



West Pasco Historical Society, Inc. Museum and Library

3rd QUARTER 2003

A Message from your President

As we begin our 31st season we have many challenges to address. The main one being the repair of our roof. Even though we had the roof patched last year when a tree fell on it in a wind storm, other leaks began and worsened with the unusual rainy weather. We can no longer ignore the need to replace it. Our Grant Committee has been successful in getting a "matching" grant from the city of New Port Richey for \$7,500. That means we must come up with the \$15,000.00 to repair the roof and then show the city the proof the work was done before they reimburse us the \$7,500. We have a TDC grant request pending, but that appears less likely. Last season we had a fish fry fund raiser, donations from politicians, individual contributions, garage sales and other events. We are planning to start this season by having a "spectacular" lawn sale in October on Founders Day weekend. I am asking each of you to contribute to this (see article in this newsletter). To the Life members, and I am one, who do not contribute membership money each year, I'm asking you to contribute a one-time donation to help your Society meet this need. I know we have a wonderful season of programs planned for our members, so check the Calendar of events. Raising our membership is another important challenge. We want your Society to grow this season, so please help by attending the programs and bring a friend who may be a potential new member. I look forward to seeing you often.

Midge

Thanks should go to these folks

This summer we have had people who came in to help out on jobs that needed to be done on the Tuesday mornings we were open. They accomplished many needed tasks such as inventorying items in the storage room and identify where they are. This also was done in the office. Pictures were taken of displays throughout the museum for inventory purposes. Lawn sale items were priced as they are donated. Everyone is welcome if you have a free Tuesday morning. Our thanks go to Dorothy Browne, Ann Buchanan, Bev Rich, Georgia Robinson, Bea Baum, Diane Dittman, Terry Kline, Dave Prace and Elsie Coy. If we've missed anyone please forgive us.

Officers and Directors 2003-2004

President	Midge London-Prace
1 st Vice President	Elsie Coy
2 nd Vice President	Jeanne Kisby
Treasurer	George Brandli
Recording Secretary	Ginny Miller
Corresponding Secretary	Laura Helm
Director (2 year term, ending 2005)	David Prace
Director (2 year term, ending 2005)	David Welling
Director (2 year term, ending 2005)	Marc Bowman
Director (2 year Term, ending 2004)	Wendy Brenner
Director (2 year Term, ending 2004)	Ann Buchanan
Past President	Ann Hildebrand

Calendar of Events Sep 2003 thru Dec 2003

September 2003 Program—Season Opening Saturday, September 20, 1:00pm 4:00pm A presentation on Moon Lake Lodge and Gardens by Phebe Ranson

October 2003 Program—Sat & Sun, October 25th, 26th, open 9:00 to 4:00 **Yard Sale** on front lawn for Roof Fund Raiser 25th, 26th, **Quilter's demonstration and exhibit**

November 2003 Program—Saturday, November 22, 2003 2:00pm Speaker Dell DeChant - The Sacred Santa Book review by author and signing

Members Christmas Party—Wednesday, December 10th- 6:00pm Christmas dinner at Clarion Hotel

Wassail Bowl Party—Saturday, Dec. 13th evening at Museum, 6:00pm Mary Jane Prichard - organ music Christmas Street Parade, 7:00pm

Rosters

New membership rosters are being printed and will be available at the Season Opener on the 20th of September. Don't worry if you can't be there perhaps someone can pick up your copy, if not we will mail copies to be included in the next mailing of the Newsletter.

Installation and Anniversary Luncheon

Our Installation and 30th Anniversary of the Society luncheon was a beautiful affair. Elsie Coy and her committee planned well, from the colorful programs to the beautiful flower decorations on the tables. A lovely rendition of our national anthem was given by guest Ruth Gruen, followed by Clara Ann Smith who gave a poignant prayer before our delicious meal. Our speaker was Dr. Lewis Wynne, from the Florida State Museum located in Melbourne, FL. He had a very thought provoking message given with a lot of humor interspersed. Congratulations went to Audrey O'Neil, who was chosen the Honorary Member this year. She has worked long and hard for the Society. She founded the gift shop which she still manages among other things, so it was well deserved. Those of you that couldn't attend missed a great get-together.

Library News by Bea Baum

The West Pasco Historical Library and the New Port Richey Library are combining forces to publish a cookbook composed of local recipes and interesting stories. The sales will bring in needed revenue. We will start as soon as you bring in your favorite recipes to the library and please sign them so you'll get credit.

Our Adopt-a-Book program has brought in three new books. Anyone may participate by bringing in a new book related to Florida, the new books added to our collection are: "Sink Holes" by Sandra Friend, "Treasury of Florida" by Webb Garrison, and "A Land Remembered" by Patrick D. Smith. Also a "History of Keystone, Odessa and Citrus Park, Vols I & II" compiled by the Keystone, Odessa, Citrus Park Historical Society has been received.

"The Hysterical Historians" Red Hat group met on our grounds, Thursday, August 28th for a trip to Sunken Gardens. The next meeting will be at Angel Theater to see "The Last of the Red Hot Lovers" on September 25th. Call Norma Nelson on this one. 846-0011. Reservations should be made now.

Bea Baum is available for persons wishing to do research in the library during hours we are closed. Call 841-6933.

Membership

Our membership presently stands at 235 listings as of this writing. A listing may consist of a single person or a family listing so it is always difficult to determine how many members we actually have. As you all know many people will join us after they have visited the museum but do not necessarily continue after the first year. Please tell your friends about us and bring them in to get involved.

My Life of Crime by G. L. Brandli

Now, Lost Creek, West Virginia was a really rough coal mining town. only about 678 residents, but there were, on the average at least four murders per year. No one was ever punished to my knowledge. Everyone knew who did it and why, but no one would speak up. My days at school averaged at least one fight per day, that is until I challenged my good friend "Wimpy" Stover one hot afternoon. He wouldn't cross the line I had drawn in the dirt and dared him and he wouldn't knock the wood chip off my shoulder that I had placed there. So, I knocked it off and then I hit him. That was the way it was done. They told me that I was unconscious for about twenty minutes after he hit me. Then I calmed down somewhat in my fighting and again became very good friends with "Wimpý."

However, there were other diversions to occupy our time and our minds. We would ride our bicycles North on Mount Clare Road to a spot near the old Bassel farm. The creek cut in near the road at that location, there were shade trees and it was a good place to gather, lean back and light up a cornsilk cigarette rolled in a piece of paper torn from the Sears Roebuck Catalog. Now, on several occasions some of the boys would see the soft drink delivery truck approaching. They would mount their bicycles and one at a time ride up alongside the truck as it started up a slight grade. Pulling up beside the truck as it slowed for the grade, they would reach out and remove a bottle. Then, coasting back to the shade of the trees, the cap would be removed and a long and satisfying drink would be swallowed. At times they would allow me to have a drink, even though I never participated in this thievery.

So, on this lazy warm summer afternoon, I was relaxing with my friends at our location and was thirsty. Down the road from Mount Clare came the soft drink delivery truck. I had waited long enough. My friends got pop from the truck. There wasn't any thing wrong with doing this. It was a hot day. I wanted a drink. So, just as the truck passed, I jumped on my bike and took off in pursuit. As he went around the left turn and headed up the grade, I was almost up to the rear of the truck. Pedaling furiously, I was gaining on him. Faster and faster, I was almost up to the open side of the truck ... the racks of soda pop were right there ... they were almost within my reach ... I pedaled harder ... I pulled even with the waiting soft drinks ... easing in closer to the side of the truck ... I steered with my left hand ... reaching out with my right ... my feet were flying as I drove the bicycle to faster speed ... my fingers were almost touching a bottle ... DISASTER !!!!!

The driver had been watching me in his rear view mirror and that instant, he did two things. He slammed on the

brakes hard and opened the left door of the cab. My outstretched hand slid along the bottles of soft drinks ... my flying feet propelled me onward and I rode at full speed directly into the opened door of the truck ... CRASH. I hit the door with such force I flew sideways out into the road and my bike landed on top of me. The driver looked down and said, "You shouldn't steal drinks from my truck." With that, he shut the door, put the truck in gear and drove away.

We should all be very cautious as we hurtle onward at full speed toward an elusive goal that our approach method not result in harm to ourselves or others.

The Biggest and Best Lawn Sale Is Being Planned

Our Roof Fund raiser needs to be BIG, so we need all your good, but not recently used items. Please take a look around the house and find those treasures that can raise the final money needed to put on our new roof. Anything but clothes will do. Please bring them in early to us so we can price them and put them away for the lawn sale scheduled on October 25th and 26th. We can use all you can spare. The white table in the office is waiting for your "good stuff." If you can't come in call and we'll come pick it up!! There will be lots going on in the park so we should have lots of customers but we need to have the product.

2003 Honorary Member

Our honored member was born in Rochester, New York. The eldest of two children. High school and graduation was an important part in life. After graduation, time was spent as an Administrative Assistant at the Kodak Company. Marriage came and then two daughters, 3 granddaughters, 1 grandson and 2 great grandsons.

Following the loss of her husband, she moved to New Port Richey in 1981 to care for her mother and later cared for Aunt Jessie Hyde, our librarian for many years. She is a member of the First Presbyterian Church, serving on many important committees, enjoys crafts and her number one hobby is line dancing.

She became a member of the Historical Society in 1982 and has dedicated herself in this organization for over two decades. She has served in various positions with her strong point working in the gift shop which is a vital part of our fund raising. I use the term "worked" in the gift shop rather loosely. This person founded our gift shop. She acquired a louvered door wall cabinet and placed objects on the shelves and this was the founding of our present day gift shop. Stop by the society office and see the original cabinet. From this meager beginning it has evolved as I said into a major fund raiser. Also, and we cannot overlook this aspect of her contributions, is the securing and wrapping of over 40 gifts for our annual fashion show. The

ticket drawing and receiving of these gifts is a major item of our Show. Each gift is attractively wrapped and those attending eagerly await the gift drawing. This she has done year after year, plus holding many garage sales and participating in city market days.

Besides her thoughtful approach to challenges, we believe her to possess nerves of steel. Think of the time while at her desk in the gift shop, a huge tree just outside the window spun around on its roots and tilted over and crashed through the ceiling right over her head.

May I present to you a beautiful person, a loyal friend, and a member of true dedication. Truly a blessing to those who know and love her....I give you the 2003 recipient of the honored member award...Audrey O'Neil.

Mothers Day Tea at Museum on May 10th

The annual Mother and Daughter Tea was a great success this year. It was held at the museum with a cross-section of members and guests attending. The program for this fifth annual tea was especially poignant. The speaker was a local mom, Regia Vanpetethem and her two adopted daughters from Russia. Their story was featured in a newspaper article last year. They all came dressed alike and were absolutely enchanting. Regina spoke on the experiences, she and her husband had going to another country with no communication skills. They had the aid of an interrupter while being interviewed and meeting the children. The orphanages that she and her husband visited were in the Russian countryside. Regina told of how she and her husband Walter fell in love with the sisters, Olga and Marina. They made their arrangements and brought the girls back to America on their second trip to Russia. The girls 7 and 9, each had a few words to say which delighted the attendees. It was a happy ending to a special day.

Gift Shop News

Audrey will be coming back from her summer in Rochester very soon. I know she would love to see some very nice new items to put into the gift shop for the new season. If you have some talent in the creative area then perhaps you make items you'd like to put on sale. We also always like to have jewelry donated or any saleable item you may have. Mary Jane Prichard's plaques for the new season will be available. The gift shop would like to know of anyone interested in working there. Please give the them or the museum a call. Audrey can be reached at 948-3451, or Mary Jane at 845-4936.

Followup on Obit Project

We've been open and meeting all Summer on Tuesday mornings, 10:00am to 1:00pm. There was a newspaper article about Joe Bie, our PHCC intern working on the obituary database. Because of it we have had Dannee Brooks and Diana Dittman working along with Joe Bie. They are now entering the 1950's obits. Some 30's papers have been returned but they are fragile and will have to be laminated before we can handle them and include them in the project. Anyone free on Tuesday mornings 10:00 to 1:00 please come and join us. The Obit Project will be a continuing work-in-progress.

Antique Tidbits - Telephones by Eleanor Schoepflin

Now that cellular phones seem to be everywhere, it is hard to imagine life without the telephone. But collectors who want to remember the olden days are paying top dollar for antique phones. The basic principle of the telephone was developed in Germany as early as 1854. Alexander Graham Bell was granted the first American patent in 1876 for his electromagnetic telephone. Since that time the telephone has gone through many evolutions in design, structure and functions. Many so-called improvements occurred earlier than thought - in 1892 Automatic Electric Co. developed the first push-button phone using telegraph keys. That same year Almon Strowger invented the dial phone and his patent for automatic switching still holds today. By 1900 there were over 300 phone manufacturers. Early telephones came in two basic types - the candlestick and the wall model. Back in 1876 when Alexander Graham Bell filed for his patent, the idea that the human voice could be transmitted over a wire seemed miraculous.

By 1877 over 1000 phones were in use in America. Many companies devised improvements in mouthpieces, transmitters, switchboards and receivers, all of which make appealing collectibles. The 1999 Batavia, N.Y. auction included over 250 phones. A Willhelm double diaphragm pot belly stick phone sold for \$13,800, an 1878 wall phone for \$16,100 and a Stromberg Carlson tapered stick phone with crystal mouthpiece brought \$1,495. A Wilhelm oak and metal wall phone with double diaphragm transmitter, 6 line, single bell went for \$1,208 and a National Improved Telephone Co. coffin case wall phone went out the door at \$9,775 while a pencil shaft stick phone sold at \$6,900. Others ranged in the \$200 to \$2,000 category. Early telephone manufacturers included American Bell which later became AT&T, American Electric, Automatic Electric, General Telephone and Electronics, Dean Electric, Stromberg Carlson, International Telephone and Telegraph (ITT) and Western Electric now incorporated as Bell Laboratories.

Other Organizations Who Use Our Facility

We are happy that our Society has other organizations meeting in our building. Last year and this year the DAR will meet on the second Saturday morning of the month, at 9:30. Also the Cypress Hammock Quester Chapter meets the first Wednesday of the month at 7:00pm. Their interesting meetings discuss such subjects about antiquities, collections, etc.

The New Port Richey Garden Club meets on the 3rd Thursday at 9:30am

Curator Committee Report

Donations - The following received thank you's for their donations

Jeff Miller donated a computer monitor from Gulf High School
West Pasco Art Guild donated keys that look like they belong to a jail, and a Civil War Book
Mr & Mrs Hugh Doane of NPR donated a punch bowl, with 18 cups and glass ladel
Elaine Girouard donated a Real Estate sign
Phil Daldron donated a group of razors
Kathy Martin donated an 8oz coke bottle
Maxine Clayton donated a hard bound copy of the novel "A Land Remembered"
Terry Kline donated a small ladder.
Tena McGuire donated a Gulf Harbors Beach token
Home Depot - A large aluminum ladder

Field trip to Florida Historical Society in Melbourne on January 22, 2004

Mark your calendars and sign up now for one of the 20 seats on the Elfers bus that will be taking our members and guests to visit the Florida Historical Society on January 22, 2004. Dr. Lewis Wynne and staff will host our visit. Every effort will be made to make this an interesting day, including a drive through the Space Center vicinity. We will leave at 8:00am and return as late as 7:00pm, since it takes 2 1/2 hours to reach Melbourne. Final details will be available in October. Please sign up early if your interested for this day trip. Cost of transportation is approximately \$15.00. Meals are "Dutch Treat." For more information contact Clara Ann Smith, Event Volunteer at 847-0404 or call Museum at 847-0680.

