Our Spring cover is all about enchanting flowers, and how fitting that our cover flower is poetically referred to by its nickname Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow. It seems destined that this changing flower should mascot our spring issue, after all it was the inspiration for our newsletter, Embrace Your Cultural Story -Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow.

The genus Brunfelsia is a lush green foliage plant accented by a crown of five overgrown petals with aromatic blooms that fades from one day to the next. Fittingly called the yesterday, today and tomorrow flower, the blooms evolve in color for three days. Day one consists of a deep-red-purple that fades to a light lavender on the second day. One day three the blooms subtly fade to a brilliant white.

Rachel Dangermond, the main rock star at the 100 Men Hall in Bay St. Louis explained that the purple represents yesterday, lavender for today and white for tomorrow. I instantly knew this flower truly embraced our cultural story. The mission of the Mississippi Coast National Heritage Area is to enhance, conserve, promote and provide connectivity among the coast’s many heritage resources; to tell the enchanting stories of yesterday, today and tomorrow.

Rhonda Price  
MGCNHA Director
our MISSION

ENHANCE, CONSERVE AND PROVIDE CONNECTIVITY

to cultural resources of a unique and defined area through identification, interpretation and promotion.

CREATE AUTHENTIC EXPERIENCES

and serve as a source of pride. Providing increased awareness and appreciation of their environment, history, culture, traditions and lifestyles.

PROMOTE ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY

of heritage resources that benefit the entire region and support the long-term enhancement and conservation of those qualities that make the six counties of the MS Coast NHA unique.

TELLING THE AREA’S NATIONALLY SIGNIFICANT STORY

to residents and visitors through activities and partnerships that celebrate the area’s unique history, people, traditions and landscapes.

Your MS Coast NHA is a partnership of communities, businesses, governmental agencies, non-profit organizations and individuals who value the region’s rich cultural and environmental diversity, history, natural beauty and traditions.
Recently the MS Coast NHA assisted the Historical Society of Gulfport with some preliminary digitization of a rare set of maps in their collection. The Society recently received an insurance map of Gulfport from November 1945 made by the Sanborn Map Company. When new, these maps were used by insurance underwriters to assess risk when issuing policies. Today, these maps are a great resource for historians as the Sanborn Map Company meticulously measured out the locations of buildings, along with noting construction details.

The Historical Society of Gulfport’s map was originally created by the Sanborn Company in 1929; however, was updated by the company to reflect the changes made to Gulfport’s built environment by November 1945. This 1945 edition map may be the only copy in existence, as both the large Sanborn Insurance Map collections of the Library of Congress and at Mississippi State University do not include a copy of this year maps. The digitization of such rare documents allows researchers and other curious parties to view the maps while protecting the originals.

The collections of the Historical Society of Gulfport are in the Gulfport Museum of History. The museum recently relocated to the old Union Station Railroad Depot at 1419 27th Avenue in downtown Gulfport where they display rotating and permanent exhibitions of Gulfport and Gulf Coast history.

The Historical Society of Gulfport’s hours of operation are Thursday – Saturday, 10 am- 3 pm. To learn more, visit the website historicalsocietyofgulfport.org.
Of all the developments along the Mississippi Gulf Coast in the past 300 years, few have had as profound an impact as the development of a rail system spanning the three coastal Mississippi counties and connecting the cities of Mobile, Alabama, and New Orleans, Louisiana, by railroad. Shortly after the first engines roared across the Gulf Coast on steel wheels in late 1870, the coastal economy and culture experienced a period of growth and transformation that defines us as a people to this very day.

Railroad development allowed for an economic boom of two specific industries along the Gulf Coast: The timber industry and the seafood industry. The advent of rail transportation allowed for quicker and broader access to markets for these industries resulting in their unprecedented commercial expansion. The lumber industry soon began to develop short-run rail systems into the coast’s interior, harvesting upland forests and resulting in the settling and development of South Mississippi’s Piney Woods. The seafood industry suddenly could deliver its products further and faster than before, and increases in both fresh and canned seafood production led the Mississippi Gulf Coast to be dubbed, “The Seafood Capital of the World.”
Growth in other sectors of the Gulf Coast may be indirectly attributed to the railroad as well. With timber and seafood advancements came the expansion of congruent industries, such as sawmills, naval stores, shipbuilding and the improvements of seaports. The arrival of Slovenian and Croatian migrant workers in the 1880’s and 1890’s to work in the seafood factories was a result of the economic progress driven by the railroad. Even the tourism industry owes a debt of gratitude to the railroad; by the end of the nineteenth century, the Mississippi Gulf Coast was developing a reputation as a resort destination. The railroad allowed families to escape the summer heat or evade the winter chill for the cool, temperate climate of the Gulf Coast. It can truly be said that with the completion of the Mobile to New Orleans railroad, the Mississippi Gulf Coast was destined to “build steam.”

To learn more about railroads in Coastal Mississippi, or to take a ride on an Amtrak train, visit the Picayune Train Depot, Museum & Tourist Center & Amtrak Station on Facebook or search for the Intermodal Tourist Center & Lower Pearl River Valley Transportation Museum in Picayune at msgulfcoastheritage.ms.gov.
In this edition of the Gulf Coast Outpost (GCO) Business Spotlight, we are featuring two businesses in Jackson Country, MS who received the MS Coast NHA Gulf Coast Outpost recognition in 2018: Eco-Tours of South Mississippi in Gautier and the Harbor Garden House in Ocean Springs.

The Gulf Coast Outpost recognition program celebrates the Nature Based Tourism plan for Coastal MS as laid out in 2016. The program identifies companies who are knowledgeable about our Coast’s natural environment and take steps to protect it by fostering environmental and cultural understanding, appreciation and conservation.

Our Outpost program applauds these two businesses and their amazing dedication to protect and foster our Gulf Coast environmental treasures.
ECO-TOURS OF SOUTH MISSISSIPPI

Eco-Tours of South Mississippi celebrates the "star" of Jackson County, the Pascagoula River! This is the largest (by volume) unimpeded river in the lower 48 states. Over three hundred species of plants, including water lilies, ferns and orchids, enhance the beauty of the bayous. Wildlife abounds! Turtles, frogs, alligators, fish, birds and a variety of other wildlife flourish. The yellow-blotched sawmill map turtle is a wonderful indicator of how healthy the Pascagoula is. This threatened species is thriving on the river!

Captain Kathy will take you on a power boat tour to introduce you to the natural habitats of the cypress swamps and salt marches of the lower Pascagoula. Not only will she point out wildlife and plants, she’ll also share with you the history of the river. Whiskey Bayou, in particular, has an extremely interesting past!

Eco-Tours also offers guided kayak trips in the river’s swamps and marshes as well as out to Deer Island. Our best tip, bring your camera! Your guide, Jeff, has a keen photographic eye.

HARBOR GARDEN HOUSE

Near Ocean Springs’s Inner Harbor, you will find the Harbor Garden House. This comfortable, quiet and private vacation rental home is a gem. The 1,700-square foot home has 3 bedrooms, a sunroom, two porches and an amazing connection to nature! Vegetable and herb gardens, fruit trees, private woods with walking paths and oak trees will help make your stay special. Sit back and relax in a rocking chair and watch the never-ending bird show. Your host, Don, who lives next door, is both a Master Naturalist and a MS Habitat Steward. The property is a Certified Wildlife Habitat and it will be hard to believe you are only five blocks from downtown Ocean Springs.
We are looking forward to spring with great anticipation for the riot of blooms that will no doubt appear in the meadow at the Charnley-Norwood House. This past fall, the Crosby Arboretum in Picayune donated several native plants and trees to the MS Coast NHA to be planted in the meadow. These plants include long leaf Pine trees and common milkweed to be planted in the well-drained loamy soils of the upper meadow, while Joe Pye weeds and aquatic milkweed will thrive in the moist, sandy acidic soil of the swales. Upon seeing the Crosby Arboretum’s generosity, John Collins’ 6th grade CREATE class at Biloxi Upper Elementary School donated several native plants that will attract butterflies to the meadow. The MS Coast NHA gives a very big thank you for these donations!

The meadow at the Charnley-Norwood house is both a natural and historic landscape. In general, meadows are rich centers of activity with plant life, insects and animals all interacting in one way or another. Typically, meadows are located at the outer edges of the woods where the tree line stops. The tree line at the Charnley-Norwood House is comprised of oaks, maples, pines and magnolias. Meadows are identified by their herbaceous biodiversity of non-woody plant life. The base of any meadow is the grasses that provide structure, habitat as well as soil stabilization to other plants and animals that coexist in the meadow. A combination of native grasses makes up the meadow. Within these grasses grow a variety of wildflowers that provide color, food for animals and nectar for pollinators. Throughout the year, the meadows themselves goes through a variety of plant life cycles. Each cycle provides a different benefit to both the plants and animals which rely on the habitat for survival. In addition to being a natural habitat, the meadow is also a historic landscape. The meadow is how the space from the house to the waters edge would have appeared during the Charnley and the Norwood families periods of occupation. The meadow, featured prominently in the property history, the Charnley family even referred to the property as “Charmleigh,” a combination of a pun on their last name (Charn or Charm) and an old English term for meadow (leigh).

Following a storm-filled hurricane season, the meadow experienced several changes. The inundations of storm surge brought both natural and man-made debris. While man-made materials were removed from the debris field, the natural debris is part of the meadow’s lifecycle and will be left to deteriorate naturally. As the debris breaks down it will create a natural levy that will mitigate future flooding of the area.

If you are interested in touring the Charnley-Norwood House, email us a line at heritage@dmr.ms.gov to schedule a tour.
As part of the MGCNHA’s Nature Based-Tourism effort, the Blueways program was established to provide explorers with an unforgettable experience along miles of beaches, rivers, creeks and bayous. There are currently 12 blueways, or water trails, that have been mapped out for recreational canoers and kayakers within the six coastal counties in Mississippi. Here is a look at two of the blueways available to the adventurer in us all:

**OLD FORT BAYOU** twists and turns through Jackson County, beginning with the longleaf pine savannas south of Vancleave, winding through natural areas, such as the Sandhill Crane Wildlife Refuge and the Land Trust’s Twelve Oaks Conservation Park, and Mississippi’s Old Fort Bayou Coastal Preserve. The Bayou deepens and widens, ending its journey at the mouth of Biloxi Bay in Ocean Springs.

A variety of habitats exist along Old Fort Bayou. The mouth of the bayou is considered an estuary, a place where the river meets the sea. This area hosts ecological communities of submerged aquatic vegetation such as widgeon grass or tape grass beds; its presence is vital in the developmental stages of many estuarine wildlife species such as native Blue Crabs, shrimp, fish and other species that spend their early juvenile stages in the shallow estuaries where they can hide from large predators.

**WOLF RIVER** runs through Harrison, Hancock and Pearl River counties. This blueway is named after the red wolves that once roamed the southeastern United States. Although the red wolves no longer live near the river, you can still admire the other wildlife that inhabits the area. The Wolf River is home to foxes, coyotes, turkeys and songbirds, to name a few.

This blueway offers 22 miles of water trails through a diversity of natural settings. The south side starts at the mouth of the Wolf River as an estuarine system with salt marshes in the northeast corner of the Bay of St. Louis. As you paddle north, you will find bottomland hardwoods with shallow black water and beautiful white sandbars all the way to the end of the trail just north of Cable Bridge Road in Harrison County.

Visit msgulfcoastheritage.ms.gov to learn more about our various blueways, download maps that include launches, mile markers and points of interest.
THE HISTORIC Barq's BUILDING OF BILOXI

By: Andrew Barrett
Having grown up in Bay St. Louis, one of the fondest memories I have as a kid was the summertime treat of crossing over the bay bridge into Pass Christian and picking up po-boys at Pirate’s Cove restaurant for the whole family. Although the po-boys alone were worthy of the trip, you did not make this journey without the accompanying purchase of what we all know to be the compulsory supplement to any well crafted po-boy: Barq’s Root Beer.

Now there are some things you like simply because of where you are from, not because it’s any good: like a Cleveland Browns fan in the 1990’s. The Browns weren’t very good, but people in Cleveland still went to the games. That was not the case with me and Barq’s Root Beer. At the time, I didn’t even know I was living in the birthplace of the famous elixir. I just knew it was good.

In a small commercial building at 141 Keller Avenue in Biloxi, Barq’s Root Beer was created and bottled by Edward C. Barq in 1898. The root beer quickly grew in regional popularity, and by 1936, operations had to be moved to a larger facility on Lameuse Street. By the 1950’s, there were over 200 franchise bottlers across the nation and an ice-cold Barq’s Root Beer could quench the thirst of almost anyone from the East Coast to the West. In 1995, Coca-Cola purchased the rights to the bottling company and still markets the tangy root beer under the Barq’s name today.

And what remains of Barq’s humble origins on the Mississippi Gulf Coast? Bragging rights for one, pride in our culture of ingenuity on the coast and respect for the thread that Barq’s has added to the fabric of our heritage. And that little commercial building in Biloxi where it all began? It’s still standing. Battered and beaten by 123 years’ worth of hurricanes and the wear of use, this historic building is in desperate need of salvation. Last year’s Hurricane Zeta nearly delivered the knock-out blow.

This building is a tangible connection to our shared heritage on the Gulf Coast that we can all see with a short drive down Keller Avenue in Biloxi. That may not be the case for much longer and it would be a shame to lose yet another historic structure due to the ravages of a hurricane. But historical preservation takes time, effort, vision and financing. Who could afford the investment? Who would have an interest? Who could get this done? I’m not sure, but the next time I’m at Pirate’s Cove, I wouldn’t be opposed to eating my po-boy with a Coke and a smile.

Photo Credits: (Left Page, Bottom Middle, Bottom Right) Biloxi Library/ Local History & Genealogy Photo Collection,
The Brides of La Baleine

To learn more about the Brides of La Baleine, visit labaleinebrides.org.

If you are interested in Biloxi's history, visit the Biloxi Visitors Center at 1050 Beach Boulevard in Biloxi, Mississippi.
On an expedition down the Mississippi River in 1682, the French explorer René-Robert Cavelier, Sieur de La Salle claimed all the region drained by the Mississippi River and its tributaries in the name of King Louis XIV of France and proclaimed the territory “Louisiana” in his honor. It took another 17 years before the first French colony in the lower Mississippi Valley was established by Pierre Le Moyne Sieur d’Iberville at Fort Maurepas (present day Ocean Springs, Miss.) in 1699; an area referred to as “Biloxi” by local indigenous tribes. In the following years, the struggling colonial government would be moved to the Mobile, Ala. area in 1702, back to the “Old Biloxi” area in 1719, to “New Biloxi” in 1721 (modern day Biloxi, Miss.) and then to New Orleans, La. in 1722.

In 1719, to grow the French colony, the then Governor of the Louisiana territory, Jean-Baptiste Le Moyne, Sieur de Bienville, requested from France a delivery of marriageable women to serve as brides for the garrison’s colonists. In January of 1721, the French sailing vessel La Baleine arrived off the coast of Old Biloxi with a cargo of 88 French women between the ages of 12 and 30. In France, these women were inmates of the Hospital General de la Salpetriere; a female prison that one could end up in for offenses ranging anywhere from murder to simple vagrancy. For many of these women, the only prospect for release was deportation and matrimony to the French settlers in the Louisiana territory.

Within a year of their landing, most of these women were married in the Biloxi colony and are referred to today as “The Brides of La Baleine.” The significance of these unions to the Mississippi Gulf Coast, as well as South Louisiana and Alabama, cannot be overstated. These marriages are the ancestry of many familiar surnames in our region and represent the foundation of French genetic heritage along the Gulf Coast.

Names like Bosarge, Cuevas, Dedeaux, Dubuisson, Evans, Favre, Fayard, Fountain, Gill, Gollott, Greenwell, Guice, Krohn, La Fontaine, Ladner, Ladnier, Lizana, Moran, Necaise, Quave, Saucier, Seymour and Swetman are all descendants from the Brides of La Baleine.

Much of the credit for preserving this heritage can be attributed to the late Randall Ladnier who researched and authored the book “The Brides of La Baleine” and who is in fact a descendant of one of the brides. Ladnier’s work, and the work of the Oceans Springs Genealogical Society, has helped to highlight this important story and to establish a new interactive Brides of La Baleine commemorative plaque at the Biloxi Visitors Center.

To learn more about the Brides of La Baleine, visit labaleinebrides.org.
If you are interested in Biloxi’s history, visit the Biloxi Visitors Center at 1050 Beach Boulevard in Biloxi, Mississippi.
Heritage on the Water

BY SARAH BEAUGEZ

Sarah is a Mississippi-born artist, writer and photographer. Her goal in life is to share unadorned beauty with all who cross her path. Learn more about Sarah Beaugez at sarahbeaugez.com.
In 1838, when my great-great-grandfather, Stanislaus Beaugez, made his way to the sleepy hamlet of present-day Ocean Springs, Miss., there were less than 300 inhabitants. Born in 1813 Paris, Stanislaus boarded the Jane Ross, in La Havre, France, also known as a fishing village until the 1820’s. Upon signing the ship manifest in the Port of Orleans, he listed his occupation as merchant. Filled with an adventurous spirit, Stanislaus made his way from New Orleans to the Mississippi Gulf Coast.

While I do not have knowledge of his complete skillset, it would appear Stanislaus found Ocean Springs attractive due to its rich abundance of seafood. In Ocean Springs, he soon married an 18-year-old local girl named Louise L’adnier, of Deer Island, Biloxi. She was the daughter of two of the oldest known families in the area, Jean Baptiste L’adnier and Julienne Celine LaFountaine (pronounced LaFontane), who were known to speak only French and lived very simple lives, including farming the Gulf.

Christening records at the Cathedral of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Biloxi, record Louise and Stanislaus as having the first of ten children in 1841. The ninth child, and third of four boys, was my great-grandfather, Alphonse. Stanislaus and Alphonse spoke only pure Parisian French and, as a family, worked together to harvest the bountiful seafood found in the warm Gulf waters. This was the first of three generations who fed their families first, then sold a portion of the bounty for extra income.

My grandfather, Henry Paul Beaugez, was born in 1889 on a piece of property that sits on high ground at the west end of the Ocean Springs Harbor. At a very young age, Grandpa began tonging oysters off a small skiff over a reef in the Biloxi Bay. Located at the eastern edge of the Ocean Springs Harbor, the reef was long ago moved due to over harvest by others who did not respect the environment. Just as agricultural farmers must allow their land to lay fallow and replenish itself, so does the fisherman. Back-in-the-day, oysters were so prolific that the streets of many Coastal communities were layer upon layer of oyster shells.

Today, the oyster population has dwindled to a negligible amount in the Biloxi Bay and commercial fishermen are presented with many challenges across a variety of species. While proud of the history and heritage which accompany all aspects of the profession, it is a dying vocation. In the last 30 years, the number of commercial fishing licenses has gone from 2,500 to 250. Due to the decline in resources, as well as the dangers and many hazards associated with commercial fishing, the physical and financial risks have become extremely perilous.

Respect for the water and all resources by the whole of those who enjoy the richness found in the Gulf of Mexico will determine the fate of those warm waters in years to come. We have lost much, but have much remaining to treasure, protect and grow for future generations who will tell our story.
THE MISSISSIPPI GULF COAST NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA
PRESENTS
EMBRACE OUR CULTURAL STORY
Our exciting oral history project that tells our story!

National Heritage Areas are designated by Congress as places where natural, cultural, and historic resources combine to form a cohesive, nationally important landscape. Through their resources, NHAs tell nationally important stories that celebrate our nation’s diverse heritage. NHAs are lived-in landscapes. We are proud of the people who make up this great place we call home and want to show you off to the rest of the nation. Let’s identify, preserve and promote the culture of the Mississippi Gulf Coast ...

TOGETHER!

msgulfcoastheritage.ms.gov

Follow us @ MSCOASTNHA
While COVID-19 may have shifted the scope of some Heritage Community Grant projects, it has done little to slow the great progress our 2020-2021 grant recipients are making. In this newsletter, we’ll give you a brief introduction to two organizations that are first time Heritage Community Grant recipients. For a complete list of our 2020-2021 Heritage Community Grant recipients, please see our Fall 2020 newsletter, available at issuu.com/mscoastnha/docs/ms_coast_nha_newsletter_fall2020.

The Historic Ocean Springs Association (HOSA) was awarded a grant to create and install interpretive historic markers throughout Ocean Springs. HOSA is a non-profit, membership organization with the mission of promoting, protecting and preserving the unique charm of Ocean Springs. HOSA projects include the restoration and ongoing maintenance of historic Marshall Park; the creation of the HOSA John Blossman Garden at Shearwater Park as a very popular birding spot at the Inner Harbor. This project addresses the lack of interpretive signage for Ocean Spring's historic resources. Ocean Springs has six national register historic districts, eight local historic districts and 13 individually listed properties, along with several other sites of cultural importance. Unique, custom signs, designed with public input, will be installed throughout the city at various locations. Signage will be like the sign created by HOSA that was placed in Marshall Park several years ago. Learn more about HOSA at the website hosaoceansprings.com.

The John C. Robinson Brown Condor Association was awarded a grant to complete finishing touches on the Mississippi Aviation Heritage Museum. Located at 429 Pass Road in Gulfport, the museum is one of the coast's newest attractions, having opened in the fall of 2020. The name of the association and museum honor pioneering African American aviator John C. Robinson. Known by his nickname, the "Brown Condor," Robinson spent his early years in Gulfport where he developed a passion for flying. He would spend his life working to create equal opportunities in aviation for African Americans. Located adjacent to the Gulfport-Biloxi International Airport, the 52,000 square foot museum houses life-size exhibits from many of Mississippi's historic aviators, including the likes of Apollo astronauts Fred Haise and Stu Roosa, Shuttle astronauts Donald Peterson and Richard Truly and aviation's heroes and daredevils like the Key Brothers, Roscoe Turner and Jesse Brown. Learn more about the museum at the website browncondorassociation.com.
Upcoming Events

PICAYUNE STREET FESTIVAL

The 53rd Bi-Annual Spring Street Festival is in Downtown Picayune, MS (I-59 Exit 4 to West Canal Street in Historic Downtown Picayune). Enjoy our Unique Downtown Shops and Dining along with 200+ Artisans and Craft Vendors. For more information, visit picayunemainstreet.com
GULF COAST HISTORICAL & CULTURAL EXPO
April 30 - May 1, All Day

This expo is open to the public and will feature displays, presentations, demonstrations, lectures, films and performances by groups dedicated to the promotion of the history of the Gulf Coast. This event takes place at Biloxi Visitors Center at 1050 Beach Blvd. in Biloxi.

GULF COAST SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA’S SOUNDS BY THE SEA
Gulfport May 29, 6–9 pm  |  Pascagoula May 30, 5–9 pm

Sounds by the Sea is the Gulf Coast Symphony Orchestra’s celebration on Memorial Day Weekend. These concerts are free to the public. Local talent will be the pre-show performance before the Gulf Coast Symphony Orchestra performs popular hits and the concert concludes with a fantastic firework show. These concerts take place at Jones Park in Gulfport and Beach Park in Pascagoula.