

Some things you might not know about us . . .

THE GULFPORT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Society was founded in 1981 as a non-profit association dedicated to the gathering, distribution, and preservation of the history of Gulfport.

The first Board of Directors included people whose names have become synonymous with the history of Gulfport itself: Catherine Hickman, Mary Atkinson, Judy Ryerson and Nathan White.

One of its first goals was to compile a history of the community. "Our Story of Gulfport," a collection of essays and memoirs, was published in 1985 and is now out of print. In 1999 a photo survey of Gulfport became one of Arcadia Publishing's "Images of America" series. Lynne Brown's first volume of "A Definitive History" was published in 2004 and the final volume came out in connection with our Centennial in 2010.

THE GULFPORT HISTORICAL MUSEUM

Another early goal was to find a home for the memorabilia donated by residents. This was accomplished in 1984 when the Society obtained a lease on the former Methodist church building in Chase Park and began the acquisition of a collection of research and exhibit materials. The Museum has been open on a regular basis for the past 28 years, and now is available to the public six days a week, from 2 to 4 on weekday afternoons and 10 -12 Saturday mornings.

THE ACCESSIONS PROCESS

When something is added to a museum collection, it becomes what is called an **accession**. The entire collection of the Gulfport Historical Museum, with very few exceptions, is composed of gifts given by those who have something they think would be of interest to our residents and visitors.

When we receive such a gift, we make a note of the donor and try to find out what we can about the object.

About three or four times a year, we have a meeting of our Accessions Committee, and every new item is brought out and discussed by the group. They then decide between three possible choices: make it part of the collection, sell it, or give it away. We accept nothing on permanent loan, though we do occasionally have temporary exhibits of interesting collections belonging to people in the community.

When an item is accessioned, it is given a number designating the year it became a part of the collection. For example, something labeled 12-06 would be the sixth object accessioned in the year 2012. It may then go on display.

Our Accessions Committee serves a very important function, and we appreciate the time and knowledge they share with us. Current members are Miki Vaughan, Gene and Marie Gsell, Mary Orzech, and Lynne Brown. If you have an interest in the history and preservation of every kind of memorabilia, we would welcome your joining us on this committee.

What is this and why are we sending it to you? The Gulfport Historical Society is hoping that more members of the community will become involved in our projects. Here are some of the ways you can help, either by volunteering yourself or passing on the word to others you think might be interested.

WE NEED

A CURATORIAL ASSISTANT

So many objects come to us without any information. For instance, just recently we received almost the complete contents of a photo studio. Someone with an interest in photography might enjoy going over these items, identifying them, and preparing them for exhibit. Or would you like to work with a collection of old toasters, including a Mickey Mouse one that actually prints Mickey's face on your toast? Or a 1919 Singer sewing machine that needs to be cleaned up and offered for sale? And there are many more fascinating pieces of history waiting for someone's attention.

WE NEED

IDEAS FOR FUNDRAISERS

This is everybody's least favorite job, so it will take an exceptional person to volunteer in this department. The Society currently has no steady source of income, beyond donations and the sale of books and calendars. The annual Birthday Bash in October is a potential occasion to launch some new projects, such as the Antiques Appraisal we sponsored last year. What do you think? Any ideas?

SEE WHAT WE MEAN? WHATEVER YOUR INTERESTS OR TALENTS, WE CAN USE THEM! PLEASE LET US KNOW IF YOU CAN HELP. THANKS!

WE NEED

A WEB SITE OVERSEER

If computers are your thing, there is plenty to do! Lots of pictures and stories to add to the web site periodically. Roam through the files and the collections and find treasures to share with everyone in Gulfport.

WE NEED

A PROGRAM CHAIRPERSON

Only interesting programs will bring people to our meetings to learn more about the Society and the Museum. We are planning to have two membership meetings in 2012-2013, one in September to kick off the year ahead and one in January to include the many folks who are here only during the winter months. In September we already have a great program planned, Deborah Frethem's new one-act play about Gulfport's earliest residents, "Henry's Cemetery." In October there is the Birthday Bash, but from November on, we need some new and exciting ideas.

Drop in or email us at
admin@gulphorthistoricalsociety.org

A WORD FROM OUR PRESIDENT . . .

I greatly appreciate the importance of the job I have been given. Following in the footsteps of Judy Ryerson, our president for the last 17 years, will not be easy. I hope I will not fail her.

We are the living symbols of our history. The trials and triumphs of each generation define us today. It's an interesting journey. Come visit us and see how our unique community evolved.

Miki Vaughan, President