



THE GULFPORT

HISTORIAN

No. 1-3

NEWSLETTER OF THE GULFPORT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

May, 1983

JUNE MEETING

JUNE 13; 7:30 PM; GEMS Bldg.; 53rd St. at 28th Ave. S

1) Election of four officers for the two year term starting July 1, 1983. The nominating committee, composed of Frances Purdy, Walter Brooks, and Colleen Camp, has recommended:

President - Catherine A. Hickman
Vice President - Genevive Smith
Secretary - Ruby Walker
Treasurer - Doris Brown

Additional nominations will be called for from the floor and will be welcome.

2) Reports from everyone working on any phase of our "History of Gulfport" book project, with general discussion of progress to date and plans for the future.

Please come and express your thoughts on this most important project! Refreshments and social period will follow the meeting.

The next regular membership meeting will be in October, with details in the September Historian.

DONATIONS

The Society has recently received several donations of pictures and other memorabilia. Among the larger are:

Mr. Frank W.H. Convery has donated a number of photos and some other material relating to Veteran City and to the Davista Subdivision, and has promised more.

Mr. Convery found this material in a house built in 1916 by his uncle, Howard K. Heritage. Mr. Heritage was a St. Petersburg pioneer, having come to this area possibly as early as 1901. He was a developer, fruit grower, and director of such local corporations as the St. Petersburg & Gulf Railway, the St. Petersburg Transportation Co., and the St. Petersburg Investment Co. These companies were all very important to the early days of Gulfport.

Norma Lamb, Gulfport's Chief Librarian, made the initial contact with Mr. Convery on behalf of the Society.

Bill Hurst, a new member of the Society, has donated considerable historic material, including copies of a long defunct newspaper, the "Gulfport Citizen."

Ted Havness (Gulfport Gabber) donated the negatives of his Nostalgia Day pictures.

(CONTINUED on Page 2)

DUES

Dues for the Society year starting July 1, 1983 are now payable. (If you joined since Feb. 1, 1983, if you are a life member, or if you have already paid, then you owe nothing)

If you owe dues you will find, folded inside, an addressed envelope with the amount due and your name written on the inside of the flap. You may mail your dues in that envelope, leave the money at our President's office (3006 Beach Blvd.), or pay at the June meeting.

It would be very helpful to have all dues paid no later than June 30th.

TAX EXEMPT STATUS

The Federal Internal Revenue Service has issued a formal determination the the Gulfport Historical Society is a "tax exempt educational organization."

To our members, and all others, this means that donations to the Society, including dues, and bequests made by wills, can be treated as Charitable Contributions on your Federal Income Tax returns.

To the Society, it means that we pay no Federal Income Taxes, and do not even have to file returns unless our gross income goes over \$10,000 per year.

These provisions are retroactive to July 1, 1982.

TYPIST NEEDED! ! !

With own typewriter. To transcribe the Society's tapes of oral history interviews. Here is your chance to perform a most vital part of the research process involved in writing the history of Gulfport. Work in your own home at your own pace. The Society will furnish a cassette player if needed. If you will volunteer for this job, or know someone who will, call Catherine Hickman at 321-7095.

DISSTON CITY'S 100th ANNIVERSARY

We have all been so wrapped up in arranging the celebration of Gulfport's 75th anniversary of incorporation in 1985 that we almost forgot that 1984 is the 100th anniversary of the filing of the first plat of Disston City - Gulfport's predecessor.

In honor of that anniversary the 1984 Nostalgia Day will be named "Disston City Day." It is scheduled to be held on April 14, 1984.

THE GULFPORT HISTORIAN

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

Editor: Willard B. Simonds
6218 - 10th Ave. S. (345-7938)
Gulfport, FL, 33707

GULFPORT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

A voluntary, non - profit, tax exempt educational organization. Its purposes are to promote interest in the history of Gulfport, to collect and preserve mementos and memorabilia concerning that history, and to research and write articles and books on the subject.

Everyone interested is welcome to membership. Dues are: Individual, \$5.00 per year; Family, \$10.00 per year; Individual Lifetime, \$50.00 once.

Officers: (Terms expire June 30, 1983)

President - Catherine A. Hickman
Vice President - Genevive Smith
Secretary - Ruby Walker
Treasurer - Willard B. Simonds

Directors (Terms expire June 30, 1984)

Nathan White, Judy Ryerson, Mary Atkinson.

(The above seven persons constitute the Board of Directors - the governing body of the Society.)

Address of the Society

3006 Beach Blvd. S.,
Gulfport, FL, 33707 (321 - 7095)

RECENT INTERVIEWS

During the last three months fourteen people have talked with Helen Ross and her tape recorder about their memories of the "old days" in Gulfport, and of historic events. These fourteen are: Margaret Vincent, Hampton Dunn, T.C. Roberts, Jr., Irving Slaughter, Alice M. Holland, Phyllis Roberts Holland, Bert Mann, R.J. Hosack, Dorothy Bishop (for Stetson College), Catherine A. Davis, Harold Anderson, Adelaide Murray, and Dorothy Aiello.

The Society thanks them all.

ST. PETE'S TROLLEYS

Just out, a new book, "Street Railways of St. Petersburg" by James Buckley. (54 pages, 8½" x 11") Buckley lived in St. Pete for many years, and combined his knowledge with extensive research performed by Robert S. Torbett before his death. Well written, with many historic pictures including some of Veteran City and Gulfport, maps and timetables. Worth the price to anyone interested. \$7.00 from Harold E. Cox, 80 Virginia Terrace, Forty Fort, PA, 18704.

ADDRESS Correct? If anything should be changed, please let us know soon. Especially check your apartment or lot number, and Zip Codes.

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Dear Friends:

It is hard to believe that our organization is almost two year old! We continue to grow, with new memberships steadily coming in. How gratifying it is to know that so many people are interested in the history of our community. No day passes that I don't get at least one phone call or one visit relative to our Society.

Carl Norberg tells me quite a few members of the Boca Ciega Yacht Club are doing research on the marine area for us. He donated a picture of the first yacht club building and dock on lower Pinellas, built in 1910.

It is time to ask all of the local clubs and organizations to research and write their histories if they wish to be included. And we still have not heard from all of the churches.

I want to take this opportunity to thank you for your interest and participation. I feel that the Gulfport Historical Society has a vital part to play in Gulfport, its past and its future.

Catherine A. Hickman
President

DONATIONS, (Continued from Page 1)

Harold Anderson donated a very high quality, and never used, cassette tape recorder.

Stetson University was recently given a lot of material relating to the construction of its buildings and their operation as the Rolyat Hotel, and other material concerning the Pasadena developments (All of Gulfport west of 58th St.) Ms. Dorothy Bishop of Stetson made copies of much of this material for the Society.

Several others brought material to Nostalgia Day for donation. We will try to list them in a later issue.

Thanks to all!

RECENT MEETINGS

Feb. 7th - Members of Company K, Florida Infantry Civil War Reenactment Group, in full uniform, told us of that group's work in Civil War history. This program led to their participation in our Nostalgia Day activities.

March 14th - Mr. Russell St. Arnold, Florida Aviation Historical Society, presented a slide show and talk on the project of building an exact, flyable, replica of the Benoist air boat. This air boat operated the world's first scheduled passenger air service, St. Petersburg to Tampa, Jan. 1, 1914

May 9th - Prof. Richard Mathews, Society member and executive of Gulfport's Konglomerati Press gave us a wealth of extremely valuable hints on researching and writing history.

NOSTALGIA DAY HIGHLIGHTS

Frances Purdy Contributed Notes for this Article

Our second Nostalgia Day was bigger, and different than was our first, last year. People came because they knew that they would see old friends again and could continue talking over their memories. This year our guests seemed to stay longer in the GEMS building, pouring over old scrapbooks, old pictures, maps, other memorabilia. This year they wandered over to the Civil War encampment, something new, and they again inspected beautiful vintage cars, arranged by George Larison. Once more Nathan White was the masterful MC who knew everyone and everything, and was never at a loss for words.

The Civil War encampment by members of Company K, Florida Infantry Civil War Reenactment Group, with its genuine uniforms, its drills, and music, and stories reminded many of Civil War tales heard from their elders.

The registration booth, presided over by Genevive Smith and Colleen Camp in charming costumes, recorded over 200 guests, many of whom accepted our interview forms for completion. Substituting for our Treasurer those ladies signed up 17 new members, including three life members.

Judy Ryerson and Helen Ross in lovely old costumes set up the displays in the GEMS building, and acted as hostesses. Helen Ross, and others, spent much of the day conducting taped interviews with some of the more interesting guests

One of the more important and interesting of her interviews was with Mr. Irving Slaughter, born in Disston City before the turn of the century, and grandson of the first permanent settlers.

Mary Atkinson, Ways and Means Chairman, raised \$35 from a rummage sale of donated trinkets.

Margaret Brooks and Frances Purdy again did KP duty, dispensing hundreds of cuts of the beautifully decorated cake donated by the City, and other cakes donated by our members, they poured countless gallons of coffee and Orange Crush donated by Burger King. Those who did not bring their own lunch were able to go across the street and buy a hot dog at the Methodist Church sale - a very happy and totally unplanned cooperative arrangement.

Thanks to the City of Gulfport for the use of Chase Park and the buildings, to the City Recreation Dept., under Scott Jamison, for setting up and cleaning up the grounds and buildings, to Charlie Brown and others for many beautiful photos of the happenings, and to everyone who worked on, or contributed to this most successful project.

NOSTALGIA DAY MEMENTOS

Nathan White's Nostalgia Day Committee is in the process of organizing scrap books of photos and other mementos of the two Nostalgia Days already held, along with all future such events.

The Society has many photos of both events, but if you took photos which the Society does not have, how about donating prints for the permanent record! Leave them at Catherine's office, 3006 Beach Blvd., and try as much as possible to identify the people.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Q3 - Irving Slaughter showed a picture of, and talked about, a very large saw mill, said to have been in the vicinity of Tangerine and 55th St.

A) Is anything known about the people who owned and operated that mill? - Names?

B) - About when was it built, and how long did it operate?

C) - Exactly where was it located?

D) - What areas were logged over to supply it?

E) - Is there any other information of any kind about it? Other pictures? Maps? Ads?

ANSWERS

Q1 - It has been pretty well established that Disston City's Waldorf hotel was located on today's York St., and close to the then water front. But we still have nothing definite on its size.

Q2 - No evidence has turned up that trolley tracks were ever laid, or even planned, in any part of the Pasadena developments of northwest Gulfport.

ABOUT OUR MEETINGS

Attendance at our meetings has been very disappointing, seldom running over about $\frac{1}{4}$ of the membership! This is pretty bad, but WHY?

At most of the meetings there have been good speakers, talking about subjects which should be of interest to the members of an historical society. The social hours which follow the talks have become almost an extension of Nostalgia Day with good informal conversations and refreshments.

So, why the poor attendance? Are we conflicting with meetings of other organizations? Could something be done to make the meetings more interesting? A suggestion has been made that perhaps the third Tuesday evening would be more convenient.

Please, call Catherine or one of the other officers and give us your thoughts. Or come to the June 13th meeting and discuss the subject. Or, send us a post card or a letter with your ideas.

A PERSONAL NOTE

Regretfully, I decided that it would be in the best interests of both the Society and myself if someone else took over the Treasurer's duties. Handling that job, along with publishing three issues of the Historian, and five or six meeting post cards each year has been taking more of my time than I can justify. It is also leaving me no time to do any research or writing for the Society.

I pledge my fullest cooperating with whoever is elected Treasurer in turning over the treasury and membership records in good shape, and offer as much help as desired in getting organized.

Bill Simonds

SELF - PUBLISHING SEMINAR

Conducted by Richard Mathews for the Konglomerati Foundation, it covered methods of getting published limited appeal, special interest books. I found it very valuable, and worth far more than the \$10.00 cost. The seminar will be repeated, probably more than once, and I recommend it to everyone who might be associated with any publishing venture. Call Konglomerati at 323-0386 for dates.

TREASURER'S REPORT

January thru April, 1983

INCOME

Dues	\$320
Sea Breeze Copies	27
Rummage Sale	35
Cash Donation	10
TOTAL	392

EXPENSES

Membership	4
Meetings	59
Gulfport Historian	48
For Resale (Sea Breeze)	76
Nostalgia Day	49
Regulatory (IRS)	29
Publicity - Advertising	131
Misc.	9
TOTAL	405

SURPLUS ACCOUNT

On Hand, Jan 1, 1983	\$728
Income	+ 392
Expenses	- 405
ON HAND, April 30, 1983	715

Royal Trust Bank	680
Cash	35
TOTAL ON HAND	715

GULFPORT HISTORICAL SOCIETY
6218 - 10th Avenue South
Gulfport, Florida 33707

NOSTALGIA DAY BEAUTIES

(1 - r) Genevive Smith, Ruth Huff, Judy Ryerson, Teresa Marshall, Ruth Barby, Betty Marshall, Dorothy Blanch, Val Dutcher, and unidentified member of the Civil War Group. The little girl has not been identified.

(Photo and print by Charlie Brown, half - tone by Gulfport Gabber)

FIRE DEPARTMENT FUND RAISING

(Continuing a series by Walter Brooks)

Most, but not all, of the fund raising efforts were more successful than the motorcycle race described in the January issue. Another one which flopped was in 1940 when the Democratic National Committee requested help in raising funds to reelect Franklin D. Roosevelt. The Fire Department put on a big fish fry which was a great success in every way but one - we came up with a net LOSS of \$1.00! (In spite of this negative help F.D.R. was reelected, carrying every Florida County, and receiving 75% of the State's popular vote - Ed.)

(More about the Fire Dept. by Walter in future issues)

The next issue of the GULFPORT HISTORIAN will be mailed about Sept. 30th. Currently we plan to include a complete membership roster. Deadline for everything else will be Sept. 15th.

A PERSONAL NOTE

I decided that it would be in the best interests of the Gulfport Historical Society to publish a membership roster in the next issue of the Historian. I have been thinking about this for some time, and I feel that it is time to do it. I have been thinking about this for some time, and I feel that it is time to do it. I have been thinking about this for some time, and I feel that it is time to do it.

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