

Around the Community

(A partial listing of local Black citizenry)

Educators

Teachers: Chantel Babs, Elvina Barnes, Mary Bowser, Phyllis Watson Barnes, David Dedeaux, Marilyn Dedeaux, Otis Gates, Jr., Gwendolyn Lawyer, Doyle Moffett, Lawarnda Singleton, Hall Walker, Lawrence Webb, Winston Ausmer, Theodora Breaux, Verna Hall Walker, Louis Hall, Ella Hall, Phyllis Watson Bourn, Lynn Twyner, Maude Rucker, Margie Foxworth, Lawrence Webb, Eddie Antoine, Jr.,

Retired Teachers: Dorothy Antoine, Mattie Bradley, Michael Bowser, Prentiss Ginn, Jessie Hawthorne, Betty Moffett, Alva Singleton, Huey Singleton, Adrian Swanier, Corrine Swanier, George Watson, Rev. Tose Williams, Victoria Webb.

Deceased: Alberta Butler, Gladys Bowser, Betty Ginn, Sadie Williams, J.J. Cotten, Delphine Murray Scott, Eugenia Murray Saucier, Armenta Hall, Simuel Hall, Phoebe Payne, Olivia Brown.

Former School Board members: Eddie Antoine, Bidwell Barnes, Col. Lawrence Roberts.

Superintendent of Schools: Dr. Philip Terrell

Other Educators: Dr. Louis Perkins, Dr. Evelyn Webb, Laura Cappie, Dorothy Salvant, Mary Conway.

Professional Contributors

Dr. Theodore Atkinson, M.D., Dr. Elise Donaville, M.D., Dr. Greg Antoine, M.D., Dr. Roslynn Webb, M.D., Dr. Maceo Dennis, M.D., Dr. J.O. Tate, D.D.S., **Attorneys:** Theodore J. Lawyer, Warren Conway, Kevin Antoine, and Judge Wayne Salvant.

Political Leaders

Michael Antoine, Alderman, Ward 3

Joseph Piernas, Alderman, Ward 2 (son of Lucien Piernas)

Theodore J. Lawyer, former Mayor

Lionel Landry, former Alderman

William Welch, former Alderman

Victor Decoudreaux – served many years as Alderman during the mid to late 1800s.

Contributors from the Arts

Musicians: Alfraizer Acker, Mary Bowser, Gene Bradley, John Handy, Joseph Jackson, “Jug” Jackson, Eddie Joe Lyons, Don “Cadillac” Henry, and the Watson Brothers Band, Edward, Henry, Harry and Charles. **Artist,** Joseph Pearson and **T.V. Personality,** Robin Roberts.

Community/Service/Civic Contributors

Eddie P. Antoine, Myrtle Ashley, Sammie Barnes, Jeronio Brown, Idella Barnes, Laura Cappie, Marie Donaville, Yvonne Fields, Olivia Hunter, Steve Hunter, Mrs. Govan, Vernelia McCathen, Veronica McKay, Athalia Piernas, Henry Piernas, Sr., Wallace Rials, Lucimarian Roberts, Eugenia Saucier, Anna Mae Swanier, and former Assistant Police Chief, Anthony Johnson.

Landmarks

James “Smokey” Welch, former Public Service Department head is namesake for the Smokey Welch Annex on Second Street.

Ricky Levy, former Public Service employee, namesake for the West Marina Harbor Park.

Handy Street was formerly Third Street and was renamed for John Handy, internationally renown musician.

Asmard Street crossing access from Henderson Avenue to Clark Street – is the northern boundary of the original Charles Asmard Claim.

Religious Leaders

Rev. Brown, Goodwill Baptist Church

Rev. Bobby Dailey, Pastor

Rev. Barney Govan, Pastor

Rev. O.D. Gilmer, St. Paul United Methodist Church

Rev. Harry Scott, Goodwill Baptist Church

Rev. Harry C. Tartt, Goodwill Baptist Church

Rev. Harry Toussaint, Pastor Goodwill Baptist Church

Rev. Rose Williams, Mt. Zion Methodist Church, DeLisle

Rev. William Young, Pastor First Baptist Church

We Care!

The We Care Committee, headed by Otis Gates, is 11-member strong in their capacity and all heart in their community performances to raise money for those in need. They usually gather at Labat’s on Davis Avenue and put on fish fries and barbecues to raise funds for a charitable cause.

Afro-American Club

The birth of the Afro-American Club in Pass Christian High School in 1970 proved valuable to school relations of that era. After the second full year of club activities, Ralph Salvant, president of Pass High Club, summed up the benefits, "It gives them a feeling of belonging and provides an opportunity for self-expression. For instance, " he continued, "when a student may want to sing, dance or just rap a little, someone is there to listen. This gives a feeling of importance to the black student in a predominantly white school."

Alexander Dedeaux, club vice president, stated, "Black students feel more a part of the school because of the club . . . (by showing) fellow blacks the right way to settle disputes (and) getting problems off their chests".

In 1972, the club had 146 members which constituted a bi-racial mix.

A Black Mardi Gras organization use to stage a Mardi Gras Parade in the 1970s

An African Prayer

Utuombee sasa
Na tunapokufa

*Pray for us now,
and when we die!*

Other Black leading citizens:

James "Smokey" Welch became the first Black city department head in 1970s as head of the Utilities Department. His son, William Welch, is recognized as the first Black native to become an attorney.

Harold Bowser became the first Black registered plumber in the Pass in addition to serving as Sexton for the Baptist Cemetery and remaining active in church duties.

John Charlot became the first Black registered electrician in the city and ran for City Alderman.

Rosamund "Roy" Piernas, deceased, operated a successful dry cleaning establishment on Davis Avenue, and worked for the Public Housing Authority after Hurricane Camille.

Jules Piernas was the patriarch of the family, an expert plasterer, Albert was one of the most successful plastering contractors in the Pass. Lucien was also a plaster and remained active in church affairs, he was also well-known as bartender at the Pass Christian Isles Golf Club and the Yacht Club.

Walter Daniels was one of the largest property owners in the City.

Ambrose Shief operated a successful taxi business

Paul St. Amant operated a successful dry cleaning business

William, June, and George Salvant were successful house builders

Thomas Spencer was a successful carpenter contractor

Alvin Clyde Coleman organized the first football program for Blacks at Randolph High. He later became assistant coach at Tennessee State University.

Besides being one of the organizers of football at Randolph High, Greg Antoine was on the first Basketball and track teams. As an honor graduate of Jackson State he received his medical degree and practiced medicine.

Henry Palode was an expert mason who supported many of the families in the 300 block of Saucier.

Benjamin E. Cannon had been elected president of the Student Government Association at Xavier University in the 1970s.

Bidwell Barnes became the first Black member of the current School Board system

Tony Johnson served as second in command for the Pass Police Department and was respected for his professionalism all along the Coast.

Ron Jackson was one of the first Black men to work on a Congressional Staff in Washington D.C. Thad Cochran chose him because of his credentials having graduated from Jackson State University and a Masters Degree from Howard University in Social Work.

Thomas Stewart aided in construction of the L&N Railroad from Mississippi to Virginia as well as all the railroad bridges.

H.P. Epting had a tailor shop

Pittman had a fish market on Market Street

Samuels owned a coal kiln from which he sold to the Pass

Lucius Parker was a plasterer

Pearl Beldon Harrison was a distinguished educator and writer. She taught in public schools, church schools, and taught the dramatic arts in Washington, D.C. She was a prolific newspaper writer and organized and published Pass Christian's only black newspaper, *Pearlies's Prattle*.

Adrien Swanier, a native of DeLisle, was principal of Pass Christian Middle School

Rev. Louis Allen, served as pastor of St. Paul Methodist Church from about 1915 to the 1920's, carried on a strong youth program. He organized a baseball team which played on the old playground near the railroad back of the present location of Pass Hi.