

**DANCING RABBIT  
GENEALOGICAL  
and HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

WINTER EDITION

SEPTEMBER- DECEMBER 2022

*President's Message*

Dear Members and Friends of Dancing Rabbit,

February promises a return to normal. Our next Board meeting will be Wednesday, February 8 and the General Meeting will be February 15. How I look forward to the sweet winter days when the red sky of a Mississippi morning lights up the horizon outside my kitchen window. As I have time for reflection, I realize how fortunate we are to have the warmth of friendship and to have something worthwhile to do. DRGHS has a worthy mission and I am pleased to be a part of it.

Our Board met on January 4. The following things were accomplished: We are pleased that Evelyn McGivney will serve on the board. She is such an asset to the organization. Mona Raborn will continue to share her wisdom and knowledge. She knows more about Dancing Rabbit than is imaginable; however, she decided to take some time without a schedule. We all understand that need. We need that from time to time. The board also approved the purchase of a gift plant for Laurie Henderson, the newly installed mayor of Carthage. We wish her well. It is very important to keep strong connections with our community. Mike Ellis and Evelyn McGivney completed our yearly internal audit. Our records may be needed for review one day, and we must be prepared to share them.

2022 was a good year. We enjoyed excellent programs. John Latham returned to Dancing Rabbit, presenting a program that focused on the Ludlow community and another concerning Good Hope. Mike Ellis shared his cousin's experiences living and growing up in rural Leake County. His family lived their lives as a close community. Strong families are how we nurture our history and our traditions. We also highlighted French Camp. This historical community has a close connection to us at Dancing Rabbit. The area was established by the ancestor of Lynn Johnson, our vice-president. Louis Leflore created a trading post there known at that time as Frenchman's Camp. Two staff members from French Camp Academy gave a program relating the history of the Trace and its relationship to French Camp.



We also learned about the Rainwater Observatory that is accessible to all, a real educational treasure.

The Sudduth Family continues to support our organization. Their donations of furnishings, decorative articles, and items to meet our culinary needs have been more than generous. We are deeply grateful. The spirit of the Sudduth family lives at 309 North Van Buren Street.

By spring the dependency may be ready. Mississippi weather is in control of a project such as this. The foundation is in and it promises a beautiful scale of the building. Its image is so clear in our imagination. We are grateful for Sonny Easom. His years of experience are blessings to us.

We now welcome the Republican Executive Committee as the venue for their monthly meetings. We are a part of our community and have a process in place for the use of this wonderful home. We consider the historical nature of Sudduth House in everything we do. 2023 is filled with promise. Kathy Heidorn will, with support from our membership, create an archival resource that will serve those who want to unite with their ancestors now and in the future.

Please remember that your dues help us to maintain Dancing Rabbit. Your participation is vital to our future.

As I am in rehab, working to leave the ranks of walker warriors, I have time to see how important each day is.

Susie

Our New Members

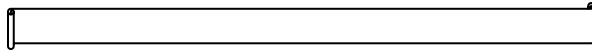
Daniel Jones	Carthage, MS
Clyde Williams	Starkville, MS
Allison M. Smith	Oxnard, CA

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

February meeting	Wednes.	Feb. 15
President's Day	Monday	Feb. 20
March meeting	Wednes.	March 8
Easter	Sunday	April 9
April meeting	Wednes.	April 12

## REMINDER

If you pay your dues annually, it is time to send your remittance for 2023. Annual dues are \$25.00 for an individual or \$35.00 for a couple. Lifetime dues are a one-time payment of \$150.00 per member. Please bring your remittance to the February meeting on the 15<sup>th</sup> or mail them to DRGHS, P O Box 166, Carthage, MS 39051.



## A DANCING RABBIT CHRISTMAS

It is always a joy to dress Sudduth House for holiday celebrations. At the end of November, the Dancing Rabbit elves descended upon the home that Colonel Eads created to bring in the holiday season. The tree was adorned with white lights and dried orange slices. A wonderful garland that was created by Mary Ellen Ellis's mother so many years ago reminded us of those who made our holidays special when we were young. Broom sedge was incorporated in our arrangements and sparkled on the top of the tree to serve as a tribute to early Mississippians. Broom sedge brooms were a necessity of our ancestors and many of us still remember using them in our own homes. These brooms are beautiful and functional. We honor the grasses that cover our land in Mississippi, and we honor the homes that nurtured our families. At Sudduth House, broom sedge was on the mantles and interior door decorations. It is lovely and catches the light creating a soft amber glow.

Holidays seem to come faster every year so we had better start drying salt ornaments and the fruits that will welcome Christmas 2023.

*Happy New Year to All.*



## Mona's Treasures

Mona Raborn has been a member of the Dancing Rabbit Genealogical and Historical Society since the organization's beginning. She has held every office, been a member of the Board of Directors, and shares her wisdom with us each time we meet. Mona is also the curator of that miracle red folder that celebrates our history. Have a question, check with Mona.

We are gatherers. As human beings we just have a need to surround ourselves with what we enjoy, what we value, or what we find beautiful. Mona Raborn is a gatherer. A visit to Mona's home is a joy. She decorates in vignettes. Each table and shelf tells a story.

Among her collections is a gathering of birds. Like the birds of the fields and trees, Mona's birds fill the imagination. The figures, paintings and prints illustrate the lives of these beautiful creatures. Some are feeding their young. Some are taking flight. Some are stopping just to bless us with songs. The list goes on and on. In one painting, many colorful birds can be found among the leaves and branches of their world and just seeing their feathered images makes one thankful that we share the earth. One of Mona's favorites is a small bird figure that resides on her refrigerator door. It is especially treasured because her granddaughter purchased it when she was celebrating her wedding in Costa Rica. Thoughts of love are within reach each day.

Another collection that is especially meaningful to Mona is her collection of occupied Japan teacups and saucers. The journey of this collection began when Mona inherited some teacups from her mother-in-law. Occupied Japan china is marked to specify its origin. It is delicate and intricately designed. It represents a time in history from 1945 until 1952.

Our collections are the narratives of our lives. We are revealed by them when we share our treasures with others. Mona's story is illustrated on the canvas of her home. Her love of the natural world is a part of who she is. She has watched many generations of mockingbirds making nests and nurturing young in the crepe myrtle trees. She has witnessed the first flights of fledglings as they strive to greet the currents of air that take them high above the earth.

Collections are personal and fragile. We seek what we love in antique stores, specialty shops, auctions and yard sales. We have an eye for the hunt. We know that beneath the jumble, there is something wonderful.





## RIVER SONG

We Mississippians celebrate our rivers. We write about them. We sing about them. We give tribute to those wonderful waters that move across our land. The rivers have nurtured our culture since ancient days.

The Pearl River touches land in 2/3 of our state. The Pearl is like a "giving tree". It has always given what it has to give to the people of Mississippi. Now the golden age of the Pearl River transportation is no more, but the river still gives. This river provides places to enjoy life, places where families may gather. One very special place for families in our area is Ratliff Ferry. Everything in Mississippi returns to family. We know about those who came before us. We know what they thought and what they said. We southerners learn from our ancestors by the stories told around kitchen tables, and by the references that are understood by the members of the family and their chosen friends.

One bright fall afternoon I visited Ratliff Ferry with Marilyn Strum, the secretary of Dancing Rabbit. Down the shady road we drove until we came to a quaint general store and a view of the beautiful waterway. It was an exceptional day so we made a side trip into the campground. This enclave of cottages and mobile homes is a treasure. It holds the memories of so many people who have enjoyed life here in the Mississippi sun. Marilyn started to let her memories unfold. It seems that her cousins Choyce and Francine Horn, parents of Pam Tucker, had a place as did Cousin Norville Moore. Curtis and Hilda Horn, Marilyn's parents, also had a place as did cousins Clyde and Helen Mayo. Children came to spend time with the older folks in the family. Friends gathered here. Birthdays and holidays were celebrated, their stories embellished for years. Some days were reserved just for the joy of fishing. Yes, this is a place to connect with what is important. When evening comes, and the mosquitoes hum softly in the shadows, if you listen, you can hear the voices of our people as they sit on warm porches keeping the home fires burning.

By Susie Johnson

2023

President	Susan Johnson
Vice-President	Lynn Johnson
Secretary	Marilyn Strum
Treasurer	Pam Tucker
Archivist	Kathy Heidorn
Board of Directors	Mike Ellis
	Henry Bryan
	Evelyn McGivney

---

### The Problem With New Year's Resolutions

Another year is over

A new year has begun.

Say goodbye to all the negative stuff

Move on with positive things

Forget those New Year's Resolutions

They are never what they seem.

Resolutions are no sooner made than broken.

It's far better to follow your dream.

Let's pray for health and happiness

And for peace in the New Year too.

And as those bells rang out at midnight

We hope the dreams you dream come true.

by John P. Read