



Gretna Chronicles



Gretna, Louisiana

Volume 30, Issue 01*

An Official Publication of the Gretna Historical Society

January 2021

The President Presiding...

By Sylvia Schwarz, GHS President



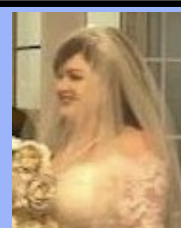
Happy New Year to all. Hopefully, your holidays were filled with joy, happiness, friendship, love and many blessings. Our hope is that this spirit will continue into 2021. We are all filled with hope for the New Year. Made any New Year's resolutions? GHS's resolution is to have General Membership meetings as soon as we can ensure that such a gathering will be safe and healthy for all. Until that time, we will continue until the guidelines say otherwise.

- Breaking tradition, the Board did not meet in the month of December. Under normal circumstances, we would have elected new board members, installed them, and had a joint board meeting with old and new. Needless to say, this did not happen. I greatly appreciate the continued support of our current Board until elections can be held.
- An agreement with GEDA is at a standstill. We have had no success getting in touch with anyone from GEDA. Until we have a response from them, we cannot proceed with the agreement allowing them to use the Depot for their offices. We hope this situation will be resolved in the near future.
- Two artists have been contacted and asked for submissions of sketches for a mural on the wall of the storage shed. When the Board meets in January we will be able to make a decision and get the project going further enhancing our complex.
- We have begun planning for Valentine weddings. This is contingent upon what guidelines will permit. We have the space, a plan and could conduct the wedding with social distancing, masks etc. This year Valentine's Day is the same day as the Bacchus parade, but Bacchus will not parade so this should improve attendance for the weddings.
- No further news on the website but "Stay Tuned."

GHS appreciates your continued support through the unusual circumstances we find ourselves in 2021. When we come back, we will be as strong or stronger than ever!

Welcome to new GHS member, Ashley Carey, who was married at the White House on New Year's evening to Jason Betts!

Congratulations to the happy couple.





The back yard of the White House was the perfect setting for the recent wedding of Ashley Carey and Jason Betts.

The White House Is the Perfect Venue for This Year's Special Events!

With its beautiful renovations, the White House is the perfect choice to be rented for social events such as receptions, repasts, showers and parties.

Amenities include an added patio, updated kitchen and large back yard for socializing. To check on availability and rates, call 504.362.3854.



Kitchen Korner



Enjoy this recipe by Garry Vedros that was taken from our "Gretna Historical Society Cookbook." Cookbooks are available at the complex office for a \$25 donation.

Shrimp Stuffed Bell Peppers

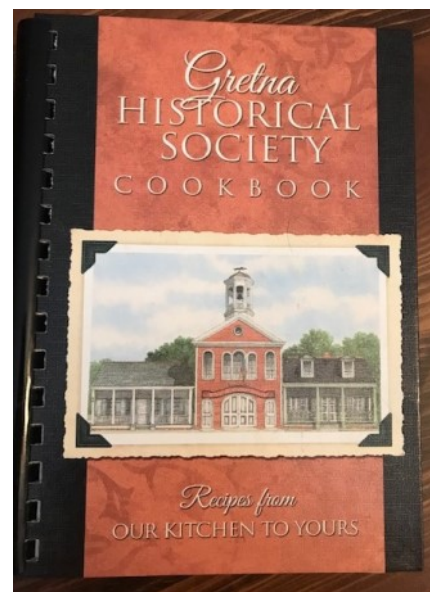
Ingredients:

- 4 large Red Bell Peppers
- 1 bag of 150 ct. Gumbo Shrimp (Raw-Peeled-Deveined)
- ½ cup of finely chopped Onions
- 4 cloves of finely chopped Garlic
- 1 cup of Mayo
- 12 slices of Pepper Jack Cheese
- 1 tbsp. Horseradish
- 2 tbsp. Oil
- 3 tbsp. Chef Paul Prudhomme's Magic Shrimp Seasoning
- 1 tsp. Salt
- 1 tsp. Black Pepper
- 1 tbsp. Tabasco Sauce

Cut bell peppers in half long ways and remove seeds and stem from pepper. Steam pepper for five minutes or until tender, but still firm. Place peppers in a bowl of ice water to stop the cooking process. Remove the peppers from the ice bath, dry and place open side down till time to stuff.

In frying pan, cook onions and garlic in oil for 3 minutes, then add shrimp and Magic Shrimp Seasoning. Stir till shrimp are cooked (don't overcook the shrimp.) Drain any excess liquid from pan.

In mixing bowl, add shrimp, onions, garlic, mayo and horseradish. Mix lightly. Add Tabasco sauce, salt and pepper. Place peppers in glass pan cut side up. Take 4 slices of the pepper cheese and cut in half, place half of a slice at the bottom of each pepper. Fill each pepper with the shrimp mixture and place a full slice of pepper cheese on top of each pepper. Bake at 350 degrees for 20 minutes.



Times Past — By Stephanie Dieterich

“5th Street Highway”

When Sheriff Louis H. Marrero purchased the first car in Jefferson Parish, he had to drive the rutted dirt or oftentimes, mud roadways. In Gretna sidewalks were paved long before streets and residents mostly walked wherever they needed to go. Homes and businesses were conveniently located in close proximity.

The State of Louisiana only had 300 miles of paved highway in 1928. Newly elected Governor Huey P. Long launched a major road building program increasing those miles of paved and gravel highway to 5,000 by 1932. The Westbank would receive five of those miles in 1930 connecting Algiers to Westwego. In Gretna, it ran down 5th Street to Copernicus and then on to 4th Street to Westwego. This highway eventually became known as the worst bottleneck in the state!

Automobile manufacturing restarted after World War II with vehicles becoming available to more people. Farmland gave way to Gretna's first subdivision, Garden Park. This neighborhood off 5th Street welcomed citizens with newer style homes on spacious lots, many with garages for beloved autos.

Several gas stations located on 5th Street



would compete to take care of your car. Service attendants cleaned windshields, checked tires and fluids in addition to pumping gas, all with a smile and a thank you for your business.

Various businesses opened on the 5th Street Highway including Leson Chevrolet, today the site of the Gretna Police Station. The Gretna Jail

was located behind the recently demolished Heebe's Bakery. Gretna City Hall moved into the new red brick building on the corner of Richard Street that is today the Gretna Water Works.



The Carlo Ditta Concrete plant with its tall mounds of rocks was replaced with the relocated water tower. Billa Auto became Mar-Jolee's bridal shop where many prom and wedding dresses were bought. That building is now a church. Billa's Real Estate office was next door.

Klein's opened a new drug store on the highway and the location of Gattuso's Grocery & Market later became Piggly Wiggly and finally was Casey Jones Supermarket. Many hair dressers learned their trade at Jerome's Beauty College. No one could miss the large iconic frosty-foamy mug sitting atop the Frostop Drive In where carhops brought your order to your car!

Farther down the street was Leon Wolfe's Fastway, Gretna's first convenience store. The entire front of the Fastway opened up like a garage door. They were open seven days a week until 11 or 12 o'clock at night when other places were closed. That was during those pesky blue law days.

There was Hendrick's Appliance Store, Duffy's Hardware, Singer Sewing, Lewis Business Machines and Vic Mille's seafood market, Sal's Meat Market and the popular Hawaiian Room Lounge. On the corner of 5th and Hamilton was Whiteside's Restaurant, while farther down was Da Wabbit and finally, Nelson's Drive In. These businesses were ideally situated to catch the people coming down the highway from Algiers.

Roads and vehicles allowed growth like never before. Things would never be the same!

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
 Gretna, LA 70054-0115



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 Staff

M. Helen Williams, Editor
*To submit articles, call Helen at 504.450.8481
 (or e-mail mhw500@cox.net)*

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 \$20 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. Guests and prospective members are always welcome to attend the meetings.

The society's newsletter, *Gretna Chronicles*, is published monthly and mailed or emailed to all members.

Gretna Chronicles

is published for the members and friends of the

Gretna Historical Society

P.O. Box 115, Gretna, LA 70054-0115

Phone: 504.362.3854

Email: directoroffacilities@gretnahistoricalsociety.org

- Sylvia SchwarzPresident
- James Rolf.....Vice-President
- Allison Livingston.....Recording Secretary
- M. Helen Williams.....Corresponding Secretary
- Sarah Daigle.....Treasurer
- Stephanie Dieterich.....Historian
- Monica NaquinArchivist
- Sue McLetchie.....Parliamentarian
- Judy LeBlanc.....Membership Chairman
- Holly Williams.....Sergeant-at-Arms
- B.J. LeBlanc.....Building Chairman
- Ray Markase.....Program Chairman
- Garland Gaspard.....1st Board Member-at-Large
- Chris Ziifle.....2nd Board Member-at-Large
- Terry Lacoste.....3rd Board Member-at-Large