

NUECES COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

PRESENTS

Speaker: Terry Caldwell

“Growing Up in Corpus Christi”

Tuesday, February 5, 2019

7:00 p.m.

First Presbyterian Church,

430 S. Carancahua Street, Corpus Christi

As a third generation Corpus Christian, Terry Caldwell will share his memories of growing up in Corpus Christi as well as speaking of his family connections and other well-known names associated with Corpus Christi. Mr. Caldwell is a direct relative of E. L. Caldwell who founded E. L. Hardware Company in 1890. E. L. Caldwell and sons were instrumental in meeting the needs of our agricultural region from farming to ranching as they invented and improved various implements. The company was responsible for delivering castings used in the first drilling of artesian wells on the King Ranch. The company continued to grow and develop until 1978.

Mr. Caldwell is a graduate of Gregory Portland High School and then attended Southwest Texas State University. He worked for an oil company on offshore gas platforms throughout the 1980's and then moved to Aruba for 13 years. He returned to Corpus Christi with his German born wife and began his business, Del Mar Painting.

Billy Sayles' presentation on growing up on the Northside of Corpus Christi at the January NCHS meeting was interesting and informative.





Girl Scout Troop 96009, under the direction of Cynthia Uriegas, did an outstanding job presenting the colors and leading the pledges at the January meeting. Girl Scout cookies are currently on sale! Check out girlscoutcookies.org.

**A Brief History & Timeline of One of
the Nueces County Historical Society's Founding Members,
and Early Corpus Christi & Nueces County Historians**



(Photo source: "The People of Cathedral Parish – 1853-2003
<https://eccathedral.com/documents/2014/7/Cathedral%20History.pdf>)

Sister Mary Xavier, I.W.B.S.

aka Sister Mary Xavier Holworthy

Formerly known as: Mercedes Claire Holworthy

Born February 28, 1890 • Denver, Colorado

Died April 28, 1974 • Corpus Christi, Texas

"Her name is indeed linked with local history. She wrote much of the original manuscript on which the Nueces County Historical Society is basing its current handbook, being published by Pemberton Press in Austin. She is the author in her own right of several histories. She is the past president of the Nueces County Historical Society, has been active since its formation in 1952 and is now a director of the organization. Her favorite subject...is preserving the past. Her present task takes her to documents dating from 1848 when visiting priests stopped here briefly and 1853 when the local parish was started." (source: "Nun Passing 60-Year Mark in Order." The Corpus Christi Caller-Times, Corpus Christi, Nueces, Texas, Sun, Aug 16, 1970 • Page 33)

"She has watched Corpus Christi and IWA grow up together and has recorded much of the history of both. The Nueces County Historical Society elected her to its first board of directors in 1952, and she has done extensive research on the history of Nueces County..." (source: "The Corpus Christi Caller-Times, (Corpus Christi, Texas), 27 Jul 1960, Wed • Page 13)

The following is a brief history and timeline for Sister Mary Xavier:

- **1898: Arrived in Corpus Christi with her parents. The daughter of a well-known and highly respected Episcopalian minister, Rev. Alfred J. Holworthy, the 8th rector of the Church of the Good Shepherd from 1898-1910. The church achieved a self-supporting parish status in 1910 under his leadership (source: <http://cotgs.org/about/history/>)**

- **1903: Secretly baptized in the Catholic Church by Father Claude Jaillet since her parents did not approve. She would later write a book about Father Jaillet.**
- **About 1908: Obtained teaching certificate from “Normal School” in Corpus Christi**
- **1908: Entered the convent**
- **1910: Became a Sister in the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament**
- **1908-1954: Teacher and librarian at Incarnate Word Academy on the Bluff: 1908-1924 Taught elementary school/1924-1955 Taught high school (initially in the old Kennedy Home)/1938-1939 Organized and set up IWA library**
- **1929: Bachelor’s in history, Incarnate Word College, San Antonio**
- **1939: Master of Arts, St. Mary’s University, San Antonio/Master’s thesis “The History of the Diocese of Corpus Christi”**
- **After 1939: Obtains additional education and certifications in library science**
- **1945: Publishes the book, “Diamonds for the King” (1945) a complete history of the early days in Texas of the sisters of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament.**
- **1948: Publishes the book, “Father Jaillet Saddlebag Priest of the Nueces.”**
- **1948: Corresponding member of the Texas Knights of Columbus Historical Commission**
- **1949-1951: Officer in the “Byliners” (a Corpus Christi literary club)**
- **1952: Founding member and officer of the NCHS (member of the first board of directors)**
- **1952-about 1974: Active member and officer in NCHS**
- **1953: Published the book, “A Century of Sacrifice-A History of Cathedral Parish 1853-1953”**
- **1954: Wrote a paper on the “Trees and Plants of Nueces County” and presented it at a NCHS meeting.**
- **1955-1968: Teacher and librarian at Incarnate Word Academy on Alameda Street**

- **1957: President of NCHS**
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- **1959: As president of the NCHS she gave a presentation on the “Social Life in the Early Days of Corpus Christi” to the Clara Driscoll chapter of DRT**
- **1959: As president of the NCHS she was a contributing author to the “Complete, Up-to-date History of Corpus Christi” published by the Corpus Christi Caller-Times in their 75th anniversary edition. She wrote “Zachary Taylor in Corpus Christi before the Mexican War.”**
- **1960: Gives presentation on “Historical Markers” to the Byliners Club (CC Chapter formed in 1944) at the Robert Driscoll Hotel.**
- **1965: Presentation “Writing from Historical Research Material” given at the annual Writers’ Conference of the Corpus Christi Fine Arts Colony.**
- **1967: Elected co-secretary of the Byliners writing club**
- **1968: Elected co-vice president of the Byliners writing club**
- **1969: Retired from teaching**
- **1968: Director of the Nueces County Historical Survey Committee**
- **1968-1974: First archivist for Corpus Christi Diocese**
- **1969 & 1970: Elected secretary of the Byliners writing club**
- **1971-1972: Director of NCHS**
- **1972: Writes much of the manuscript for the “History of Nueces County” published by the NCHS.**
- **In addition to organizing the school’s first library, she also organized the school’s first orchestra, drama and music clubs.**
- **In a brief autobiography she wrote, “*I am collecting material on the pioneer families of the City which may be printed someday*” but no record of this publication can be readily found.**

Interesting Tidbit:

“Another spirit has been assigned the name Sister Mary Xavier Holworthy, a deceased nun who served in the chancery as diocesan archivist for many years. Secretaries working overtime today say they still hear the irascible old nun’s familiar door-slamming.” (Source: “Ghost Stories-Who’s Haunting Texas

Chancery?” by Kerrie Clos, Courier-Journal, Wednesday, October 26, 1983.

<http://lib.catholiccourier.com/1983-courierjournal/courier-journal-1983%20-%2006861.pdf>

Primary Sources:

1. **“Nun Passing 60-Year Mark in Order. “The Corpus Christi Caller-Times, Corpus Christi, Nueces, Texas, Sun, Aug. 16, 1970, Page 33.**
2. **“Sister Mary Xavier” (Obituary) The Corpus Christi Caller-Times, (Corpus Christi, Texas), 29 Apr 1974, Mon, Page 30.**
3. **Official Canvass of Votes Made by Commissioners.” The Corpus Christi Caller Times, (Corpus Christi, Texas), 12 Nov 1968, Tue, Page 14**
4. **“Army Paused Here Before Valley Push.” The Corpus Christi Caller-Times, (Corpus Christi, Texas), Nueces, Texas, Sun, Jan. 18, 1959, Page 115**
5. **“The People of Cathedral Parish, 1853-2003”**
<https://cccathedral.com/documents/2014/7/Cathedral%20History.pdf>
6. **“Sister Mary Xavier: The mother of local history” Herb Canales Published 4:30 p.m. CT July 19, 2017.**
7. **“Sister Mary Xavier, I.W.B.S. (Mercedes Claire Holworthy).”**
http://www.catholicauthors.com/mary_xavier.html
8. **Numerous other Caller-Times newspaper articles. To ready the numerous articles about Sister Mary Xavier and to find out more details about her and her family see <https://www.ancestry.com/family-tree/person/tree/74397447/person/170186513658/facts>**

The information in this article was researched and submitted by John Montalvo, current president of NCHS.

The Coastal Bend Genealogical Society Meeting will be held Saturday, March 9, 2 p.m., at the La Retama Central Library, 805 Comanche Street. The group explores a wide variety of topics of interest to family historians. Let us help you find your roots. The meeting is free and open to the public. For more information: catalbot2004@gmail.com

**The Nueces County Historical Society has planned an exciting list of speakers and topics for the 2018-2019 presentations. Mark your calendar to attend and bring a friend. The schedule is as follows:
February 5-“Families, History, Homes on the Bluff” with Terry Caldwell**

March 5-“Hook, Line, and Sinker” with David McKee

April 2-“Corpus Christi Seawall Project” with Dan Garza

May 7-Annual Daniel Kilgore Local History Award Banquet, Emerald Beach Hotel, 1102 S. Shoreline Blvd., Corpus Christi/ Speaker will be Dr. Frank de la Teja, Chief Executive Officer of the Texas State Historical Association

***** Speakers are confirmed but always subject to change.**

*****Please let us know if you have any suggestions for speakers and presentation topics for next year, suggestions for possible monthly *Bulletin* articles, or if you are interested in any chair, trustee or officer positions that may become vacant or that will be up for re-election for next year’s season. Please email us at**

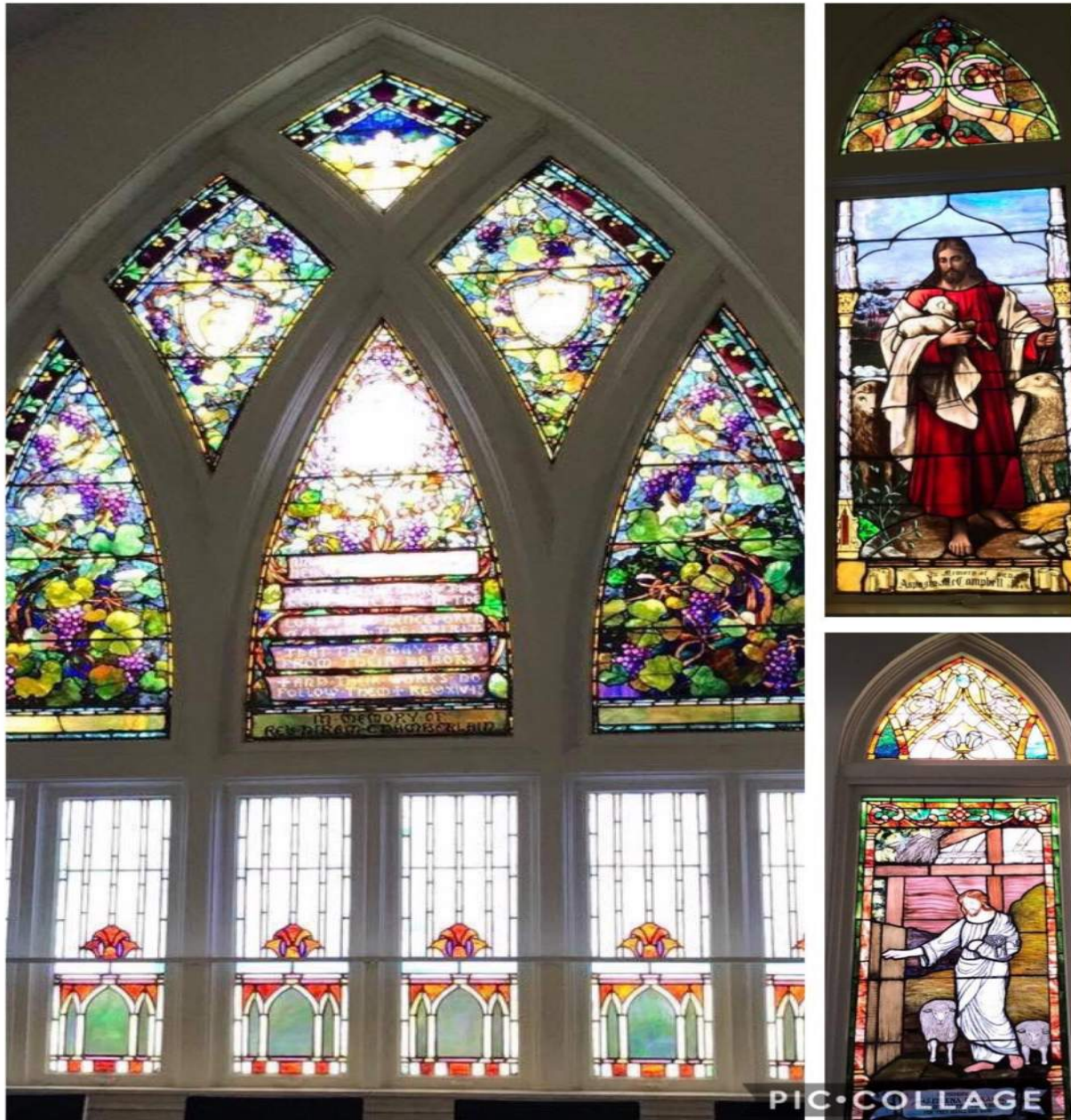
dangarza@nuecescountyhistoricalsociety.org or mcm_tx@yahoo.com

if you have any suggestions or if you are interested in one of the positions.

NCHS Mission Statement-The Nueces County Historical Society is a 501©3 multi-cultural organization which encourages a deeper understanding and appreciation for the rich history of Nueces County, the Coastal Bend of Texas, and the United States of America, by members and guests of all ages. It accomplishes this through hosting regularly scheduled presentations with interesting speakers, sponsoring special events, and leading preservation efforts for the area sites of historical significance.

The Nueces County Historical Society meets the first Tuesday of the months of September-April. An annual Local History Awards Banquet is held in May.

Find us on Facebook or on the web at
www.nuecescountyhistoricalsociety.org.



The January 22, 2019, Tropical Trail tour of Alice, Texas, included a visit to the First Presbyterian Church to view its beautiful stained glass windows. They were originally installed at the First Presbyterian Church in Corpus Christi, a gift of Henrietta Chamberlain King and dedicated to her father, Rev. Hiram Chamberlain. Years later when the Corpus Christi church was expanding its facilities, it was decided the windows wouldn't fit in the plans. So they were relocated to Alice,

where they are now brilliantly displayed. Of special interest are the spectacular curved portions of the windows above the altar as these were created by Tiffany, the world famous stained glass maker. Rev. Kris Bair, minister of the Alice church, stated the windows are protected with a covering of Plexiglas, not so much for vandalism, but for safety from lawn work. Photo credit: Nancy Smith



The stained glass windows shown in this vintage photo of the First Presbyterian Church in Corpus Christi are now displayed in the Alice Presbyterian Church located at 77 North Adams Street.

Upcoming Events:

February 5-NCHS Meeting, 7:00 p.m., First Presbyterian Church, Corpus Christi

February 16-Bayside Historical Society, 2:00 p.m./Speaker: Clinton McKinsey,

UTSA “Englishman Ingrams Passed through Texas in 1568” For more

information, contact Herndon Williams at cherndon8695@sbcglobal.net

February 19-Texas Tropical Trail Partner Event, Brownsville**

**February 28-March 2-Texas State Historical Association State Convention,
Corpus Christi**

March 2-“A Toast to Texas”, 1:30 p.m., Old Bayview Cemetery

March 2-The Daughters of the Republic of Texas Museum 5th Annual History

Symposium “The Early Inhabitants of Texas”, Norris Conference Center, 2525

West Anderson Lane, Austin. 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. For more info, contact Julia

Lopez, Museum Chair at republicoftexasmuseumchair@drinfo.org

March 5-NCHS Meeting, 7:00 p.m., First Presbyterian Church, Corpus Christi

March 19-Texas Tropical Trail Region Partner Event, Weslaco**

April 2-NCHS Meeting, 7:00 p.m., First Presbyterian Church, Corpus Christi

April 16-Texas Tropical Trail Region Partner Event, TBA**

May 4-Bucaneer Days Navy Army Night Parade

May 7-NCHS Dan E. Kilgore Local History Awards Banquet, Emerald Beach Hotel

May 11-Buc Days IBC Bank Junior Parade

May 17-19- Tejano History Conference, Goliad, Texas, Speakers include Dr.

Frank de la Teja, Loretta Williams, Dr. Armando Alonzo, Dr. Andres Tijerina, Dr.

Carolina Crimm, Jose Lopez, Dr. Tom Krenek,

<https://goliadtejanoconference.eventbrite.com>

May 21-Texas Tropical Trail Region Partner Event, TBA **

June 18-Texas Tropical Trail Region Partner Event, TBA **

July 4-Parade, Downtown Corpus Christi

**** Contact Nancy Deviney, Executive Director, for more info or to get on the mailing list, at nancydeviney@yahoo.com. Everyone is invited to participate in the monthly partner events.**

2018-2019 Nueces County Historical Society Officers and Board Members:

President-John Montalvo

Vice-President-Kathy Wemer

Secretary-Gloria Montalvo

Treasurer-Sue Ryland

Immediate Past Co-Presidents-Allan Hayes and Dan Garza

Membership-Allan Hayes

Bulletin Editor-Penny Pillack

Hospitality-Jack Green

Social Media Administrator-Dan Garza

Trustees-Anita Eisenhauer, RudyTejano Pena, Tom Stewart, Debbie Zuniga

The Nueces County Historical Society
NCHS Membership Year: September 2018 to August 2019

Name _____

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Please select Membership Category:

- | | |
|--|------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Military Veteran | No Charge* |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Family | \$20.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student | \$4.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Patron | \$50.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining Patron | \$100.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Supporter | \$150.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor | \$250.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Corporate | \$250.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Angel | \$1,000.00 |

Please remit dues check with this membership form to:

Nueces County Historical Society

Attn: Allan Hayes

P. O. Box 60003

Corpus Christi, Texas 78466-0003

***Veterans should present valid Military ID card or DD Form 214.**