

## Remerton Timeline

By Donald O. Davis

Consultants, from as far away as Rhode Island recently, steadily visit the museum checking early aerial photographs for historic uses of property. Often the parcels being researched are in the mall, Interstate 75, and Baytree Road area. The early aerial photographs covering this area show the Remerton mill village standing alone, apart from Valdosta. Consultants often quiz about 'the houses in a row' and the story of Remerton. The inquiries of consultants led to the concept of developing this timeline. I did not have documents at hand to be specific on a couple of event dates, but felt those items needed inclusion in this list. Thanks to Nina Singletary King and Susie McKey Thomas for their assistance.

### 1880s

- 1889 – February, Georgia Southern and Florida Railroad (GS&F) construction from Macon was completed as far as Valdosta.

### 1890s

- 1899- Strickland Cotton Mill incorporated. Constructed along side the GS&F railroad tracks, began operation September 11, 1900.

### 1900s

- 1900- Remerton established, named for banker Remer Y. Lane
- ca. 1900-GS&F extended off its main right of way a rail line direct to the Pine Park fairgrounds, which became the foundation for the Valdosta Street Railway (trolley line) to expand to Remerton in October 1900, on what is now Alden Avenue.
- 1901- February 10, Factory Church organized, later named Remerton Methodist.
- 1902 – February 25, *Valdosta Times*, "The Strickland Cotton Mills are said to be overrun with orders, having shipped two hundred thousand yards of cloth to San Francisco yesterday."
- 1904 – Earliest marked burial in Remerton Cemetery, Rubie Harp, 9 months old.

### 1910s

- 1915- Benjamin Franklin Strickland, organizer and president of Strickland Cotton Mill, dies. Central in the large family plot is a life size statue of "Mr. Strickland" atop an obelisk facing towards the mill.

### 1920s

- 1922 –The diagram of Remerton in the 1922 Sanborn Insurance Maps of Valdosta shows 71 houses plus the mill, Methodist Church, Church of Christ, and school house.

### 1930s

- c1934 – During the Great Depression control of the mill passed to another branch of the Strickland family headed by A. J. Strickland, Sr., a brother of the late B. F. Strickland.
- 1936 – An addendum to the 1930 Sanborn Insurance Maps of Valdosta shows that the names of 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Streets were changed to Sycamore, Plum, and Poplar respectively.

### 1940s

- 1940 – Valdosta City Directory states that Sustella Street (Avenue) continues as Remerton Road.
- 1943 – Early aerial photographs show the mill village with farms, fields and woodlands between Valdosta and Remerton.
- 1945 – October 16, elevator cable snaps with Mr. Strickland and nine college girls on board who were touring the mill. Dr. Reade, GSWC (VSU) president, reported to the Board of Regents that only one student was "at all badly hurt." Mr. Strickland was badly injured with broken collarbone and ribs.

## Remerton:

### Named to Honor Remer Young Lane

Remerton was named for the banker, Remer Young Lane, who provided the loan to get Strickland Cotton Mill in operation. We have the two photographs below, in our museum archives; they were also used as prominently displayed photos in a separate publication in our archives, *The Southern Citizen, The Special 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition*, published in 1957 by the Citizens & Southern Banks in Georgia. In 1957 the C&S system termed itself the largest and best in Georgia—It is now Bank of America. The publication states of the early R. Y. Lane Banking Company in Valdosta "This bank was ultimately to become, as Mills B. Lane, Sr. used to say, 'the father, mother, uncle and aunt of the C&S system today.'"



R.Y. Lane at the head of the table and other directors of the Merchants Bank: H. Y. Tillman, E.P.S. Denmark, Mills B. Lane, R.Y. Lane, E.W. Lane, W.R. Strickland, Lowndes W. Shaw and Frank Strickland.



Growers with bales of Sea Island cotton on Patterson Street in front of the R. Y. Lane Banking Co., 1880s.



- 1947 – Valdosta City Directory shows that Baytree Road had been constructed, connecting to Remerton Road, the latter taking the Baytree name.
- 1947-48 – Size and productive capacity at the mill was doubled.

### 1950s

- 1951- Remerton incorporated as a municipality.
- 1955- Remerton school replaced by Parker-Mathis Elementary.

### 1960s

- 1960- Population 571
- 1960 –Wagon Wheel package store opened at the corner of Baytree Road and Melody Lane.
- 1966 – Last plant expansion at Strickland Cotton Mill.



Mrs. Joella Blackburn recently gave the museum this oil painting of Sycamore Street, now Baytree Place, in Remerton. Painted in the early 1970s, the artist is Mrs. Blackburn's son, Veran, Jr.

### 1970s

- 1970- Population 523
- c1972- Jerry Jones Road realigned to connect directly with Melody Lane at Baytree Road. Melody Lane paved and directly connected to Lankford Drive.
- 1977- June, fire station completed.
- 1979- January, Strickland Mill closed.
- 1979- March, Strickland Mill sold to Wipo, Inc. who did business as Sugar Creek Textiles.

### 1980s

- 1980- Population 443
- 1981- Apartment building and businesses begin to give Remerton a new look.
- 1981- Remerton develops own water system, had used water from the mill. Sewerage treatment continues contracted with City of Valdosta.
- 1981- October, first woman is elected to Remerton City Council, Grace Brantley.
- 1981- December, Remerton levies taxes for the first time.
- 1982- Remerton Community Center and Ball Park are closed.
- c1982-3- Hagan's Clover Farm Food Store closes.

- 1982- November, Piggly Wiggly (later Harvey's) Grocery store opens.
- 1983- Attempt to revoke City Charter, the legislation was discarded.
- 1985- first woman becomes Mayor of Remerton, Myra Darlene Courson.
- 1985- May, L. E. Davis family buys Strickland building from Sugar Creek Textiles.
- 1986- December, Wilkinson Textile Company purchases old Strickland Mill.
- 1987- For promotion of mill house businesses, the name of Sycamore Street was changed to Baytree Place.

### 1990s

- 1990- Population 468
- 1991- First Cotton Patch Festival
- 1994- First Mayfest celebration.
- 1996- February, first 24 hour police
- 1996- July, voters approve Sunday alcohol sales by the drink
- 1996- October, new City Hall opened
- 1997- March, Remerton United Methodist Church destroyed by fire.
- 1997- New water tower erected

### 2000s

- 2000- population 847
- 2006 – Announcement of plans for rehabilitation of Strickland Mill into residential, professional and retail units
- 2007- February, Cornelius Holsendorff became first black on Remerton city council
- 2007- Old Harvey's Grocery location remodeled to "mill style" retail space named Remerton Square.



Pictured above with the caboose are students from Genesis Christian School which is located in Remerton. On the left is Dr. Debra Tann, school administrator. The museum had approximately 800 student and youth visitors in the spring and summer of 2007.

