



Gretna Chronicles

Gretna, Louisiana



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December 2023

Cemetery Tour – Fun & Successful!



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Times Past — **By Stephanie Dieterich** ***Cow Troubles!***

India has a cow problem. The Hindu religion considers cows sacred and slaughter is illegal. Once cows stop giving milk, they are usually abandoned, as feeding and maintenance become a financial hardship. Thus over 5 million cows roam freely in India. The cattle are common on airport runways, railways and roads, often causing deadly accidents. Cow attacks on humans are common as is slipping on cow excrement.



Well, from the late 1800s to the early 1900s Gretna and other local municipalities had serious cow nuisance problems too! It appears stray bovine roamed at will without any boundaries. This created a problem with railways, causing derailments, fires and deaths. The Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers in New Orleans framed a law that was presented to the Legislature seeking to control the “EVIL” of livestock on the railroad tracks. This law would save the railroad hundreds of thousands of dollars in claims and protect the safety of passengers as well.

In Algiers, cattle roaming near the river was a great concern. The trampling of the soil on the levee was cause for alarm, as it seriously affected its structural integrity.

Over here in Gretna, at a 1922 city council meeting, statements were made concerning the enforcement of the cattle-roaming nuisance laws, which had almost become “dead.” The board decided to employ a pound keeper at a salary of \$50 per month plus half of the fines collected in cases of violations of the cattle-roaming law. The money to pay the pound keeper’s salary was provided for by cutting in half the salary of Peter Troulliet, the city marshal whose salary was reduced from \$100 to \$50 per month.

The city ordinance relative to cattle roaming at large was strictly enforced in Gretna by Mayor Gelbke who asked citizens to cooperate with officials. Because of the big improvements being made through the paving of sidewalks and gutter bottoms, a big expenditure, Mayor Gelbke said damage to this work would be threatened if cattle were allowed to roam at large.

He also said that cattle owners might prefer affidavits without impounding their cattle and that in all such cases the complaints would receive half the fines imposed.

In the case of resident Emma Whiteside, whom you would likely remember if you’ve ever been to the GHS Cemetery Tour, she wasn’t interested in receiving fine money. Emma took matters into her own hands and just shot Mr. Brown’s cow with her trusty shotgun for eating her prized flowers!

***Dues for 2024 are due and
can be paid at the
December meeting.***

**Cash Donations for the
Gretna Food Bank will be
accepted at the December
meeting.**

CALENDAR

Dec 14 @ 7 pm Annual Christmas Production & Party at St. Joseph Gym!

Jan 11 @ 6 pm Membership Meeting at St. Joseph Gym!

Feb 8 @ 6 pm Membership Meeting at St. Joseph Gym!



Gretna Chronicles succeeds the GHS Newsletter and the Gretna Historical Society Newsletter as the official source of news for the general membership of the Gretna Historical Society.

Gretna Historical Society

201-209 Lafayette Street
 P.O. Box 115
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Gretna Historical Society Museum Complex

1840s Strehle Family Cottage, 1859 David Crockett
 Volunteer Fire Co. No. 1 Fire Station (now Louisiana Fire
 Museum), 1840s White Family Cottage

Gretna Chronicles

is published for the members and friends of GHS

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ABOUT THE GHS AND HOW TO JOIN

The Gretna Historical Society was founded in Gretna, Louisiana, in 1969, by Lloyd E. Gomez (insurance man, volunteer firefighter, and community activist), who descended from Gretna pioneers, German immigrants Claudius and Catherine Nuss Strehle. The Society's articles of incorporation were drafted by Gretna attorney Everette F. Gauthreaux and signed in his law office on October 26, 1969. Today, the GHS operates the Gretna Historical Society Museum Complex at the corner of Lafayette Street at Second. It consists of three 19th century Creole cottages, a blacksmith shop, and the Louisiana Fire Museum. The GHS also owns and maintains the caboose and train depot on Huey P. Long Avenue at Fourth Street.

There are no requirements for membership in the GHS, other than the timely payment of annual membership dues of \$25 per person. Monthly meetings are held at the St. Joseph's Auditorium at 7th and Newton Streets on the second Thursday of every month at 7:00 p.m. The society's newsletter, *Gretna Chronicles*, is published monthly and mailed or emailed to all members.

Gretna Historical Society

<https://www.gretnahistoricalsociety.org/>

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