Mulligan, and moved to Orange, Texas, where they stayed for two years. They then moved to Huntington Beach California, where they had another son they named John.

In 1980 the family, now with nine children, moved back to Texas looking for a place that was more like the climate of Viet Nam. They arrived at Oak Shore Inn at the coastal town of Fulton, where they lived with their relatives. They went into shrimping as an occupation; very familiar work from their years in Ben Da. The Nguyens mainly sold their catch to local fish houses, Casterline and Surfside Seafood.

Some local fishermen felt very territorial and became resentful of the Vietnamese fishermen. Many of us spoke no English and were unfamiliar with fishing. There were some rough patches when the Klu Klux Klan made their way to town to cause problems for the Vietnamese, but they were unsuccessful because the town did not approve of their presence. Relations gradually improved with the healing power of time.

In 1984 the movie *Alamo Bay* was filmed in Fulton and included several Nguyen family members who played small parts. Today, Linh and his wife Sam, along with six of their children still reside in Rockport. Linh retired from shrimping in 2005 and now works as a carpenter, while Sam still does small seafood jobs here and there.

As fate would have it, the small village the Nguyen family left in 1975, Ben Da, Vietnam, in English means "Port Rock."



Movie poster, 1985, promoting the movie *Alamo Bay*, which was filmed in Fulton and starred Ed Harris, Amy Madigan and Ho Nguyen, and featured local members of the Nguyen family, including future RFHS football star Dat Nguyen, who was 9 years old at the time. Poster © TriStar Pictures, <https://www.cineplex.com/Movie/alamo-bay/Photos>.

LARGE CROWD ATTENDS ACHS ANNUAL MEETING ON FEBRUARY 25

The 2016 ACHS Annual Meeting featured Rockport artist Steve Russell, who talked about the community's history and influence on his work. In addition, the membership elected two new trustees, Cheryl Livingston and Timothy Mullin, and re-elected David Murrah, Janie White, and Jo Ann Morgan to new three-year terms.



The ACHS members enjoyed a light meal at the February Annual Meeting. Photo by Veronika Camehl.

Norinne Holman retired from the Board after serving for six years, but remains active as a member of the Cemetery Committee. Since the annual meeting, Gloria Davis and Donna Dickinson have resigned from the board, but also continue to remain active, especially working at the Lab on Wednesdays. We shall miss all three.

A SPECIAL MORGAN FAMILY MOMENT
At the annual meeting, **ACHS's official photographer** Veronika Camehl captured this wonderful picture of long-time Society members Wesley and JoAnn Morgan, their daughter Kathryn Albin (standing left) and daughter-in-law Jennifer Morgan, from Madison, Wisconsin.



SAVE THE DATE!
COMING OCTOBER 27
A very special program on the late Guy Clark.
WATCH FOR DETAILS!

WELCOME TO OUR NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Cheryl Livingston's family goes back on her mother's side at least four generations in Rockport. She and her husband Tom Watkins moved here in 2014 from Colorado where Cheryl worked in the library at the Colorado School of Mines.



Timothy Mullin moved from Kentucky to Rockport late in September, 2015 after retiring from the museum field. He works part-time as the Tour Guide and Rental Coordinator for the Fulton Mansion. He has many years of historical research experience, especially dealing with the Victorian era.



ACHS BOARD: The new ACHS board was introduced at the February Annual Meeting. Included are (L to R) David Murrah, Tim Mullin, Cheryl Livingston, Sandy Garrison, Dolly Close, Marsha Hendrix, Jo Ann Morgan, Janie White, Pam Stranahan, and Jeanie Schindler. Not in attendance was Ray McLester. Photo courtesy Veronika Camehl.

ARANSAS COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Historical markers will be dedicated in the fall to designate the Casterline Fish Company and The Air Force Radar Station as "Places that Matter." The Commission has revived the Historic Resources Survey for the downtown area in partnership with the AC Historical Society and Friends of the History Center. Survey information is being entered into an access data base to allow descriptions of historical sites to be more available for analysis.

ARANSAS PATHWAYS

Aransas Pathways honored volunteers with a BBQ on July 8. Thanks were extended to those who worked in birding, kayaking, history and trails. Volunteerism has accounted for completion of several projects since Pathways inception in 2011.

**DAUGHTERS OF THE REPUBLIC OF TEXAS/
 FULTON SCHOOLHOUSE MUSEUM**

The Fulton Schoolhouse Museum is open on Saturdays and Sundays, 1-4 PM. ACHS board member Jean Schindler is currently president of the DRT chapter. Applications to join DRT by proving lineage from ancestors in Texas during the Republic 1836-1845 may contact Jackie Shaw, registrar.

HISTORY CENTER FOR ARANSAS COUNTY

On June 25, the History Center opened its new exhibit, *The Art Colony*, with a program by Kay Betz. The exhibit details the evolution of the art colony from 1948 when Simon Michael began to teach in Fulton until the opening of the Art Center in 1984.

On September 10, the Center will begin a new exhibit, *Stewards of Nature*. Which will feature local heroes who have promoted conservation through preservation, protection and restoration of nature. The History Center is also a Hummer Home and many feeders will adorn the garden especially designed for butterflies and hummers. A monthly Plant Exchange is held every first Saturday at 10 AM. For more information, visit www.aransashistorycenter.org.

TROPICAL TRAIL TOUR RETURNS TO ARANSAS COUNTY TO VISIT LAMAR SITES

Tropical Trail Partners visit Aransas County Tuesday, August 16, for an all-day program visiting attractions around the area.

Tours will include "The Big Tree" at Goose Island State Park, the Lamar Cemetery and Stella Maris Chapel, and the House of Schoenstatt Retreat & Shrine.



The program will include a history of the Schoenstatt movement, presented by Sister Deanne, House Administrator, plus a tour of the Shrine and the gift shop.

Reservations are limited to 50 people and are due by August 8. For additional information or to make reservations, please contact Nancy Deviney at Texas Tropical Trail Region nancydeviney@yahoo.com by email or by phone, home/office - 361 547-8033 cell - 361 701-0555.

**FULTON MANSION
 STATE HISTORIC SITE**

Enjoy another free concert on the beautiful lawn of the Fulton Mansion, Tuesday, August 9, from 7 to 8:30 pm. Bring your lawn chairs and take in the easy sounds of Pueblo.

Concessions will be available for purchase.

