

Friends

Of the Fairhope Museum of History

NEWSLETTER



Vol 8 Issue 3 June - July 2017

Satsuma Blossom Festival



Dogwood Trail Court: Lauren Buehler, Abigail Macaro, Caroline Toombs, Kate Nobles, Abigail Davis and Sofia Gambino enjoy the People's Railroad, escorted by *Friends* Louie Blaze (L) and Wayne Brunson (R)

The satsuma became a favorite fruit in the early 1920s and after years of popularity, it became cause for celebration. The first Satsuma Blossom Festival was held in Mobile in 1926. After that, the satsumas were hit by frost and inclement weather, and the festival faded. The tasty satsumas continued to be grown here and cherished as a treat, but they no longer drew crowds for parades and ceremonies.

On Saturday, April 15, 2017, the Fairhope Museum of History celebrated the fourth annual historic recognition of satsumas, and the first year to blend the beauty of the blossoms with the celebration of the first Satsuma Blossom Festival on the Alabama Coast.

The activities began with a large gathering of fans at 10 a.m. to hear the Eastern Shore Ukelele Club and to

Satsuma Blossom Festival, continued on page 3



Director's Desk

Time flies! We opened this Museum in 2008 and right away applied for a state constitution for the *Friends of our Museum*. We also had our first Elderberry Festival that year and it has grown to become our premier special event every summer; we have to juggle it around depending on when we expect Elderberries to be available for pies and recipes. But it has always been well attended.

In 2010, we got our State charter for *Friends of the Fairhope Museum of History* and since that time, we have maintained a list of active members of around 70-80 people. Our next big program that year was Round Up Day and it went over well too. It gets hard to top our last act. We began the *Tea for Two* Speaker programs in November of that year and have had over four hundred speakers in these past 7 years, tell us about their experiences in the growth of Fairhope and about our history.

We have had two mayors, over 125,000 guests, added Satsuma Blossom Festivals, walking and bus tours and seen docents come and go (in a good way) and even had Jerry and Claudia Fortis meet and get married while serving as our docents.

We have enough researched history articles that Bob Glennon is working on a book of our stories and I just finished one about *Stewart the Picture Man*.

Everybody knows I grew up here and have been heard to say, "I did it for nothing before they started paying me," - and I would do it again.

Our great staff and volunteers make this the best job in the world and I get my picture taken with celebrities almost every week. We get tired sometime, but about the time we do, here comes one of our been-here-forever docents to pump me up and here we go again. All of you make it a wonderful place to work! Do I say, "Thank You?" You bet I do!

Donnie Barrett

The Royal Lineage of the Queen



The crowning of a Queen of the Satsuma Blossom Festival was a first for this year's satsuma celebration. But there is noteworthy historical significance to this regal milestone. In Mobile in 1926, Miss Elizabeth McKenzie was crowned Queen of the Satsuma Blossom Festival, to great Pomp and Circumstance. This year, Mrs. Becky Jones, a long-time Fairhope resident, was crowned Queen of our Satsuma Blossom Festival. Her fun and charming personality showed, as she gave her queenly wave and posed near the framed photograph of her mother in the downstairs corridor, for interviews with WALA television and our own newsletter editor.

Queen Becky accepted the scepter at our annual Festival with elegant pride. "This is such an honor to be selected as the Queen of the Fairhope Satsuma Blossom Festival," she said. "My mother was Queen of the Satsuma Blossom Festival, and now I am honored to follow her as Queen!" Queen Becky beamed with a big smile as she was crowned and descended the Museum staircase escorted by Director Barrett. You see, it was Mrs. Jones' *mother*, who 91 years ago while still in high school, was selected Queen in 1926! "My mother was beautiful as she rode in the parade, escorted by UMS cadets in full-dress uniforms," said Mrs. Jones.



Mrs. Jones is a Fairhope native and retired Fairhope school teacher. Donnie Barrett was one of her students. Last year at one of our *Tea for Two* programs, she also told about growing up in Fairhope. She and her husband now run the *Bay Breeze* Bed and Breakfast on Mobile Street by the bay. ~

Satsuma Blossom Festival, continued from page 1



watch the skill and training of Fairhope Police Officer Becky Woodruff and her canine companion, *Segan*. The German Shepherd was trained in the Czech Republic, so he responds only to commands in German!

The Ukulele Club again entertained, as they did throughout the day, between other activities.



At 11 a.m., the young ladies of the Dogwood Trail Court brightened up the scene in crinoline petticoats, Antebellum dresses and broad brim hats of beautiful colors. They took to the stairs in the Museum foyer and did an impressive introduction of themselves and their mission as ambassadors for the Eastern Shore. They posed for pictures with guests, chatted with visitors and cheerfully participated



in the fun of the Cake Walk that began shortly after they arrived.

They also added elegance to the May Pole Dance class, led by Director Donnie Barrett.

At 1:45 p.m., Director Barrett ceremoniously crowned Mrs. Becky Jones, Queen of the Satsuma Blossom Festival. Queen Becky was selected for her charm, enthusiasm for Fairhope history and to commemorate the crowning of her mother, Queen of Mobile's Satsuma Blossom Festival in 1926!

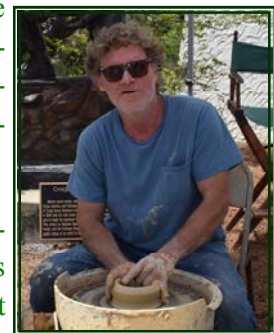


The professional dance group *Baklava Belly Dancers*, took the courtyard stage at 2 p.m. as they showed the enjoyment, fun and rhythm of belly dancing! The pretty and talented ladies performed several numbers with their traditional live music in the background.



Mad Mike the Magician made his fourth annual appearance, with an outstanding magic show of mental games and illusions for a packed audience. Mike is always a favorite!

John Rezner, long-time Fairhope potter, again displayed his locally fired pottery and gave demonstrations of his artistic skill.



Emogene DeMaagd, Chairperson for the event, was pleased with the turnout and program. "People have been more excited this year than ever before, to get involved and participate. It has been great!"

Tomorrow, we start planning for next year! ~

Walking Tours of Fairhope

Fairhope weather was beautiful this April, making for perfect days for this series of outdoor programs. Each Saturday morning a group would gather at 10 a.m. and off they would go, with Donnie in the lead, talking even before some are off their benches.



The first group pictured (left) met at the Rose Garden at the Fairhope Pier on April 8. This casual lecture featured the story of the Fairhope beach area, which was the center of Fairhope's social activities in the early 1900s. Donnie discussed the eight piers of the past that were ravaged by fire and storms. He also described the casino, bowling alley, several hotels and restaurants, the baseball field, amusement park rides and the walk-in movie theater that attracted locals for over six decades.

The April 15 tour departed from the Welcome Center and took guests along both sides of Section Street from Magnolia Street to Greer's

The Walking Tour of Fairhope pre-date the opening of the Museum of History at its current location. Director Donnie Barrett has always loved to tell our story, so when the Alabama Department of Tourism initiated a program for cities in Alabama to show off their history, Director Barrett applauded the idea. This is the twelfth year for him to walk the streets of Fairhope with a smiling group of history buffs and curiosity seekers.



Grocery and back. Director Barrett told about the buildings and traversed an alley or two while explaining landmarks and how Fairhope has developed over the years. He also talked about the Single Tax concept and its successes and challenges.

The Knoll Park tour on April 22 went from the Welcome Center, west toward the bay, to Knoll Park overlooking the pier. This short hike went west on Magnolia Street, in front of several of the original town founder homes, and past several early hotels. The trek crossed Knoll Park while Donnie told stories, then traveled back up Fairhope Avenue to the Welcome Center.

Walking Tours, continued on page 5

Even alleyways has their history. Donnie comingled vintage facts with his personal experiences as a student and young man running the byways of the colony-turned-city . (continues below)

thousand past and future residents will rest eventually under these oak trees; some with their spouses buried above the other, within fourteen inches of the surface. The only requirement for being buried here is that immediate family members must be members of the Single Tax Corporation.

Ninety-five people took the cemetery tour this year. Crowds continue to grow as these tours gain in popularity! ~



Photographs by Becky Brunson, *Friends* photographer

History Bus Tours Saturday, July 15

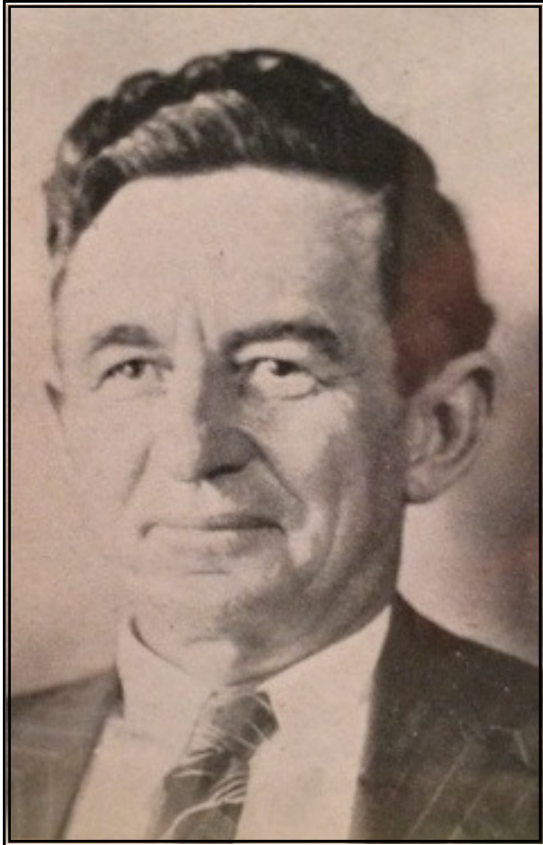
The last walk of the series was the Colony Cemetery on April 28. Director Barrett slowly walked the paved roadway winding through the gravestones, pointing out the resting places of colorful personalities of early Fairhope. He also told interesting and amusing stories about some eccentric citizens and their politics. To many listeners, they were surprised to learn that the cemetery has been used since 1895 - eight months after the founding of the Single Tax Colony. Over two-

Four History Bus Tours will leave the Courtyard of the Fairhope Museum of History at 9a.m., 11 a.m., 1 p.m. & 3 p.m. Twenty dollar tickets can be obtained from the Docent Desk at the Museum beginning July 1. Reservations can not be made without a ticket as these trips sell out every year! All proceeds go to the *Friends of the Museum* to support programs, events and projects.

Adolph Berglin

The Ice Cream Man

by Louie Blaze



Adolph Berglin

I scream, you scream, we all scream for ice cream .. but did you know that the very first ice cream produced in the state of Alabama was right here in Fairhope? In 1897, an energetic young man came to Baldwin County from Wisconsin and immediately set to work as a self-employed entrepreneur, first as a vendor of fresh meat and other perishable foods, which he delivered from door to door with a horse-drawn wagon. This young man was Adolph Oscar Berglin, "A. O." to his friends.

As a dealer in perishables, A. O. recognized the need for ice, and soon thereafter, he leased a site on the beach from the Single Tax Colony. He established an ice plant there in 1918. The machinery and equipment consisted of mostly used items, assembly of which required all of his personal skills and mechanical abilities.

A steam boiler and engine furnished power for the operation with pine logs as fuel; thus, the cost of power was negligible. At the time, pine knots were available at no cost, from the cut-over open land. Steam power with wood fuel made it possible for the plant to pump its own water and produce its own electricity; it was almost self-sufficient. The two items coming from outside sources were salt and ammonia, both necessary for making ice.

Soon after the ice plant was placed in operation, milk and dairy processing equipment was added. When World War I brought shipbuilding and port activity to Mobile, *Fairhope Ice and Creamery Company* became a leading supplier of ice and dairy products. Especially popular were the ice cream cones and cantaloupe a-la-mode, sold to eager lines of customers on weekends. The beach was then crowded with summer residents and visitors who came to Fairhope via the Bay Boat excursions.

In 1915, A.O. developed his own business, and since he was mayor of Fairhope, his influence was also a key factor in planning the municipally-owned power plant and electrical distribution system. That utility has continually expanded and is now one of Fairhope's major assets.

Mr. Berglin also served as an officer of the Single Tax Corporation and member of its executive council for a number of years. He was also an original director of the Bank of Fairhope, a position he held throughout the remainder of his life.

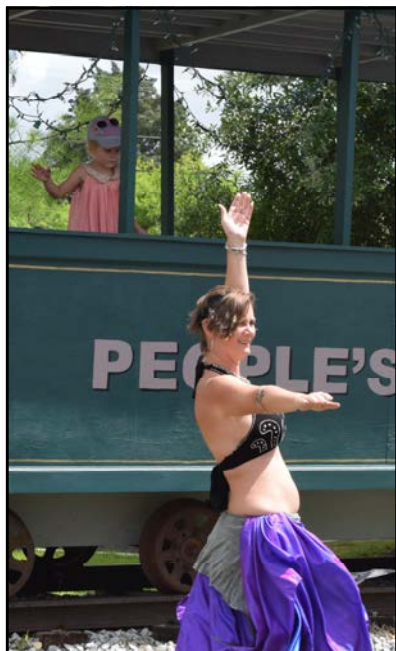
As noted here, Mr. Berglin is shown in our current feature exhibit, *Fairhope Founders*.

So when you are enjoying your favorite flavor of ice cream, just remember where it all started . . . ~ ~



Director Barrett's History Story of his Own

In the past, when Donnie taught students at the Organic School in Fairhope, he had many pet birds, chickens, emus, pheasants, quail, turkeys and peacocks. On occasion of a class science project, the students enjoyed watching the hatching of a rooster. As he (the rooster) began to grow, Donnie took him home to raise and feed, but regularly returned the little rooster back to class as a kind of mascot. The fledgling loved to be picked-up and petted. And as children do, the rooster would be jostled, carried by the feet or inside their jackets, yet the rooster never feared, or tired of the kids' handling. During lessons, the bird would sit quietly on a desk, or windowsill and periodically, to the children's pleasure, he would crow loudly at will! During recess, the mascot rooster would pick through open lunch boxes and eat snacks and crumbs. He developed the ability to flip open a peanut butter sandwich and peck out the nuts, often without reprimand from the young owner of the lunchbox. This little rooster named "Cole" lived to a ripe old age, but alas, on a careless weekend, a hawk was his demise. ~



Satsuma Blossom Festival - Candid Camera!

Unknown to the Belly Dancer at the Satsuma Blossom Festival on April 15, the young lady in the Railroad car behind her was stealing the show!

Too bad we didn't catch it on video...! The tiny dancer is Avalyn Clavette.

The Festival was a great family event!

Black History Highlight -

Shave and a Haircut...!



Reese Wainwright in 1903, was the first Black businessman to open an establishment in Fairhope. He offered shaves, haircuts and mustache trims in his barber shop at 412 Fairhope Avenue. Mr. Wainwright cut hair downstairs in the two-story building and Dr. Floyd Moore treated patients in his office upstairs. Dr. Moore bought an apartment house on Fels Avenue which later became the Fairhope Sanatorium. ~



Friends News

On April 6, 2017, Museum Docent and Author, Rebecca Brunson, was invited to speak on the WABF Radio Station in Fairhope. She talked about the Museum and its supporters, especially Jule Moon, an area native who has spoken at our Museum's *Tea for Two* Program



and has contributed historical details and stories for our archives and enjoyment. Becky also read a poem about Jule and her vivacious personality.

Becky is in the foreground left, and P.T. Paul, popular Alabama poet, (background) was the host of the show segment of Tod Johnson's "Man About Town" weekly radio program. ~

Tea for Two

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

Upcoming Programs

June 6 – David Bagwell – David is a noted historian, accomplished author and lecturer. He will present his entertaining program, “Harry Maury: South Alabama’s Ante-bellum sailor, duelist, filibusterer, soldier and Wild Man.”

June 13 – Paul Brueske – Paul is a Civil War expert who will share a PowerPoint presentation on the *Lady Slocumb*. This famous cannon held the line at Spanish Fort then magically disappeared. Paul has found it! Great story!

June 20 – Dick Scott – Dick’s parents wrote the local history books, “Daphne”, “Montrose” and “Point Clear” and he will tell us about these books. Mr. Scott is also a history researcher with a great story.

June 27 – Jimmy Conyers – Jimmy is serving his first term on the Fairhope City Council. He is a native of Atlanta, GA and will tell his Fairhope story and entertain questions about City Council business.

July 4 – 4th of July Holiday – Museum closed.

July 11 – Lt. Stephanie Hollinghead –The museum has had several Fairhope Police officers here to tell their stories at our Tuesday teas. Continuing our support of our Police officers, we present Lt. Hollinghead to share her Fairhope story with us.

Tea for Two

Upcoming Programs

July 18 – Jule Moon – Jule is a well-known local author and poet who will tell us her Fairhope story. She will read from several of her recent works. Her poetry is delightful!

July 25 – Amy Thompson – Amy was known as “Amy Greer,” News Center 5 anchor during the 1990’s and is now Donnie’s next door neighbor. She has a great story to tell about her many local projects and how she is now promoting the IB (International Baccalaureate) programs at Fairhope High School.



The Newsletter

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Fairhope Museum of History

24 North Section Street

(251) 929-1471

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

<http://www.fairhope-museum-of-history-friends.com>

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