

One hundred years have elapsed since the small fishing village, now known as Gulfport, on the shores of Boca Ciega Bay on Florida's west coast was colonized. A few years thereafter veterans of the war between the states settled in the area on small garden plots. However, the growth of the settlement was slow, with little or no facilities such as power, water and transportation. The development, however, was accelerated in the early twenties with the promotions of land developers, contractors and realtors. Electric power and transportation, as well as water and paving accelerated the quality and quantity of growth. However, the collapse of the land boom of 1928 and 1929 caused widespread disaster.

During all these years there was no attempt to cultivate community activities and it was not until the late fifties that the urge for development of community activities was felt.

Various social groups were organized and in November of 1960 a group of senior citizens were brought together for the purpose of extending friendship and entertainment to the large number of retirees who found home in the boundaries of Gulfport.

The efforts of this group produced an immediate and enthusiastic response. The original charter membership comprised of approximately forty men and women and grew into a total of 120 by the end of the first year.

Meetings were held once each week and provided entertainment, card playing, dancing and refreshments, also tours by land and water were provided for points of interest as far away as Ocala and Fort Myers.

In summation the Gulfport Senior Citizens Club can be counted a success in that it erased loneliness and promoted enduring friendships and associations. Now sixteen years later it is a sturdy institution and continues to serve as an example of community relations.