



# The Historical Quarterly of The St. Lucie Historical Society, Inc.

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Spring 2019

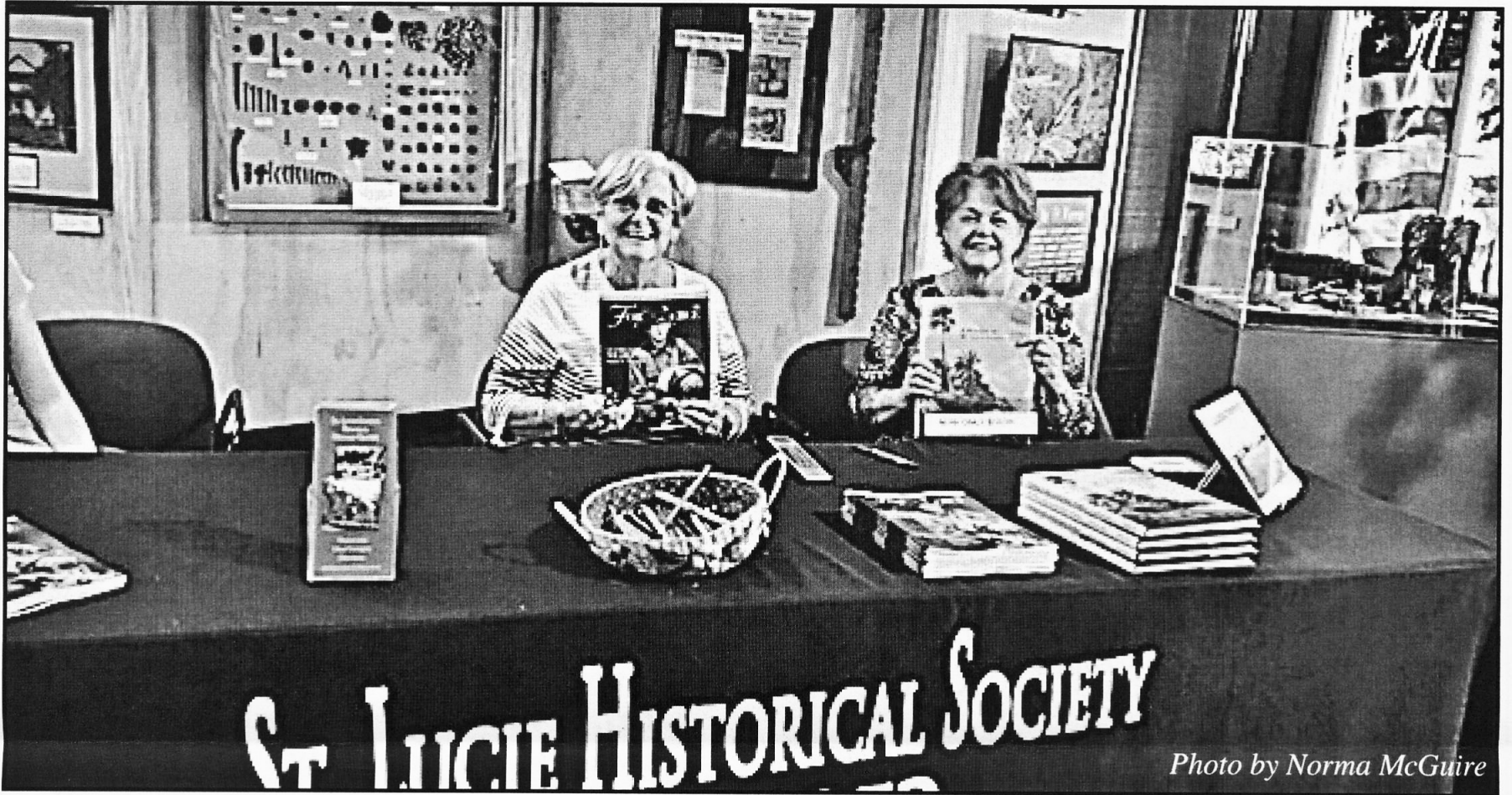


Photo by Norma McGuire

*SLHS volunteers Corinne Vrana and Patsy Nelson display history-related items at the 2019 St. Lucie County Fair.*

## County fair highlights busy season for historical society

The winter season just ending has been an especially active one for our St. Lucie Historical Society and its members. With thousands of seasonal visitors added to local residents, most cultural and entertainment events were well attended.

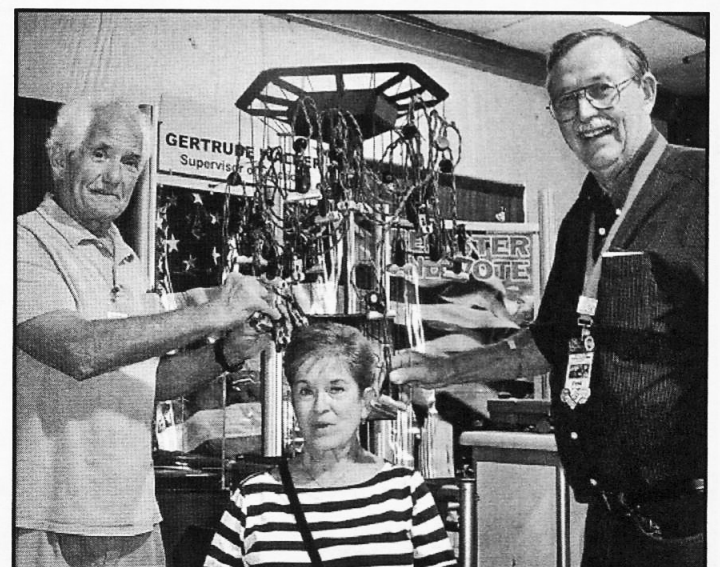
In mid-January, the society co-sponsored the annual history festival in downtown Fort Pierce, founded and organized by *Indian River Magazine*. A one-block stretch of South Second Street between Orange and Atlantic avenues was the scene of educational displays, military re-enactors, panel discussions in the Sunrise black-box venue, and much more. SLHS members volunteered at several booths, greeting visitors and explaining aspects of this area's rich history.

An art festival saluting this area's famed Highwaymen landscape painters was a mid-February highlight in the Moore's Creek Park. And as usual, the Saturday morning farmers' markets and monthly Friday Fests drew enthusiastic crowds to Fort Pierce's Marina Square. In addition, SLHS members volunteered at the downtown Sandy Shoes event in March.

The season's most ambitious undertaking by the historical

society was the 2019 St. Lucie County Fair. Dozens of volunteers were needed to greet visitors to our exhibit – created by **Harry Quatraro** with help from **Fred Ebner**. For

*... continued on page 3*



*Volunteers Terry Howard and Fred Ebner demonstrate the antique hair curling machine for Linda Burrows at the SLHS fair exhibit.*



## Welcome - New Members

Sue Favorite, Membership Chairman

Robert & Susan Polakow

Clay Yates

Charles & Diane Benway

Harvey & Tamara Crouse

Sal & Ashley Guttuso

Michelle Franklin

Marion McKinney

The Society is a Florida Corporation exempt from federal income tax under section 501(a) of the Internal Revenue Code as an organization described in Section 501(c)(3). The Society is also classified as a public charity under 509(a)(2).

### The Historical Quarterly of The St. Lucie Historical Society, Inc. Officers and Board of Directors

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**Second Vice President:** Sue Favorite

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**Parliamentarian:** Roger Miller

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Robyn Hutchinson, Ernie Merrill, Norma McGuire,

Roger Miller, Rick Modine, Jean Ellen Wilson, Jon Bell

### The Historical Quarterly Staff

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**Disclaimer:** The views and opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of The St. Lucie Historical Society, Inc., P O Box 578, Fort Pierce, Fl. 34954, Telephone (772) 461-8020, stluciehistoricalsociety.net

## The President's Message

by Nancy Bennett

It is hard to believe that spring is already here. The museum has had a busy winter, and we are finding Tuesdays are a popular day for visitors. I am delighted to have several new volunteers and encourage anyone with a few hours to spare to join the team.

On January 11, we participated in the History Fair on Second Street in Fort Pierce. This gave us an opportunity to promote the museum and the Bud Adams exhibit at the Cobb Store. Thank you to our volunteers that day, **Patricia Brewer, Katy Purcell, John Honea, Pete Peterson, Jean Ellen Wilson, Terry Howard, Lucille Rights and Robyn Hutchinson.**

**Harry Quatraro**, with the help of **Fred Ebner**, designed and built a really interesting exhibit for the St. Lucie County Fair. Between February 22 and March 3, our volunteers greeted visitors, provided information, and sold books. The following members volunteered:

**Ted Burrows, Richard Coffman, Marianne Coffman, Bob Davis, Betty Jo Starke, Pat Brewer, Jim Jaques, Pete McLeod, Margi Lloyd, Katy Purcell, John Honea, Maggie Summerlin, Deb Billis, Dave Schmidt, Joann Schmitt, Robyn Hutchinson, Ernie Merrill, Judy Merrill, Roger Miller, Adele Lowe, Mary Schrader, Norma McGuire, Tom Bailey, Patsy Nelson, Mike Nelson, Corrine Vrana, Ken Vrana, Ellen Lynch, Richard Lynch, Terry Howard, Jon Bell, Fred Ebner and Simone D'Addario.** Thank you all for your contributions. We couldn't do it without you. Δ

### Florida Facts

Soaring aloft from the Kennedy Space Center on the space shuttle Discovery, U.S. Sen. John Glenn became the oldest man in space, at age 77, on Oct. 29, 1998. It was Glenn's second trip as an astronaut. He was the first American to orbit the Earth on Feb. 20, 1962 aboard the Friendship 7 spacecraft.



## As time goes by...

Items from past editions of the society's *Historical Quarterly*.

From Vol. 2, no. 2, December 1983



On Nov. 2, 1983, **Addie Holmes Emerson** died peacefully in her sleep.

Born a cattleman's daughter in Fort Drum 82 years ago, she shared the memories of those early days with us: the welcoming ranch house, visiting Indians with **Polly Parker**, and cow camps with hardworking

cowboys on the open range.

The Holmes family moved to Fort Pierce when Addie was seven years old because her parents desired a good education for their children. She attended the old wooden school on North Second Street near Cobb's Store. When the new, modern yellow brick school on Delaware Avenue was opened in 1915, Addie was there.

Her family operated Holmes Casino and pool where most of Fort Pierce youths learned to swim. And Addie was there.

She grew up, married **Lindsey Emerson**, raised her children **Tom** and **Pugie**, worked with her church and community in Fort Pierce, and stored memories.

But in 1968 when she became director of the St. Lucie County Historical Museum, she helped put those memories back into life. And for thousands of adults and children, visitors and residents, she was Mrs. St. Lucie History because she had lived that history, remembered that history, and told all of us how it was. And we know it would never be that way again.

So, thanks to Addie, our museum contains irreplaceable objects of Florida's history.

Thanks to Addie for tape recordings and pictures of "how it used to be" in St. Lucie County.

Thanks to Addie for years of work in preserving our past for our future.

Thanks to Addie for sharing it all with us.

Thanks, and farewell. Δ

## Maggie Minchew would welcome calls from friends

**Maggie Minchew**, a longtime historical society enthusiast and former board member, now resides in an assisted living facility in North Carolina and would welcome contact with local friends.

Her daughter Lee Anne reports that Maggie is recovering from a stroke, and also has vision and short-term memory issues. If friends would like to telephone Maggie, it would be best to do so early in the day. Her number is 252-631-1282. Her mailing address is Courtyards at Bern Village, 2701 Amherst Blvd., Room 303A, New Bern, NC 28562. Δ

### *COUNTY FAIR ... continued from page 1*

a full list of SLHS fair volunteers, see the president's message. Our members sold books and distributed pamphlets for the museum. Among the pieces on display were artifacts from old Fort Pierce, antique implements and household items, plus the antique hair-curling machine – always a favorite curiosity item.

## Florida Facts

Florida's first newspaper, the East Florida Gazette, was founded in St. Augustine in 1783. (*The Florida Handbook*)



Educators and civil-rights activists Harry T. and Harriett V. Moore were killed on Christmas Day 1951 when a bomb exploded under their house in the Brevard County community of Mims. No one was ever charged with the murders. A re-investigation by the state in 2006 identified four Ku Klux Klan members as those responsible.



Gov. Lawton Chiles died Dec. 12, 1998 of an apparent heart attack while exercising in the gym of the executive mansion in Tallahassee. He was 68 and near the end of his term in office. Lt.-Gov. Buddy McKay was sworn in as governor to fill the remaining 23 days.



## Bulletin Boosters

Help support production of a lively and useful SLHS Historical Quarterly. A \$10 donation will add your name to the Bulletin Boosters roster for a full year of Quarterly editions. Give your \$10 donations to Treasurer **Bob Burdge**. Many thanks! Names of current Bulletin Boosters are listed below (with expiration month).

<b>Joyce Moody-McGraw</b>	4/21	<b>Robert &amp; Ruth Essay</b>	4/20
<b>Jack &amp; Sue Favorite</b>	4/21	<b>Lynne Williams Norvell</b>	4/20
<b>Deborah &amp; Stephen Billis</b>	4/20	<b>Ed &amp; Jackie Fischer</b>	4/20
<b>Margaret Lloyd</b>	4/20	<b>Cynthia Putnam</b>	4/20
<b>Jerry &amp; Carolyn McNeil</b>	4/20	<b>Rick Modine</b>	1/20
<b>Beverly L. Traub</b>	4/20	<b>Pat Modine</b>	1/20
<b>Simone D'Addario</b>	4/20	<b>Ernie &amp; Judy Merrill</b>	1/20
<b>Buck &amp; Mary Ann Bryan</b>	4/20	<b>Bob Burdge</b>	1/20
<b>O.C. Peterson</b>	4/20	<b>Robyn Hutchinson</b>	1/20
<b>James E. Hatfield</b>	4/20	<b>Linda Hudson</b>	1/20
<b>Ron &amp; Maggie Waites</b>	4/20	<b>Roger Miller</b>	1/20
<b>J. Michael Brennan</b>	4/20	<b>Jean Ellen Wilson</b>	1/20
<b>Jim Turner-Apple Machine</b>	4/20	<b>Norma McGuire</b>	1/20
<b>Harold &amp; Mae Holtsberg</b>	4/20	<b>Betty Jo Starke</b>	1/20
<b>Betty Hutchinson</b>	4/20	<b>Tom Bailey</b>	1/20
		<b>Richard Coffman</b>	1/20
		<b>Ann Healy</b>	1/20
		<b>Ted Burrows</b>	1/20

## Feedback

Here are some recent visitors' comments about the St. Lucie County Regional History Center, compiled from the guest book:

**Cody, Hannah & Eliot McKinney**, Pinedale, WY: "Wonderful exhibits."

**Barry & Brandi Barr**, Sugar Grove, VA: "Amazing experience."

**Kathy & Allan Trocolla**, Palm City: "Excellent – We want to come back real soon."

**Robert & Tonya McKinnell**, Ottertail County, MN: "Very interesting! Great history tour!"

**Bill & Jane Scrafford**, Greenville, NY: "Wonderful collection and presentation."

**Amil Kleinert**, Indiana: "Never know when you will find such a hidden gem!"

**Jean & Christophe Fortier**, Montreal QC, Canada: "Thorough coverage of the region's history."

**Scott & Susan Rhodewah**, Craftsburg Common, VT: "What an impressive way you are preserving this town's history".

**Paarlberg Family**, Jacksonville: "Great museum! Kids scavenger hunt is a great idea!"

**Johanne & Patrick Archambault**, Terrebonne, QC, Canada: "Interesting, lots of history."

**Milana, Oliver & Vivian Hajme**, Bonn, Germany: "Truly fantastic! Thank You!"

**Kaitlyn McCurdy**, Kilbarchan, Scotland: "Good history museum." Δ

## Florida Facts

The American Revolution's "last battle" is reported to have been fought at sea east of Cape Canaveral, March 10, 1783. The Continental frigate Alliance and a French vessel were carrying gold lent by France to the new American government when they encountered three British warships. Alliance damaged one British ship in an exchange of cannon fire, enabling Alliance and the French

ship to escape and complete their mission. This occurred about a year and a half after Cornwallis surrendered at Yorktown, and three months after a provisional peace treaty was signed at Paris. In 1986 the Legislature passed a resolution honoring the event as the "Battle of Florida." (*The Florida Handbook*)



## Remembering Bob Cushman, creator of whimsical 'Woogums'

By Fred Ebner

When I was growing up in Fort Pierce during the 1950s there were a lot of interesting characters but the one I remember most was **Bob Cushman**. He was influential in my decision to go to sea in the Navy, as he had been in the Navy and talked about it often.

Bob ran away to sea at age 14 and served in the old China Clipper Ship trade in the Orient. Later he did a hitch in the U.S. Navy in the south Pacific. During World War One he served as a captain in the U.S. Army infantry. After discharge he attended Kansas State University, from which he graduated.

*Editor's note: An Aug. 9, 1969 article in the Fort Pierce News Tribune reported Robert Grant Cushman's death at age 78. He was born July 17, 1891 in Emporia, Kan. A world traveler with a keen interest in ornamental horticulture, he moved to Fort Pierce in 1947 and served for 10 years as superintendent of the city's parks department before retiring. With his home workshop and kiln, the article said, he produced "thousands of his Woogums as ashtrays, dwarfflower holders and whimsical artistic creations that were avidly sought by collectors and gift shops."*

He lived at the southeast corner of Twelfth Street and Hibiscus Avenue in a house he designed, just a block from my family's home on Georgia Avenue. Bob's house was fully open on the east side and he could clean house by opening the doors and squirting

it down with a garden hose, then just mop it dry. As a young man this, to me, seemed the epitome of relaxed and sensible living.

Bob was a close friend of **Beanie Backus** and a social acquaintance with many locals including **Wilma** and **Pete Cowles**, with whom he spent many a Sunday afternoon. Their daughter, **Hart Stephenson**, recalls playing with her friends in Bob's jungle of a back yard while the grownups visited on the east patio.

He was known for his interest in horticulture and had a large greenhouse in which he raised orchids. Attached to his greenhouse he had a small pottery shed. There he made, among other things, his popular ceramic "Woogums." These were delightful creations of frog-like creatures with extra-long legs and arms, attached to mugs, ashtrays, etc.

**Harold Holtsberg** remembers ordering individualized Woogums as gifts. He ordered one of a Woogum playing poker for his brother-in-law, and one smoking a big cigar for his uncle. Bob only charged \$4 or \$5 each for these special-order items.

These Woogums, because of their long, thin arms and legs, were very fragile. There probably are very few left. If any historical society member has a Woogum, we would like to take a photo of it for our archives. Δ





St. Lucie Historical Society, Inc.  
P O Box 578  
Fort Pierce, Florida 34954

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**PAID**  
Fort Pierce, Fl  
Permit No 422

Or Current Resident

**Membership Application**

**St. Lucie Historical Society, Inc.**

Please join us in preserving our local heritage for future generations.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Names and ages of minor children:  
\_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Home Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Business Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Cell \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

I/We wish to join the Society at the level indicated below.  
Membership is from September through August.

New  Renewal  Individual (\$20.00)

Family (\$25.00)  Business (\$50.00)

Please make checks payable to:

St. Lucie Historical Society, Inc

P O Box 578

Fort Pierce, Florida 34954-0578

For Information telephone: (772) 461-8020

**General Meeting are held at:**

**The Elks Lodge**

**635 South 5<sup>th</sup> Street**

**Fort Pierce, Florida 34950**

Society General Meetings are held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the month, from September through May. A meal is provided before the meeting at the price of \$12.00 per person. Reservations must be made for these meals no later than two days in advance of the meeting. To make reservations telephone (772) 461-8020 and leave a message. Reservations and your RSVP information by e-mail to: dinner@stluciehistoricalsociety.net. Dinner begins at 5:30 P.M. and the General Meeting Starts at 6:00 P.M.

**Volunteers are Needed**

If you have 3 1/2 hours that you can give once a week either in the morning or afternoon, please consider volunteering at the Museum.

Admission, to the museum, for St. Lucie Historical Society members is FREE. So come and take a tour.

The latest exhibit is St Lucie Families-Crafters of Local History.

The Pineapple Patch Gift Shop has a large selection of books of Florida historical value, cards, handmade Seminole Indian dolls, and baubles made by volunteers.

**Museum Hours:**

Tuesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.