



# NEWSLETTER

MARCH

Happy 40th Anniversary, OIRF

2000

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

A new century brings with it an opportunity to take a fresh look at things we see and do everyday and, in the case of a non-profit, the programs and services we provide every day.

Old Island Restoration Foundation, now in its 40<sup>th</sup> year as the preservation guardian of the unique architecture of Key West, is using this opportunity for a fresh insight to look at Mallory Square with any eye toward reintroducing historical references.

40 years ago, a group of concerned citizens formed this organization to promote the preservation and restoration of historically significant buildings on the island. Its first project was the reclamation of the old Mallory Docks which had fallen into severe decay due primarily to the lack of water related activity. The Old Mallory Square Commission was formed, the docks were shored up and the buildings restored. The Mallory Steamship Lines ticket office (built in 1865) was moved to its presented location and restored by OIRF as its new home- Hospitality House!

Over the 40 years the waterfront section has seen changes but stayed primarily a parking area and a stopping spot for the Sunset Celebration. Three years ago the majority of the dock area

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*Capt. Alex Vega (on right) discusses plans for the rehabilitation of the feed house at Fire Station #3 on Grinnell St. with, from left, architect Michael Ingram, OIRF Treasurer Sue Zirilli and President John Weachter*

## GRANTS PROGRAMS

The Small Grants Program for the preservation of historic Key West structures, funded by Old Island Restoration Foundation, is once again seeking applicants for \$1000 to \$2500 grants for City projects of merit. By providing these grant opportunities, the island's preservation guardian seeks to recognize and promote in-town renovations and restorations of a reduced size which might not otherwise be undertaken.

Over its 40 year history O.I.R.F. has contributed to the completion of such large scale programs as the rejuvenation of Mallory Square and the old steamship office, now Hospitality House, the restoration of Old City Hall and the San Carlos building, and the preservation of several local churches. Its most recent grants to larger projects include the

Wesley House restoration of the original facade of the former Ley Memorial Church and rehabilitation of the Grinnell Street Fire Station, specifically the feed house structure pictured above.

The Small Grants Program, which fills a smaller and often more critical need, has helped seed the Lofton Sands African Bahamian Museum & Resource Center project, restore the Key West Botanical Garden after Hurricane Georges, provide shutter restoration for the Heritage House Museum and evaluate the restoration of the Auditorium at St. Mary's as a community center.

Deadline for applications for the coming evaluation period is April 1. Those wishing more information or an application should call the O.I.R.F. office at 294-9501.

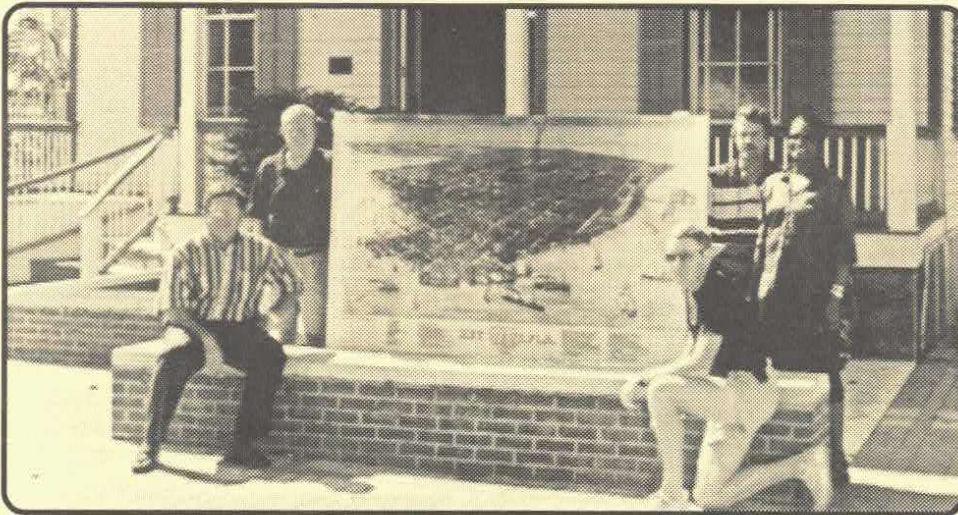
## Dates to remember:...

April 5-Members' Appreciation Party

*\*Dues must be paid by party date  
OR at the door that night.  
(no membership cards are issued)*

April 12-Annual General Meeting





*The Hospitality House Committee (John Weachter, Neil Hartman, Bill Horn, Sarah Fowler, Ed Little, and Ginger King (missing here) with the 7 foot enlargement of the 1884 Key West Bird's Eye View*

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was bricked over to provide a plaza or mall for cruise ship visitors and sunset celebrants.

After an initial reaction of dismay, we now see the creation of a plaza as a stage ready for playing out some of the significant history which developed from this very dock area. It would be appropriate to call the docks the heart or the core of Key West historically, considering that the City's spread resulted from the docks and their role in producing commerce and therefore building needs.

To begin evaluation of the docks and particularly Hospitality House as a focal point to a maritime exhibit of yet-to-be-determined scope, we have formed a committee consisting of Neil Hartman (Chair), Ed Little of the Maritime Heritage Society, and Board members Sarah Fowler, Ginger King, Bill Horn with Betsy Dietz and myself.

Some immediate aspects of a long term program have been budgeted and will include a 7 foot blow-up of the 1884 Bird's Eye View of Key West, Fla., which upon approval, will sit out on the lawn in front of the Hospitality House. Photo enlargements of the 1830s views of the business section of Key West will be easel-mounted on the porch.

We are discussing with the University of Miami's Architecture School's their

students' involvement with the planning and production of a diorama of the Mallory docks at a fixed period in time, to be complemented by a photo series showing the area's evolution. A video is also planned for continuous running in the Hospitality House showing various historical materials available.

There are almost endless possibilities to bringing "History" back onto the docks, much of which will include the City government.

We are encouraged by responses to some of our initial thoughts. We look forward to developing this program, at its VERY infancy at this point, and encourage the involvement of any and all of our members. Let us know your thoughts and how you want to assist.

*John Weachter*

#### COLIN JAMESON

A good friend to OIRF and to the Oldest House Museum passed away recently. Colin Jameson will be remembered for his wit, his wisdom and his dedication to the museum. He sat for many hours greeting guests to the museum and playing solitaire with the tiniest deck of cards imaginable. Our deepest sympathies go to his family, especially to our friend, Nancy.

#### WHAT A BALL!

This year's Black and White Ball, about to happen at press time, will net at least \$15,000 for additional furnishings for the Oldest House Museum. Co-chairmen Margaret Fauber and Michael Pelkey have put together a grand evening of dining (via Great Events) and dancing (via our own Dick Moody). Michael and Trip Hoffman arranged the usual "unusual" silent auction array which must be one of the largest in local fund raising history.

The extraordinary decor was gathered and donated by Michael, also. To Margaret, Michael and Trip, and to all the generous businesses **THANK YOU!**



Your **MEMBERSHIP DUES** are the life blood of the operation of OIRF. They insure the administrative operation of the foundation, the running of Hospitality House, and the production of the Pelican Path brochure and the Newsletter. Please send your support and, perhaps, consider an upgrade in Membership level. *Thank You!*

#### OIRF NEWSLETTER

Editor- Betsy S. Dietz

Production- Kat Klingerman

OIRF

P.O. Box 689, Key West, FL 333041  
305-294-9501





*Paula Newhouse, Betty and Jack Goodwin, John Belkengren, Bill Gillette and Barbara Martin welcome guests at 328 Whitehead St. during Tour #3., the final tour of the 40th annual House & Garden Tour season*

### HOUSE & GARDEN TOURS 2000

Under the capable leadership of Tours Chairman Trip Hoffman and House Selection Committee Chair Mitzi Krabill, the 40<sup>th</sup> Annual House & Garden Tours celebrated another exceptionally successful season. The four sets of tours, from the Holiday event through early March, raised over \$55,000 to be used to provide grants to local preservation projects.

Sincere thank yous go to all those who volunteered the many man hours it takes to run the tour season, approximately 2800. And, esteemed recognition goes to the home owners whose contribution of their residences for these tours is immeasurable: Michael Bauer, Michael Pelkey, James & Randy Duclos, Michael Gosselin & Chuck Nosal, the Key West Garden Club, Momy Ortiz-Benavides, Shirley & Frank Piku, Lynn Sherman & Leonard Reiss, Bebe & Steve Weavil, Dick Jones & Dominique Del Monte, Chris Simpson, Willow & Joseph Taves, Marta & Martin White, David Dresie, David George & William Welch, Jamie & John Hallick, Richard Kemble & George Korn, and Diane & Dick Scruggs.

Each year it becomes more and more difficult to find suitable homes for the tours. Often it is simply the need of homeowners to understand OIRF's criteria: **houses are chosen primarily for their contribution to the Key West community as either a significant historic building, an outstanding restoration or renovation or an example of the unique lifestyle here on the Keys.**

The house Selection Committee welcomes any suggestions for homes for the 2001 tour. This is an opportunity to provide a notable contribution to the preservation community.

### WISH LIST 2000

- \$ A new copier machine with zoom, collating (a dream!) etc.
- \$ A digital camera to record for posterity (and for PR) the houses on the tours and other activities
- \$ A REAL desk for the OIRF office
- \$ A VCR for a video of historic Mallory Square for Hospitality House
- \$ Parking spaces for Hospitality House and Oldest House volunteers
- \$ Shutter/blind repair for all houses
- \$ New-used Orientals for the Oldest House parlors and dining room, or a good lead to purchasing same
- \$ A mini-fridge for museum docents
- \$ A custodian for the Oldest House
- \$ A new face for the porch "dummy"
- \$ Lots and lots of fabulous houses for the House & Garden Tours 2001
- \$ And, lots and lots of fabulous volunteers for all of our activities

Thank you everyone!



### From the Executive Director

*Since I will be retiring from OIRF at the end of March, I want to take this opportunity to thank the many, many wonderful volunteers who form the core of this unique organization. There is no other group in the Keys who have such an enthusiastic volunteer cadre, who can produce a fundraiser as significant as the Annual House & Garden Tours solely through volunteerism. And, thank you to those who serve at the Oldest House, at Hospitality House and on the Board of Directors. It has been a pleasure!!*

*Betsy Dietz*



*Museum staff John Gallagher joins the replica of Capt. Watlington on the porch of the Oldest House Museum at 322 Duval Street. Voices were provided by Mike Alpern (the Captain) and Sally O'Boyle (his pet parrot). Bruce Peterson designed the "production" and Private Ear Studio created the tape.*



The Membership of  
Old Island Restoration Foundation, Inc.  
is cordially invited to attend the  
**MEMBERS' APPRECIATION PARTY**

Wednesday, April 5, from 6:30 - 8:30PM  
in the garden of the  
Oldest House Museum,  
322 Duval St.  
(dues may be paid at the door)

and the  
**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

Wednesday, April 12, at 5:30 PM  
-to hear reports of active committees  
-to elect new Board Members  
\*Refreshments to follow

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**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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George Born  
1205 Newton St. #3  
Key West, FL 33040

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