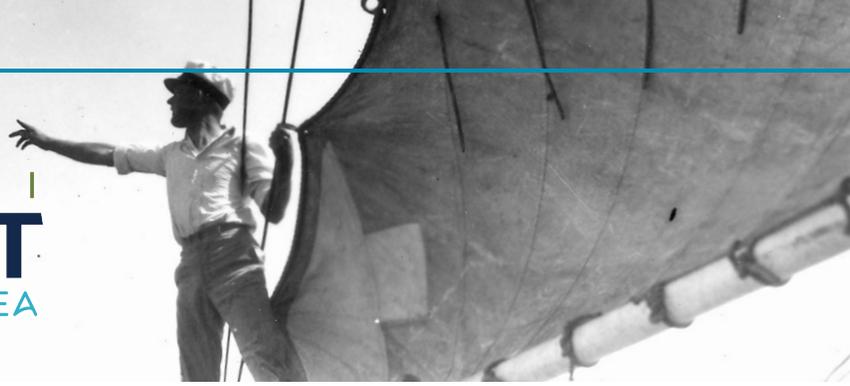




MISSISSIPPI GULF COAST NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA

msgulfcoastheritage.ms.gov



GULF GUARDIAN PARTNERSHIP AWARD

The Mississippi Gulf Coast National Heritage Area (MS Coast NHA) is proud to be a recipient of a 2019 Gulf Guardian Partnership Award for our nature-based tourism management plan. The Gulf Guardian award was created by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Gulf of Mexico Program Partnership to recognize and honor the businesses, community groups, individuals and agencies that are taking positive steps to keep the Gulf healthy, beautiful and productive.

Implementation of this plan satisfies a part of our mission to identify, preserve and promote the natural beauty of the six coastal counties. In 2015, community leaders approached the MS Coast NHA to establish the region as a premier nature-based tourist destination. Over a year-long community engagement process, we worked with Allen Engineering and Science to develop a set of goals that represented the interests of the stakeholders and the environment.



“We are proud of the continued partnerships that have led to programs, such as MS Gulf Coast Blueways and Gulf Coast Outpost, and we look forward to working with all our partners to improve these and implement new projects as a result of this plan.”

WELCOME



Rhonda Price,
MS Coast NHA
Director

Where has the year gone? A phrase that I have heard several times over the past couple of weeks. Time is speeding up and we had a lot of accomplishments to feel good about in 2019.

A big thank you to MDOT. We finally have 13 wayfinding signs that you will soon see on major roads coming into the six coast counties. Those big brown signs will let everyone know they are entering the MS Gulf Coast National Heritage Area. We are finishing up our 17 heritage community grants and will have another request for proposals out by February 3, 2020. We received a Gulf Guardian award for our “Nature-based Tourism Plan for Coastal MS”. I have to say, 2019 was a great year and we feel very blessed to have accomplished so many of our goals we set at the beginning of the year. 2020 is shaping up to be just as busy. We will kick off the year with our new campaign, “Embrace the Gulf 2020” in partnership with the Gulf of Mexico Alliance. We are excited about this new campaign that will tell our story of how we Embrace our Culture and Embrace the Gulf.

There's lots to see and do in the Mississippi Gulf Coast National Heritage Area in the winter months. Mardi Gras will be in full swing and this time of year is perfect for hiking, biking or watching one of our beautiful red sunsets. It is nice to walk the dogs, Hank and Stella, at 5:30 am and not glisten from the heat.

Be sure to check out our events calendar on the back of our newsletter or on our website for upcoming festivals and cultural attractions. While you're taking part in all the great things the MS Coast NHA has to offer remember to tag us on Facebook and Instagram @MSCOASTNHA. Also, there is a big roll out surprise we are working on for June 2020. So, stay tuned.



POWER OF PARTNERSHIPS HERITAGE COMMUNITY GRANTS UPDATES



CITY OF OCEAN SPRINGS: EVERGREEN CEMETERY MARKER

The City of Ocean Springs was awarded a 2018-2019 Heritage Community Grant to purchase and install a historical marker at the Evergreen Cemetery on Sunset Avenue.

The marker celebrates the historical character and unique natural surroundings of the burial grounds. Established around 1854, it was the first public cemetery in the city and accepted burials regardless of religion or race. The cemetery is the resting place for the remains of many notable Ocean Springs residents, including artists Walter Anderson and Peter Anderson, Civil Rights leader Rev. Dr. Jesse Trotter, Sr. and abolitionist, reformer and suffragette Hannah Tracy Cutler. In addition to these prominent citizens, the cemetery is also the resting place for many past occupants of the Charney-Norwood House.



WAVELAND GROUND ZERO MUSEUM: WHEN WIND AND WATER SPEAK

The Ground Zero Hurricane Museum in Waveland was awarded a 2018-2019 Heritage Community Grant for the production of a video documentary on Hurricane Katrina that will be on permanent exhibit in the museum. The Museum is housed in the historic Waveland Elementary School, the only building south of the railroad tracks in town to survive the storm.

For the video, oral histories from storm survivors in the Bay-Waveland communities were collected for long-term preservation. Using these firsthand accounts of survival and recovery, the video does not show the disastrous results of Hurricane Katrina. Instead, it shows the cornerstone tenet of the museum, which is to “show the resilient strength of the coastal people.” The video now plays on a regular basis.



CHECK WITH THE MUSEUM FOR SPECIFIC SHOWTIMES
BY CALLING 228-467-9012 OR VISITING WAVELANDGROUNDZERO.COM.

MS GULF COAST NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA NEEDS YOUR HELP!

We are excited to announce that beginning January 2020, we plan to launch a new program, “Your MS Coast NHA,” and we want to interview YOU! National Heritage Areas are places where the historic, cultural and natural components are significant to the landscape of the United States of America. We are proud of the people who make up this great place that we call home and we want to show you off to the rest of the nation. Our goal is for our community to embrace the National Heritage Area designation that has been given to Pearl River, Hancock, Stone, Harrison, George and Jackson counties, and tell the story of the people who love this place as much as we do, and to identify, preserve and promote the culture of the Mississippi Gulf Coast.

Ideally, the stories will mirror the MS Coast NHA themes, which are historic, innovative, natural and flavorful. If you or someone you know has a distinctive story that contributes to the MS Coast NHA, we want to hear it.



HISTORIC Ours is a place of history. The Spanish and French explored this land preceded by Native Americans who lived here for thousands of years. A drive here reveals stunning homes that have survived the ravages of disaster, downtowns whose history is being reinvented each day. Lighthouses here shine as beacons to our past and optimism about our future. Across our communities we revel in sharing our history in an array of museums and historic sites.



INNOVATIVE We are a place of innovations. It is here that we build ships that defend our nation. It is here that the rockets that propelled our country into space were tested and proven. It is here that we bring the bounty of America to the western hemisphere through our ports. We are innovators in art. It is a place where creativity thrives. Our people create paintings, pottery and sculpture that have come to be known worldwide.



NATURAL Our land is defined by the water that connects us. We are beaches, bays, rivers, creeks, swamps, marshes, islands and shores. We are home to the nation’s last remaining unimpeded river and 36 miles of sandy beaches. Our water provides us ecological riches unrivaled in other places. Our environment creates seafood known worldwide, freshwater that flows abundant from artesian wells and unmatched habitats that sustain untold species of flora and fauna.



FLAVORFUL We are a people with a flavorful culture. We blend customs, ethnicities and backgrounds to bring a warm pace of life that welcomes visitors and soothes the soul. We are a place where food unique to our region is shared in grand seafood houses, gourmet kitchens, backwoods barbeque joints and tiny dives. Our zest for life is celebrated throughout the year with small festivals, large events and coast-wide celebrations.

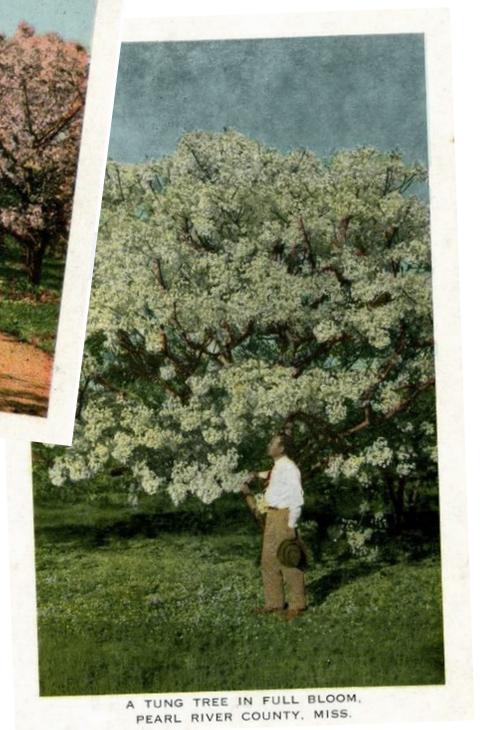
**CONTACT US BY EMAILING HERITAGE@DMR.MS.GOV OR CALLING 228-523-4075
TO BE PART OF THIS EXTRAORDINARY PROJECT.**



TUNG TREES

COME MARCH, THE TUNG TREES IN SOUTH MISSISSIPPI WILL BE BLOOMING.

Tung trees were introduced to the United States in the early 1900s as an ornamental specimen. For centuries before this in its native Asia, Tung trees were prized for their oil, which is obtained from pressing the seeds of the tree. South Mississippi, with an ideal climate and large expanses of empty land left after the cutting-over of the pine forests, was found to be the perfect location in the U.S. for the trees to flourish. Several large groves for commercial production were planted here beginning the 1920s. Major production of Tung oil in the U.S. occurred between the late 1930s and 1972, peaking in 1958 at 44.8 million pounds. The primary use of Tung oil is for finishing woodwork. When applied to a raw surface, the oil hardens to protect and add luster to the wood. The remains of many old Tung tree groves can still be seen in Jackson and Pearl River counties, especially in March, when the trees produce small white flowers with red centers. Later in the summer, before the trees produce seeds, its heart-shaped leaves grow quite large.



GULF COAST OUTPOST BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT: SHORE THINGS FISHING CHARTERS

Established in 2003, Shore Thing Charters (STC) is Mississippi's largest charter service. They have seven 24-26 ft. boats available for charter fishing and their local, knowledgeable guides take care of everything. Live bait, rods n' reels, water, snacks, fish cleaning and fuel are all included on every trip. Their guides are licensed to fish in Mississippi and Louisiana waters and they fish the Mississippi Sound, Lake Borgne, St. Louis Bay, the Biloxi Marsh (Louisiana Marsh) and the barrier islands. Typically, anglers fish for Speckled Trout, Red Drum, Black Drum, Tripletail, Flounder, Sheepshead, sharks and several other species.

STC also runs all-inclusive overnight trips to a magnificent three-story house on Cat Island. For the past eight years, the "Cat Island Experience" has been all the rave. Fishing, food and fun are the major themes. There is no other operation like this in the northern Gulf of Mexico.

The STC crew has also taken groups birding. The barrier islands, marshes and shorelines along the Mississippi Gulf Coast are teeming with birds and other wildlife. Photographers and birding enthusiasts have seen birds not found anywhere else on these excursions.

Recently, STC was recognized as a Gulf Coast Outpost for being a leader in sustainability for their conservation efforts. STC guides assist with the Gulf of Mexico Marine Fisheries Council, the MDMR Charter for Hire Task Force and the Gear Task Force. Captain Sonny Schindler, an owner of STC, said, "Shore Thing participated in numerous activities to help promote conservation. In the last few years, our guides have assisted in Tripletail tagging and collection for aquaculture programs. They have also done work with Cobia, Mangrove Snapper, Flounder and Red Drum. Just this year, our guides have tagged over 400 fish."

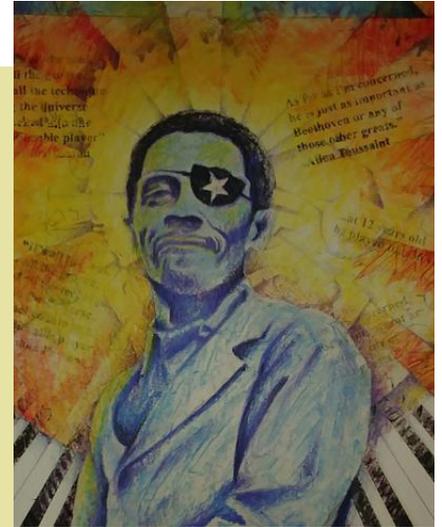
The Gulf Coast Outpost business recognition program is part of the 2016 Nature-Based Tourism Plan for Coastal Mississippi. It was developed for the Heritage Area by stakeholders in the industry. Business owners and operators are recognized through a checklist that focuses on training, sustainability and stewardship. The program is aimed at those companies whose primary business is dependent on the natural environment in Mississippi's six coastal counties. This includes eco-tours, locally owned outfitters, charter boat operators, tour guides, eco-lodges and agritourism entities. To become recognized as a Gulf Coast Outpost, email bridgette.varone@dmr.ms.gov.

TO BOOK A TRIP WITH SHORE THING CHARTERS, VISIT SHORETHINGCHARTERS.COM.



ACROSS THE COAST...

BOOKER FEST, AUGUST 30-31, 2019: MS Coast NHA was proud to sponsor the first ever Booker Fest at the 100 Men Hall in Bay St. Louis which honored the musical genius of James Booker. Booker Fest was designed to bring awareness to one of the town's most gifted artists, James Carroll Booker III (1939-1983), who was raised by his aunt in Bay St. Louis. Booker played with the St. Rose de Lima gospel choir and on the stage at the 100 Men Hall. The hall is an age-old organization that interprets history, preserves culture and gathers the community in Bay Saint Louis, Miss. Through live music events, innovative programs and artistic expression, the 100 Men Hall seeks to make this African American landmark accessible to visitors of all ages. At the 100 Men Hall, they are committed to the preservation of the distinct culture found within the community of this geographical area. Contact Rachel Dangermond at 100MenHall@gmail.com, visit the100menhall.com or call 415.336.9543 for more information. The Hall is a 501c3 nonprofit and is available as a multipurpose rental venue.

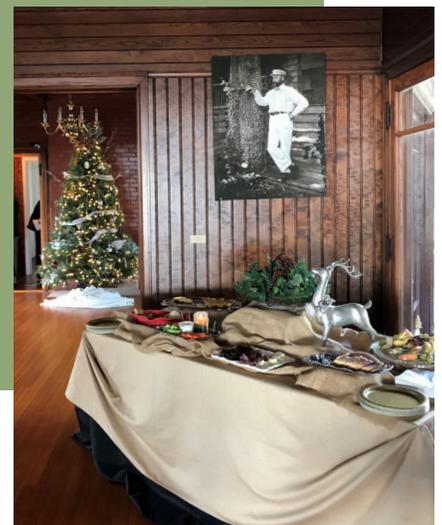


NATIONAL ESTUARIES DAY AT THE GRAND BAY NATIONAL ESTUARINE RESEARCH RESERVE:

One of the programs of the MS Coast NHA was on display at National Estuaries Day at the Grand Bay NERR in Moss Point, MS on September 26, 2019. The MGCNHA also implements a variety of programs, such as the nature-based tourism plan that has coalesced the Mississippi Gulf Coast Blueways with a design guide, updated maps, website with story map and installed new wayfinding signage. Visit gis.dmr.ms.gov/Blueways/ for details. In honor of National Estuaries Week, the Grand Bay NERR, in conjunction with MGCCC Estuarine Education Center, hosted the Seaside with a Scientist adventure for the whole family with boat rides, guided tours and exploration activities.

THE CHARNLEY-NORWOOD CHRISTMAS OPEN HOUSE:

The halls were decked for a Christmas celebration at the Charnley-Norwood-House. Designed by the famous Louis Sullivan and Frank Lloyd Wright - architects of hundreds of impressive landmark structures, the house is historically significant and maintained under the auspices of the MS Coast NHA. Located on East Beach in Ocean Springs, Miss., this house embodies the nexus of ideas that powerfully reshaped not only American, but international residential architecture in the 20th century. It is quite likely the first Modernist house ever. Tours are given throughout the year by contacting the MS Coast NHA at heritage@dmr.ms.gov or by calling 228-234-7298.





MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES

Joe Spraggins, Executive Director
Rhonda Price, MS Coast NHA Director
Marie Lewis, Administrative Assistant
Heritage Coordinators:
Jeff Rosenberg
Bridgette Varone

1141 Bayview Avenue
Biloxi, Mississippi 39530

DOWNLOAD THE MS COAST NHA APP!

Discover the cultural, historical, and natural treasures of the Mississippi Gulf Coast National Heritage Area. From museums and historic sites, to year-round festivals, and miles of sandy beaches, we have it all.



phone: (228) 523-4150
web: msgulfcoastheritage.ms.gov
email: Heritage@dmr.ms.gov
facebook & instagram: MSCOASTNHA

UPCOMING EVENTS



Embrace The Gulf 2020: The Gulf of Mexico provides food, shelter, protection, security, energy, habitat, recreation, transportation and navigation – playing an important role in our communities, states, region, and nation. To highlight the value and the vitality of the Gulf of Mexico region, the Gulf of Mexico Alliance conceived an awareness campaign “Embrace the Gulf” for the entire year 2020. The awareness campaign will culminate in a multi-stakeholder, cross-sector celebration of the importance of the Gulf of Mexico throughout the year 2020. This campaign will include 365 Positive Gulf Messages through social media platforms, as well as Gulf state-wide proclamations declaring 2020 the year to Embrace the Gulf. embracethegulf.org



In 2020, **Mardi Gras Day** is February 25. Fat Tuesday is the last day of the Carnival season as it always falls the day before Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent. The MS Gulf Coast celebrates with Mardi Gras balls and parades in the weeks leading up to Fat Tuesday.



Spring Festival Season: Soon after Mardi Gras, the MS Gulf Coast celebrates art and culture, food, music and our natural landscape. With festivals in each community across the coast, there is something for everyone. To name a few, Art in the Pass and Celebrate the Gulf, Tern Fest, Spring Arts Festival and the Blessing of the Fleet and Fais Do Do.

Visit msgulfcoastheritage.ms.gov for a full calendar of events.