



# NewsLetter

FEBRUARY  
2021

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION OF CENTRAL LOUISIANA  
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Welcome to the inaugural  
issue of our Newsletter

### President takes medical leave—HACL

President, Charles Charrier, has taken a medical leave until the end of June 2021. Our thoughts and prayers are with him and his family, and we all wish him well!

In order to ensure continuity in President Charrier's absence, the HACL Board of Directors approved two persons to carry on the presidential functions: Fr. Chad Partain as Interim Executive Officer and Dave Curry as Interim Administrative Officer. The other officers are John McDaniel, Vice-President, Sid McDaniel, Secretary and Donna Charrier, Treasurer.

**Hurricane damage**--When Hurricane Laura swept through central Louisiana on August 27, 2020, its winds and heavy rains caused major damage at the Historic Rapides Cemetery, the site of one of the Historical Association's ongoing initiatives. Large trees were uprooted and countless tree limbs were blown everywhere, some causing severe damage and dislodgement to several monuments. In the aftermath, cemetery volunteers combed the entire seven-acre tract, photographing and making careful notes of the damage to trees and monuments throughout.

*(continued on page 2)*



**Historic Rapides Cemetery showing downed trees and limbs after Hurricane Laura. The City of Pineville has removed these since this photo was taken.** Photograph by Paul Price



**Damaged and dislodged monuments caused by downed trees during Hurricane Laura.**

Photograph by Paul Price

## Hurricane damage--(continued from page 1)

With FEMA assistance, the City of Pineville was able to quickly remove most of the large trees, and the cemetery volunteers have made its inventory of monument damage available to the City in hopes that FEMA may also cover the cost of monument repairs.

**Volunteers invited**—Come and see the cemetery for yourselves! Wear some work clothes and comfortable shoes in case the grounds are damp. Our volunteers will greet you and give you a guided tour. We will also explain our ongoing efforts to restore and preserve the grounds and monuments.

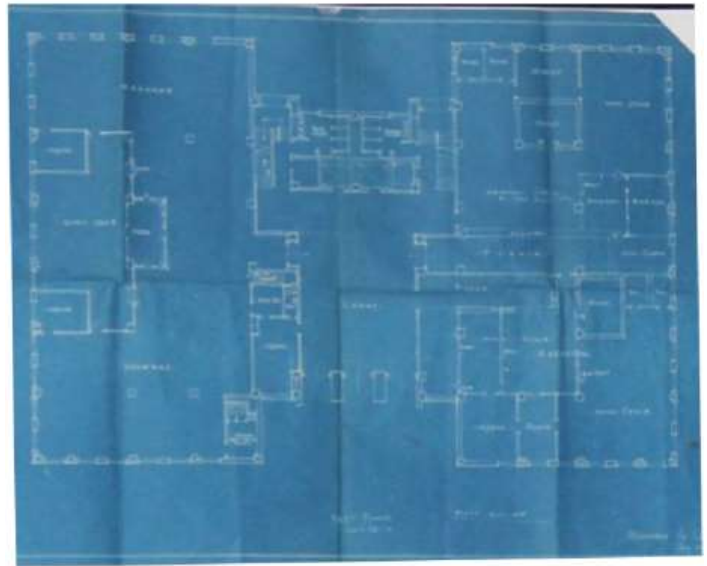
Every second Saturday and every fifth Saturday of each month are pre-scheduled cemetery workdays. We start at 8:30 AM and work until we are too tired or too hot to continue. Our coffee and water break, usually with cookies, comes at 10:00 AM. The next scheduled workdays are:

<b>FEB 13th</b>	<b>MAY 8th</b>	<b>JUL 10th</b>
<b>MAR 13th</b>	<b>MAY 29<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>AUG 14th</b>
<b>APR 10th</b>	<b>JUN 12<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>SEP 11<sup>th</sup></b>

The cemetery main entrance is at the end of Hattie Street in Pineville, one block from Main Street. Turn off Main Street onto Hardtner Street beside the Jewish Cemetery, and then turn left onto Hattie Street. Just keep driving!

## We'll be looking for you!

**Fred Barksdale Collection**--Several years ago, the Historical Association came into possession of certain architectural plans, sketches and drawings, now referred to as the Fred Barksdale Collection, and has recently donated them to the University Archives and Central Louisiana Collection at LSU.



### Blueprint of Rapides Parish Courthouse from the Fred Barksdale Collection

Once inventoried by the LSUA staff, this important collection will be available to the general public. Fred Barksdale (1921-2005) was an area architect whose many design commissions, including private residences, churches and commercial buildings, can be viewed throughout central Louisiana and elsewhere.



Dairy Barn photograph by Paul Price

**Save The Dairy Barn at Buhlow Lake**— (Editor's note: Although the **Save the Dairy Barn at Buhlow Lake Committee** is not affiliated with the Historical Association, we monitor their reports as a part of preservation efforts in central Louisiana.)

*(continued on page 3)*

## Save the Dairy Barn at Buhlow Lake

**Background:** The old Dairy Barn, built in 1923 on the property of the Central Louisiana State Hospital, has been out of use as a dairy barn since the mid 1950s when the dairy farm operations ceased. The pastureland had been converted to Buhlow Lake. The barn has been deteriorating ever since.

A grassroots committee, Save the Dairy Barn at Buhlow Lake, formed in 2014 with a goal of saving the Dairy Barn. The committee and the organization of the same name have worked very hard toward their goal. Their fundraising efforts over the years raised over \$55,000 with the help of an early donation of \$5,000 by the HACL. In 2018, a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement with the State of Louisiana was approved which resulted in the North Wall Project being completed in January 2019, a rebuild of the north wall of the barn.

The HACL recognized the accomplishment by awarding the *2019 Preservationist of the Year Award* to Save the Dairy Barn at Buhlow Lake along with our board members State Rep. Mike Johnson and Dave Curry.

Thanks to support from State Legislators, funds have been received to restore the exterior of the Dairy Barn and roof.

**Update:** Initial bids for the work exceeded the budget of Save the Dairy Barn at Buhlow Lake. Specifications were modified but rejected by the Department of Administration since they called for replacing one door while framing in others which would violate the State Fire Marshal's ingress/egress code.



**Nathan Martin, VP of Save the Dairy Barn at Buhlow Lake, accepts the 2019 Preservationist of the Year Award for their organization**

Updated plans and the bid package were submitted to the Louisiana Department of Health, Division of Administration, in January. When approved, they will go through the public bid process of advertising for bids and award potentially in April or May.

**Historical markers**—In his role as HACL Coordinator for Historical Markers, Mike Tudor reports that pursuant to a request from the Pineville City Council that the England Authority recognize two local aviation pioneers, he made contact with Ms. Sandra McQuain, Executive Director of the Authority. At HACL suggestion and as a result of that conversation, the HACL will propose that it perform both the historical research and suggested texts for two historical markers to be placed near the entrance of the AEX terminal at the Alexandria International Airport. One marker will honor Leo Ortego from Alexandria on one side, and Charles Frederick Page, an African American from Pineville on the other side.

**Historical markers**—(continued from page 3). The other marker will cover the history of commercial aviation in central Louisiana.

Both texts have been researched and edited by local historians Michael Wynne and Paul Price, and after first being submitted to the HACL Board of Directors, they were then submitted to Executive Director McQuain for her review and approval and to be placed before the Board of Commissioners for its consideration. As former Chairman of the England Authority, Mr. Tudor appreciates the interest for this markers project and is hopeful that the Authority will underwrite the cost of honoring these two local aviation pioneers.



Discussions for an additional historical marker are ongoing for the former residence in Lecompte of James Madison Wells (1808-1899), Governor of Louisiana through the turbulent post-Civil War era from 1865 until 1867. Wells was one of only four residents of Rapides Parish ever to be elected governor for the state; the others were Joseph Marshall Walker, Thomas Overton Moore and Newton C. Blanchard. Governor Wells called his home “Sunnyside” and lived there with his wife until his death in 1899.

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**Questions? Comments? Suggestions?**  
**Email: [theHACL@suddenlink.net](mailto:theHACL@suddenlink.net)**



**Mike Tudor, HACL Coordinator for Historical Markers**



**Governor James Madison Wells**