

# West Pasco Historical Society

## Museum and Library

"The Old Schoolhouse in Sims Park"

VOL X, #4

OCT/NOV 1997

### FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK...

Our season opener was a huge success. Nearly 125 people passed through our doors Sunday, September 14th to hear our speaker, Jan Glidewell, and to celebrate the beginning of our 25th anniversary. Thanks to Frances Mallett, Ceil Zubrod, Mary Jane Prichard, Audrey O'Neil, Katy Casto-Hevey, Laura Helm, Terry Kline, Sam Eaton, Howard Chenoweth, Elizabeth Jones and her Library staff, and Midge London-Prace for their help on this day.

The crowd was captivated by Jan Glidewell's stories of his experiences as a journalist. It was a great way to open the new season. Mr. Glidewell was presented a Certificate of Appreciation and a set of books that are published by the Society. Afterwards refreshments were served and tours were conducted through the Museum and Library.

Our new exhibit, "Y'all Come and They Did," was well received. Please note the "Timeline" constructed for this exhibit in the Indian Room, also when you visit the Museum don't forget to put a pin in the map hanging in the main Museum Room to show what State you came from.

### WISH LIST

We are in desperate need of a few major items:

1. Small office copy machine
2. P.A. system
3. TV stand with glass front to store videos

### HIBISCUS MEMORIAL FOR MARY LOU KNIGHT

Nearly 45 people met at the Historical Society on August 27 to honor the memory of Mary Lou Knight, one of the founders of the Chasco Questors. The Questors dedicated a hibiscus plant to be planted in the Memory Garden to Mary Lou. Also represented were the Pithlachascotee Questors, the Clayton Woods Questors, the Fivay Questors, and the United Daughters of the Confederacy. The event was chaired and arranged by Frances Mallett and the invocation and dedication was done by David Spriggs.

### CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**Oct 12** - John Gallagher, County Administrator will be our featured speaker at the Museum at 2:00pm. He will be talking to us about, "How WPHS Got Where We Are!"

**Oct 25** - "Downtown Revisited," branching out from Main Street & Grand Blvd will be artists, music, & specialty foods. Later in evening will be Dedication for Streetscape.

**Oct 25,26** - Antique Car Show at Sims Park, Antique & Flea Market near Museum, Arts & Crafts Festival opposite side of lake.

**Dec 11 (Tentative Date)** - Christmas Reception at Museum.



## CURATOR COMMITTEE REPORT

by Midge London-Prace

It takes a lot of work from many people to get ready for the beginning of our season. Thanks to the cleaning crew: Howard Chenoweth, Julie and Harry Hall, Audrey O'Neil, Mary Jane Prichard, David Prace, and especially Terry Kline (who made the new look in the meeting room possible. The beautiful silver arrangements were made by Frances Mallett, with Ceil Zubrod and their committee providing the tasty refreshments. I also want to acknowledge the people who loaned us articles for the new display: George Brandli, Katy Casto-Hevey, Vivienne Cramer, Harry Hall, Jack Hevey, Norma Nelson, Raymond Otero, Donald Prichard family, Brian Elassar, and Margaret Toscano. We had an outstanding start of our celebration of the 25th Anniversary of our Society, with much more to come.

The following donations were made to the West Pasco Historical Society, with our thanks.

1. Three antique fans given by Mrs. Altman.
2. A quilt in the log cabin design with sugar bag backing made by Hazel Willis Graham and donated by her niece Dorothy G. Vandiner.
3. Crystal vase given by Howard Chenoweth.
4. An advertising booklet "New Port Richey," an advertising pamphlet on the Hacienda, and a collection of Christmas cards from the 1930s, belonging to Alma Moran Kilborn given by her nephew William Wilson.
5. A stuffed alligator given by Mary Jo O'Sullivan.
6. Tin type photo, of a young woman, in a covered frame given by Sue Grandson.
7. Two paintings by Clare Harshaw (former member now deceased) donated by Sue Sweeney in memory of her mother Claire Moulds. Thanks to Ede Bauer for coordinating this acquisition.

The New Port Richey Community Cooperative is looking for a few volunteers to staff its office in City Hall. Call 842-8066 for information.

## GIFT SHOP NEWS

by Mary Jane Prichard

Gift shop sales were good on our 25th grand opening Sunday.

Our consignees have some new special items for sale. Donna Lyle has an old oar on which she has painted a tall ship and she will paint a picture on your special oar for \$40.00, also she has large painted gourds.

Clara Ann Smith has tea cozies and afghans.

Carol Spicuglia has a handmade Santa doll and a sunflower mirror.

We can always use more collectibles and we thank all of you who have contributed your special items.

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## THE LAND BETWEEN THE RIVERS

by Terry Kline

To tell you about how I came to collect artifacts, since I'm a windy person anyway, I must first tell you about myself (my favorite subject). As a boy I roamed the land between the rivers. I call it that because of the two nice platform mounds that are still there to enjoy today.

One of these mounds is at Anclote Park and the other being the Oelsner (God bless her soul) mound on the Pithlachascotee River and the possibility of them being territorial markers. (See *Crystal River, a Ceremonial Mound Center on Florida's Gulf Coast*, pg. 83, published by Florida Archaeology Society.)

I remember going down Pine Hill past the large sand platform mound (good for a slide ) to the dump on Congress, to say hi to Mr. Baker and poke around a little, then on to the large shell mound not far away which I loved to climb. I had been told the mound had been made by the Indians by Dr. Neill (my hero) whom I sometimes followed around (not because of his vast knowledge I'm sorry to say, but because he liked snakes). He said they used the mound in their ceremonies (I just thought they ate a lot of oysters).



Sometimes I would watch the city workers load the shell on trucks to be put on alleys downtown, not realizing I was watching the destruction of a monument that had stood for thousands of years. On the top of a bluff behind the mound was a doughnut shaped burial mound, a ready made fort for me and my friends. When no one was there, I would go through the marsh coming out to a sand field where another large mound and many small ones stood. I was told this was a village, but it sure didn't look like one to me.

Down Rowan Road to the old swimming hole on the river, I later learned was also a village site. On these trips I encountered a lot of odd shaped stones, large round ones which I used to bash things with, and ones with a sharp edge I would chop a pole to fish with. Flat ones to skip across the water and even an occasional arrowhead (a good trade item for baseball cards). I never realized how much the old ones had touched my childhood or gave them much of a thought until years later.

My young son Donald and I were looking for fossils and he kicked up a small point in front of me. I was awe struck with this beautiful carved stone. Working with my hands all my life I knew I found a virtual Swiss Army knife: a point to drill with, an edge to cut and scrape, a weapon, and a digging tool. But what struck me the most, by making a tool in his every day endeavors, this man had left a legacy that had endured the test of time and was still useful today. (I was hooked.)

After finding out all I could about these people I once again traveled the path of my childhood. The large platform mound stands only in my memory (P.A.L. baseball field). The shell and burial mound on Orchard Lake Road and even the bluff are gone. The village site is now Carlton Arms and adjacent sub-division. Only the old swimming hole which is in the new park property the city just acquired was left unchanged.

I did find a few stones which I now know is chert, a low grade flint, which is formed when silica washes into the limestone. I thought about the large round hammer stones used on

other rocks or to smash nuts and bone to get to the meat. The large chopper stones used to cut wood and bone, the small flat ones used to cut and scrape reeds and hides for baskets, nets, and clothes. The projectile points which were not arrowheads but the smaller ones being a tip to a dart thrown by a stick called an atlatl (an Aztec word meaning throwing on water) and the large ones being well made knives. Donald and I have spent many hours now searching for these treasures and as the old ones touch his childhood, we enjoy this time together and get a thrill when we find a hint of these people who walked the land between the rivers before us and like very much to share this pleasure with others.

We shape our tools, then our tools shape us.

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## LIBRARY NEWS

by Elizabeth Jones, Librarian

Four of our Library staff members attended the dinner and book reviews at the New Port Richey Library, Thursday evening. We appreciate these reviews and also thank the Marchman students who do so well in preparing and serving the dinners.

Excitement was high last week when material was given to us and included was a book published in 1926 by a group of realtors hoping to create interest in sales by advertising "The land of Paradise." We believe this to be the inspiration for the naming of the American Legion Paradise Post.

Our rearrangement of shelved books under readable labels is nearing completion. Come in and easily locate books you wish to look at and read.

### **!! DON'T MISS !!**

John Gallagher, County Administrator will be speaking to us on Sunday, Oct 12 at the Museum. John was instrumental in getting the old schoolhouse moved to Sims Park and he will be talking about this subject at 2:00pm.



## PASCO'S PAST

by Julie Obenreder

Soon after the incorporation of New Port Richey in 1924 a real estate boom began. Warren E. Burns left a lucrative importing business in New York City to come south to develop his extensive holding around the city. Burns had a good friend, James Becker, a high official with General Motors. Burns persuaded him to come south assuring him New Port Richey was a booming little city worthy of investment.

Both Burns and Becker built mansions at Jasmine Point, laid out a subdivision where they sold lots to such motion picture and stage celebrities as Errol Flynn, Raymond Hitchcock, Ed Wynn, Gloria Swanson and Thomas Meighan. the Burns-Becker Corporation was instrumental in bringing many wealthy people to New Port Richey.

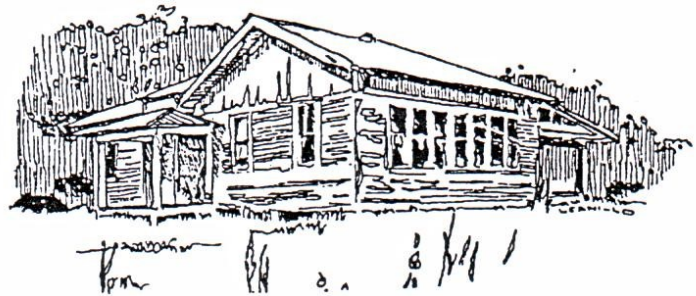
They built a golf course adjoining Jasmine Point Estates. They employed Gene Sarazen to be the golf pro of the new course. He was known as the "wonder boy" of the golfing world. This brought in many celebrities to the city adding great emphasis on the early growth. With the arrival, daily, of so many people the town found itself in need of more and better hotel facilities. A group of men discussed the idea of a hotel. Stock was sold and the Hacienda Hotel soon became a reality. The men hadn't considered furnishings so had to sell more stock to pay for \$130,000 worth of furniture.

When completed, a great dedication ceremony was held. Dinner was served in the spacious dining room, and a dance followed in the large living room area. Ed Wynn, comedian, was Master of Ceremonies. Guests included: Lupe Velez, Gloria Swanson, Ann Harding, Mr. & Mrs. Earl Binham of Broadway fame, as well as many other motion picture celebrities. The year 1924 through 1928 were building boom years but 1929 brought the great depression and all building stopped. Most of the stars returned to Hollywood.

When the Meighan Theater opened Thomas

Meighan was the star in the first movies shown. The theater was filled to overflowing. Meighan made several personal appearances much to the delight of the audiences.

The theater has gone through many changes. First came the silent films, then the talkies. It was closed a short time during World War II. When it reopened it had been remodeled, murals on the walls, a larger better screen, and upholstered comfortable seating. Now since 1977 it has been known as the "Richey Suncoast Theater."



*The Old Schoolhouse in Sims Park*

## NEW MEMBERSHIP ROSTERS ARE PUBLISHED

Hope everyone enjoys their new membership roster which you have picked up at the Museum or is included with this Newsletter. Any errors or omissions are entirely my fault. As you all know, with any publication of this type there are always bound to be changes on an ongoing basis. If there are any corrections to be made please inform our Membership Chairperson, Clara Ann Smith.

Addendums to this roster will be made and published in our Newsletters. See Addendum #1 on the back page of this Newsletter.

If, for some reason, you did not get a roster they are available at the Museum.

- David Prace



## RUMINATIONS FROM GEORGE...

by George Brandli  
(Escapee from West Virginia)

Philomon and her husband Marcus were seated outside their hovel high on the mountainside along the dirt track that wound around the mountain. Yes, they had only one room with the dirt floor, but life was good. Strangers were rare in that part of the country and so, as dusk began to settle, and the sun was shining its final rays on the mountain peaks, they were startled to see two strangers slowly wending their way up the mountain track. One was bearded and walked with a staff, the other a bit shorter carried a small sack under his arm. Approaching the home, the tall one raised his arm in greeting and asked if they might rest for awhile as their travels had been long and hard.

Philomon, always the gracious lady, asked if they were hungry and they answered in the affirmative. Now Philomon only had one dried crust of bread to serve them and the milk pitcher was long dried up. However, she invited them in to share what they had.

The tall stranger placed his staff alongside the door and Philomon saw the snake carved along its length. She rubbed her eyes in disbelief as she was certain she saw the snake writhe and move when he leaned it against the door frame. In any event, she seated them around the hand hewn, wood table in the room and offered them the crust of bread.

The tall stranger then said a blessing and asked Philomon if she would please pour them some milk to drink with the bread. Philomon said the pitcher was dry, but the stranger insisted she pour from the pitcher. Somewhat upset by this command she rose to get the pitcher and prove there was no milk. But, when she reached for it, she glanced into the vessel and her eyes saw, a small fountain of milk welling up from the bottom and then when she reached the table, the pitcher was full. The milk was the sweetest and the coolest she had ever tasted. She was functioning in disbelief, because, as they drank the milk and asked for more, the pitcher was always full. Then the stranger asked for bread

from the brick and clay oven. Again Philomon rose to prove the dried crust was all they had, but when she removed the stone from the oven, there were four loaves of the most moist and tasty bread she had ever tasted.

Following the meal, the strangers stated that their journey was far and they must leave. Thanking them for the milk and the bread, they left the home and continued their journey to a far destination unknown to Marcus and Philomon. From that day on, the pitcher was always full and the bread always in the oven. And so it is with our organization. If we welcome those who come to our door and share what we have, our "Pitcher and Oven" will always be full and overflowing. Or, should we make the decision to stay at home and not be a welcoming member who shares our talent and time, then we are destined to live our life, or lives, alone in our "hovels" and greet each day with a dried crust of bread and an empty pitcher. It is our choice in life. Pay our annual dues and stay home feeling noble that we are supporting the Society, or pay our dues and become active in the life of this rare part of our history. I wonder, which will it be? Life is too short, don't sit by the doorway too long. We may become that crust of bread and the dried up pitcher.



# Addendum to Membership Roster

#1

## Add to List:

## Change zip Code:

John & Ede Bauer  
6039 Tennessee Ave  
New Port Richey, FL 34653  
842-2432 (F)

Ida Brunner  
from: 34640 to: 33770  
M. Louise Embree  
from: 45309 to: 45304

Bob Evans Restaurant  
9115 U.S. 19 North  
Port Richey, FL 34668  
Att: Amanda Bono  
848-7599 (B)

## Delete from List:

Elizabeth Wilson

George & Bette Farmerie  
6034 Missouri Avenue  
New Port Richey, FL 34653  
849-0242 (F)

## Deceased

Claire Moulds

Georgianna Krommydas  
6302 Missouri Avenue  
New Port Richey, FL 34653  
849-5751 (I)

Jane Merriman  
4521 Tidal Pond Road  
New Port Richey, FL 34652  
846-9138 (I)

Jeffery & Lois Morgan  
8735 Schrader Blvd.  
Port Richey, FL 34668  
869-1703 (F)

Mary Jo O'Sullivan  
10909 Claymont Drive  
New Port Richey, FL 34654  
845-4261 (I)

West Pasco Historical Society, Inc.

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