

Upcoming Events

Gladys City Live

April 10 | 10 am – 2 pm

Jazz and Wine

April 23 | 6 pm – 8 pm

Jazz and Wine

June 18 | 6 pm – 8 pm

Beaumont Amateur Radio Club Field Day

June 26-27

Gushers in July and Food drive

Every Wednesday in July at 12:00 PM (noon)

DRILL BITS

New Improved Newsletter and Member Benefits

Welcome to the new and improved newsletter. The museum has formed a committee to work on improving the newsletter as well as other communications. Also, more benefits are coming to members. Some of the new benefits include free 1901 money to spend during our Gladys City Live event, and free admission to our Jazz and Wine Sessions. Non-members will be required to pay the \$10 admission cost. Our communications committee also put together a new PR campaign that will be shown across our social media platforms.



Playing for the Crowd

Picture taken by Steven Lewis.

120th SPINDLETOP ANNIVERSARY

On Saturday, January 9, the museum celebrated the 120th anniversary of the discovery of oil at Spindletop. We lucked out with great weather, and brought in a fantastic crowd, making the event an overall success. Everyone was required to wear masks, social distancing was enforced, and most of the guests adhered to these policies with minimal issues. This resulted in a fun and safe event. We also had a documentary film crew here filming pieces for their upcoming film; more details will be provided soon! This event was sponsored generously by ExxonMobil.

March Gusher Schedule

March 3 – 12:00 pm
 March 12 – 11:00 am
 March 18 – 1:00 pm
 March 27 – 12:30 pm

April Gusher Schedule

April 1 – 12:00 pm
 April 10 – 12:00 pm
 April 15 – 1:00 pm
 April 20 – 11:00 am
 April 23 – 5:45 pm
 April 28 – 12:00 pm

UPCOMING EVENTS

An events committee has been working hard to bring fun, new events to the museum.



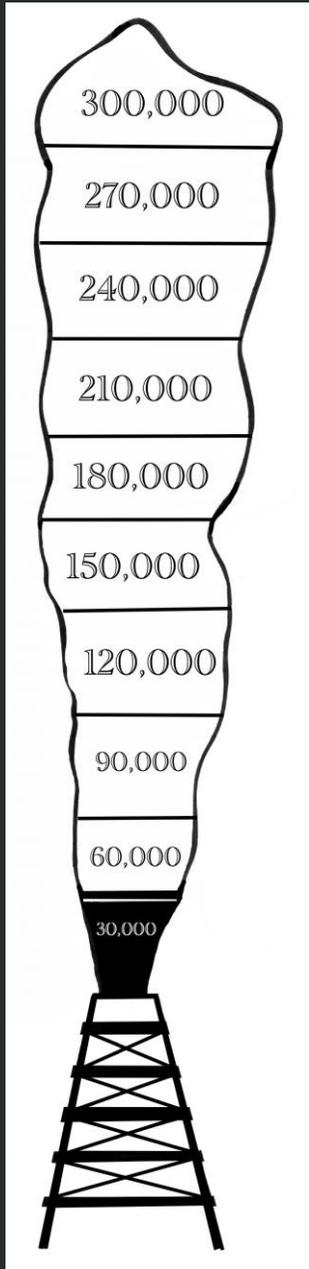
On April 10, Gladys City Live is returning. This year, we have more actors and members will be able to receive 1901 money after presenting their membership card in the giftshop. Non-members will receive free admission, but they will need to pay a donation to get money to spend. Gladys City Live features characters in each building and the chance to interact with them while buying items with money of the period. Masks and social distancing will be required.

On April 23 and again June 18, from 6 pm to 8 pm, we will get to relax in the saloon, have a couple of drinks and listen to great music. While the musical guest is still being decided on, museum staff is excited for the saloon to be used the way it was (or at least almost) in early 1900s. For members, this will be free and for non-members, it will be \$10 a person. This will be a continual event through the year.

On June 26 and 27, we will be hosting the Beaumont Amateur Radio Club as they participate in their annual field day. Starting at noon on June 26, the members will host a 24 hour ham radio event, which is happening all through the United States on the same weekend. Please come and learn not only about the history of Spindletop, but about ham radios and what the club is all about!

In July, we are bringing back Gushers in July/Food Drive! Gushers in July is our annual summer event where, on every Wednesday at 12:00 pm (noon), we will blow our gusher. Families are encouraged to come and play in the water. Don't forget some non-perishable items for the Southeast Texas Food Bank. Afterwards, take a tour of the museum!





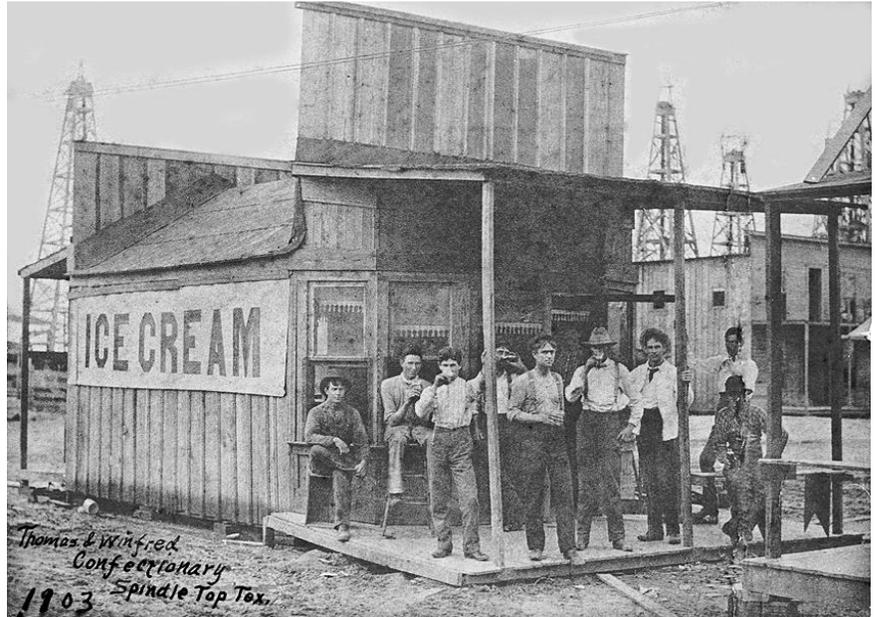
Gusherometer

Our rise to \$300,000.

We have collected \$36,000

We need \$264,000.

History Corner



Men outside the Thomas & Winfred Confectionary

We've all heard about how wild and woolly life was in the early oil boom towns; did you ever stop to think what it was like to be a kid in one of those chaotic, dangerous, oil-soaked places?

Alice Shockley Slauson was six years old when she moved to Spindletop from Houston with her parents, John Thomas and Polly Shockley, and her siblings, shortly after the Lucas Gusher came in on January 10, 1901. Eighty-eight years later, she shared her memories in an oral interview with then-Lamar Professor Jo Ann Stiles.

Alice remembered “a lot of people swarming around” and “tents all up everywhere...no houses.” Her father opened a saloon and a livery stable and her mother ran a boarding house in a big two-story home near the oil field. The Shockleys lived on the first floor.

Alice's life in Houston had been relatively sheltered; life at Spindletop was anything but. At first her parents tried to keep her and her brothers and sisters within the boarding house yard, but “Mama got to where she couldn't do much with us,” Alice confessed. “Papa would lay down the law every night, and we sure did break it the next day.”

In spite of the danger and violence all around, the oil field soon became their playground. They played hopscotch, jump rope, and hide-and-seek. Old, discarded boilers made ideal hiding places. Oil derricks were for climbing. Alice, according to her estimate, could climb “faster than any...men,” adding, however, “It's a wonder we wasn't all killed.”

Spindletop Gladys City
Boomtown Museum
5550 Jimmy Simmons
Blvd.
Beaumont, TX 77705
(409) 880-1750
gladyscityinfo@gmail.com
spindletop.org

Alice and her friends swam fearlessly in the snake-infested rice canals and bayous near the oil field. “The snakes took for that high ground when we kids got in there,” she boasted.

Like children everywhere, Spindletop kids were endlessly curious. “You couldn’t lay a board down there that we didn’t go dust it and look at it and see where you were gonna put it and ask nine hundred million questions,” Alice recalled. They were also entrepreneurs, picking up coins that drunken oil workers dropped in the dirt around the saloons. That gave them spending money for candy and fruit.

Many of their games mimicked adult activity. Alice recalled that they staked out tiny land parcels and “drilled” wells on them. “We put more holes in that Spindletop field than you could count

Law-abiding adults at Spindletop made efforts to bring order and social institutions to the oil field, opening a school at the field in 1902. Alice later attended school in the South Park district, where Spindletop kids were considered “rough” by the other students. Alice and her siblings even went to church, though the preachers delivered “hell and damnation every night,” frightening her because she thought the preacher was personally going to deliver the punishment.

Growing up on Spindletop *could* be rough. Alice saw injury, death, dishonesty and cruelty as almost daily occurrences, but her overall memories of her childhood were fond, especially of the freedom that she and the other kids enjoyed. “It was exciting!” she remembered. “We had a picnic.”

You can hear more of Slauson’s story at
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=twgwAkwAGec&t=79s>