



THE GULFPORT HISTORIAN

No. 1 - 1 NEWSLETTER of the GULFPORT HISTORICAL SOCIETY September, 1982

WELCOME to the "GULFPORT HISTORIAN"

A year ago, when the Gulfport Historical Society had nine members it was very possible to get news of meetings and other important matters to all by word of mouth. Now, with over 50 members and growing, something better is needed. Hence, the HISTORIAN.

Plans for the HISTORIAN are still tentative, and may change. At present, we plan three issues each year, September, January, and May. All issues will carry Society news, and announcements of the next one or two membership meetings. The September issue will carry annual reports of officers and committees.

We intend that the HISTORIAN will be more than a newsletter, in that each issue will have brief articles on interesting or little known facets of local history.

To succeed, the HISTORIAN must be joint effort. It cannot be a one or two person project! Everyone, member or not, is urged to contribute brief articles on any subject of interest to an historical society membership. Especially, if you have any information on any of the questions asked - let us have it.

We will particularly welcome "Letters to the Editor" on any aspect of the Gulfport Historical Society's operations. Comment, suggestions, criticism, praise will all be equally welcome. However, please keep your letters brief - our space is limited.

Meeting Notices ~ Page 3

LETTER to the EDITOR

Dear Editor:

Congratulations to the Gulfport Historical Society on the publication of your first newsletter!

The distinctive history of Gulfport is an irreplaceable asset to our community, and the work of your group in gathering and preserving this valuable information for future generations is to be commended.

On behalf of the Gulfport City Council, please accept sincerest wishes for continued success in your endeavors.

Sincerely,

Jay P. Clymer
Mayor, City of Gulfport

THANK YOU! Mayor Clymer

THE GULFPORT HISTORIAN

The official newsletter of the Gulfport Historical Society.

EDITOR - Willard B. Simonds
6218 - 10th Ave S., 345-7938

Distributed free to members of the Society, the Gulfport City Council, other City Officials, locally circulating news media, and others interested.

Communications concerning the HISTORIAN should be addressed to the Editor

THE GULFPORT HISTORICAL SOCIETYOBJECTIVES - DUES

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

Everyone interested is welcome, and cordially invited, to membership. Dues are: Individual, \$5.00 per year; Family, \$10.00 per year; Life, \$50.00 one time. The Society year is from July 1st to the next June 30th.

You may join at the Society office, at any meeting, or by mailing dues to the Treasurer, 6218 - 10th Ave., S.

ORGANIZATION - 1982-83

OFFICERS, Terms expire 6/30/83

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

DIRECTORS, Terms expire 6/30/84

Nathan S. White, Sr.
Mary Atkinson
Judith Ryerson

The above seven persons constitute the Board of Directors - the Society's policy making and governing body.

COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN, No fixed terms

Ways and Means - Bernice Perry
Oral History - Mary Atkinson
Nostalgia Days - Nathan S. White, Sr.
Membership - Judith Ryerson, Frances Purdy
Public Relations - Judith Ryerson
Gala Days - Glenn Hendley
Editorial - Willard Simonds, Frances Purdy
Pictorial - Charles Brown, Willard Simonds
Historical Society Coordination -
Willard Simonds

ADDRESS of the SOCIETY

Hickman Realty - 3006 Beach Blvd. S.
Gulfport, FL, 33707; 321-7095

SPEAKERS

For the work of the Society to be a success as many people as possible must be told of it. To this end, several of our members spoke about our work to other groups during the year:

KEITH HICKMAN to the history class of the Tampa College

FRANCES PURDY to the Gulfport Coterie

JUDY RYERSON to the Gulfport Methodist Women's Club and to the Gulfport Civic Association

BILL SIMONDS to the Gulfport Lions Club

Would you talk about our work to some other group to which you belong? Or would you like to have another member do it? Either way, check with Catherine Hickman.

President's Letter

Dear Members:

Thank you for your wonderful response in working to form Gulfport's Historical Society. It has been gratifying to me to find so many people willing to devote their time, energy, knowledge, and money to an organization I felt long overdue.

In this one year's time our Society has begun its preparations to publish a history of Gulfport in time for the 75th anniversary of its incorporation - 1985. At that time a "Gala Days" Festival will be co-sponsored with the City, and we hope the entire community will take part.

During our first year dozens of people have reminisced and answered our questions about the "old days" during Oral Interviews. Many have donated or loaned valuable old photos, postcards, documents, and other memorabilia. Without such cooperation there is no possibility of producing a history of Gulfport. To all we say "Thanks."

A good beginning has been made towards our project. But, much, much, more is needed. Let's keep the good work going and make our history project the success it deserves to be!

Yours,

Catherine A. Hickman, President
Gulfport Historical Society

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

The most immediate and most urgent objective of our Society is the production of a History of Gulfport in time for the 75th anniversary of the City's first charter. That time is only 2½ years off - and the mechanics of publishing a book of the type we are considering requires at least six months after all writing is completed. Time is getting short!

Work on the book has been divided into several categories with members already working in some of them. More workers are badly needed in all categories. If you can help - please contact the Society President.

These notes are from members working in various categories:

Documentation appears to be available for completion of narratives on at least ten old buildings - some now demolished.

There is an ongoing project to locate and trace the history of the oldest homes in Gulfport.

There have been interviews with many people who have lived through parts of the City's history. Some need additional information some are on tape and must be transcribed. Many more such interviews must be held.

The story of Disston City's newspaper, "The Sea Breeze" (the first newspaper of the lower Pinellas peninsula) has been completed.

Sufficient material is available, with some minor exceptions, to complete the story of our trolley system, and of the SAL Railway branch along our north boundary.

Histories of the Fire Dept., the Police Dept., and of the Elementary School are available, and can be adapted for our purposes.

All of the above sounds like a lot - but it is really just "a drop in the bucket" compared with what must be done

ABOUT DUES

At press time there were still a few members who had not paid their 1982-83 dues. Please try to get this money in soon! If you have paid those dues, and have not received a membership card, please let me know.

Willard B. Simonds, Treasurer.

TREASURER'S REPORTFINANCIAL

From organization through June 30, 1982

RECEIPTS

Dues	\$445.00
White Elephant Sale	148.00
Donation - Gulfport Lions Aux.	50.00

TOTAL RECEIPTS \$643.00

EXPENSES

Postage	\$19.19
Photo Work	11.45
Printing, Copying	17.55
Stationery, Office Supplies	8.11
Dues - Fla. Confed. Hist. Soc.	10.00

TOTAL EXPENSES \$66.30

NET WORTH (Receipts - Expenses) \$576.70

ON HAND

Royal Trust Bank	\$548.70
Cash	28.00

TOTAL ON HAND (Equals Net Worth) \$576.70

MEMBERSHIP

The Society started with nine members at the June 8th organizational meeting. At year end, June 30, 1982 there were 50 members. Since over 1/3 are family memberships, there are over 75 person involved in the Society.

DONATIONS

The Society has received donations of pictures and other memorabilia too numerous to list. Other donations received during the year ending June 30th, we can list:

GULFPORT CITY COUNCIL and the CITY ADMINISTRATION - Cooperation and services of infinite value.

GLENN HENDLEY FUNERAL HOME - Cost of printing for Nostalgia Day.

Dr. A.L. STEPHENS - Cost of advertising Nostalgia Day.

GULFPORT LIONS AUXILIARY - \$50.00 cash

SETCHELL TYPESETTING SERVICE (The Rauch family) - Typesetting and photocopying.

To all we say "Thanks" and pledge our best efforts to justify your faith in the Gulfport Historical Society.

MAJOR MEMBERSHIP ACTIONS

by: Anita K. Simonds

The Gulfport Historical Society was organized June 8, 1981 at a meeting held in Catherine Hickman's Real Estate office. That office itself is located in one of Gulfport's historic landmark buildings - the City's open air Post Office from 1915 until 1928, Walter Brooks, Postmaster.

The organizing group appointed temporary officers and discussed ideas for participation in the "Gala Days" celebration in 1985 of the 75th anniversary of Gulfport's incorporation as a city in 1910. It was decided that the best way to participate would be to publish a book on the history of Gulfport. No such book exists, although that history goes back to 1868 when a Mr. Barnett homesteaded in the area and set out an orange grove.

Work on the book was divided into categories, with volunteers asked for each.

Before 1910
City Government
Churches
Cemeteries
Education
Library
Agriculture and fishing
Industry and business
Nationalities
Transportation, Communications,
and Utilities
Public Safety (Fire and Police)
Military History
Houses and Buildings
Natural Disasters
Sports, Recreation, Entertainment
Clubs and organizations
Post Office
Arts and Photography
Shuffleboard
Boom times
Rolyat Hotel, Florida Military
Academy, Stetson.

A first draft of a proposed Constitution was read at the meeting of August 10, 1981 by Bill Simonds. After considerable discussion many changes were agreed upon, and a revised draft was presented to the meeting of September 14, 1981. After some discussion a vote was taken, and this draft was adopted as our Constitution by a vote of more than the required 2/3 of the members present. Permanent officers were then elected for the two year term.

Public events during the year were the "White Elephant" sale in October and the first annual "Nostalgia Day" on April 24th.

Starting in September, 1981 the GEMS building was made available for our meetings. This gave us more room, and made possible the invitation of guest speakers to our meetings. Those speakers have been:

Nov. 9th - June Hurley Young, historian
Jan. 11th - Nathan White, Jerome Girard, and James Gaskins, all area "old timers." Mr. Girard was Gulfport's first Supt. of Public Works.
Feb. 8th - Frank T. Hurley, Jr., author of "Surf, Sand, and Postcard Sunsets", a history of Pass-A-Grille.
May 10th - Everett Lehnert, President, St. Petersburg Historical Society, gave a slide show and talk on area history.

Meeting Notices

EVERYONE interested is invited and urged to attend our meetings - you do not have to be a member. (Of course, only members can vote on Society business matters)

OCTOBER 11 - 7:30 PM - GEMS Building, 53rd St at 28th Ave. S.

Carole McQueen and Jo Pippin (and possibly others) will talk about the experiences and problems of the First United Methodist Church in planning for its 70th anniversary celebration. This should be of great help to us in our planning.

NOVEMBER 8th - Same time, same place Two brothers, Leon Noel and George E. (Eddie) Noel, will discuss the Florida Military Academy of the 1930's, and what the northwest part of Gulfport was like in those days. (The FMA occupied the buildings now housing Stetson University College of Law) Leon Noel was an instructor at the Academy, Eddie was a cadet.

DECEMBER - No meeting, too close to Christmas.

PLEASE SAVE the above information and dates. No other notices will be mailed.

JANUARY 10, 1983 We will meet at the St. Petersburg Historical Museum as guests of the St. Petersburg Historical Society. Details will be mailed in early January.

IMPRESSIONS of NOSTALGIA DAY

Chase Park - April 24, 1982

By: Frances Purdy

As a newcomer, here only 12 years, I was more than lucky and happy to be involved in this exciting event which everyone hopes can be repeated annually. Possibly 3/4 of the 176 persons registered were born and brought up here. Each person brought picnic foods, Drinks and a beautifully decorated cake were provided by the City. Lots for all!

Nathan White, Chairman, was the continuous MC, greeting almost everyone by name. (What a memory!) He helped old buddies find each other, he urged each to talk about his or her memories.

Keith Hickman recorded the whole event, others recorded individual interviews. Many families have their "trees" and wish to share them, many have pictures and clippings and all promised to make these treasures available to the Society

Every member of the City Council came and mingled, Mayor Clymer made a brief speech. There was a singalong led by this writer with Yvonne Johnson accompanied by Dorothy Coveio on the melodia. George Larrison and several of his friends brought their antique cars for added attraction.

Eighteen new members joined that day!

This "happening" will surely serve as a sparkling starter for developing our Society, planning for the City's 75th, and meeting the objectives we have set!

OTHER GROUPS

The FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH of GULFPORT will celebrate its 70th anniversary on October 24, 25, 26, and 27, 1982. The Church is in the process of collecting memorabilia of all kinds relating to its history. If you have newspaper clippings, etc., that will help, please call Jo Pippin at 896-5579, Carole McQueen at 345-4985, or the Church Office, 321-3620.

The GULFPORT COMMUNITY PLAYERS will present "Exit the Body", a comedy - mystery, as its second production of the season on Nov. 26, 27, and 28th. Showtime is 8 PM at the Community Center. Tickets are \$2.00 at the door, or at Catherine Hickman's office, 3006 Beach Blvd.

THANKS to Vice President Geniveve Smith for the design and typography of the HISTORIAN'S heading.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

(This will be a regular feature of the Historian)

Do you have a question about any area of local history? Send it to the Historian, we will print it without using your name.

If you have the answer to a question send it to the Historian - we will pass it on to the questioner, and print it with your name.

Here is the first question -

Q1 Disston City's Waldorf Hotel opened on Christmas Eve, 1884. (St. Petersburg's first, the Detroit did not open until four years later!)

A) Where, exactly, was the Waldorf?

B) What kind of a place was it?
How many rooms? How many floors?

C) Do any pictures, advertising brochures, menus, or any other memorabilia exist? Where?

ADVERTISINGWANT ADS

WANTED TO BUY - Florida railroad and trolley timetables, maps, brochures, books, postcards, pictures. Also Florida State, County, City maps. Fair prices. W.B. Simonds, 6218 - 10th Ave. S., 345-7938

FREE for members (\$5.00 donation for others) want ads of up to six lines. See example above.

(The HISTORIAN will gladly run brief items for other local, non-profit, groups at no charge, on a space availability, first come - first served, basis. Send your copy to the Editor, 6218 - 10th Ave. S.)

COMMERCIAL ADS. - Your business card, or any other copy which will fit a 3½" x 2" space. \$10.00 donation per issue.

All advertising copy and payment must reach us before December 20th for the next issue.

DEADLINES - NEXT ISSUE

January 6, 1983 is the final deadline for material to be included in the January issue. Except, December 20, 1982 for advertising and "Other Group" notices. And, earlier than those dates if possible. That next issue will be mailed Jan. 31st.

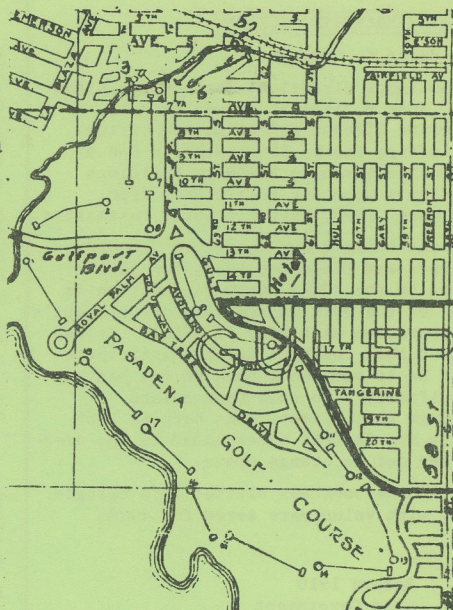
DID YOU KNOW -

That the original name of the Pasadena Golf Course was Bear Creek Golf Course when built by Jack Taylor in 1925? And that the first nine fairways ran north and south just west of 64th St. to about where the Pasadena Baptist Church is located, then turned east, with the 5th hole and 6th tee on the banks of the creek between 62nd and 63rd Sts? The late Dixie Hollins aquired the property about 1928, and before 1934 had rebuilt the course so that all holes were south of Gulfport Blvd. A few years later he rebuilt so that the entire course was south east of Royal Palm Dr. The course has been redesigned and rebuilt at least three times since then.

The area originally occupied by the course is now occupied by the Pasadena Baptist Church, the Pasadena Trailer Park, and parts of the Pelican Creek and Golf Course Estates and other subdivisions.

This (about) 1930 map shows the original layout.

(Information provided by Mr. Maurice Hollins - Map from collection of W.B.Simonds)

REMEMBER WHEN ? ?

The Gulfport waterfront looked like this about 1912 or 1913? The camera was on the roof of The Spa (First Casino) looking north along Davis Blvd. (Beach Blvd) The building just left of the trolley tracks was the Bayview Hotel (now The Cedars) on the corner of Bon Air Ave., (30th Ave. S.)

Almost all of the area shown has been filled, Shore Blvd. and Gulfport Beach now occupy the foreground.



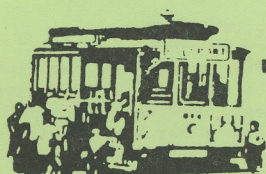
(Photo from Gulfport Historical Society collection)

(Halftone screening of photo for printing courtesy of Gulfport Gabber)

The GULFPORT HISTORIAN

6218-10th Ave. S.

Gulfport, FL., 33707



GULFPORT
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY