

ROCKIN' N ROLLIN' IN THE BILOXI CEMETERY

By Laurie Rosetti, Downtown Services

What is it about hearing a song from decades ago that can transport you right back to that time of your life? Suddenly, you're a teenager or in college again, or maybe you're just starting your career, or falling in love; yes, music can be a time machine.

Prepare for take-off to times long ago when Preserve Biloxi presents the 16th Annual Old Biloxi Cemetery Tour entitled "Music-makers of Biloxi"! This year's tour will celebrate music throughout the decades, showcasing singers, musicians, bandleaders, and songwriters.

The self-guided tour of the cemetery takes place Sunday, October 16, from 2-4 p.m. and again on Tuesday, October 18, from 5-7 p.m. and involves graveside portrayals.

Portrayals will include: Raymond "Red" Egers (drummer and bandleader portrayed by Clayton Pennylegion); Jelly Roll Morton, "father of jazz" (pianist, bandleader and composer portrayed by Corey Christy); Emile "Junie" Desporte (trumpeter and bandleader portrayed by Cree Cantrell); Princess Neiyoma Whitecloud (pianist, entertainer, music teacher, portrayed by Tina Ball Johnston); Clarence "Kenny" Harder (multi-instrument musician, bandleader, inventor, portrayed by Bryan Rosetti); The Rockin' Rebels: Walter Blessey, Salvadore "Penue" Taranto, and Rockin' Ray Fournier (musicians, bandmates, portrayed by Wayne Stephens, Jimmy Williams and Dennis Burke); Fiddlin' Peter Lepre (musician, bandleader, portrayed by Brennen Prince); Dorothy Dell Goff (singer, Miss Biloxi 1929, Ziegfeld Follies Girl, actress, portrayed by Mollie McCarroll); Gloria Cannette Pemberton (singer, drummer, bandleader, portrayed by Andrea Deaton); Professor Marion Carpenter (trumpeter, songwriter, music production executive, bandleader, school

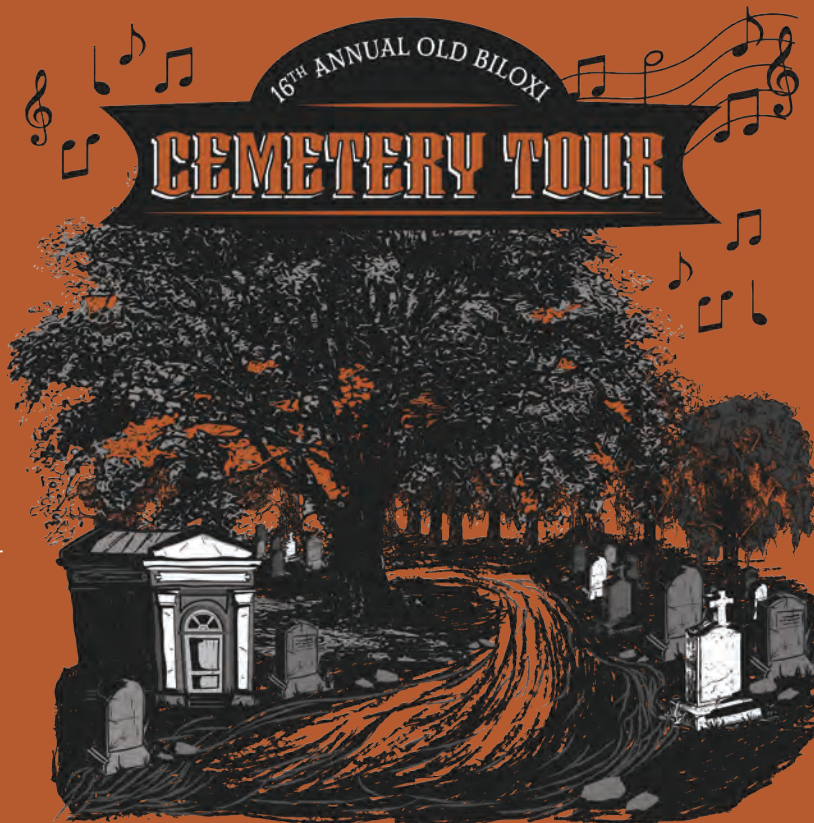
band director, portrayed by Boyce Deaton); Marrisza Rosetti Pitalo (active member of the Slavonian Lodge who witnessed Elvis Presley's performances in the mid-1950s, portrayed by Kathe Newcomb).

Parking for the two-night event will be available along Irish Hill Drive, in the Elk's parking lot, and in marked areas of the cemetery. Programs and tour maps will be available at entry points located on the U.S. 90 gate, and the Caldwell Street and Irish Hill entryways to the cemetery. The same tour is presented on both days. Refreshments will be served.

The event is free to the public; however, donations are gratefully accepted. All donations are used to help preserve and repair the oldest sections of the historic final resting place. While you attend the 2022 tour, you will notice headstone and tomb restoration expert, Nick Black of NOLA Cemetery Renewal, working on some of the headstones most in need of saving.

"Don't be surprised when music fills the air during this tour," said Bill Raymond, historic administrator for the City of Biloxi. "With this much musical talent in one city, we had a hard time narrowing down the possibilities for portrayal. We may have to revisit the theme during a future tour," predicted Raymond.

Preserve Biloxi (with members from the City of Biloxi, Biloxi Main Street, Biloxi Bay Area Chamber of Commerce, Biloxi Local History and Genealogy Library and the University of Southern Mississippi History Department) presents The Old Biloxi Cemetery Tour each year in October as a way of preserving and showcasing one of the oldest burial sites in the United States.



♦ MUSIC-MAKERS OF BILOXI ♦
PRESENTED BY: PRESERVE BILOXI

CEMETERY TOUR:
SUNDAY, OCT. 16, 2022, 2-4 P.M. AND TUESDAY, OCT. 18, 2022, 5-7 P.M.