

1996

## History News

Florida Historical Society  
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## HISTORY NEWS

The University Press of Florida has announced a new series devoted to "Florida History and Culture." Co-edited by Raymond Arsenault and Gary Mormino, both professors of history at the University of South Florida, the series will include standard academic monographs, works of synthesis, carefully selected works of popular history, memoirs, and anthologies. While the series will feature books of historical interest, the coeditors encourage authors researching Florida's environment, politics, literature, and popular or material culture to submit their manuscripts for consideration. Authors interested in contributing to the "Florida History and Culture" series should send inquiries to: Professor Raymond Arsenault, 264 Davis Hall, University of South Florida, St. Petersburg, Florida 33701, Telephone: 813-893-9555; or, Professor Gary Mormino, Department of History, University of South Florida, Tampa, Florida 33620, Telephone: 813-974-2808.

Dr. Paul S. George, past-president of the Society, and member of the social science department of Miami-Dade Community College, Wolfson Campus, was recently named editor of *Tequesta: The Journal of the Historical Association of Southern Florida*. Long-affiliated with the Historical Association of Southern Florida and well-known for his scholarly publications on the region, Dr. George has gained local, national, and even international notice for his walking tours of Miami. He is well-equipped to be editor of the highly respected *Tequesta*.

On March 9, 1996, the Junior Service League of St. Augustine, Inc., held its fourth annual St. Augustine Lighthouse Festival. The celebration was based on a Victorian theme, reflecting the era when the tower was first lit in 1874. The Lighthouse Festival serves as a way for the Junior Service League to thank the community for its continuing support of the St. Augustine Lighthouse. About 5,000 people usually attend these annual events.

At its annual banquet and awards dinner in November, 1995, the Tampa Historical Society recognized preservationist Stephanie

Ferrell by presenting her the 1995 D. B. McKay Award. The award was made by county historian Hampton Dunn.

The Tampa Bay History Center's History and Heritage Museum and Library is scheduled to open in the summer of 1996 at the Tampa Convention Center Annex at 225 South Franklin Street. This interim mini-museum will provide 2400 square feet of exhibits and changing displays.

Organized in 1995, the Boca Grande Historical Society celebrated its second year with a photographic exhibition entitled "Looking for Gasparilla: Memories of a Town" in February 1996 at the Boca Grande Community Center. The exhibit told the story of a small village which came into existence around 1900, flourished for a while, then declined and ceased to exist by the mid-20th century. Sallie VanItallie, who led a group of volunteers in preparing the exhibit, said "No trace of Gasparilla village remains today - except as recorded through photographs collected and preserved by one family." Over 600 people visited the exhibition with the result that the Society experienced a three-fold increase in size to nearly 100 family memberships. The Society is planning another exhibition for next season.

The historical *Encyclopedia of African American Associations* is seeking scholars interested in contributing assigned entries. This single-volume reference work will include associations established by African Americans and interracial groups working in the interest of African Americans. For a list of entries and further information please contact Nina Mjagkij, History Department, Ball State University, Muncie, IN 47306, or 00n0mjagkij@bsuvc.bsu.edu

#### *Obituary*

**William D. Miller** biographer of Dorothy Day, died at Lloyd, Florida on December 11, 1995 at the age of 79. A native of Jacksonville, Miller graduated from the University of Florida and received his M.A. in History from Duke University. After taking his Ph.D. from the University of North Carolina, where he studied with Howard K. Beale and J. Carlisle Sitterson, Miller began a long and distinguished teaching career at Memphis State University. He had two tenures at Marquette University between which he was at Flor-

ida State University where he helped to found and then direct the American Studies Program.

Author of six books and scores of articles and essays, Miller's early career focused on the Progressive Era in the South. *Memphis During the Progressive Era, 1900-1917* (Memphis and Madison: The Memphis State University Press and the American History Research Center, 1957) and *Mr. Crump of Memphis* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1964) were recognized for their scholarship and established Miller as a writer of grace and eloquence.

His mature writings reflect Miller's growing interest in social and intellectual history, and his commitment to Catholic social thought. A convert to Catholicism, Miller befriended Dorothy Day, co-founder of the Catholic Worker Movement, and this led to his writing of *A Harsh and Dreadful Love: Dorothy Day and the Catholic Worker Movement* (New York: Liveright, 1973) which was translated into Italian and published in Italy in 1975. This was followed by *Dorothy Day: A Biography* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1982) now recognized as the definitive biography of Dorothy Day, and *All Is Grace: The Spirituality of Dorothy Day* (New York: Doubleday, 1987).

After retirement Miller continued to write and publish, producing what many of his students see as the book most representative of his teaching, his philosophy of history, and his interest and fascination with Henry Adams: *Pretty Bubbles in the Air: America in 1919* (Urbana and Chicago: The University of Illinois Press, 1992). At the time of his death Miller was working on a personal memoir to be titled, *Growing Up in Jacksonville*.

William Miller was a teacher of extraordinary dimensions, an inspiration and guide to many who knew him beyond the classroom, and a human being of unlimited goodness and unqualified generosity. A Southerner by birth and a Catholic by choice, William Miller was an intellectual in the finest sense of the word. Thoughtful, reflective, and devoted to the life of the mind, he viewed history as an artform seeking an understanding of the human condition as a basis for authentic community.

He was dismayed by the tendency in contemporary works of history to accept "process" and work within its confines, and talked always of the need for the historian to get outside of time. It was in this view that the ideas of Henry Adams, Dorothy Day, and Peter Mauren most obviously affected his view and practice of history.

Beyond that he was able to combine in his own life the qualities of teacher and historian, the philosophy of the Catholic Worker

movement, and the teachings of the Catholic Church. He was passionately committed to the dignity of other human beings. He attracted a large and eclectic following by the force of his personality, and some members of that following became his graduate students and today seek to follow his example in university teaching.

He is survived by his wife Rhea Bond Miller, seven of their eight children, and thirteen grandchildren.

DENNIS B. DOWNEY AND RICHARD C. CREPEAU