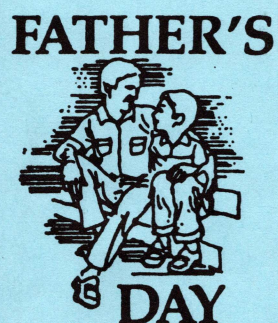


THE GULFPORT HISTORIAN

VOLUME 39

NEWSLETTER OF THE GULFPORT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MAY 1992



THE GULFPORT HISTORICAL SOCIETY
P. O. BOX 5152
GULFPORT, FLORIDA 33737

Mrs.
P.O. Box
St. Petersburg

THE PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT

We promised that this issue would be mailed mid-April but several circumstances beyond our control prevented that happening, much to the consternation of our Editor Kay Boatwright. No one could have been more delighted than I when, soon after Phyllis Plotnick resigned in September of 1991, Kay asked if she could join and then became Editor.

It has been a problem to function without a Secretary, a Director and a Membership Chairman much of this year because those three people had illness or other personal conflicts. Much of what I have to tell you is included elsewhere and hopefully, all of it will indicate my deep commitment to this Society and City residents performing activities I respect and enjoy. Here I shall report we held monthly programs, a first; and now we propose to change the meeting night to second Mondays, starting October 12, 1992. Repeatedly we have responded to member's advice about the "best time", each of which has resulted in complications we now hope to prevent.

One of my chief responsibilities is to maintain good relations with City officials and Staff. It is a pleasure to work with Mike Bonfield, Director of Leisure Services and his Bob Williams, who now services our Museum. Following the vandalism December 2, the City installed security lighting and new locks. Prompt and continuing police attention to our considerable losses that night, has not been successful. Much of what was taken had been given by George and Laurette Payne, with whom I spent several hours identifying what we have left of their many gifts. We again thank them. We deeply regret losing anything given to us for safe keeping.

That our Museum was the original sanctuary of the First Methodist Church meant that when they celebrated their eightieth anniversary, they asked me to be their guest. I invited visiting pastors and others for an afternoon of reminiscing following their splendid service and luncheon. Several of those visitors have sent us priceless memoirs, some of which are being used to validate Survey data. We hope for years of cordial relations with our "across the street nieghbors"! They supply us with their "Men of Note", their super Chefs and many participants when we have special events. I am proud of the quality of interactions we all have developed working with and for our City, Society and all residents.

ROBERT D. EASTER, TREASURER, Reports

April 30, 1992:	Balance brought forward	\$3,842.19
	Deposits	331.80
	Interest	7.05
	Expenditures	445.54
	Balance	\$3,735.50
	(outstanding checks \$101.43)	

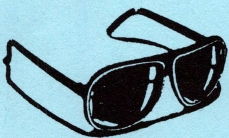


PROGRAMS PRESENTED BY CHAIRMAN ALLEAN DAVIS

October 3 - Dedication of a Doreen holly tree given by Edna Sandor in memory of Ruth Cooper, by Pastor John Gill. Special

landscaping and marker were given by Bob Easter. Ted Potyka, City Planner, gave an update on Redevelopment Plan and the Historic Survey.

- November 7 - Continuing in the historical mood, Allean presented an interesting paper written by her sister in St. Louis, "How the Declaration of Independence was Born". Charles Russell read that document and each of them answered questions, Allean also describing what happened to the signers thereafter.
- December 5 - Holidays were celebrated with a "White Christmas" and Hanukkah candle lighting. A native son, Nathan White was surprised by thus honoring him as he told about celebrations while he was growing up. Many sang "I'm Dreaming of a White Christmas" while decorating a beautiful living tree with all white ornaments, many homemade treasures members brought. Very special refreshments were enjoyed, served by Kay Higgins and her Committee. Thanks for that pleasure after each program!
- January 2 - Started 1992 with Bill Adams, President of Historic Properties of St. Augustine who had been selected by our City to conduct the Survey and prepare nominations for historic registries. We had pledged 200 hours of volunteer research service to support this endeavor and about a dozen members selected assignments from the list of 383 older-than-fifty-years structures in Gulfport, prepared by their professionals. It was exciting to review their list and see tiny pictures of so many houses, many dating much earlier than 1927, the cutoff date set for our investigations of City Directories.
- February 6 - George Belting gave a unique history of Abraham Lincoln, Nancy Hanks and John Calhoun, illustrated by his maps and highlighted with personal investigations. We anticipate another program when he will share summer experiences he and Betty will be having this year in several exciting places. Thank you both for your many contributions to our Society!
- March 5 - Sue D. Goldman of Indian Rocks came in costume with a friend and they showed many treasures as she told of Seminoles and other tribes who once lived here. Her rich background as an Educational Consultant at Heritage Park was generously shared and we were truly grateful for this evening with such a qualified expert who was delightful as well as informed.
- April 2 - Newcomers to Gulfport, David and Cora Kent, artists and owners of Sabal Palm Galleries presented "Making Current History". They diagrammed why they chose to live and work here, how they have taken stock of their lives and what they have decided to do--keep life in their years and help others more fully enjoy the natural wonders of our world especially as expressed in creative arts. If YOU haven't visited 2814 Beach Boulevard, do go see what a fantastic addition they and their property are to Gulfport! About forty members participated in the annual meeting which followed, where it was stated reporting would be mailed.



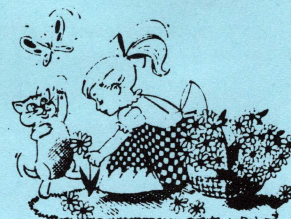
MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Dick Bullis and Gwen Goldmann each served as Chairman and our President has continued when they had to resign. Anita Morton and Mary Atkinson were appointed co-chairmen May 11 and will be oriented shortly. There have been 23 new memberships this year - 6 Life, 7 Family and 10 individual, as follows: Claudette Renney Dean, Robert D. Easter, Roberta Kimball, Ernie Perrone, Helen Ross (honorary) and Ruby Walker; Mr. and Mrs. Charles Brown, Mr. and Mrs. Aubrey Gaston, Mr. and Mrs. Johnney Johnson, Mr. and Mrs. David Kent, Mr. and Mrs. Art Padula, Mr. and Mrs. Steve Speechfly and Mr. and Mrs. "Bus" Zieres; Elsie Crimaldi, Mary Drake, Janet Dutton, Steve Hudgins, Helen V. King, Peggy Marcy, Anita Morton, Jack Olsen, Marian E. Parzyk and Lynn Vogel. The present mailing list includes 138 addresses with many duplicate members, the local Historical Societies and some complimentaries--City Staff, donors and out of State visitors to our Museum. Our "200 hours of research work" for the Survey brought us about ten new members, who are continuing to help us many ways. Jo Ann (Beal) Speechfly typed the ten year history of our Society written by the President last year. Several others are using special skills needed for some Museum procedures. Some have asked to see when life members have been recruited so here is that input:

LIFE MEMBERS OF THE GULFPORT HISTORICAL SOCIETY and indicating year of such payment or honorary

1982 - Juanita Mann Onweller	
1983 - Joseph Webb and Virginia Easter Welch	
1984 - Mr. and Mrs. Poul Hornsleth	
1985 - Mrs. Deane A. Durgin	
1986 - Helene Bazemore	Mr. and Mrs. Stephen Bonyai
Mr. and Mrs. Arthur W. Davis	Mr. and Mrs. Perry G. Davis
Michaelena Punaro	Walter Goetz
Earl C. Huckins	Ione Kinney
L. T. McCarthy	Irma Newman
Dr. Mary B. Platz	Frances Purdy*
Caroline F. Somma	
1987 - Theodore Anderson	Mr. and Mrs. R. W. Caldwell
Catherine A. Hickman*	"Kay" Higgins
1988 - Nina A. Anderson	James Brown
Mr. and Mrs. Alphonse Marcallo	Mr. and Mrs. George V. Payne
Tavia Pottanger	Jeanne Gray Romaine
1989 - Robert E. Burke	Allean Davis*
Keith Hickman*	Clarice Layburn
Mrs. Orion Osgood	Patricia Rondeau
Johanna Schneidt	Genevieve Smith
Rose Gutman	"Jan" Cook*
	Ruth S. Cooper
1990 - Edna Sandor	
1991 - Claudette R. Dean	Ruby Walker
1992 - Robert D. Easter	Ernie Perrone
	Roberta Kimball

May 1992



SPECIAL EVENTS THIS SOCIETY YEAR

The Community Holiday Celebration the afternoon of December 7, combined again with the First Methodist Church, was very popular and City officials helped us with their presence, servicing of the grounds, showing Fire Quipment and providing decorated cakes. More than ever, craft tables along sidewalks continue to enlarge our audiences for a variety of groups who offer musical, dramatic or other entertainment, especially by children. It is truly a demonstration of neighborliness, Gulfport's time honored and perhaps best quality.

Our eleventh annual Nostalgia Day April 4 was the best yet with focus on honoring descendants of pioneer families, presented by Catherine A. Hickman, Founder and First President of GHS and her Committee. An estimated 500 residents and friends kept an almost steady stream buying from selected vendors, visiting exhibits in the Museum and crossing the street to eat more, buy and be amused by many children being turned into clowns, making gifts and having fun. They came over to investigate our super fire trucks where our very special firemen and women told them about safety and let them explore the engines. Ice cream cones were the order of the day--Keith and Lum had to make refill trips, having the same luck the Chefs had with their special hot dogs. Our City gave us a new treat--motorized trolley, because the homemade one which served us ten years had become unsafe!

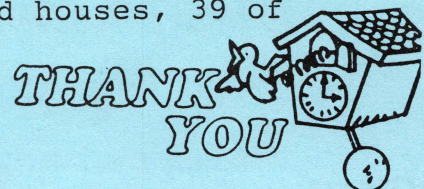
The third unique activity is publication of our fifth Community Calendar which featured pioneer faces and places--very popular. Judy Ryerson and Phyllis Plotnick and others did yoeman duty finding pictures, writing data and selling them. We thank our Library Staff and selected business owners who helped us immeasurably -- some calendars are available at the Library and Museum, for \$1.00. All the 1991 issues are gone.

MUSEUM HAPPENINGS

Open hours Wednesday and Saturday afternoons, and often by appointment, have been rewarding in many ways to those who have been doing hostess duty. Former residents are delighted with what they can recognize, find and give us. Many children come alone or with parents and enchant us with their enthusiasm and comments. Too few field trips could be arranged this year because of school schedule conflicts but we hope for more in the Fall. Frances Osgood has been especially faithful and with her gracious manner and obvious affection and respect for Gulfport she welcomes anyone--a trait most enviable and essential in a docent. Family members are bringing photos and other memorabilia to us constantly for inclusion in their family files.

Last Fall Inez Foley, Jan Cook and the Writer, completed an Inventory to which uncounted gifts have been added this year. Shortly that information will be coded in accord with our State Society's standards, by Susan Arensau, new resident, who has had considerable historic research experience in Nova Scotia.

Special displays this year included imaginary rooms of long ago, arranged by Inez, including child and adult bedrooms, playroom for children, kitchen and dining rooms and a general store. It's positively amazing what imagination, initiative and devotion to cause can create. Other displays included photos of beautiful and/or old houses, 39 of them, now collated into an album for availability.





Ruby Walker gave us priceless letters to and from baseball greats, copies of which are in another album, originals will be encapsulated for permanent "museum" care.

When Ken Ford and wife visited us recently he was more than favorably impressed with what we have accomplished and commended us warmly, offering assistance he might be able to give us. We asked for instructions about the care of precious papers and fabrics and he set up a workshop for four of us for the first petition, another will be offered later. We have prepared a "want" list from a marked catalogue of supplies we need, given to Susan May 5, to encapsulate papers and shall order them, authorized by the Board May 11, when current prices can be quoted. Ken has most strongly recommended that we must have central air maintained at 70 degrees with dehumidifiers, or we should give all papers and fabrics to other museums who can properly care for them. Our "wish" list in February included a small glass enclosed case with two shelves; it was given and we now ask for Air Conditioning, cost of which we can help pay. This is a City building so discussions will happen soon!

Very popular are the eight albums of clippings and pictures given by the Writer, representing many hours of volunteerism, deeply appreciated by newcomers especially who are investing talents to improve Gulfport and retain what is its best. Someone recently remarked that it seems to be "outsiders" who are doing the most to maintain this area as it came to be known--perhaps others are too accustomed to our advantages to realize what we have here! More volunteers are needed to do many chores in and around the Museum--housekeeping is assumed by hostesses, ground care needs improvement--we have lost shrubs and flowers because of lack of water but the Board agreed it may be possible to tap our water pump for selected small areas of underground sprinkling. Our holly has been infested as were the hibiscus and the many plants, and all life needs water. This is another topic for discussion soon. Offers for help will be thankfully received!

SURVEY UPDATE

The afternoon of April 28 saw the ingathering of data obtained by our volunteers who searched City Directories and those who went beyond the "call of duty" identifying another 90 or so houses built before 1927. We hope those "pioneer families" will prepare a Directory or other type of publication so all that information can be shared. We thank "Cathy" and Claudette Dean for this additional benefit to our City and anticipate their continuing accomplishments. Just received is the history as told by Steve Olausen and staff, copies of which have been given to five most dedicated to this Survey, for corrections, to be returned to Ted Potyka by May 21. The next step will be nominations of specific buildings and/or sites or areas for historic registrations. We shall keep you informed in THE GABBER since our next HISTORIAN will be mailed in September, predicting programs and other events.

GLEN OAKS CEMETERY PROJECT UPDATE

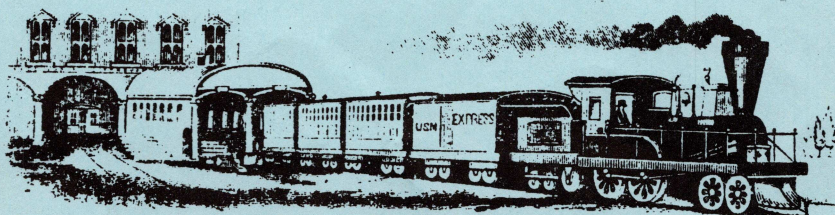
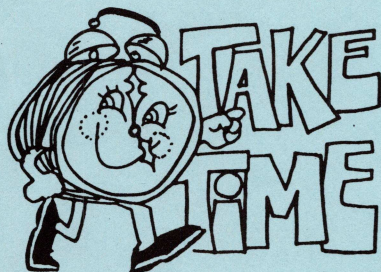
You may remember that "Cathy" and Claudette were asked to represent our Society at hearings on whether or not St. Petersburg would assume responsibility for nominating that site for preservation as originally intended. Letters were sent indicating Society support and

the Council forwarded such a Resolution. Recently we have been asked to send more letters and three will be mailed to be enclosed in their packet of data going to The National Trust for Historic Preservation from St.Petersburg Planning Council (C.A.H., C.R.D. and F.P.)

AND FINALLY--

Of course we enjoy belonging to Florida Historical Society by reading the Quarterly Bulletin and wishing we could attend sessions. We do belong to the Chamber of Commerce and supported, with Beaches the Concert-in-the Park, biggest and best with the largest audience and fullest tuba of donations! We belong to the newly formed Gulfport Arts Council and have representation there and on the Council's Special Events Committee (M.A.). We would like to attend other local Society meetings and have their members come here, and perhaps that too, will happen some day. We are pleased with what has been happening during **these** almost eleven years--eight "doing" the Museum. Please suggest how we can improve our services!

Frances Purdy



EDITOR KAY BOATWRIGHT