

Bossier

Parish

Libraries

Inform, Educate, Entertain
www.bossierlibrary.org

Bossier Parish History News

Winter 2018

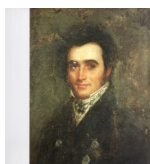
February 6, 2018

Bossier Parish's 175th Anniversary

Special points of interest:

- 175th Anniversary of Bossier Parish
- WWI Soldier Writes Letter to Sister
- Special Thanks to Randall Palmer

A celebration is in the works as Bossier Parish prepares for its 175th anniversary. Bossier Parish was formed February 24, 1843, when Act 33 of the Louisiana Legislature was signed into law by Governor Alexandre Mouton. Act 33 enabled creation of a new parish to be established by using land that was then part of Claiborne Parish. Later that land was named Bossier Parish. Bossier Parish was given its name after a creole General by the name Pierre Evariste Jean Baptiste Bossier. Even though General Bossier never lived within Bossier Parish, he had a love for the nature



and animal life native to our land. ([Bossier Parish History First 150 Years](#)) The staff at the Bossier Parish Library Historical Center would like to invite you to join us as we begin a year long celebration dedicated to the 175th anniversary of Bossier Parish.

An Open House will be the kickoff for the events and is being held at the Bossier Parish Library Historical Center Meeting Room. February 24th from 1-3pm. Join us and ask to see our collection of historic photographs passed down from generation to generation of the families, buildings, and artifacts that helped build the foundation of our great parish.

There will be food, conversation and history for all to share.

Bossier Parish Library Historical Center:

2206 Beckett St.

Bossier City, LA. 71111

318-746-7717

The following article was selected in Commemoration of the 100th anniversary of WWI... WWI Soldier Writes Letter To His Sister

Inside this issue:

Research Into 2
Koran, Louisiana

Did You Know 2

Mystery Photos 2

2nd Sunday Movies 3

Employee Highlight 3

Randall Palmer 3

Bossier Parish 4
Attractions

The Bossier Banner published a Bossier Parish Soldier's letter in its September 12, 1918 issue. Written exactly as it appeared in the newspaper.

"A letter from Sgt. William B. Manry, Headquarters Co. 58 Inf. Somewhere in France writes to his sister Mrs. J.H. Wheeler."

"American Ex. Force, Aug 10, 1918."

"My Dearest Sister: Your dear letter received yesterday as I came from the front, and believe me, I was surely glad to hear from you all. We've been having lots of excitement lately, as you have seen in the papers. So far, I am in the finest of health, but have lots of incidents to relate if it were possible to tell you, on sector C. You will have to guess and then you will be right. I am sure."

"I've gotten back from 'chow' (dinner), and feel rather good as I have a full stomach. We had rice pudding, bread and

meat, and coffee. I have been chewing real American Juicy Fruit gum today. We also bought of the army canteen some canned peaches and jam."

"Sister, you can read in the newspapers of the situation of this war, but you need to hear the real stuff. One good thing you have nothing to worry about the morals, etc., of us boys, for the country is too desolate and isolated and everything else. Pleasures are a thing of the past. We are now where only several days ago the Germans were. They destroyed everything as they went. So our pleasures is [sic] to see what was once beautiful chateaus and beautiful farms laid waste. Right near me is a rose bush with three beautiful roses on it. It looks too good. I had almost forgotten I was in a civilized country. You know how romantic I used to be -that's me now. I hate to see beautiful things blown 'helter-skelter.' I surely appreciated the pictures of the children you sent me. I have lost nearly every picture I had since coming over

here. I was transferred to Headquarters Company as a regimental intelligence sergeant. I used to be a battalion intelligence sergeant when I was in the States, if you remember. This is a real nice job, as all I have to do as I am in charge of all enemy material papers; also in charge of all observations and information regarding the enemy. I have three privates to help me. One is a German interpreter and one a French interpreter, and the third just a well educated. Boy.:

"Give my love to all, hoping I may hear again soon, and that business is better at home, for that is what worries me. Otherwise, I do not worry, for it is no use. I am as happy here as can be and will be happy when we can all come home again."

"Your affectionate brother. William."

William R. Manry, born in 1899, died in 1988 at the estimated age of 89. He is buried in Laurens County, Georgia.

Find out more at the Bossier Parish Library Historical Center

Research into Koran, Louisiana, and Its Name

From the Curator: Research into the history of Bossier Parish often can help uncover forgotten bits of the past. Our curator, Marisa Richardson, recently delved into the history of Koran, one of Bossier's small towns in the southern portion of the parish. We've looked into Koran's history previously, trying to find its namesake. Most of the place names in our parish can be easily traced to a founding family (like Vanceville) or a natural feature (like Elm Grove). But there isn't an easily located Koran family and there is no direct reference to the official naming of the town in any local newspapers.

A patron expressed interest in our research and offered some possible reasons for the name. The surname Koran is of Czech origin, an "occupational name for a herbalist or spicer," according to Ancestry.com. There is also a village called Korany, which is located in Belarus. A ship named the Koran sailed to New Orleans and Liverpool, England in 1815 from its home port in Portland, Maine. Taking these options into account, the search for Koran's namesake began.

When did Koran first show up in the historic record? All sources point to the early 1890s. An 1892 map in our Historical Center collection lists Koran near Lake Bistineau. An earlier map of the same area from 1871 does not have Koran named. The town is first mentioned in *The Weekly Shreveport Times* in 1893 (TL Atkins of Koran, La arrived at City Hotel) and in *The Bossier Banner* in 1894 (the assessor's listing of taxable property). The Koran Post Office is active in July 1893 with TL Atkins as postmaster. *The Shreveport Times* makes research even more confusing by frequently using the alternate spelling of Coran. The Bossier Banner, however, always spells the town with a K.

Often the best place to find information is also the quietest – the cemetery. Would the Koran Cemetery offer any clues? Yes and no. There are no Korans buried there, which eliminates the easiest explanation. But if Koran was only called Koran beginning in 1893, the cemetery presents another research predicament – there are graves older than the 1890s! Titus Kellogg's headstone appears to be the oldest; he died in 1848. Richard and Mary Brown passed away in 1857. There are others: Elizabeth Sugg in 1851, Josiah Sugg in 1850, John Houston in 1865, Lula Hobdy in 1866, and Carrie Sibley Hobdy in 1885. These early headstones suggest that Koran Cemetery was actually a small family cemetery before it was linked to the town of Koran.

A Google search for "Koran Cemetery" (yes, you can use Google for genealogy and history research!) led to a short footnote that drew interest – Koran aka Hobdy Cemetery. There are indeed early Hobdy gravestones in the cemetery. Usually when we come across a name, we can go right to our Historical Center database and find that name in our records. That didn't happen with Hobdy – we have no archival records and not a single mention of Hobdy in our collection! Another mystery to solve.

It's becoming easier to use newspapers for research because many are now searchable online. Chronicling America, sponsored by the National Endowment for the Humanities and The Library of Congress, includes *The Bossier Banner* from 1859-1922. The Bossier Parish Library also has a subscription to The Shreveport Times online archives. These newspapers, along with genealogical research from Ancestry.com, were extremely helpful in uncovering our elusive Hobdy family.

Lawrence Hobdy was born in Red River Parish in 1843, but grew up in Claiborne Parish. He was a Confederate soldier and enlisted from Homer. Upon his return home, he married Carrie Sibley in 1865 and the newlyweds moved to Bossier Parish. They had six children; sadly infant daughter Lula died at two months old in 1866. She is one of the early graves in the Koran Cemetery, along with her mother. Carrie Sibley Hobdy became ill with typhoid fever or malaria in 1885 and died at age 38. Lawrence remarried to Mrs. NJ Bradley in 1888. They then moved away from Bossier, first to Lamar, Colorado and then to Hannibal, Missouri. Lawrence's second wife died in Missouri in 1911. Lawrence moved back to Bossier, living with his daughter, Lettie Hobdy Hamiter, until his death in 1917. Lawrence was actually not buried in the Koran/Hobdy Cemetery. His headstone can be found in the Kimbell Cemetery in Claiborne Parish, along with his mother and his sister.

Lawrence appears often in *Bossier Banner* articles. He served on juries in 1868 and 1874. Bossier Parish's roads and bridges were primary topics of conversation and contention in the late 1800s. Lawrence and several other men petitioned the parish to build a bridge over Red Chute in 1879. He was the overseer of the road from Dr. Moody's to Mercer's store in 1884. There is even a school called Hobdy's in the 1880s!

Lawrence Hobdy clearly owned property near present-day Koran. By examining old property records held by the Bossier Parish Clerk of Court, we found that he owned 160 acres in Township 17, Range 11, Section 27 and 280 acres in Township 17, Range 11, Section 23. Those 280 acres include the property now known as Koran Cemetery – so now we know that yes, the Koran Cemetery was once a family plot, specifically the Hobdy family plot. While we still don't know the specific origin of the name Koran, we have uncovered quite a bit of Hobdy family history! We're even a little curious as to why the town wasn't named after the Hobdy family!

Did You Know?

** Did you know that this year marks the 85th Anniversary of Barksdale Air Force Base?*

Join the Bossier Parish Historical Center as we give tribute to our neighbors and friends past and present who have been stationed at Barksdale Air Force Base. The History Center currently is in the process of displaying items associated with WWI. Stop by and take a glance at our exhibit and sign a card being designed for Barksdale Air Force Base.

** Did you know that the History Center has antique school desks?*

Now on display in our "Back To School in Bossier" exhibit we presently have two school desks. Believed to be been used in Plain Dealing Elementary both desks are late 1900s to early 20th century construction. Thank you Laurie Dyche for creating this new exhibit.

Second Sundays at the Historical Center

The Bossier Parish Library Historical Center is proud to announce new programming. Starting February 11, 2018, the History Center will begin showing movies related the history of our country. We have set aside the Second Sundays of each month for the showing of these films and would like to invite the public to join us from 1:30pm to 3:00pm for the **free showings** of each chosen film.

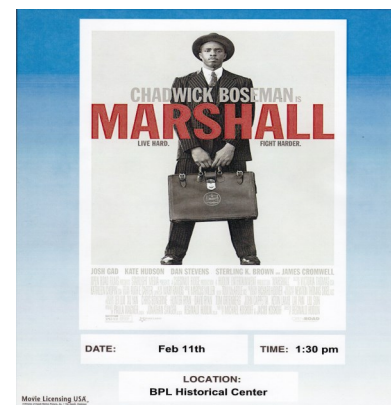
Our first showing will be the popular new release *Marshall* starring Chadwick Boseman.

Marshall (PG13) is based on

the incredible true life story of future Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall and one of the landmark cases of his life. It follows the young lawyer (Chadwick Boseman) to conservative Connecticut to defend a black chauffeur (Sterling K. Brown) charged with sexual assault and attempted murder of his white socialite employer (Kate Hudson). Muzzled by a segregationist court, Marshall partners with a courageous young Jewish lawyer (Josh Gad), and together they mount the defense in an environment of racism and anti-Semitism.

Attendance is FREE and popcorn and drinks will be provided

While we are excited to offer these upcoming films we encourage parents to decide if the film chosen for a particular month is appropriate for all ages. The History Center will continue to list monthly films on the www.bossierparishlibrary.org website along with the rating for the film.



Marshall

The March 11th Movie
Will be: *Suffragette*
Same time, same place

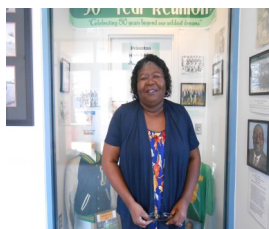
Employee Highlight: Meet Mrs. Margaret Mims

Meet Margaret Mims, Margaret has been employed by the Bossier Parish Library System since January 2013 and is a great asset to our staff. Currently Ms. Mims works as a substitute when needed. A proud veteran, Ms. Mims served in the United States Army and Army Reserves having served a combined 29 years protecting our country. **THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE!** Ms. Mims also worked for the Louisiana Workforce Commission and retired after 32 years. Margaret has one daughter and a son and is a proud grandmother of four and a great grandmother to 2 and is presently awaiting the birth of twin

great grand babies. As a student attending Princeton High School, Margaret earned the title "Miss Librarian" for reading and working in the library. She continues to use her love of learning to gain knowledge and new ideas. She is quick to be grateful for the opportunities provided that have allowed her to continue her knowledge of new things. When at home she can often be found playing video games or spending time with her grandkids.

It is an honor to have Margaret Mims as our employee highlight of this quarter. If you happen to run into her working at one of the Bossier Parish

Libraries Branches or Historical Center tell her hello and maybe a little "Thank You for your service."



The Bossier Parish Historical Center would like to say Thank You to our volunteer Randall Palmer. Randall has just completed his Masters in Library and Information Science from Louisiana State University Shreveport. Randall has been volunteering in the History Center helping to organize collections, assisting with public programming, and scrapbooking projects. The staff here at the History Center has been honored to have Randall work with us. Good luck in the future Randall.

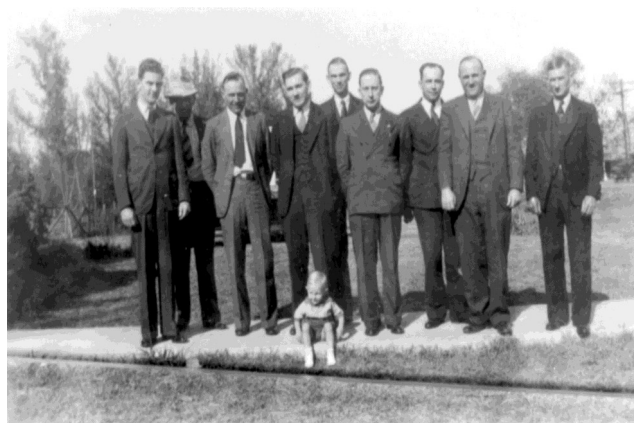


Mystery Photos

Photos are a large part of the artifacts collected and stored by the History Center. Many of our photos have names and maybe even a story attached to them, but there are some donations that have not been identified. It is part of the mission here at the History Center to identify as many individuals and places as possible. Here are a few...take a look and if you recognize a location or person please give us a call. 318-746-7717



1997.062.078



1997.062.066

Bossier

Parish

Libraries

Inform, Educate, Entertain
www.bossierlibrary.org

Bossier Parish Library Historical Center
2206 Beckett Street
Bossier City, LA. 71111
Phone: 318-746-7717
Fax: 318-746-7768
Email: hc-staff@bossierlibrary.org

Upcoming Events:

- ⇒ Remember to check back each month for 2nd Sunday Movies
- ⇒ Open House February 24th 1:00 –3:00pm.
- ⇒ DNA & Genetic Genealogy
Saturday, March 24th
1– 3 pm.

www.bossierlibrary.org



Paysinger Desk c. 1825

Bossier Parish Historical Center Attractions

If you have ever visited the Bossier Parish Library on Beckett Street you have come within feet of the History Center. Often told by visitors “we didn’t know this was here,” we remain available to the community of Bossier Parish. The staff here at the History Center is available to offer assistance in genealogy, answer question regarding our parish history and give tours. It is our mission to preserve the history and memories of Bossier Parish, Louisiana.

Located within our research area there is an 1850s Federal style desk constructed by a former slave named George Paysinger. Born in South Carolina around 1825 George Paysinger was a highly skilled carpenter and architect. Slave holder John Hamiter generated extra revenue for himself by hiring George Paysinger out to other plantation owners at the rate of \$2.00 per day. In 1999 the Hamiter family donated the restored desk to the Historical Center.

There is also a diorama depicting the village life of the Caddo Indians in Willow Chute. While looking at the diorama you may notice that each member of the tribe has a job to do; babysitting, hunting, or gathering wood for a fire, each member is responsible for a chore. Pointing these chores out to children is a great way to educate and inspire imagination.