



NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER

1997

from the President

As the season opens, OIRF is on the threshold of several new beginnings. We have fulfilled our goal of building a museum shop (which is open on a limited schedule for now). Hospitality House has had a face-lift inside thanks to the efforts and organization of Eileen Evans. Progress continues on Mallory Square and should be completed in the near future. Nancy Jameson and the museum committee are planning a clean-up and makeover of the interior of the Oldest House. The exterior work was completed this summer, and the grand opening will coincide with the opening of the museum shop.

With all these openings, you can expect that our next project needs to focus on staffing our three locations with volunteers. We need your help! If you can give OIRF a morning or afternoon a week, please call 294-9501.

I have saved the best news for last. Betsy Dietz has rejoined OIRF as executive director. We all know the great work she has done in the past, and having her in this full time position now gives me great hope of fulfilling our goals in the future.

Lucille Feaker

1997-98 Schedule of Events

- Dec. 16 - Shop "Grand Opening" and Museum Christmas party
- Dec. 27 & 28 - Christmas Tour
- Jan. 23 & 24 - House & Garden Tour #1
- Feb. 4 - Wreckers' Black/White Ball
- Feb. 13 & 14 - House & Garden Tour #2
- Mar. 6 & 7 - House & Garden Tour #3
- Mar. 21 - Conch Shell Blowing Contest

See the new Old Island Days brochure for a full calendar of cultural events.



GIFT SHOP A REALITY

All summer, the focus of OIRF's energies, physical and financial, has been on 322 Duval St., at the Oldest House/Wreckers' Museum. First, the final stage of the Master Restoration Plan for the museum begun in 1992 was completed—restoring the south facing wall, replacing the door on the second floor with a period window, upgrading the plumbing from the second floor front bath and repainting the exterior where necessary. The property now looks quite clean and bright.

Work was begun on the major recommendation of the Master Plan, the construction of a museum gift shop to enhance the entrance to the museum while contributing to the museum maintenance coffers.

While several rain days delayed the intended completion date, the shop committee opened with a rudimentary offering of OIRF souvenirs and gifts early in November.

The space, designed by architect Michael Miller with the assistance of architect Michael Ingram, is a challenge but quite charming and should prove a welcome addition to the museum.

It is expected that volunteers will staff the shop; and, therefore, a call is out for help!!!! What a great way to spend a few hours a week, right on bustling Duval St.

A "Grand Opening" is planned for Tuesday, December 16 at 6 PM.

BRING YOUR CHRISTMAS SHOPPING LIST!!

BOARD MEMBER UPDATE

The *Newsletter* would like to introduce board members Kay Behmke, Dominique Del Monte, Peary Fowler, and Sheila Shkor:

Kay Behmke arrived here from Cleveland, Illinois following the sale of a family owned business in the late '80s which led her husband John to the beaches (literally) of Key West. Finding great potential in the then burgeoning Truman Annex project (researching and investing from his home base - a van parked at Smathers Beach) and assuring Kay she would not have to live in the van, John convinced her to join him here, and the rest is history. They are now partners in the Truman Annex Real Estate Company. Kay brings to the board not only her business acumen but her love of the island's natural beauty.

Dominique Del Monte - Having grown up in Cuba, Dominique brings to the board a unique sense of the architectural history of Key West. He cites the similarities of much of "conch house" architecture to the small old towns of Cuba prior to the '50s. He spent most of his professional career in advertising sales, with Spanish versions of several well



known American publications. He now divides his time between Key West and Southampton, NY where he is an active volunteer in social services organizations.

Sheila Shkor - Sheila is our representative from the military community. Her professional life involves various applications of her strong education background. She and her husband, who is director of the JIAFT in Key West, have had several important seaport postings, such as San Francisco, New Orleans, New York City and Savannah which have versed her in the unique demands of the shipping industry historically. "Key West is the best of them all," she says. Because

of the richness of the island's history combined with its size, "so much of the culture and history is truly accessible here." As a museum docent she admires in particular the vulnerability and strengths of the early Keys ship captains during the times of the wreckers.

Peary Fowler is a 5 year resident of Key West, moving here with her son following a stint as a prosecutor with the State Attorney's office. Her career has blossomed from art major to stewardess to attorney and her current law practice which she shares with her husband, Richard Fowler. Named for her great grandfather, Admiral Peary (namesake of Peary Court also), Peary was destined for a life with historic orientation. When not dealing with legal issues, she plays "soccer mom" and devotes herself to activities at the Woman's Club and the Yacht Club.

OIRF NEWSLETTER

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OIRF P.O. Box 689
Key West, Florida 33041

GREAT GIFT IDEAS
& Stupendous Stocking Stuffers!



Visit Our New GIFT SHOP
at The Oldest House Museum!
322 Duval Street - Open Daily

**Watch for the Members'
dues renewal mailing
this month.**



Undaunted by the rain, members of our volunteer cadre donned their red shawls and shirts to participate in the first Island Roots Festival parade on October 27. Preparing to pass out Old Island Days Event Schedules on Duval St. were from left, President Lucille Feaker, Denison Tempel, Jean Reed, Ruth Munder, Nancy Jameson, Ginny Church, Christine Gallagher, David Roumm, Joyce Scott, Joann Hoffman, Mary Kathryn Taylor, Bud Hoffman, and John Gallagher. Betsy Dietz was on the other side of the camera.

1997-98 House & Garden Tour Schedule

HOLIDAY HOUSE TOURS - Dec. 27 & 28, 5 to 8PM

2620 Fogarty Avenue - Carolyn & Jerry Cash

1501 White Street - Kate Miano

615 Grinnell Street - Ray Pepper

532 Grinnell Street - Michael Pelkey

1410 Petronia Street - Laurence & Marilyn Shames

HOUSE & GARDEN TOUR #1 - Jan. 23 & 24, 5 to 9PM

1111 Packer Street - Dean Carlson & Paul Hayes

822 Washington Street - Bernie Kinzer & Joe Famularo

1422 Washington Street - Woody & Joan Cornell

1415 Thompson Street - Meryle Silver & Mary Ann Scheuhing

915 Von Phister Street - Ken Weschler

HOUSE & GARDEN TOUR #2, Feb. 13 & 14, 10 to 4PM

Weather Station (Truman Annex) - Tim Koenig

626 William Street - Don Charney

810 Eisenhower Street - Bonnie & Douglas Murray

TBA

TBA

HOUSE & GARDEN TOUR #3, Mar. 6 & 7, 10 to 4PM

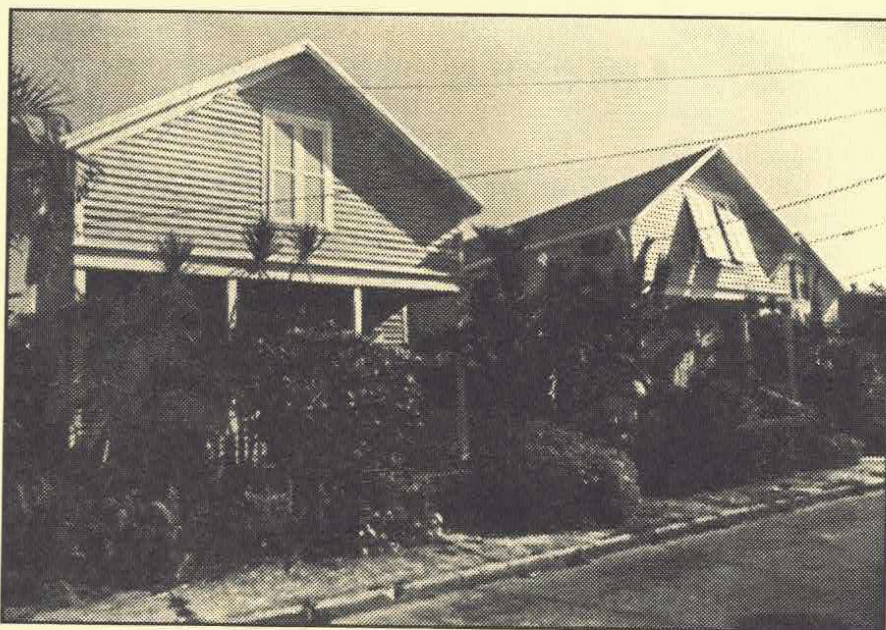
1414 Angela Street - Claude Harris

1300 Tropical Street - Ed & Shirley Block

1600 Johnson Street - Michael Berman

806 Truman Avenue - Treetop Inn (Sue & Fred Leake)

1413 Alberta Street - Thomas Buchler



Almost twins on Petronia St. - On the left is the home of author Laurence Shames and his wife Marilyn at 1410, which will be open for Holiday touring.

DEVELOPMENT UPDATES

Most of our members are local so undoubtedly are informed regarding the most salient development topics, but we will review for those who are not.

Probably the most talked about current project is the renovation of the **Fogarty House** at the corner of Caroline and Duval. After the demolition of the restaurant and dining deck which had fronted the structure on Duval, passersby were granted a look at one of the most splendid architectural designs in Key West hoping that this magnificent view would remain unobstructed. Unfortunately, two buildings are being rebuilt in front of the house (on the Duval St. side) which will re-obstruct this view. Nevertheless, we are pleased to know that the original house will be preserved.

The **Southernmost House** at the end of Duval St. is undergoing a complete rehabilitation and already boasts new wrought iron fencing and gates as well as a much spruced up paint job.

804 Whitehead Street, an interesting but formerly derelict Victorian, has managed to avoid being moved, a plan fought by the Bahama Village community. It is being designed as a small shopping village reminiscent of those at Mallory Square and the new Bight development.

The **Santa Maria Motel**, while not in the same historical category, is scheduled for demolition to allow expansion of the Marriott Reach Hotel. To most preservationists it is the nostalgia of the interior spaces and what they represented to the local community that concern them.

And, finally, **Mallory Square**...yet in its refurbishment. As of the holidays, the brick areas are almost complete with Hospitality House still isolated but at least hooked into electric (shared with two other businesses!) and water. But, the end appears to be in sight. What we are currently monitoring is a patch of dirt in front of Hospitality House which was/is the proposed site for a maritime structure afloat on acrylic water...or some such! The OIRF board has voted to oppose this if it should come to a public hearing.

ANON...BSD

OLD ISLAND RESTORATION FOUNDATION
cordially invites all members and friends to the

**The Oldest House Museum Shop “*Grand Opening*”
and Museum Christmas Party**
322 Duval Street

Tuesday, December 16, 1997
6 to 8 PM

**** Bring your Christmas shopping list ****

Old Island Restoration Foundation, Inc.

At the Hospitality House, Mallory Square
P.O. Box 689, Key West, Florida 33041
(305) 294-9501

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