



THE GULFPORT HISTORIAN

Volume 11 NEWSLETTER OF GULFPORT HISTORICAL SOCIETY December, 1985

we're happy to find out how OUR STORY OF GULFPORT, FLORIDA is being sold, read and enjoyed. Of course there are mistakes, omissions and many have better ideas of how it should have been done — but on the whole, people sound pleased with it. A number have bought additional copies for Christmas Presents or for those they visited up north this summer. Now the "Snow Birds" are returning and we believe many will want some proof of what their "winter home" is like, to share with those who haven't come yet. They will want copies for themselves too !!! We shall always be grateful to the 56 people who gave up more than \$8,130.00 in pre-publication monies — enough to cover the first estimate of cost for printing 1000 copies. Perhaps that's why we ordered 2000 copies since we think sales will continue long past this year of special celebration AND PRECISION LITHO SERVICES promised to store the extras until we need them. Catherine Hickman and I carried copies for sale to THE LIGHTHOUSE, HASLAM'S, ST. PETERSBURG HISTORICAL MUSEUM GILF SHOP, BAYBORO BOOK STORE and THE POLING PLACE. Here in Gulfport members are selling at our LIBRARY, THE VEGETABLE KINGDOM, THE GABBER OFFICE, THE BEACH BAZAAR and of course, at our SOCIETY OFFICE at 3134 Beach Blvd. (Hickman Realty). "House Captains" are helping Fred Allen with distribution in Town Shores. We offer a very special thanks to all these helpers.

Invitations to members of our Society have been mailed and we hope to welcome new members, especially those who received current membership, because of their financial contribution to printing costs of our book.

On December 5th, you will have a chance to do last minute Christmas shopping)THE BOOK, of course) as you help trim our tree)later to be planted) and enjoy old fashion refreshments and lots of good fellowship.

Frances Purdy, Chairman
Distribution Committee

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I must thank Frances Purdy for the professional job she did in publishing our book. Frances led her editorial committee to a glorious victory and deserves our undying gratitude. Thanks to all who worked on this book. You gave us something to be proud of.

Catherine Hickman
Past President

THE GULFPORT HISTORIAN

Official Newsletter of the Gulfport Historical Society. Distributed free to Society Members, Gulfport City Officials and all others interested.

Editor: Catherine A. Hickman
3134 Beach Blvd., So.
Gulfport, Fla. 33707
(813) 321-7095

GULFPORT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

A voluntary, nonprofit, educational organization whose purposes are to collect, preserve and to publish the history of Gulfport and the surrounding area.

Dues Are:

Individual - \$ 5.00 per year
Family - \$10.00 per year
Life - \$50.00

Address of the Society
3134 Beach Blvd, South
Gulfport, Florida 33707
(813) 321-7095

From the Editor:

The Editor and contributing members of THE GULFPORT HISTORIAN shall strive to preserve the dignity and integrity of the Newsletter through its appearance and published materials and input from members and friends. News items and brief articles of historic local interest are needed. The content should in every way reflect the objectives of the Gulfport Historical Society.

MEMBERSHIPS

The Gulfport Historical Society is a Member of the MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, ST. PETERSBURG, the FLORIDA HISTORY ASSOCIATES and the FLORIDA HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

Our "STORY OF GULFPORT" will make a great CHRISTMAS PRESENT for relatives, friends and neighbors.

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Ways & Means - Mary Atkinson, Colleen Camp
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November 13, 1985

Mr. Keith Hickman, President
Gulfport Historical Society
5929 Gulfport Blvd., So.
Gulfport, Florida 33707

Dear Keith:

On behalf of City Council, I wish to thank the Gulfport Historical Society for all the work that went into preparing and printing of the History of Gulfport.

The many people that helped are too numerous to mention and we would not want to slight anyone by oversight, so we will just say that every job, no matter how large or small, was important to this project and appreciated more than words can express.

Gulfport is proud of your undertaking and final product. It is something we can all look to with pride and be proud of having been a part of. Without all of you it would not have been possible.

Thank you again and good luck in your continuing efforts.

Sincerely,

Yvonne Johnson
Mayor

HISTORY OF GULFPORT SHOULD BE BEST SELLER

This year Gulfport celebrates its 75th birthday with a gift it will never forget. The Gulfport Historical Society has compiled the first book to fully present the history of the city. Thanks to this impressive undertaking, we all can enjoy a deeper appreciation of our past and present.

OUR STORY OF GULFPORT, FLORIDA includes 350 pages of text and photographs which reveal the growth of the town from the first settlers in 1867 to the present. It is told by a variety of authors, many of whom had a hand in shaping the history they write about. With dozens of different short articles and a variety of perspectives, the book is a pleasure to read and an ideal book to read in short bits and pieces, since each contribution is self-contained, at the same time contributing to the overall story of the city.

There are many outstanding features which deserve praise. All of the writing is good, and some of the stories and anecdotes are priceless. The photographs of early buildings, notable residents, and points of interest are fascinating. They are well-chosen and attractively presented. The line drawings and renderings by Genevieve Smith also contribute to the attractiveness of the book, and help emphasize that this is no dry history text, but a lively and readable anthology.

A "Chronological Calendar" near the end of the book provides a

convenient capsule survey of major events from the 1500's to the present. And a list of taped "oral history" interviews housed in the Gulfport Historical Museum will be a convenient reference tool for future historians. One final feature which should not go without mention are the maps which frame the text -- a map of the area in 1903 at the beginning, and a line map of Gulfport today at the end.

All of the authors who contributed to the book deserve credit. They have succeeded in publishing a milestone, and have made it clear that the history of our town is a personal one, not just a collection of facts and figures. Editor Frances Purdy and her editorial committee should also be especially congratulated for the splendid manner in which they performed the difficult task of bringing together all the individual contributions into a unified and coherent volume.

The Greek philosopher Plato is supposed to have said that the first step on the path of wisdom is to "Know thyself." Certainly a part of this task is to know more about our historical roots. OUR STORY OF GULFPORT will enable many of us to know ourselves better. And if it doesn't help to make us completely wise, it should at least make us wise enough to enjoy and appreciate our city.

Richard Mathews

Note: This review by Richard Mathews, Executive Director of Konglomerati Florida Foundation for Literature and the Book Arts, first appeared in the Gulfport Gabbler, October 10, 1985. It is reprinted here by permission of the author. Copies of OUR STORY OF GULFPORT, FLORIDA are available for \$12 at the Gulfport Historical Society, 3134 Beach Blvd., Gulfport 33707.

MUSEUM HOURS

Beginning Dec. 2, 1985 our museum will be open Mon. thru Fri. from 2-4 with exception of Holidays. It will not be open on a regular basis during the warm summer months until we have a better air-conditioning system. The following people have already agreed to hold the museum open: Jan Cooke, Johanna Schneidt, George and Betty Belting, Ruby Walker, Harold and Marion Shearer, and Helen Ross. If you would like your name added to the list please contact Jan Cooke or Catherine Hickman. A schedule is being set up.

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Our Story of Gulfport will make great gifts for the Holidays for relatives, friends, and neighbors. Buy a few and tell all your friends and neighbors to buy some too. PLEASE.

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SEASONS GREETINGS TO ALL

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Gulfport Historical Society
3134 Beach Boulevard South
Gulfport, Florida 33707