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Regional Historical Societies

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REGIONAL HISTORICAL SOCIETIES

THE JACKSONVILLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

A joint program meeting of the Jacksonville Historical Society and other members of the Florida Historical Society of that district was held on November 13 with the view of bringing about closer cooperation and association. Dr. Mark F. Boyd, president of the Florida Historical Society, was to address the meeting and discuss the relationship of local and regional societies with the State society, but due to illness in his family this was postponed.

The meeting brought together a large number of members and others interested in Florida's history, including a delegation from Fernandina who told of the progress of a movement to organize a local society in that historic town—a project which was initiated and encouraged by the Jacksonville Historical Society.

The program was both informative and historical. Mr. Lewis G. Scoggin, under whom the Florida State parks are being developed, spoke of the historical interest of the parks and of the important aid which local historical societies can give in that development. Mr. John W. Griffin, appointed to the newly created office of Florida State Archaeologist, emphasized that archaeology is a part of history, and joined with Mr. Scoggin in asking the cooperation of local historical societies.

Miss Katherine F. Sproull spoke on the historical background of the Jacksonville area, and of the series of forts which each era built, from Fort Caroline, through the block-houses of the Seminole War, to the earthworks of the Civil War period—each representing another struggle for possession.

Mr. Richard P. Daniel, president of the Jacksonville Historical Society, presided, and expressed the regret of the meeting at the cause of Dr. Boyd's absence. There were reports from the Society's treasurer, and from the editor of the next issue of the Jacksonville Historical Society's annual, which is to appear soon.

THE MADISON HISTORICAL SOCIETY
by EDWIN B. BROWNING

(The Madison County Historical Society has long been one of the most active in the State. With the thought that it might be of service to other local and regional societies, Mr. Browning, past president of that society, was asked to give us some account of what the society has been doing, of what they plan to do, and especially of their educational program.)

The Madison County Historical Society has been re-activated, following a war-time suspension of activities, and is again attempting a full-scale effort, including its part in an educational program open to all the schools of the county. The major features of the program are:

The County Society seeks to organize Junior Historical Societies in the schools of the County, which are issued charters when certain conditions have been met. Membership is open to all students from grades 7 to 12. A Junior Society must consist of at least ten members and not over twenty-five. Groups wishing to secure a charter must : (1) have permission of the principal of the school ; (2) have a sponsor who is a member of the faculty; (3) elect officers and agree to hold regular meetings during the school term; (4) agree to send representatives to meetings of the County Society, and (5) adopt an activities program including research, publicity, public appearances-things related to fostering an interest in and a love for the history of the County.

The great need in carrying on this phase of our work is teachers, particularly social studies teachers, who realize the importance of local history in building culture. Where we have had interested and able teachers, the Junior Societies have enriched the school life and the lives of students.

The County Society, on an informal basis, furnishes consultative services on matters related to County and local history, carrying collections of materials before classes and before Junior Societies in an effort to stimulate the collection of items of historical interest. Guide service is given to classes or groups wishing to make field trips to places of historical interest. We strongly recommend well-planned historical tours as stimulants to

teacher and student interest; one has already been conducted this year-an all-day affair, with a picnic lunch. Brief explanatory talks are given on actual sites of historical importance.

Our Society plans to mark some of our most important sites with permanent markers, and the students have expressed the keenest interest in this work. We have supplied facts on the organization of the State Baptist Convention in this County on November 20, 1854, and given impetus to a movement which has resulted in erecting a monument on this significant site. Two years ago we assisted in writing the scripts for a May Day program based on the historical background of Madison County, and more recently we have prepared "Backward Glances" for student presentation on general occasions.

Local history studied aright is far more than ancestor hunting. "A great past calls us to a greater future."