



Lowndes County Historical Society

CHARTERED SEPTEMBER, 1967

Valdosta, Georgia 31603

Dr. John E. Lancaster, President

NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 1990

VOL. XIX NO. 10



VALDOSTA COMMUNITY RECREATION PROGRAM

THE Y.M.C.A. OF VALDOSTA -- 1938

by

Albert S. Pendleton

It is always humbling and with a feeling of pride when someone gives the Society an item that belonged to a relative. That's what I felt when we received a scrapbook of the 1938 YMCA from the late Mrs. T. C. (Mamie) Ashley and given by her daughter, Harriet Ashley Churchwell of Savannah, Tennessee. We remember Mrs. Ashley of Valdosta so pleasantly and certainly in the summer YMCA programs and the Red Cross. Saying mere

"ks" does not seem quite enough, but we do thank you, Harriet. We are quite happy that you wanted to give this cherished memento to LCHS and we are proud of it.

You members and visitors must come see it and peruse it yourself. You may even see a picture of yourself in it! (In the picture we have printed here, I see Fainsy Branch, Ann McGowan, Bobbie Snow, Emily Bridges and more, at the pool of Georgia State Womans College.)

One of the first pages of the scrapbook has an "Outline Map of Valdosta and Vicinity," published by the Chamber of Commerce, Valdosta, Georgia, probably before 1938.

What a small place we were. The city limits were at Wayne Avenue and Lakeland Avenue, but also extended to two sections both called "college property." That was all the property north of Woodrow Wilson Drive, between Ashley and Patterson, known as Pendleton Park. (Now the city auditorium, library, ballpark, hospital and north campus were, and still are, Pendleton Park.)

The original college property known then as Georgia State Womans College on Patterson Street was the site of the 1938 YMCA, fun and games, "Officially loaning certain college property and equipment to the local YMCA."

The local director and YMCA District Secretary was Don C. Swanson. There are many articles about the YMCA by Don and its local work. "Recreation, like education, is for all people everywhere, from the cradle to the grave...creative activities should develop personality and build character..." The recreation movement, "is a great work of prevential social medicine which should be prescribed to every man, woman, and child in America."

Plans began early in March 1938, by a sponsoring committee composed of: President, J. D. McKey; Vice-President, Homer Eberhardt; Secretary-Treasurer, Bob Dusenbery; Miss Leonora Ivey of GSWC; Elizabeth McRee of GSWC; Rev. Hoke Dickinson of First Christian Church; Mrs. T. C. Ashley, of Valdosta Service League; Mr. A. G. Cleveland, Superintendent of Schools; John Lastinger, Georgia Power and Light Company; Clyde Kirby, Boy Scout Commissioner; Dean Hollis Edens, Emory Junior College (now North Campus); Charles F. Brown of Emory Junior and Don C. Swanson.

Swimming programs and classes were 8:30 to 4:00, ladies 4:00 to 6:00 pm., and adults 7:00 to 10:00 pm. Other activities included archery, softball, tennis, golf, marionettes, drama, folk dancing, handicrafts, campfires, overnight hikes, volleyball, ping-pong, and nature study. All activities were supervised by competent, professional and volunteer personnel.

Cooperating Agencies were: GSWC, Junior Service League, The Valdosta Daily Times, Valdosta Water Works, WPA, Georgia Power and Light Company, National Guard, Forty and Eight Club, Rotary Club, Kiwanis Club, Wymodausis, Georgia Lumber and Supply Company and Georgia-Florida Commercial College.

The program consisted of Bible Study, Aquatics, Sports and Handicrafts. There were also committes of Publicity, Finance and Promotion.

Staff members (also in pictures) were Don Swanson, Mrs. T. C. Ashley, George Jennings, Tom Freeman, Noah Langdale, Anita Oliver, Louise Holcombe, Mrs. Perryman Carter, Mrs. Ola Bergsteiner, Mrs. Mary Harmon, Mrs. John Lane, Haskall Booth, Donald Kimsey, Mrs. Gladys Barker and Aline Shearer.

Volunteer workers and their field were: Mrs. Mary Pence, Marionettes; Mrs. Carlos Griffin, Marionettes; Mary Greer, Art Work on Scrapbook; Preston Sessions, Art Work on Scrapbook; Tom Claus, Swimming and Softball; Howard Griffin, Diving; Marion Smith, Swimming; Omar Franklin, Softball; Marvin Vinson, Girls Softball; Mrs. Paul Myddleton, Beginner Swimming; Johnny Oliver, Golf; Max Oliver, Golf, Billy Oliver, Golf;

ers of the Valdosta Junior Service League; Membership Campaign; members in Daily Vacation Bible School; Miss Frances Dekle, Art Work on Campaign; and Charles Dunning, Model Aviation. Among the many workers were Matilda Plowden and Hollis Oliver.

Each area of study was thoroughly carried out, each program activity faithfully executed. The snapshots and photographs by Mr. Blackburn in the scrapbook are priceless as they show, not only people, but the early college campus -- the swimming pool and all the open spaces before the present library and dorms.

There is a picture of Don Kimsey with his favorite activity, model airplanes. Among the younger boys who built model airplanes that summer were: John McGowan, Mack Greer, John Wiggins, Carroll Rogers, Frank Youles, James Jones, Collier Cook, Francis Pendleton and others.

Overnight outings: "Overnight outings were, at the same time, the most popular and most difficult of all the summer activities...Noah Langdale, Tom Freeman and Don Swanson all took their turns planning the outings. Noah Langdale, Sr., very graciously furnished his truck for transportation for practically all of the outings. At different times, the overnight camps were held at Camp Wisenbaker, Blue Springs, The National Guard Camp and Joe Rees Mill Pond. The National Guard Camp was the most popular of all places because of the superior camping facilities... On all outings, each camper equipped himself with the following items -- two blankets, a flashlight, a knife, citronella and plenty of vim and vigor." There were many other activities, even breakfast cook-outs, reading, "quiet games," clay modeling and so on.

There were awards for best "Y" participants, not only for excelling in a sport or activity but for friendliness, reverence, adoptability, etc. There are newspaper articles about all these activities, many written by Noah Langdale, Jr. There was even "date night." So many activities -- they seemed to have had the underlying theme -- Wear Them Out! They even played sports against other YMCA towns.

Camp was three 4-week sessions. A long time! Letters given the first four weeks were to: Junior boys (8,9,10,11), Letter, Bobby Blackburn, Runner-up, Dickey Stewart; Junior girls (8,9,10,11), Letter, Ann McGowan, Runner-up, Margaret Jones; Intermediate boys (12,13,14), Letter, Billy Pinkston, Runner-up, Julian Wilson; Intermediate girls (12,13,14), Letter, Mildred Griner, Runner-up, Harriet Ashley; Senior boys, Letter, Decar Cox, Letter, John Howell, Runner-up, Charles Yarbrough; Senior girls, Letter, Henrietta Denmark. The winners were not eligible for winning in the next weeks, but runners-up were.

Second four weeks "Y" awards went to: Junior boys, Letter to Bubber Tillman, Honorable mention, Everitt Beal; Junior, Letter to Gloria Abrahams, Letter to Margaret Jones, Honorable mention to Eula Mae Blackburn; Intermediate boys, Letter to Tippie Brummitt, Honorable mention to Carlton Adams; Intermediate girls, Letter to Mary McGowan, Honorable mention to Caroline Webb, honorable mention to Mary Beth Woodward; Senior boys, Letter to Charles Yarbrough; Honorable mention to Carlton Brooks; Senior girls, Letters to Margaret King and Annette Blackburn and Honorable mention to Helen Kirk.

Softball teams listed: Hillhouse, McCrary, Forrest, Parker, Corn, McHaffey, Jennings, Fleming, Hardee, Stump, Oliver, Moore, Franklin, Swanson, Freeman, Langdale and Henry.

Archery was won by: (10 & under) Harriet Ashley, (12 & under), Aleta Corley, (14 & under), Sara Lee Taylor, (15 & under), Margaret King. Boys archery, (10 & under), Wilbur Oglesby, (12 & under), Charles Miller, (14 & under), Frank Jarrell and (15 & over), Billy Goodloe.

An iceberg party was given by the "Ice Department of Georgia Power and Light Company. It was a polar beat event." A ton of ice was unloaded into the swimming pool. It was a seven ring circus! Visitors watched kids play on diminutive icebergs -- huge blocks of ice.

ions were asked for the ice since it was not in the budget.

The WPA furnished eight out of the seventeen fulltime staff members and was lauded for their help. The cost of the program was \$3,300, with 7/3 paid to WPA workers.

"Y" third month awards went to: Junior boys, Everitt Beal; Junior girls, Phyliss Wade and Harriet Ashley; Intermediate boys, Carlton Adams; Intermediate girls, Eula Mae Blackburn; Senior boys, Edward Quale, Senior girls, Katherine Garbutt. A total of twenty-four letters were awarded. This was a satisfied town of young people. "Everybody Plays Under 'Y' at Valdosta," our paper said. I believe it.

MUSEUM NEWS

A few years ago, when I should have changed the Volume number on the Newsletter, I did not. I kept on with the same one in a November. So, I got it all messed up. Thanks to Sally O'Neal at VSC, who files our Newsletters for the library there, she noticed the error and wrote me about it. It is correct that we are on Vol. XIX, and in November will change to Vol. XX, and be nineteen years old. There are other times when I have mislabeled our publication. If everyone will go by the month and year, then we will be all right. Thanks again, Sally.

I mentioned the new copy machine we have from Hank Lee and Lee Office Equipment Company of Valdosta. We are very proud of it and making good use of it. A million thanks!

Imagine our surprise when new member Jacqueline Frutche of Florida came in the museum and said she had a computer we had been asking for! A million thanks to her, too. It is an Apple with keyboard, screen, printer, instruction books, discs and all.

We regret the death of Louise Holcombe Ellis. She was always a good supporter and we shall miss her friendly face. We regret the death of Conner Thomson, husband of Georgia Smith Thomson. Our sympathy goes out to these families.

Many thanks to the Sam Amos Estate for memorabilia, to Leona Strickland Hudson for old programs, and to the Griffin family for two large photographs. The photographs are of the Georgia Convention of the Woodmen of the World, Thomasville, April 8, 9, 10, 1913, and the Birthday Ball for the President, Washington, D. C., May 9, 1934, at the formation of the Warm Spring Foundation. I assume Valdostans were in these photographs. Help me find them in the pictures, or locate an article in microfilm about these two happenings.

TIME TO RENEW 1990-1991 Dues

Mail to: Lowndes Co. Historical Society P. O. Blx 434 Valdosta, GA 31602

Name: _____ telephone no. _____

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|---|---------|---------------------------|-----------|
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Albert S. Pendleton, Editor