

The WALKING DEAD in Biloxi

By Laurie Rosetti
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You're never alone, even during what you think are your weakest moments. You have thousands of years of powerful ANCESTORS within you, the blood of the divine great ones in you, supreme intellect and royalty in you. Infinite strength is always on tap for you. It is with this knowledge the **Old Biloxi Cemetery Tour** will present a reprisal of the theme "**Family Legends and Lore 2**" to celebrate and memorialize our ancestors and the part they play in our present and in our future.

The 15th annual tour will be presented LIVE on Sunday, Oct. 17 from 2-4 p.m. and again on Tuesday, Oct. 19 from 5-7 p.m. Parking will be available along Irish Hill and in marked areas of the cemetery. Programs and tour maps will be available at entry points located on the U.S. 90 (Beach Boulevard) gate and the Caldwell Street entryway to the cemetery. This free-to-the-public event is presented by Preserve Biloxi, a committee made up of dedicated employee-volunteers

from the City of Biloxi, Biloxi Bay Area Chamber of Commerce, Biloxi Main Street, Biloxi Local History and Genealogy Library of the Harrison County Library System, and the University of Southern Mississippi History Department.

"After postponing the live event in 2020 because of COVID-19 measures, the committee decided to reprise last year's theme which was only offered virtually via BTV. Our actors were

superb and the stories submitted by descendants were far too good not be seen live and in-person", said Bill Raymond, historic administrator for the City of Biloxi. Graveside portrayals will include: Nicholas Christian Ladner (Cree Cantrell); Henry J. Agregard (Bill Collins); Leda Anglada (Kathe Newcomb); John Becnel (Barry Newman); Ida Champeaux/Teresa Cronicich (April Donegan/Tina Ball Johnston); Wilhelm Wallis (Brennan Prince); Verta Lee Bosarge Swetman (Glenda O'Neil); Paul Taconi (Boyce Deaton); James Parks Caldwell (Sam Burke); and Lessaint Broussard.

While the event is free, donations are accepted. All monies raised are used to fund ongoing preservation projects at the cemetery. Preserve Biloxi has reconstructed one tomb and assisted with funding and expertise for the restoration of two additional tombs.

Visit the cemetery and walk with the living dead. Fill your Halloween basket with knowledge of the past.

► See the virtual tour at www.biloxi.ms.us/cemeterytour.



Tina Ball Johnson portraying Teresa Cronicich and Brandy Mills portraying Ida Champeaux



Cree Cantrell portraying Nicholas Christian Ladner
Photos by August Taconi



Clayton Pennylegion portraying Wilhelm Wallis