

1965

Historical Notes

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HISTORICAL NEWS

The Annual Meeting

The 1966 annual meeting of the Florida Historical Society will be held in Clearwater on Friday and Saturday, May 6 and 7. The Board of Directors will meet on the evening of May 5. Dr. James W. Covington, Department of History, University of Tampa, is program chairman, and anyone interested in presenting a paper is asked to communicate with Dr. Covington. William M. Goza of Clearwater, vice-president of the Society, is chairman of local arrangements.

Dr. Dorothy Dodd Retires

Dr. Dorothy Dodd retired October 1, 1965, after twenty-four years with the Florida State Library, thirteen of which she served as State Librarian. Dr. Dodd, a graduate of the University of Chicago, has served as Director of the Florida Historical Society and is nationally known as one of Florida's, and the South's outstanding historians. Under her guidance, the Florida State Library has developed into one of the largest and most important in the Southeast. Because of her interest and through her research activities, countless numbers of public documents and records, which might otherwise have been lost or destroyed, were added to the state's archives. The Florida Collection at the State Library is now one of the best available and a great deal of credit for this belongs to Dr. Dodd.

She is the author of many articles on a wide variety of Florida subjects which have appeared in the *Florida Historical Quarterly*. She is also the author of *Florida Becomes A State* and a history of Florida during the Civil War which appeared in the *Florida Handbook*. Dr. Dodd's father, the late Dr. William George Dodd, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Florida State University, was also interested in Florida history. He was the author of *History of West Florida Seminary*.

The new State Librarian is F. William Summers, a native of Jacksonville and a graduate of Florida State University. After serving in the public libraries of Jacksonville and Cocoa, Florida,

he became Associate Librarian of the Providence Rhode Island Public Library and lecturer at the University of Rhode Island Library School.

Henry M. Flagler Month

To honor the memory of Henry Morrison Flagler, financier, philanthropist, and one of Florida's greatest promoters, the city of St. Augustine has proclaimed January 1966 as Henry M. Flagler Month. Mr. Flagler was born in Hopewell, New York, on January 2, 1830. He came to Florida for the first time in the late 1870s, hoping that the sunshine and warm climate would restore his wife's health. He visited the state again in 1883, and in 1885 he decided to make Florida his home. During his lifetime here, he built the Florida East Coast Railroad from Jacksonville south to Key West, and a chain of luxury hotels, including the Ponce de Leon in St. Augustine, the Ormond Beach Hotel, and the Royal Poinciana in Palm Beach. He pioneered in the development of the citrus industry and in the growing of tropical fruits and vegetables. The establishment and growth of Palm Beach, West Palm Beach, and Miami are closely associated with Henry Flagler.

Many events important to Flagler occurred during the month of January. It was in January 1885 that he took over active management of the Jacksonville, St. Augustine and Halifax River Railroad which ran from South Jacksonville to St. Augustine. On January 10, 1888, the Ponce de Leon Hotel opened in St. Augustine with an air of celebration and gaiety. Five days later, January 15, the \$84,000 Grace Methodist Church, which Flagler had helped build, was dedicated in St. Augustine. On January 20, 1890, the first all-steel railbridge across the St. Johns River was opened for traffic, which meant that through trains could be operated for the first time between New York and St. Augustine. Flagler's final achievement, the construction of the Florida East Coast Railroad into Key West, was completed at 10:45 a.m., January 22, 1912. Thousands of people turned out to greet the decorated cars, and many of the natives saw a passenger train for the first time in their lives. On the train were a number of notables, including representatives from foreign embassies and legations. Florida Governor Albert W. Gilchrist was present, as was

the famed Cuban hero, Jose Marti. The *Miami Herald* described the railroad extension into Key West as the "Eighth Wonder of the World."

Local and Area Societies and Commissions

Alachua County Historical Commission: Mrs. Helen Ellerbe, librarian of Westwood Junior High School, has been appointed to the Alachua County Historical Commission filling the vacancy created by the death of Mrs. Sanford Goin. The Commission announces the placing of a historical marker in Waldo, Florida, noting the final Civil War encampment of Captain John J. Dickison and the place where baggage belonging to Jefferson Davis and the Confederate government was captured in the spring of 1865.

Delray Beach Historical Society: This newly formed historical society, whose board meets monthly, has already launched a large program of historical activities. The Society is planning to publish a book on "Delray-as it was then-as it is Today." It will contain the history of Delray Beach from 1895 to the present. Jack Kabler is chairman of the Society's archives committee, and he is anxious to secure pictures, documents, and any other data relating to Delray Beach and the surrounding area.

Gulf County Historical Commission: The Commission announces that preliminary studies for a monument to be erected at the Ft. Crevocoeur site on U. S. 98 are underway. The historical display that was used at the celebration honoring Congressman Robert L. Sikes, Jr., formerly a member of the Board of Directors of the Florida Historical Society, and Governor Haydon Burns was the work of members of the Commission and the St. Joseph Historical Society.

The Commission, together with the members and officers of the St. Joseph Historical Society and the Advisory Council to the Constitution Park Museum, have been the major supporters in the efforts to establish the St. Joseph Peninsular State Park.

Jacksonville Historical Society: Dr. Lawrence E. Breeze, professor of history at Jacksonville University, spoke at the program

meeting of the Society in the Friday Musicale Auditorium on the evening of November 10. Dr. Breeze's topic was "London Looks at North Florida," and he utilized material from his article "The Battle of Olustee: Its Meaning for the British" which appeared in a recent issue of the *Florida Historical Quarterly*. Philip S. May, Jr. is president of the Jacksonville Historical Society.

Key West Art and Historical Society: Volume II (1965) of *Martello*, the publication of the Key West Art and Historical Society, has appeared. Included in the magazine are short articles on the theater in Key West, salt making in Key West, and biographical sketches of Dr. J. Y. Porter and Governor William Marvin. The purposes and activities of the Old Island Restoration Foundation are also explained in a short article. The Key West Art and Historical Society reports a membership of 300.

Marion County Historical Commission: At its mid-summer luncheon meeting the Commission heard Harvey Benson, assistant ranger for the United States Forest Service, describe the proposed plan to identify old trails and sites in the Ocala National Forest and to erect descriptive markers. Chairman J. Ed Blocker appointed Wilbur A. Willis and Mrs. John Rogers of Lynne to assist with this valuable project. W. L. Tomlinson was appointed to represent the Board of Marion County Commissioners on the Historical Commission. Miss Sara Ferguson and Mrs. John H. Norman are also new additions to the Historical Commission's board. Miss Ferguson and Mrs. Norman are working with John P. Chazal, Sr. on the records committee. Mr. Chazal's genealogical research has turned up valuable data on pioneer residents of Ocala and Marion County. The records committee is trying to secure the names and other pertinent data from gravestones in private cemeteries, many dating back to the nineteenth century, in the area.

The Commission continues to publish its interesting and valuable Bulletin twice a year. Mrs. Roy V. Ott of Oklawaha is editor.

Martin County Historical Society: Congressman Paul G. Rogers spoke at the annual meeting of the Martin County Historical Society on November 11, 1965. His topic was "Legislation to Sup-

port United States Research in Oceanography." He was introduced by Commissioner Frank Wacha. The Historical Society, the Elliot Museum, and the House of Refuge Museum continues its active and varied cultural, social, and historically oriented programs. These include art exhibits and films. A variety of exhibits attract a steady stream of visitors and school children to the museums.

Peace River Valley Historical Society: The Society has held several interesting program meetings recently. In September, Vernon Peoples of Punta Gorda described the exciting activities of the Sarasota Vigilantes in the 1880s to the members at a meeting in Wauchula. At the October 26 meeting in Bartow, William M. Goza, vice president of the Florida Historical Society, described his recent "pathfinding" expedition of the route taken by Major Francis L. Dade's command in December 1835 from Fort Brooke to the site of the Dade Massacre near the Wahoo Swamp. Joe M. Larned, an amateur archaeologist from Bradley Junction, described some of his unusual finds at the November meeting in Fort Meade on November 23.

Colonel Read B. Harding, secretary of the Society, reports a total of seventy-six members who represent fifteen different communities. Miss Louise Johnson, librarian at the DeSoto County High School in Arcadia, is also librarian for the Peace River Historical Society.

Pensacola Civil War Round Table: The Civil War Round Table of Pensacola held its sixty-seventh regular meeting at the Pensacola Public Library on the evening of September 24, 1965. Earle Bowden, president of the organization, discussed Jefferson Davis as a statesman and a soldier. There was no lull in the Round Table's activities during the past summer. In July, New Orleans author and newspaper columnist Charles L. Dufour gave an interesting talk on the Red River campaign, and in August, William Roberson described the land campaigns involving the Mobile and Pensacola areas during the Civil War.

The Pensacola Civil War Round Table is supporting the efforts to get Pensacola officials to designate Seville Square as an historic district. The Round Table is celebrating its sixth year of operation, and although the Civil War Centennial is ended, the

members plan to continue the organization. In the fall issue of its newsletter there is a listing of the sixty-seven speakers and programs it has presented.

Pensacola Historical Museum: The Pensacola Historical Museum celebrated its fifth anniversary in August 1965. Located in Old Christ Episcopal Church, one of Pensacola's most historic and architecturally important structures, the Museum is a valuable storehouse of relics, remnants, and lore of Pensacola's past. Miss Lelia Abercrombie is curator and Gordon M. Simons is assistant curator. They report that the Historical Museum attracts some 15,000 visitors a year and is used by students, researchers, and scholars studying Pensacola's history. Old Christ Episcopal Church is 133 years old and was used during the Civil War as a hospital.

Pinellas County Historical Commission: The Commission meets monthly at the Courthouse in Clearwater. At its September 15, 1965 meeting, William M. Goza, vice president of the Florida Historical Society, was introduced as a new member of the Commission. Walter P. Fuller, vice-chairman and formerly a member of the Board of Directors of the Florida Historical Society, informed the Commission members of his efforts to reconstruct the activities of Hernando de Soto who is believed to have established a supply or base camp on Tampa Bay near the site of what is now known as the Del Oro Groves subdivision.

The Pinellas Board of County Commissioners has adopted a resolution requesting that persons finding artifacts on county property will turn them over to the Historical Commission for preservation. At the October meeting of the Historical Commission, Ralph D. Reid, executive director of the Museum, reported the most recent acquisitions. He noted that a large number of school children and adults are visiting the Museum.

Safety Harbor Historical Society: This newest of Florida's local historical societies was organized recently by a group of Safety Harbor citizens. Mayor George McGonegal is president; Victor Sellers, vice-president; Gustave Nelson, treasurer; and Betty White, secretary. These officers together with Fred Campbell

constitute the Society's board of directors. The organization plans to mark the various historical sites in the area, to encourage the collection of Indian and European artifacts, and to develop an annual historical pageant based on the visit to the area by Pedro Menendez de Aviles in February and March 1567.

St. Augustine Historical Society: The fall business and program meeting of the St. Augustine Historical Society was held at the Art Center on the evening of October 12, 1965. Two new St. Augustine Society publications have been released, and Albert Manucy's biography of Don Pedro Menendez de Aviles, *Florida's Menendez*, was reviewed by its author. The other is a reprint of the article "Cattle Raising in Spanish Florida, 1513-1763" by Charles W. Arnade that was published originally by *Agricultural History*.

Otis E. Barnes, treasurer of the Society for forty-four years, died in August, and his son, Roy O. Barnes, has been elected to serve his father's term as treasurer. Mrs. Charles E. Walker is a new member of the Society's board of directors.

St. Lucie County Historical Society: With the cooperation of the St. Lucie Arts Council which was organized recently, an effort is being made to establish an historical museum in Ft. Pierce. Walter R. Hellier, member of the Board of Directors of the Florida Historical Society and author of the recently published *Indian River: Florida's Treasure Coast*, is active in the Arts Council and the St. Lucie County Historical Society. Largely through his efforts the Society organized an exhibit of Spanish gold and artifacts discovered in the Atlantic Ocean off Ft. Pierce, and they have been displayed in a temporary museum in the Public Utilities Building. Thousands of persons, including many classes from the public schools, have visited the exhibit. It also includes St. Lucie County historical artifacts.

Volusia County Historical Commission: The first number of the Volusia County Record, published by the Volusia County Historical Commission, was issued in September 1965. This four-page leaflet includes historical news and short articles and genealogical material relating to Volusia County. The authors of the articles in this first number are Blanche Fearington, Vermeille H. Galbreath,

Alice Strickland, Natalie Lamb, Ianthe Bond Hebel, Eileen H. Butts, and Zelia Sweett.

The Volusia County Historical Commission has voted to give \$1,000 for one of the historical mural panels to be placed in the new DeLand Post Office. The Junior Woman's Club of DeLand is sponsoring this project of placing eight murals depicting the history of the area in the new building. The Historical Commission is advising on the historical events to be portrayed in the murals. The Commission is erecting a bronze marker on the site of the former home of Harrison G. Rhodes, editor, dramatist, and author, on South Beach Street in Daytona Beach. Mrs. Ianthe Bond Hebel has been named historian-emeritus because of her many contributions to Volusia County, and a plaque is being placed in her honor in the Volusia County Courthouse.

Florida Public Relations - Hall of Fame

The Hall of Fame Commission of the Florida Public Relations Association has elected Henry B. Plant, founder of the Plant system, and Baron G. Collier, Sr. to its Public Relations Hall of Fame. At a luncheon meeting in Jacksonville on December 2, there was public recognition of these two Florida pioneers. Their portraits will be placed in the State Chamber of Commerce Building in Jacksonville.

Crystal River Indian Mounds Museum

The Florida Board of Parks and Historic Memorials dedicated the new Crystal River Indian Mounds Museum at Crystal River on Saturday afternoon, November 20, 1965. Members of the Park Board, public officials, and members of local and state historical societies were present for the ceremonies. Representative A. R. Strickland, who spearheaded the fight in the legislature to have the burial mounds preserved, was master of ceremonies. Representative George Stone of Escambia County made the dedicatory address. The museum will house artifacts and relics uncovered from the eighteen acres constituting the museum site.

Extraordinary Congress, International Council of Archives

The International Council of Archives will hold an Extraordinary Congress in Washington, D. C., May 10-13, 1966. The overall theme of the conference is "Archives for Scholarship: Encouraging Greater Ease of Access." Four working sessions are to be devoted to the following aspects of the theme: liberalization of restrictions on access to archives; national documentary publication programming; microreproduction of archives for reference and publication purposes; and international cooperation in facilitating access to archives. A final session will consider and decide on resolutions for concrete action growing out of the working sessions.

With the U.S. National Archives and Records Service as host, and in cooperation with the Society of American Archivists, some 125 national archivists and other leading figures of the world archival community will participate as official delegates. The widespread interest of archivists and historians generally in the theme of the Congress, however, has led the organizing committee to develop plans to accommodate a substantial but limited number of observers. The observers would have seats at the Congress and access to the simultaneous translation facilities, but they would not participate in the deliberations.

Persons wishing to attend the Extraordinary Congress as observers should apply to Robert H. Bahmer, Chairman, ICA Extraordinary Congress Organizing Committee, National Archives and Records Service, Washington, D. C. 20408. Seats will be allocated, as long as they are available, in the order of receipt of the applications.