

Friends

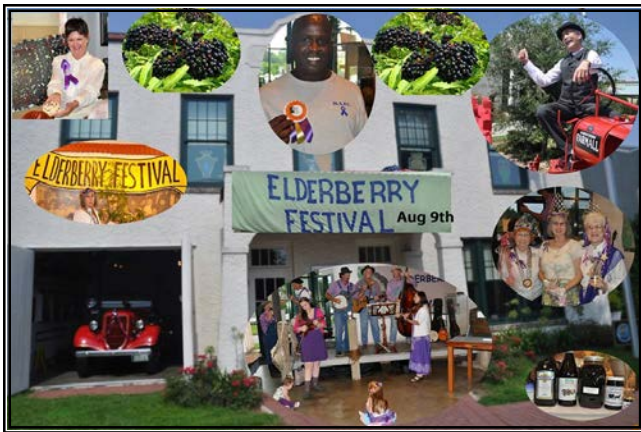
Of the Fairhope Museum of History

NEWSLETTER



Vol 5 Issue 5 October–November 2014

Sixth Annual Elderberry Festival



The Sixth Annual Elderberry Festival on August 9, 2014 at the Museum of History drew a large crowd to enjoy lots of music and fun activities.

Residents competed for ribbons and bragging rights for all kinds of treats made with the berries; categories included pie, cake, bread, jam, jelly, juice, gelatin, butter and elder-flower creations. First place winners were:

- Elderberry Sweet Rolls: Kate Settles
- Elderberry Cake: Vicky Day
- Elderberry Jam: Mary Ann Maradik
- Elderberry Pudding: Kate Settles
- Elderberry Cordial: Lottie Barrett

The fun began at 10 a.m. The first level of the Museum was packed with cheering fans as the Elder-

berry pie eating contest got underway. The challenge was to eat a whole pie sans use of hands! Five competitors hastily devoured the pies as fans rooted for their favorite pie-pal. The winner for the second year in a row, was Jim Bates!

The program promptly moved into presentations and demonstrations that continued throughout the day about Elderberries and how to use them for tasty refreshments and desserts. There was even a demonstration for making and playing a musical flute, from the Elderberry stalk.

At 1 p.m., Queen Eli IV was crowned with appropriate ceremony and the singing of “Our Queen Ellie!” The surprised Queen was Mrs. Lottie Barrett.

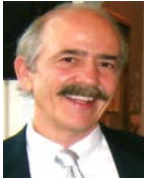


Queen Ellie IV,
Mrs. Lottie Barrett

Musical entertainment was provided by Kracker Dan Minstrels from 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. And outside, there was old fashion churned ice cream in Elderberry, strawberry, vanilla and chocolate flavors and a trailer-mounted tumbler for kids!

The beautiful weather attracted over three-hundred participants to the spirited festivities.

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



Director's Desk

We have recently updated our docent list and we now have over fifty docents! That is a lot of volunteers that we see on a regular basis. We are lucky, because we can't run this Museum without this large force of enthusiastic volunteers. There are some days where our docent coordinator, Mary Ann Maradik, has been able to double up on volunteers, so we can do some on-the-job training for our new recruits. In past days where we had just one docent on duty, we now regularly have two. This also works nicely because we have two entrances and provides a greeter at each entry door.

I think back eight years ago when our Museum was in the Bell Building on the Faulkner College campus. We did not have enough docents to even keep the doors open. We had volunteers who would come "every third Thursday," and work "when my knees are not bothering me," or "when the grandchildren aren't home." Then some wanted to work unusual and limited hours, to the point we could barely schedule when the Museum could be open. This made programs, special exhibits and public relations almost impossible.

Now we have a team that is a strong working machine! We all have to take care of business at times, but we have enough helpers to cover for those who have to be away. We have several who we can call on anytime and they will be here in fifteen minutes. These are immensely valuable in a pinch.

The general attitude of our volunteers is most heart-warming! They love it and it shows! This week, I over heard, "this place has it really going on," and "this Museum is on the move!" The docents enjoy it here and cherish their time spots. They are complementary to our Museum and to each other. Guests notice this too and have lavished numerous compliments about our staff to City of Fairhope officials.

This good feeling also shows with plans for our up and coming docent appreciation party. I hear how everyone is coming and offering lots of suggestions for what type of activities we might have. So far, only two will possibly miss our docent social. We have a wonderful group of cheerful people who makes running this Museum a smooth sailing operation.

Thanks, Guys!

Donnie Barrett

Elderberry Festival, continued from page 1

The popular event began in 2009 to recognize the value over the years of the local Elderberry, an indigenous wild berry harvested by settlers and still used by many residents for jams, jellies, pies and cakes. The Museum's Elderberry Festival has become



an annual attraction for all ages!



Photographs for the Festival were provided by Docent/Photographer Curt Cochran



Helping us tell the Fairhope Story!

Fort Morgan Anniversary Event

The 150th Anniversary of the Battle of Mobile Bay was commemorated on August 1, 2 & 3, 2014. The weekend was filled with events that included re-enactments of the fleet entering the bay and cannon fire into and from Fort Morgan and Fort Gaines, a Union bombardment from fortifications outside the forts and periodic assaults and skirmishes throughout the weekend. About 200 enactors camped on the grounds of Fort Morgan and talked with visitors about life as a soldier and sailor during the Civil War.

On Saturday morning, Fairhope artist-historian Dean Mosher unveiled a painting of Confederate Admiral Buchanan's decisive moment to attack the Federal fleet with his flagship, C.S.S. Tennessee. Governor Robert Bentley who was slated to attend the unveiling, was delayed in-transit and arrived instead on Sunday, for the final ceremonies of the anniversary of the Battle of Mobile Bay.



Pictured above (L-R) is Jefferson Davis re-enactor, Tyrone Crowley and Artist Dean Mosher, with the Admiral Buchanan painting.



Our Museum Director, Donnie Barrett, participated in the Anniversary activities for the entire weekend. He replicated the experience at the time of the conflict by sleeping on the ground in his tent, eating hard-tack and “food of the time” and charging Fort Morgan as a part of the Union regiment re-enacting the Federal Army charge upon the Fort in August 1964.



Round Up Day

120th Anniversary

November 15



The founders of Fairhope gathered on November 15, 1894 and founded the Single Tax Colony of Fairhope. That gathering became known as Round Up Day. Mayor Tim Kant proclaimed in 2008 that this would be an annual celebration in Fairhope. For the past 5 years, our Museum of History has commemorated that event with a special program. This year, it will take on a different flare!

On Saturday, November 15, 2014, the celebration will take place at the Colony Cemetery at Section and Oak Streets with special theatrical effects. Costumed historical celebrities will tell the story of Fairhope, once in the morning at 11 a.m. and again in the afternoon at 2 p.m. Introductions and narration will be done by Museum Director Donnie Barrett, who also wrote the script for the program.

Staging the Founders Day event at the cemetery will provide a unique atmosphere for the milestone, as 14 of the 28 founders are buried in that graveyard. The settlers designated the site in their original layout of the Colony and put it into first use on July 4, 1895 when John Hunnell was found drowned in the bay that morning. It has received the remains of Colony and Single Tax Corporation residents since.

This will be a remarkable first-of-a-kind presentation of the Fairhope story!! Advance donations of \$10 ea will be on sale at the Museum, as group size must be limited due to space and sanctity of the cemetery. Donations will be used by the Friends for Museum projects.

Fairhope Historical Preservation Ordinance making Progress

by Bob Glennon

Fairhope is actively participating in the Alabama Communities of Excellence program and as an ingredient of that effort, the city will create a five-year strategic growth plan. The non-profit organizers of that program have noted that Fairhope lacks an historic preservation ordinance.

The matter of an historic preservation plan has been a debate for many years between preservation supporters and property owner business interests; preservation vs. “do what we want with our property,” which includes sub-divide and have the option to tear down old structures.

On August 21, the city council gave Mayor Kant authority to update the city’s eight-year-old historic sites survey. The plan will focus on four historic districts that are listed in the National Register of Historic Places; Bayfront, Fairhope Downtown, Montrose and White Avenue.

The national recognition gives incentives for the preservation of buildings, but doesn't prohibit property owners from tearing down the structures. Mayor Kant says the districts will be resurveyed within their boundaries as well as their outskirts, such as more areas along South Mobile Street (along the shoreline). The mayor has said that the American Legion is probably one of the oldest buildings in town and he would like to see them figure out how to help the owners preserve it. Mr. Kant said that the new ordinance will be similar to the one proposed in 2011, in that the Historic District and Landmark Commission will not have enforcement powers. It is more educational, promoting and encouraging respect for our historic assets. They are also looking at other areas of town that should be considered. Developers are wanting to divide some larger lots for more houses.

The Museum staff, docents, local history buffs and serious historians most certainly applaud this progress to get the ordinance again in consideration by the city council.

Baldwin County during the Civil War: The War Comes Home!

Interesting tidbits that we have learned since beginning emphasis on “The War Comes Home!”

The Museum Civil War exhibit opened on May 18, 2014 with an exciting ribbon cutting by Mayor Tim Kant and marked the results of many hours of work by many professionals as well as the docents and staff, to build and tell the story of Baldwin County during the Civil War. In the past four and a half months since the exhibit opened, several fascinating facts about the Civil War in our county have come to light:

- Fort Morgan did not fall into Federal hands until August 23. Even though U.S. Admiral Farragut’s fleet penetrated the entrance to Mobile Bay on August 5, the Fort remained Confederate for another 18 days. This topic was discussed by Director Donnie Barrett in the *Tea for Two* speaker program on August 5.

- “Revetment” is a real word! Hurdle revetments were engineered by military strategists as defensive fortifications near our forts. When the War exhibit opened in the Museum and articles were written about the battles, the term “revetment” was unfamiliar to some visitors. Military engineers designed “something-to-hide-behind” for the infantry and entrenched forces. The laborers building the defenses, often slaves, were instructed on how to build line earthen field fortifications, using timbers. The creative design would not only provide shelter, but also had a bounce-back effect for bullets and objects that hit and impacted the fortification. Dirt and debris were thrown back toward the attackers, when the revetments were hit. Replicas of these defenses are a part of the exhibit in our Museum.

- In the Book Review in the last Issue of our Newsletter, it was said that Fairhope Mayor Greeno was in the 4th Arkansas Calvary Regiment, yet he was a major in the Union Army. Further research into the mayor’s papers corrected us. He was in fact, a Captain in the 6th Kansas Volunteer Calvary, who

fought in Arkansas and Missouri. His papers identify him as a dentist and a doctor, when he wasn’t in combat. That fact made his invitation in 1905 to both Union and Confederate Veterans, for a Civil War Reunion in Fairhope, to be a heartfelt special event.

- Our Director Donnie Barrett has been performing reenactments of various battles of the Civil War and participated in area archeological digs for over 40 years. He has always loved history and when still in grade school, he would go with Flo Simmons, his friend and teacher, along the bay shoreline and study relics that were uncovered by the tide and rain.

- The Federal Ironside, *U.S.S. Tecumseh*, that led the assault into Mobile Bay, remains on the bottom of the bay today, with 94 Union sailors and officers still on-board. It is a federal cemetery site protected by law from vandalism and excursions by divers. The shoreline at Fort Morgan has moved westward, leaving the marker for the submerged cemetery near the shore.



Director Donnie Barrett and Docent-Photographer Curt Cochran show off the Museum’s new full-color book entitled *Baldwin County During the Civil War; The War Comes Home!*, authored by Mr. Barrett and photographs by Mr. Cochran. The books are on sale in the Museum bookstore for \$5. Donnie and/or Curt will also personalize and sign one for you. It tells stories about the exhibit and the Civil War as it came home to Baldwin County.

Tea for Two

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

Upcoming Programs

Oct 7 - **Jo-Anne Crawford** – Jo-Anne is a native of the Eastern Shore – she was a *Steiner* from Montrose. She has been active in many business and civic organizations and will come and tell us her stories.

Oct 14 - **Jack Cummings** – Jack’s family is from Mobile and they came to Point Clear in 1920. Jack will tell us of his life, family and work careers in our area.

Oct 21 - **Fred Marchman** - Fred is a local author and college professor and will present his new book “Portals of Paradise.” His unique style and sometimes dry humor is very entertaining.

Oct. 28 - **Mike Turner** – Mike is the founding member of the Eastern Shore Ukulele Club and will tell us the history of the ukulele. He will present songs covering the ukulele’s unique cultural past from the beaches of Hawaii to Tiny Tim.

Nov. 4 - **Don Cheney, Jr.** – Don will show us his recent craze for carving wood fish – some comical & some realistic – and will also tell us about his on-going project cataloging and researching *Edith Harwell*.

Nov. 11 - **P.T. Paul** – P.T. is the reigning Poet of the Year for 2014 and has won several awards in the 2014 Spring Poetry Competition from the Alabama State Poetry Society. She will present to us some of her latest works.

Tea for Two

Upcoming Programs— Continued

Nov. 18 - **Jacqlyn Kirkland** – Jacquelyn is the Museum Relations Officer for the Museum of Mobile and will discuss *Mary McNeill Fenollosa*, a famous Mobile novelist and poet from the early 1900’s.

Nov. 25 - **Curt Cochran & Donnie Barrett** – Curt and Donnie will review the life of *Hatchett Chandler* who started the park at Fort Morgan. Curt will present a slide show and Donnie will correct the many inaccuracies in Chandler’s books, “Little Gems from Fort Morgan.”



Dixie Fortis Art Exhibit Eastern Shore Art Center

October 3 – 31, 2014

The Eastern Shore Art Center is exhibiting over 80 pieces of art by Dixie Fortis. Dixie died on August 22, 2013. She is in the Chicago Women Hall of Fame and wife of our active docent Jerry Fortis. Art sales will benefit the Eastern Shore Art Center.



The Newsletter

The Friends Newsletter is the official publication of *Friends of the Fairhope Museum of History, Inc.*, an Alabama Corporation organized exclusively for charitable, scientific and educational purposes within the meaning of Part 501(C) (3) of the United States Internal Revenue Code. Contact: Fairhopewriter@gmail.com. Editor: Bob Glennon.

Fairhope Museum of History

24 North Section Street (251) 929-1471

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

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