

# Friends

Of the Fairhope Museum  
of History

Newsletter



Volume 4 Issue 5, Oct - Nov 2013

## Fifth Annual Elderberry Festival



**CROWING OF QUEEN ELLIE III  
ELOISE ROGERS**

For the Fifth consecutive year, the Elderberry Festival was a resounding success with plenty of Pomp and Circumstance as well as fun filled competition of foods made with Elderberries. Ribbons were awarded for entries and winners, and hourly demonstrations were presented for making jams, juice, pies and cakes.



Activities began at 11 a.m. with a pie eating contest broadcast live on WABF 1220 Radio with Lori DuBose. Seven eager challengers dove face-first into Elderberry pies. The rules of the contest did not allow use of hands! But that was not a deterrent, as each of the competitors were smiling as they came up for air, then resumed the munch-down amidst cheers from onlookers. After a heated competition, Assistant Director, Jim Bates won the trophy for fastest consumption of an entire pie sans hands.

Continuous programs filled the afternoon describing Elderberries, their history and practical uses for the berry found everywhere in Baldwin County. At 1 p.m., Mary Ann Maradik told how to make Elderberry jam, at 2 p.m., Catherine King discussed “breaking breads”, showing

“Elderberry Festival”, continued on page 2, column 2



The fall of each year is a whirlwind of activity. We are now at the first days of fall and our calendar looks like my chickens have been walking all over it. There is something every day. Several days have two and three events or tour groups per day. I remember it is like this each year. We get many tour groups each week in the fall. It seems there is a busy spiral all the way to Christmas – which this year will be followed by the Smithsonian exhibit, Mardi Gras, Arts and Crafts and our 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Civil War exhibit. Whew!

At our last meeting it was brought up that we have never had a Christmas party. My first thought was “when are we going to have time for a Christmas party” and my second thought was “we ask our docents and *Friends* to do so much, this is just another event.” We are such a good group of “Friends” that our Christmas party this year will be a great success. Maybe an occasion where we can lounge around and chat and not have to put on a show, would be a nice change of pace.

All these events, functions and activities work so well because we are such a good group of friends. We are organized around a common bond and share a common goal - to see the Museum glow in an aura of golden success! I continually thank all for their sincere contributions and for how dedicated they are to this link that certainly makes us “Friends” indeed!

- Donnie Barrett

several tasty Elderberry breads and at 3 p.m., Kate Settles drew laughs as she discussed enhancing lady fingers with Elderberry Chutney. Free samples of several prize winning Elderberry sweets were available (until they were all consumed) and some Elderberry food products quickly sold out.



Above: Kate Settles and Donnie Barrett enjoy a moment during the demonstration



Left: Curt Cochran and Lottie Barrett taste the Elderflower Cordial

Throughout the day, numerous tourists visiting Fairhope found the venue to be a pleasant diversion from the rain on Section and Bancroft Streets. Unfortunately, the inclement weather forced cancelation of the planned antique tractor display on the east lawn by the members of the South Alabama Antique Tractor and Engine Club.

The highlight of the evening was the crowning of “Queen Ellie III,” chosen by a committee of past Queens and docents. Museum Director Donnie Barrett ceremoniously announced with pageantry and accolades, the crowning of the new Queen, Ms. Eloise Rogers, as she descended the Museum staircase, escorted by Assistant Director Jim Bates. The royal festivities began at 6 p.m., with music provided by the Kracker Dan’s Minstrels staged on the pier in the foyer. The popular band provided lively music for dancing and listening entertainment throughout the evening. About 300 revelers and visitors attended this year’s Festival, making it another memorable and enjoyable event in our historic city.

*These events are made possible by the dedication and hard work of museum docents, the members of the South Alabama Antique Tractor and Engine Club, Kracker Dan’s Minstrels, Museum volunteers and many City of Fairhope personnel. We couldn’t do it without you. Thanks!! ~*



## Fairhope Black History Documentary debuted September 4, 2013!



Descendents of Fairhope Black families who attended the Premier, shown above (clockwise) are: (L) Alma Bonner Clausell, (R) Helen Victoria Nichols, (L) Sarah Mitchell Sledge, (R) Roshenda Briscoe, (L) Anne Coleman and (R) Thelma Young Todd. Several told their personal experiences for the compelling story of Fairhope's African – American Heritage Documentary. The Lewis, Young, Bonner and Houston families settled in the area in the 1860s.

The first historical documentary about Fairhope's proud Black heritage was released with visible fanfare on Wednesday, September 4 at the Museum of History. "Celebrating the African – American Heritage of Fairhope, Alabama" premiered with a crowd of about 80 citizens and local celebrities. The screening hosted by Museum Director Donnie Barrett, was preceded by a red-carpet reception attended by Fairhope residents featured in the video, as well as other invited guests and city representatives. The documentary featured interviews with Black Fairhopeans who told the difficulties and pleasures of themselves and their ancestors, carving out their place in local history.

The digital video began continuous viewing downstairs on September 5, in the Black History exhibit, during Museum hours. Copies are also available for \$10 at the Museum gift shop.

## Fairhope Golf is Older Than You Think

Twenty-one years, four months and two weeks after the Single-Taxers landed at Battles Wharf to establish Fairhope, the words "club," "driver" and "eagle" took on new meaning in the colony.

"Fairhope's new golf course will open tomorrow," announced the *Fairhope Courier* on March 17, 1916. Mr. Walter Fovargue, employed for eight months of the year as instructor of the Skokie Golf Club of Chicago, prepared plans in 1915 and came to Fairhope during his winter hiatus and laid out the 9-hole Fairhope course. The land for the course was set aside as a public park by the Fairhope Single Tax Corporation and "play upon it is under the control of the Fairhope Golf Club. The location is an easy walk from ... Mobile Bay", said the *Courier*. Excerpts from the newspaper stated that, "It winds through piney woods, with the shortest hole being (#2) 90 yards and the longest (#8), 266 yards. The tees and greens were made from red clay which has proven to be the best possible foundation. Few bunkers and hazards will be necessary, owing to the natural ability of the site chosen."

Prior to the course opening, the *Courier* proudly stated in it's February 11, 1916 Edition that "A suite of rooms occupied by a family of six, rented last week for the season at one of these places for \$186 a week, just because of the golf course.". Golf fees advertised on March 31, 1916 were \$10 for the season or \$.50 a day.

Seven years later, an article in the *Fairhope Courier* [January 5, 1923] said it all began in 1916 with the Fairhope Golf, Gun and Country Club, which was the "focal point of golf and social life in our community."

The club house was built in 1922 and still stands today off Johnson Street, one block south of Fairhope Avenue, a quarter-mile east of the current Fairhope Post Office.

The building, now a home, is leased from the Fairhope Single Tax Corporation by Delbert and Roberta Long. The short article in the *Courier* cited that "Members of the Fairhope Gun and Country Club dedicated their beautiful new club house with a delightful dance Monday, New Year's night. There were about 50 people present."

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The public park designated for the course, was located between Fairhope & Morphy (north-south) Streets and Mershon and Ingleside (east-west) Streets. The course was closed in the late 1950's when the land was returned to the



The Original Fairhope Golf, Gun and Country Club

Single Tax Colony for housing development. Perhaps the stress of not having a town golf course was lightened by the fact that the Grand Hotel at Point Clear opened two 9-hole golf courses in 1947. It later added two more 9-hole courses.

In 1985, there was a frail attempt to again bring golf back to Fairhope. *The Mobile Register* in January 1985 noted that the Fairhope Recreation Board had authorized \$15,000 to fund conceptual plans for an 18-hole golf course in Fairhope; on land to be donated by Angelo Corte, Fred Corte and Madeline Berglin. This was 150 acres "off highway 98 between Parker Road and Gulf Coast Substation." (sic). But six developers did not exercise their option to buy [part of 400 acres of] land from Corte; thus negating the free land offer to the city. But this didn't end the campaign by area golfers to get another course.

In April 1985, a goal was set to raise \$650,000 to \$1,000,000 by June 1 in order to show support for construction of a course at Highway 104 and U.S. 98. By June of that year, \$1.1 million had been pledged and committed. A minimum monthly fee of \$25 was set for memberships, to remain in effect for the first 3 years that the course was open.

But in July 1985, *The Mobile Press-Register* reported that the Fairhope City Council voted to scrap all plans to construct the 18-hole course on donated land and return all funds designated for the project by July 31 of that year.

Construction cost exceeding budgeted funds was the reason given for canceling plans on the Corte/Berglin donated land. City Councilman Barney Shull, with encouragement from local golfers, said they would continue to look for an 18-hole course site. A local un-named builder told the City Council that he would build the course if he could get a \$1 million pledge of support from the residents. The developer wanted to build the course between Greeno Rd and Section Street. But soon thereafter, the developer's bank [also not named] decided that Fairhope was too small to sustain the course and backed out of financing the venture.

Councilman Shull once again took up the task of stirring interest, this time for a \$1 million General Obligation Bond. "Season pass sales were overwhelming before the first shovel full of dirt was dug," said the *Eastern Shore Courier*, dated July 4, 1990, reflecting back on the 1986 funding effort. Encouraged by that support, the city bought 150 acres from Dr. O.O. Jones and Matt Dial east of the city off County Road 27; now State Highway 181.

A few months later, the city bought an additional 50 acres in order to someday add another 9 holes. Mr. Shull, an engineer for the Army Corp of Engineers, helped design the course and the city hired Horace W. Smith, who had built many courses around the Southeast, for the construction work. Smith completed the task in May, 1987. On April 4, 1988, the Fairhope 18-hole Golf Course at Quail Creek opened with Harry Dyer as the Course Professional. The Quail Creek Estates Sub-division was built around the perimeter of the course.

On opening day, the cost to play a round of 18 holes was \$9. The 6500-yard course hosted over 200 golfers that first day. Several tournaments were scheduled immediately and the full service course with Pro Shop, driving range, snack shop and equipment rentals was a hit from the start. On August 19-20, 1989, the Mayor's golf tournament was held at the course. Local professional golfer Bobby Hall joined the city staff in January 1989 and continues today as the club professional.

Fairhope golf got another attractive boost in 1993, when the 18-hole Rock Creek Golf Course was opened. Private developers David Head and Kenny McLean turned land east of Hwy 98 north of downtown Fairhope into the Rock Creek Community of about 1000 homes. The land was also previously owned by Greek settler, A. Corte, who began buying land along Rock Creek in 1876. It had been his descendents who offered land to the Fairhope Recreation Board in 1985.

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## ***Museum Represented at Fort Mims 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Event***

On August 30, 1813, Indians attacked Fort Mims in upper Baldwin County and approximately 500 Settlers and Indians died in the largest frontier massacre in Alabama history. The event was commemorated at the Fort Mims State Park site on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, August 30 – September 1, 2013.

Re-enactments of the Battle of Burnt Corn Creek and the Massacre at Fort Mims were presented on each of the three days. Re-enactors camped at the site for the entire period and vendors were on-hand with food, history and souvenir books, frontier clothing and pottery. Our own Museum Director Donnie Barrett served as Master of Ceremonies for the 3-day event, sponsored by the Fort Mims Restoration Association.



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“Fairhope Golf,” continued from page 4, column 2

Falkner State College uses Rock Creek as the home course for its golf team. Contemporary professional golfer Bubba Watson, played the course when he attended Faulkner and is still remembered by some Rock Creek players.

Now, within minutes of downtown Fairhope, Rock Creek, Lakewood (Grand Hotel) and Quail Creek Golf Courses offer golfers superb choices for challenging outings.

Fairhope’s Quail Creek Golf Course is an affordable, city-owned course, 3 miles east of downtown. The course includes well manicured greens, fairways, tee boxes, a full service Pro Shop and a friendly & knowledgeable staff.



Jim Bates, Assistant Director of the Fairhope Museum of History and avid golf enthusiast, (pictured here) says, “We are fortunate to have so many great courses on the Eastern Shore, but our Fairhope Quail Creek is the most challenging course of them all. We can proudly consider ourselves a ‘golf destination’!” ~

## **Sixth Annual**

# **ROUND UP DAY**

**Celebrating Fairhope’s Founding  
118 years ago**

**Friday, November 15, 2013**

**The Fairhope Museum of History  
6 – 9 p.m.**

**“Another period-costume Event”**

When the Founding Fathers of Fairhope landed on the Eastern Shore, they called together all of the new like-minded arrivals to launch the Single Tax Colony. So we celebrate!!

Round Up Day 2013 will include a dance featuring music from the 1800s-period band, Kracker Dan’s Minstrels. “Museum staffers and volunteers will be wearing period costume, and we invite the public to do so as well,” Director Barrett says. “But costume or not, we invite everyone to the Museum to learn more about and to celebrate Fairhope’s founding.”

Be sure to stop by for this “open house” style event

## **Surprise Party for Director Donnie**

Director Donnie Barrett turned 64 on August 16th! The surprise group of Museum docents, friends and visitors suddenly appeared and joined the celebration.

Sherry Sullivan lit candles on the mint chocolate cake as a “flash mob” of about 20 people sang “Happy Birthday” and Donnie blew out the candles.



This was another fun day at the Fairhope Museum of History!!

## Tea for Two

Each Tuesday 2 p.m. in the Museum Council Chamber

### Upcoming Programs

Oct 1 – **Charlene Lee** – Charlene, the creator of “Smart Coast”, will tell us about her walking school bus program.

Oct 8 - **Mia Burmeister** – Mia works with Roberts Brothers Realty and has experience with historic preservation in Miami and Charleston.

Oct 15 – **Charles Cort** – Charles will present several antebellum paintings by Edward Troye that depict Alabama thoroughbred race horses. He will also tell the story of the winning horses from Mobile and how they were raised in Baldwin County.

Oct 22 – **Beth Stowe Fugard** – Beth is the owner and operator of Stowe’s Jewelers which is one of the oldest businesses in town. She will tell about her family and their lives in Fairhope.

Oct 29 – **Lynn Hastie Bozone** – Lynn helped designate the Stockton Landmark District and founded the new Stockton Museum. She will tell us about their new festival called “Saw Mill Days”, which is taking place on Nov. 2, 2013.

Nov 5 – **Alan Lipscomb** – A life-long Fairhope resident, Alan is the son of a former Fairhope High School principal. He is now a lawyer in town and will tell us about his life here.

Nov 12 – **Robin Fabel** – Robin will show a PowerPoint presentation on the life and times of Fairhope benefactor, Joseph Fels.

Nov 19 – **Lynne Switzky** – Lynne is president of the League of Women Voters of Baldwin County. She will present a program entitled “Should women be allowed to vote?”

Nov 26 - **Bessie Montgomery** – Bessie operates Fairhope’s “Town and Country” Ladies Apparel and has been in business in Fairhope for 72 years!

## Annual Friends Membership Meeting – October 15, 2013

The State Constitution of the *Friends of the Fairhope Museum of History* requires that an annual meeting be held to elect officers for the upcoming year and to address business of the organization. That meeting will be held in the Council Chamber Room upstairs at the Museum on October 15, 2013 at 3:30 p.m.

While this is a special meeting, it will be short, efficient and fun. Light refreshments will be served and as an incentive for newcomers, a door prize will be awarded to an attendee. Members should mark their calendars, as a quorum of 80% of *Friends* membership is needed. If you are a member and can't attend, please stop by the docent desk and sign a proxy form so your vote will be counted!

### Next Regular Friends Meeting

The next regular meeting of the *Friends* will be November 19 at 3:30 p.m. in the Council Chamber Room upstairs at the Museum. Non-members are invited to attend and participate in Exhibit and Event planning with us. The *Friends* are now meeting monthly on the third Tuesday of each month. Lots of activities are being discussed and planned!

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### The Newsletter

The contents of this Newsletter are provided for information only and remain the property of the *Friends* organization, or the source from which the information was obtained. The contents are monitored by and have the approval of the Newsletter Committee of the *Friends of the Fairhope Museum of History, Inc.*

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## Fairhope Museum of History

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Hours: 9 – 5 Tuesday through Saturday Admission: Free!

*find us on: [facebook.com/FairhopeMuseumofHistoryFriends](https://www.facebook.com/FairhopeMuseumofHistoryFriends)*