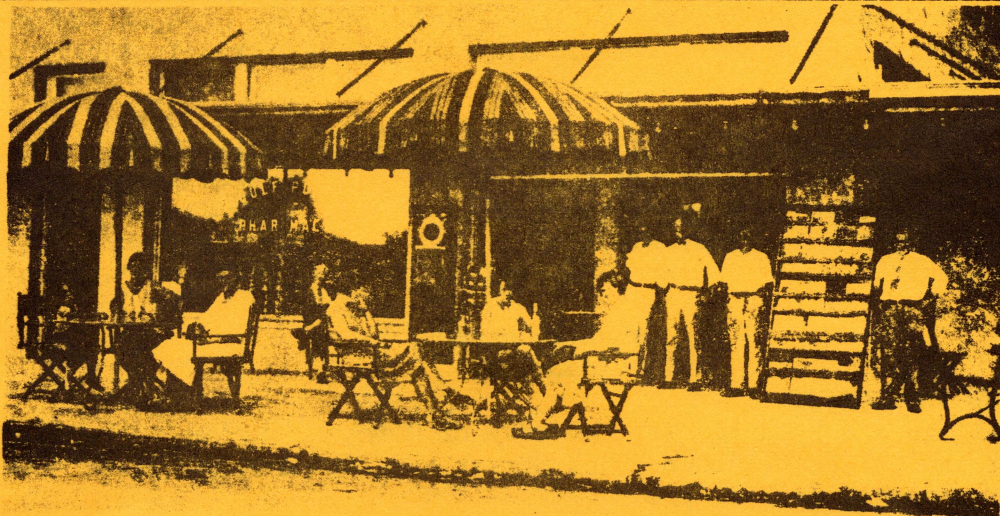


THE GULFPORT HISTORIAN

Volume 19 Newsletter of the Gulfport Historical Society September 1987



A sneak preview for Historical Society members of the JANUARY picture featured in the 1st Gulfport Calendar. Be one of the first to get and give (as holiday/birthday/friendship presents) this keepsake (details inside).

Gulfport Historical Society
3134 Beach Boulevard South
Gulfport, Florida 33707



GETTING BACK IN TOUCH

WHAT WE'RE ALL ABOUT...

The GHS is a voluntary, non-profit association whose objectives are to preserve and to publish the history of Gulfport.

HOW TO JOIN...

Everyone intereted is welcome and cordially invited to become a member. Dues are: Individual \$5.00/year; Family \$10.00/year; Organization \$25.00/year; Life \$50.00 single payment (never to be reminded again!). The society year runs from May 1st to April 30th. You may join at the Society office, or at any meeting. You can also mail dues to the Treasurer at 5302 11th Avenue South.

OFFICERS:

President - *Kieth Hickman*
Vice-President - *Frances Purdy*
Secretary - *Judy Ryerson*
Treasurer - *Johanna Schneidt*

DIRECTORS:

Mary Atkinson
Doris Brown
Phyllis Plotnick
("Historian" Editor)

MUSEUM CURATOR:

Jan Cook

WHERE ARE WE LOCATED...

Meetings are held the 1st Thursday of October, December, February, and April at the Gulfport Museum, 53rd Street and 28th Avenue, South. We aim to begin promptly at 7:30 p.m.

Our mailing address is : **Gulfport Historical Society**
c/o Hickman Realty
3134 Beach Blvd. South
Gulfport, FL 33707

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The time of the year has arrived when we begin our meetings and programs. I hope everyone is refreshed after your summer adventures and are ready for an eventful season of Historical Society activities.

Our program for the October meeting will be presented by Jan Cook, our curator. It promises to be very interesting, so you all plan to come.

The members of the Calendar Committee are to be commended for the fine quality Calendar they created and published. It will go on sale October 1, and be available at our meeting that evening (at \$2.00 each).

Our next major undertaking will be the 1st Gulfport Old Fashioned Holiday. Many organizations will take part to make the afternoon of December 6, one filled with music, costumes, games, decorations, crafts and refreshments-in the spirit of days gone by. There will be much more said about that event in our November "Historian."

We need to be thinking about Nostalgia Day next Spring and about ways to nurture and guide (and financially support) our museum's growth.

I am looking forward to a great year with your help. Please bring your ideas to our October 1st meeting.

Kieth Hickman

A MEMBERSHIP REPORT

We are anticipating an even more exciting Society year starting October 1 and are especially pleased to report we have 163 members in the following classifications:

Life dues - 21 and 2 named "Honorary" by Board action
Family dues - 38
Individual dues - 60 and 3 Banks hold memberships.

Most people have paid dues through 1988, but about a dozen owe for 1987. We hope to have 100% soon. The annual list of members will accompany THE HISTORIAN again in November so there is time to submit your dues and make the list! We mail 126 copies to members and deliver extras to City Hall and the Library (a recruiting effort). Of course, copies are sent to other Historical Societies-that of St. Petersburg, Pinellas County, and Florida itself. The "Historian" is also available in the Museum and our Society Office (Hickman Realty).

Frances Purdy
Membership Chairman

THE SOCIETY HISTORIAN SAYS

I am happy to say the current history album is nearly full as you will have the opportunity to see October 1 at our meeting. It has articles considered of interest today and for many tomorrows. Our bound and bountiful collection gives YOU the chance to see what you perhaps missed during the county's 75th Anniversary Celebration, or news about Gulfport that you missed in THE GABBER or the TIMES one day. Photos from our meetings can also be found in the album.

Frances Purdy
Historian

AS VICE PRESIDENT AND OBSERVER, MOSTLY

Our newsletter Editor may be too modest to admit it was she who first suggested that we might publish a community calendar. At once her buddy-on-TV Judy Ryerson agreed as did other Board members and now we are about to publish it with sponsorship from the Chamber of Commerce. With Judy and Phyllis, Mary Atkinson, Leah Bell, Pat Scullion and others have worked tirelessly preparing pictures, script, and layout. We believe it will be a most useful item for you and an excellent gift for your friends, whether they live here or not (maybe they used to or will!) Unlike some calendars published elsewhere, WE have lots of information about what our City Departments do-thanks to Manager Kathy Rice and staff. Included are dates for public meetings of local organizations and of City Council.

Thanks to all on the joint committee, to our advertisers who responded generously and promptly, and to those who have already placed orders (over four hundred sight unseen). I have been proud to have the opportunity to work ex officio on this Committee!

Frances Purdy

Allean Davis, Program Chairman announces that our opening meeting on October 1, at 7:30 p.m. in the Museum, will feature our Curator Jan Cook who will tell us how to preserve papers. What a chance to learn how to save those family documents which aren't going to be worth reading unless you give them proper care NOW. Officers will serve refreshments, dues will be received and hopefully, many members will come and bring their neighbors. Have YOU seen what has been happening at our Museum lately? Sadly we have lost our second Christmas tree and one of the magnolias given us by the Garden and Bird Club--but they shall be replaced by us! This summer was a killer to be sure, enough watering was not available to help seedlings tolerate their babyhood!

Frances Purdy

IN MEMORIAM

Willard "Bill" Simonds came to Gulfport from Massachusetts where he was born in Watertown. A 1934 graduate of MIT, he was employed by Florida Power Corporation from 1947 to 1975. In 1969 he was named manager of fuel and special products department. He served as consulting engineer for the City of Gulfport.

Bill served as Player Agent for Gulfport Little League for many years and was in charge of printing programs and making game schedules. He served as President.

Bill was a charter member of the Gulfport Historical Society and was the first Treasurer and Editor of "The Historian". Bill always did an outstanding job on whatever he did and was a tough man to follow because of the high standards he set.

Bill was a member of the Gulfport Lion's Club serving on many committees and boards. Bill believed that just to be a member of an organization was not sufficient. He understood each organization's purposes and worked zealously to help accomplish the goals.

Bill's interest in local and Florida history and in particular railroads led him through many interesting histories. He was a careful researcher and scholar.

Bill's contributions to our lives have been many and we will remember him with deep respect.

Catherine A. Hickman

As one of many who have special reasons for remembering Bill, let me say our history book would never have contained so much data had not that scholar researched the development of our city's utilities, transportation systems, and government services. He arduously wrote even when he was quite ill because he truly believed we should have such a book and all the information he could gather for it. His example of devoted service stimulated the rest of us to do our best and so, with much encouragement from him and others, we published as promised. Knowing Bill and Anita has brought me personal pleasure and I am grateful our paths crossed in June 1981 when we were founding this Society. They could not always be at meetings, but then we knew they would be back. Now we shall miss Bill, but hope Anita will continue to help us.

Frances Purdy