

Monthly Publication from the Zephyrhills Historical Association

Volume 17 – Number 10

October 2015

The next Zephyrhills Historical Association meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 3rd in the meeting room of the *Zephyrhills Public Library*, 5347 8th Street. The business meeting is scheduled for 6 p.m. and the program is at 7 p.m. Refreshments include drinks, which are provided, and food brought in to share by members.

Speakers



Louie Holt was our presenter for the October meeting. He showed a series of pictures we received from a collector in Miami. Margaret Seppanen first sent me a note about some postcards belonging to a collector in Michigan, but I procrastinated. Eventually I asked Jeff Miller for help. The postcards were already sold when Jeff contacted the man, but he followed up with a phone call to the man who had bought them. He agreed to scan them for us free of charge. So, at least on one occasion, my tendency to procrastinate paid off for us.

The speaker for November was not set at press time, but Irene assures me she will get somebody. We hope you'll join us.

From the Desk of the Editor:

Folks, I realize some of you did not receive a newsletter in August or September, and you may not know why. Clereen filled in for me and sent out newsletters, but she did not have all my addresses in her database. The reason I was not available was because I was recovering from quadruple bypass surgery. I must thank my primary care physician, Dr. B. S. Bedi, for having a hunch that I needed to go for a stress test. I was still working out six days a week until a couple of weeks before surgery. I'm confident Dr. Bedi saved my life. I am much better now. I've lost some weight, and I've quit smoking. I'd rather not go through this mess again. I appreciate the cards, visits, and phone calls from those of you who knew.



Jeff Miller
Pasco County Historian
For a walk down memory lane visit
www.fivay.org
Please consider contributing old photos for the
website.
My email address is on the opening page

ZHA Mission Statement

The mission of the Zephyrhills Historical Association is to research, gather, and share local historical information with all generations, through our literature, programs, and scholarships, and to volunteer assistance to the Zephyrhills Depot Museum and WWII Barracks Museum.

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PASCO PIONEERS — THE STANLEYS
by Madonna Jervis Wise & Ernest Wise

We were reminded of southern hospitality at its best and the graciousness of community, when we visited with the Stanley family on Saturday, July 21, 2015, at the home of Roscoe “Rocky” and Theresa “Lou” Stanley at 4-Bar Ranch, on Ryals Road. They are descendants of early pioneers to Pasco County. We met with **Lillie Eva Sapp Stanley, Marco Edward Stanley, and Roscoe “Rocky” Stanley**, and had the opportunity to learn about their family through stories, photographs and artifacts.



Ernie and Madonna Wise are researching Wesley Chapel (otherwise known as Godwin, Double Branch, Gatorville, Lemon, and Westley), for a book that will be published in 2016. Numerous articles, as well as Rosemary Trottmann’s history, discuss the Wesley Chapel pioneer families and their comradery. *By 1850...the Osburns, Kerseys, Bradleys, Hills and Stanleys had settled along the stage route*, said Trottmann.



Marco Edward Stanley has completed in-depth family genealogical research. In addition the family has hands-on knowledge of the economic and social history of the area that was home to settlers known for their farming, lumbering, charcoal, gator hunting, turpentine, and moonshine. ‘Marco’ related that the families were connected via marriage, so one cannot

study the Stanley family without learning about the names of Gillette, Smith, Godwin, Wells and the list goes on and on. With large families, a spouse came from neighboring families so it is no wonder that in the Stanley family tree or for that matter, any of the other family trees in Wesley Chapel, you will find the key pioneer names as well. Hard work and family permeated the lives of these frontiersmen.

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Lillie Eva Sapp Stanley is the lovely, vital matriarch of the family at age 95 and as all agree, she is “sharp as a tack.” Lillie and her twin sister, Willie Neva, were born February 8, 1920 in Georgia. Her family relocated to Polk County when she was a toddler, and she was reared on her family’s farm with chickens, cows and various crops. Lillie met and married Marco Stanley in the decade of the 1940s and they lived in Wesley Chapel. When asked what was most important to share about the Wesley Chapel area, Lillie explained that it was **a true community where everyone helped each other, went to church and just pitched in to mentor the children and take care of each other...A TRUE**




COMMUNITY. She described the school house of Wesley Chapel with two rooms, one for the lower grades and another for the upper grades through grade 8. She recalled members of the pioneer families with recollections of the character of the people, careful to share their kindnesses and contributions.

Lillie also shared that Hazel Weaver Stanley, wife of Roscoe Napoleon Stanley, was a ‘school bus driver’ in her own Model “A” Ford. Unlike today, she was paid per head for transporting the pupils to school. This included neighborhood children along with their own children, Raymond, Francis, Keith and Shirley.

The first of the Stanleys to arrive was William Sebron Standley and his wife, Fannie Bradley Standley. They settled near Gatorville after the Civil War. He spelled his name as Standley and the ‘D’ was later dropped by other family members. They lived between St. Joe and Godwin. William Sebron Standley’s son Lewis Napoleon Stanley had his homestead on Tupper Road across from what is now Saddlebrook.



Allegiances in the Wesley Chapel area were for both the confederacy and the union during this period. Marco Edward Stanley, said, “My Great-Great Grandfather was William Sebron Standley who is buried in Mt. Zion Cemetery in Dade City. He married Captain Robert Duke Bradley’s daughter. Frances.”



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Marco has located William Standley’s Confederate Pension which states that he was captured by the union army in Murfreesboro, Tennessee and imprisoned in an Ohio POW camp. Marco explained that William was a loyal confederate through and through, as evidenced by his pension document that recalls he was ‘involuntarily’ forced to state his allegiance to the union, while in the POW Camp.

Although William Sebron Stanley was the first to settle in Pasco County, the family settled for some time in Alachua County and were originally from Ireland. Through Marco’s extensive research, he discovered the Standley Family Cemetery near the Hague Community, around what was originally the county seat of Alachua County, Newnansville, which has recently been scanned for descendants using the ground penetrating technology to discover the burial of several ancestors.





Marco Edward and Roscoe “Rocky” are first cousins. Their dads were brothers, Marco Stanley (1921-1966) and Roscoe (1918-2003); sons of Raleigh “Rollie” Stanley and his wife, Malinda Jane Gillett who was a midwife in Wesley Chapel. In regard to lineage, Grandfather Raleigh “Rollie” parents were Lewis Napoleon Stanley and Mary Alice Tomberlin. Lewis was a son of the founding family, William Sebron Standley and Frances C. Bradley. Grandfather Raleigh lived at the end of Smith Road in Wesley Chapel.



Roscoe “Rocky” Stanley, son of Roscoe, shared a variety of photos and artifacts from the family including some of his Uncle Luther Smith’s items. Okay, how does Uncle Luther fit in...another example of the interconnectedness of the Wesley Chapel community? Well, Daniel H. Smith born in 1870 was married to Elizabeth Frances Geiger, daughter of John Adam Geiger and Eliza Jane Carroll. Daniel and Elizabeth’s son, Luther,

married Louneta Stanley, daughter of Lewis and Mary Alice Stanley. Luther served in the cavalry in World War I. Rocky has his uncle Luther’s cavalry saddle and military saddlebags, and they are in great condition. The family is very proud of his service

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The branding iron from the Stanley’s depicts the brand used by the family and Rocky explained the marking system that the family used. Rocky is proud of his father’s spurs that also hang in his family room over an impressive set of horns harvested from a range steer that was quite exemplary. Traditions continue as Rocky is proud that he and his wife have continued the tradition of giving a heifer to each grandchild so they can earn money for their education and future through the breeding and selling of the livestock...a tradition that teaches responsibility.


They are also particularly proud of their Cousins Bill Smith and Ruth Smith Adams who both are accomplished historians. Their family generously donated the log cabin built by Daniel H. Smith to the historical exhibit on the Florida Fairgrounds known as *Cracker Country*. The Smiths have spent considerable time at the exhibit telling stories and answering questions about the cabin and frontier Florida.

An iconic story of Wesley Chapel is that of Margaret “Maggie” Gillett Keen, daughter of James Horace Gillett and Zelin Grantham Gillett. So we inquired about this legendary story. Maggie’s name has been mentioned frequently, and many a story has been shared about the gal who lived at the end of Smith Road in Wesley Chapel. Sometimes referred to as the ‘bag lady’ because of her rustic attire and rough-hewn mannerisms, she was a hard working frontier woman. She was self-sufficient and was known for walking into Zephyrhills from Wesley Chapel once a week. Rocky said, ‘She was a good shot.’ Lillie Stanley pointed out that Maggie was an intelligent gal who had an education but when married, had lost a young baby and never recovered emotionally from the loss. Lillie pointed out that Maggie was misunderstood and showed her empathy and kindness as she spoke of her. Lillie said, she often got into mild squirmishes with Wiregrass Porter over the ownership of the roaming hogs. Marco Stanley said, Wiregrass *knew just how far to push Maggie*.



The Stanley family believes the name, Gatorville originated from the frequent gator hunting and or bayheads where gators were prevalent.

Fast forward to 2015, and the cohesive Stanley family is proud of their frontier history. Their family was recognized as a founding family at the 1998 dedication of the courthouse, and has an array of wonderful artifacts and family photos. We enjoyed a demonstration from both Rocky and Marco of the ‘cracker whips,’ that they definitely know how to pop! This family is most definitely a treasure in the history of Wesley Chapel and Pasco County.

<p>CornerStone  Baptist Church 7th Street & 8th Avenue</p> <p>Come be our special guest Coffee & Donuts 10:30***** Worship 11:00 A.M. and 6:00 P.M.</p> <p>Dr. Neal Resue—Pastor *NealDoe1956@verizon.net</p>	<p>In Memory of</p> <p>Ryals Furniture Exchange And Great Parents Powell & Maude Ryals</p> <p>From son James</p> <p>God Bless America</p>
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Sawdust Pile

by Jon R. Ferguson

My twin, Jim, and I were born west of Zephyrhills on Ryals Road in 1934. The “Great Depression” was rampant. Folks were starving and willing to work for food. Mother and Dad had moved several times in a matter of a few months, seeking a place to make a living. One crop near Hillsborough River State Park was bountiful, but so was everyone else’s, so there was no profit.



The only house we remember from our youth was located on a dirt road between 7th and 8th Avenue on 3rd Street. The house number was 712, but it has been changed. Dad had built a house and planted a grove north of Dade City for a man who promised them a good living when they first moved to Florida in about 1917. That didn’t turn out well. Dad had been a mechanic, an early automobile dealer, farmer, WPA worker, etc. He was foreman for much of the WPA work around Zephyr Park and the school building. He was also employed in the clearing of the roadway for U.S. Highway 301 from Zephyrhills to Tampa. We survived.

Fred Butterfield Gill was instrumental in getting a sawmill for Dad. It was put into use on the vacant lots to the north of our house. Much pine lumber was cut at that mill. In the process, much sawdust was produced. A chain hoist was built to take the sawdust from under the saws and make a pile of it. One must realize that fresh sawdust has a small amount of resin in it and it clings to clothing. One would think that Mother would complain when we stomped through the house with sawdust on our clothes, but she “took the high road” and I often heard her say: “Rich folks buy sweeping compound, mine is free.” Deep piles of sawdust can create heat...I even heard about spontaneous combustion, but we never experienced anything like that. Many times scrap pieces of wood would be thrown onto the pile and the “pilings” were set on fire to destroy them. The sawdust could smolder for days. The smell and smoke was not always pleasant, but to us, it smelled like money!

The larger the pile, the more fun we kids had playing “King of the Mountain” or some other game. We felt blessed when we could place cypress bark on the slopes and slid down in a shovel. Dad rarely cut cypress. One time Jim and several of his friends who had motorcycles decided to see if they could ride over the top of the pile. They forgot that the ride down would be much faster. There was a pile of metal and “shook-up” boys at the bottom. Luckily no one was hurt and the cycles were also fine. Once was enough. Lesson well learned. That was the period when kids created their own entertainment and didn’t rely upon expensive store-bought toys or movies, etc. Many of the neighborhood children, boys and girls, would scamper across the sawdust and just had a ball. It was clean. Clothing could be shaken and was unhurt except for a few new wrinkles. Bare feet were called for, but most of us were always barefooted, especially in the summer time. In fact, we were lucky to have new pair of shoes each year.

We were not the only folks who had a mill in town. Byron Hill owned a mill on the south end, Booth Crate mill was also an early operation at the south city limits line. Stanley Ryals dealt in a lot of lumber, but I don’t remember if he had a mill.

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It all depends on your interpretation as to whether the mill was a curse or a blessing. The neighbors complained enough to cause the City Council to ask Dad to move the “attractive nuisance” out of the city. He did. He bought a few acres right on the west city limits near the cemetery thinking the folks in the cemetery would not cause a ruckus. The sawdust pile at the new location never got very big. An edging mill was added, but the mill was never a real money maker. Dad was not a good manager. He let folks take advantage of his good will. One Sunday afternoon in about 1949 or 1950 (Jim and I were in high school) the mill burned beyond restoration, and there was no insurance. Ironically, that same afternoon the Hill Mill was burned to the ground. The Booth Crate Mill had been closed for years.

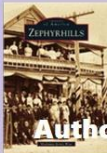
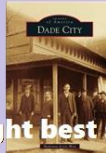




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As the old sawdust pile aged it was not uncommon for folks to drive up to it and load up all sorts of containers with it, primarily using it as mulch or compost. Well, it was sterile, but the value of it as mulch or compost was always questioned and never proven. Dad had experimented with it trying to make a cement mixture with it for paving blocks, etc., but was not successful. His younger brother in Arkansas was successful in using “scrap” chips, etc. as filler for layered parquet floor tiles. Now you can find “pressed wood” furniture, etc. That’s okay, I prefer solid wood.

A few years went by. The city bought the last mill property to expand the cemetery. There was a five-acre tract between the mill and the cemetery, but when the owners of that tract realized that they were bordered on each side by a cemetery, the sold out to the city also. The former location of the mill between 7th and 8th Avenue on 3rd Street is now filled with houses. Our old home place has been rebuilt and is not recognizable as the same building. Our old chicken yard and barn/garage are just memories.

Somewhere along the line, the city paved Third Street. No curbs. The street only stretches from 5th Avenue to the cemetery where it joins First Street. Much later the septic tanks were “bombed” out and sewer lines were installed. There is something about the “good old times” that still thrill me.

   <p>Author of eight best selling books</p> <p>Madonna Wise Books Author, Research & Consulting Madonna Jervis Wise Zephyrhills, Florida Murphy, North Carolina</p> <p>813-469-8627 MadonnaJWise@gmail.com http://madonnawisebooks.wordpress.com</p>	<p>Cutting Edge Beauty Salon</p>  <p>813-782-4001 813-469-3437</p> <p>Joni Gauger owner/stylist</p> <p>6132 Fort King Rd. Zephyrhills, Florida 33542</p>
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