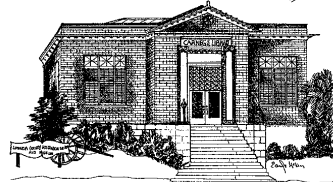


# YESTERDAY & TODAY



## Newsletter of the LOWNDES COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Chartered September 1967

305 W. CENTRAL AVENUE  
VALDOSTA, GEORGIA 31603

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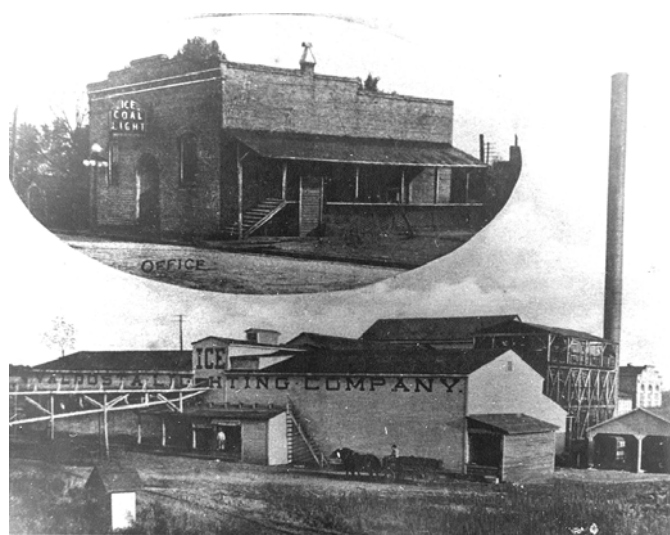
### Let there be light-and ice!

While searching the archives for other items, interesting information on electricity coming to Valdosta was found in the Barnes collection. Remember that it would be decades before portions of rural Lowndes County would have electricity. Much of the early emphasis on electricity was for the production of ice. One write up tells of the tremendous cantaloupe crop one year and how much ice would be sold to fill the rail cars for shipping the produce.

In April 2005, at the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the first session of court in the 1905 courthouse, Judge Arthur McLane stated that the courtroom was originally equipped for gas and electric lights because some thought electricity might be a passing fancy.

By the way, as you read below about electricity and the ice it brought to Valdosta, I wonder how many of us still sometimes call our refrigerator the icebox.

Electricity was first introduced for practical use in Valdosta on September 4, 1889. The first plant was started by Mr. B. W. Bentley under the name of Valdosta Ice and Fuel Company, being located on South Toombs Street.



Valdosta Lighting Company

The plant equipment consisted of a 500 light Westinghouse generator, with a load of 30 arc lights for street lighting and 144 fifty watt, fifty-volt lamps for commercial purposes. At first there were very few residents using current; however, this condition changed very quickly, until the total number of consumers was in excess of one hundred.

At the same time the electric plant was started, a five-ton ice unit was installed, but was operated separately, as the electric

plant was not furnishing day current. In 1900 the Street Railway was started and the Electric Company secured a contract for furnishing the current and also began to bid for industrial load, which resulted in obtaining some direct current motors.

A few years later an additional five-ton ice unit was added, making the total ice capacity ten tons. The business continued to grow and in 1908 the electric had been changed to 110 volts with a load of about 200 K.W., and the ice capacity increased to thirty-five tons.

In the summer of 1908 the Consolidated Ice and Fuel Company was organized, with the idea of entering the ice field and was located on Savannah Avenue with a 60-ton capacity. However, in 1910, after two years of competition between the two plants, the Consolidated Ice and Fuel Company bought Mr. Bentley's Valdosta Ice and Fuel Company and operated both plants for two years.

Then the entire business was purchased by the Municipal Service Company and began operating on August 1, 1912, as the Valdosta Lighting Company. Mr. W. G. Eager came from Staunton, Virginia, to be General Manager with Mr. F. W. Harris as Assistant Manager. Municipal Service Company also had a plant in Staunton.

The original plant, which was located on South Toombs Street, was closed down. They moved some of the equipment and operations carried on entirely from the Savannah Avenue or new plant.

The equipment consisted of two 300Kv-a Westinghouse turbines, two 500 hp Casey Hedge boilers, a 60-ton York ice machine and other plant accessories. Soon an additional turbine and boiler were installed, and with a push for new business, a number of consumers were added to the electric lines and the volume of ice business increased.

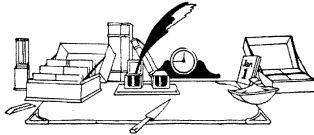
The new company established a record of good service and obtained a new and favorable franchise from the city and thus avoided the establishment of a city plant. A new contract was made with the Street Railway System, the existing price war for ice automatically ended, and a satisfactory scale of electric rates under the permission of the Georgia Railway Commission was established. The Railway Commission regulated electric rates.

Mr. Eager was succeeded by Mr. Young Shackelford who came from Sumter, South Carolina, which was formerly the location of one of the Municipal Service Company's properties. In 1938 the Atlantic Ice & Coal Company of Atlanta bought the local plant. Earlier Mr. Eager had become manager of Valdosta Gas Company.



W. G. Eager

## Albert's Desk



by Albert S. Pendleton, Jr.

The following article is a true story taken from the book *Loch Laurel, 1897 – 1997*. The book was compiled by Morris Smith and is a history and collection of stories centering on activity at the lake. The *Pig Funeral* is recorded as told by Stephen Paine. Stephen, currently residing in New York City, is the son of Clarence and Joyce Paine, LCHS members. Stephen earlier wrote us an article about escaping his office in the World Trade Center twin towers before their collapse on September 11, 2001. Morris and Stephen gave us permission to use the *Pig Funeral*.

This story is shared here to remind us of the serendipity and surprise of the summers of our youth. A few explanations precede the story so that you may follow it more easily:

Wayne and John are sons of Mitchell and Lota Smith.

Carroll Meat Packing is now Sunset Farm Foods, Inc.

The Singing Americans were a local professional group of three-dozen musicians and vocalists that performed in five southeastern states at conventions and patriotic events.

Conner Thomson was a well-known local architect who was married to Georgia Smith Thomson.

Bruce and Chris Hendry are cousins whose family also had a lake house.

## PIG FUNERAL

As told by Stephen Paine

The pigs, Frosty Morn and another, were one in a string of summer projects that Mitchell [Smith] planned for Wayne and John when they were children. The pea-shelling business was another project. The pigs were to be raised over the summer, and then be sold for breakfast bacon. The route from town to Loch Laurel passed by Carroll Meat packing Company – and each time some lake children passed by Carroll Packing, one would sadly remark that this would be the final destination for poor Frosty Morn.

The pigs were kept in a pen across from Mitchell's [vegetable] garden and did well most of the summer. Then in August, Frosty Morn (probably John's pig) became ill. John's two-story tree house was turned into a pig hospital, and John may have spent the night in it, nursing the pig. But the next morning Frosty Morn passed on.

Lota [Smith, wife of Mitchell] was running errands in town, and the children wanted something to do, so they decided to have a real funeral for the pig. Stephen [Paine], who was interested in ministerial trappings, already had a black-robed outfit, so he agreed to conduct the services. He also owned a pulpit (that had been built by Wayne as a gift), so he was well equipped.

Next they needed a coffin and someone to provide the music. Mitchell helped his son Wayne make the coffin. This was built with a two-section lid so one part could be opened for the "viewing".

However, at first Frosty Morn was put in the coffin backwards, and the hind part was viewed instead of the head. Stephen ran to his house for his robe and pulpit, and when he returned the coffin was



Young boys enjoy the lake. This photo is from the D. C. Hunt collection taken about 1905.

complete and Wayne was lining it with a baby blanket. Frosty Morn was reinstalled, and placed in the back bedroom where the service would be held.

Next consideration was music. Wayne brought out his Magnus chord organ (22 keys), and the boys ran to Georgia Thomson's house to ask her to play. A bridge game was in progress, but luckily the players included Joyce Chitty and other Singing Americans.

They decided they could interrupt their bridge game for the occasion, and followed Wayne back to his house. Stephen in his robe was stationed in the walk-in closet, ready to make his entrance at the right time. Lota had not yet returned from town, and Mitchell, tired after the coffin making, had stretched out in his room and napped through the service.

*Continued on page 3*



Singing Americans Joyce Chitty(l) and Georgia Smith Thomson(r) left their bridge game to sing *Swing Low, Sweet Chariot* at the ceremony for Frosty Morn.

*Continued from page 2*

All lake children were mourners, and they were delighted to have adults in attendance. Stephen made appropriate remarks and read the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm, organ music in the background. The Singing Americans sang "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot".

All was going well, until Big Conner [Thomson], probably wondering where everybody was, made a dramatic entrance with a baby alligator on a leash. (He claimed to have just caught it while fishing.) This caused some distraction, as people screamed and strained to see the alligator, which Conner was swinging around. But the service proceeded and ended with a song and a prayer.

Following the indoor service, a grave was dug by Bruce and others. Lota returned from town just as the service broke up, and was on hand to send water to the gravediggers who were getting sweaty. They kept sending young cousin Chris Hendry back to the house to Lota, saying, "the grave diggers are thirsty."

The ceremony ended at the graveside, near the pigpen. The children buried Frosty Morn without the Singing Americans, who were back at their bridge game, or the other adults who resumed other activity.

It had been quite a day. Among other accomplishments, they had managed to have both a dead pig and an alligator in Lota's immaculate house while she was away on errands to town.



LCHS Trustees Lamar Cole, Lilla Kate Hart and Kathryn Stevens were on hand for the unveiling of a special tribute to Susie Thomas. Susie's documentation of history revealed that the first session of court in the current building was Friday, April 14, 1905. The framing included a photograph of the courthouse cupola – now available as a postcard – and the following script:

Presented to  
Mrs. Susan Converse McKey Thomas  
In sincere appreciation for  
decades of historical documentation  
that will forever benefit the citizens  
of Lowndes County  
in honor of the  
100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
of the Lowndes County Courthouse.

Lowndes County Board of Commissioners  
April 14, 2005

## Email from China Solves Peanut Puzzle



Fomby Hardin and Floyd Rogers enjoy the scrapbook.

David Waller made several visits to the LCHS museum while gathering photographs and information for the Valdosta Wildcat Football Museum. Since that time he has kept us apprised of certain Wildcat museum activity. A few weeks ago he told us that the Bobby Warlick family had seen the Peanut Bowl trophy in a pawnshop, paid a considerable amount for it, and were planning to present it to the museum. Bobby Warlick had played on the 1952 team that won the Peanut Bowl over West Springfield, Massachusetts, High. The Peanut Bowl, played in Columbus, Georgia, matched the best Georgia squad with another nationally ranked team. The game was last played in 1953. The Wildcats won that game also and were allowed to retire the trophy. It had been missing over twenty years. In presenting the trophy the family shared that their father's main discussions about high school football were of Coach Wright Bazemore's positive life influence on the players.

We told David Waller that a scrapbook in the LCHS museum had complete coverage of the 1952 season and the Peanut Bowl. The scrapbook had been brought to the museum by Carole Rice Pinson with others that were assembled by the late Tootsie Foy Anderson. Upon inspection we realized, along with Tootsie's husband Bob Anderson, that she would not have assembled this particular scrapbook. David Waller wanted us to show the scrapbook at the function and we had one week to hopefully discover the past owner of this exceptional scrapbook.

The scrapbook was totally about the team. Nothing emphasized any individual, however, in one article the name Herman Parramore was underlined. Before we could call her Lilla Kate Parramore Hart happened by the museum. We told her about the scrapbook and she told us that Herman was her cousin, that he was currently a missionary in China, and that she would email him for information.

Lilla Kate returned the next day with a message by email from China. "At one time I had a "wooden" scrapbook of all the 1952 football stuff – Gaye put it together during or shortly after that season. I had no idea what happened to it? ... I think there was a write-up for all the games we played cut from various newspapers. Glad to know it found a home. Blessings, Herman."

The email from China solved our mystery, and the scrapbook enhanced the presentation of the Peanut Bowl Trophy to the Wildcat Museum.

## May Meeting Focused on National History Day

We had a wonderful and informative meeting on May 15<sup>th</sup>. We focused on National History Day, a yearlong research program where students prepare projects based on an historical theme. Mary McRee, LCHS member and retired teacher, and Pamela Rickman, a teacher at St. John Catholic School, gave overviews of History Day through their experiences as teachers. Julie Smith and other parents discussed their involvement in the program through their children. The real treat, however, was the presentations from the students. Several young people from St. John Catholic School and Valdosta Middle School shared their National History Day projects with us. The theme for the 2005 competition was **Communication in History: The Key to Understanding**. Presentations included PowerPoint shows on the Cuban Missile Crisis and Communication Satellites, two exhibits on ancient communication – one on Hieroglyphic writing and another on the Rosetta Stone, and documentary video on the Pony Express. The video, which placed at the state competition in April, will compete at the National level in June. We were pleased to host these young scholars and see their interpretation of communication in history. The Historical Society was proud to monetarily support Valdosta Middle School and St. John School as they moved to state and national competitions. We would like to continue to support National History Day and other social science projects in our community. If you would like to make a contribution, you may specify the Susan McKey Thomas Local History Award and help us support education in history.



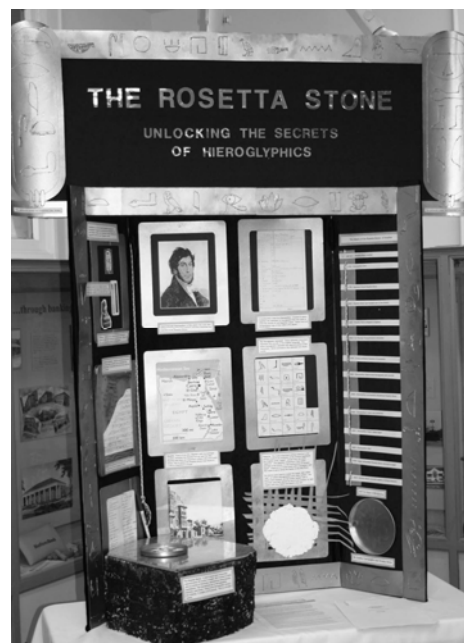
Dr. Joseph Tomberlin, left, learns the finer points of Ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphic Communication from an exhibit by Patrick Stevens, a 6<sup>th</sup> grade student at St. John School. Patrick, at right, enthusiastically discussed how he researched and prepared his project.



Jordan Rickman, left, presented a video documentary on the Pony Express, which he prepared with his partners, Joey Culligan and Camden Smith. They are 7<sup>th</sup> grade students at St. John Catholic School and presented their project at the National History Day competition at the University of Maryland, June 12 - 16<sup>th</sup>. In the documentary the students traced the history of the Pony Express and showed the routes taken by riders. They also staged mock interviews with riders portraying harrowing encounters with bandits and Indians experienced by the riders and station operators. The students also looked at why the Pony Express ceased—mainly the telegraph and cost of continued operation.



Andrew Smith, above, a 6<sup>th</sup> grade student at Valdosta Middle School, presented his PowerPoint on Communication Satellites which showed how quickly satellite communication developed and became part of our daily lives.



Gabrielle Campiglia discusses her exhibit on the Rosetta Stone with Gloria Sorenson. Gabby created the exhibit with her partner, Krista Silvin. They are 6<sup>th</sup> grade students at Valdosta Middle School and are alternates for the National competition.



Chris Hilgert and Sam Courtenay presented a PowerPoint on the Cuban Missile Crisis. Their presentation sparked an interesting discussion with the historical society members who remembered the crisis.

Elections for Officers and Trustees were held at the May 15<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Officers for the 2005 – 2007 term are:

President:	Julie Smith
1 <sup>st</sup> Vice President:	Lamar Cole
2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice President:	Martha Gibson
Secretary:	Joseph Tomberlin
Treasurer:	Redden Hart

Trustees whose term ends in 2008:

Martha Gibson	Bootsie Smotherman
Catherine Redles	Loyce Turner
Chris Meyers	Susie Thomas
Gloria Sorenson	

## PRESIDENT'S LETTER



Dear Members,

We had our election on May 15<sup>th</sup> and we hope to accomplish a great deal in the next two years. The Officers for 2005-2007 and our Trustees whose term expires in 2008 are listed above right. We welcome Martha Gibson who wanted to get more involved after she retired. For more about Martha Gibson see page 6.

We are making plans for the Second Annual History Festival so mark your calendars and join us on September 17, 2005 for another "Blast in the Past". If you would like to

help with the festival contact the museum at 247-4780 or me at 244-7480.

Our September Meeting is planned during the festival at 2:00 p.m. with Dr. Marvin Smith talking about the archaeology he is conducting on the museum grounds. We are planning a great day of fun and learning as we once again step back in time.

Join us and get involved! We have so much going on and we need you! These are exciting times for us—Climb aboard and join us as we make the past come alive.

Sincerely,

*Julie Smith*



## WELCOME MARTHA GIBSON

We are pleased to welcome Martha Gibson to the Lowndes County Historical Society Board of Trustees, and as our newly elected Second Vice-President and Membership Committee Chairperson. With her retirement from ArtSouth pending, she mentioned to several members that she would like to do more with the historical society. We are thrilled to have someone with Mrs. Gibson's experience and dedication, join our board. We know she will have many ideas and help us forge into the future.

For those who do not know Martha Gibson, a recent tribute in the Valdosta Symphony Orchestra program outlined her contributions to the arts and the community. She served as Director of ArtSouth and was instrumental in helping found the Valdosta Symphony Orchestra. Through the years she has helped organized the Symphony Board and Guild, coordinated ticket sales and reservations, organized social events, arranged accommodations for visiting artists, and served as liaison between the orchestra and the community. She also served on other community boards and her church board. She is also active in politics and is a lobbyist for the arts.

Martha Gibson is committed to education and taught English, speech, and theater for many years. She is also a theatrical director and published playwright. As the daughter of a journalist, she also pursued journalism as her major at the University of Georgia. Her master's degree in education is from Valdosta State University.

Mrs. Gibson's background and experience are exactly what the historical society needs as we expand our education programs and exhibits. We are looking forward to her ideas for our historical society and suggestions she will have for us as she joins our Board.

## HISTORY DAY IS A LASTING EXPERIENCE



Former LCHS president Louie Peebles White was aware that the 2005 Annual History 100 Dinner would feature Valdosta's railroad history. When she learned that Blake Woodruff had twice placed at the state level and gone to the national competition with reports on railroad topics she had him and his grandmother Brenda Thrasher as her guests at the dinner. Blake is the grandson of Louie's dear friend, the late Mayor Jimmy Rainwater. In a private ceremony at her table Louie presented Blake with a pewter railroad spike that contained a miniature train in the trough. When Blake attends functions throughout his life at James H. Rainwater Convention Center he will now know who is the 'Louie' in the *Lake Louie* at the center. Louie's table at the History 100 Dinner was fondly named 'Madam Caboose'.



Mrs. Sandy Folsom of Hahira Elementary School with some of her students.

Five classes of third graders from Hahira Elementary visited the museum, viewed the slide show and completed the scavenger hunts. The students were split into three groups and rotated visits to the *Valdosta Daily Times* and the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts.



Emily Bechler and Royce Coleman

Royce Coleman is chairman of the Design Committee for the Central Valdosta Development Authority. He and Emily Bechler are shown at the museum comparing the 1885 panoramic view of Valdosta with the 1885 Sanborn Insurance Map of Valdosta. Royce is gathering information for historic markers to be placed on downtown buildings to tell what previous businesses were in that location. Emily is from Valdosta and is a 2003 graduate of the University of Georgia. She plans to attend Ball State University in Indiana to pursue a graduate degree in historic preservation.



George and Barbara Masciarelli visited the museum and then came back bearing gifts – working telephones of the late 50s, early 60s vintage. The Masciarelli's moved to Lowndes County about three years ago from New Hampshire. At that time, their son George, Jr., who now pastors a church in Statesboro, was the pastor of Mount Zion United Methodist Church in southwest Lowndes County. Rev. Masciarelli researched items about Mt. Zion Church at the museum before moving to Statesboro. George and Barbara have refurbished older phones as a hobby for over twenty years. They have all models, shapes, and sizes. When they noticed that we had no phones of the 50s, 60s era they donated three telephones from this period.



Pictured above are Nick Lindner, Gordon Pickard, Eric Broyhill and Zach Sweeney during their cleanup of Crawford Cemetery on Skipper Bridge Road. The scouts also installed attractive fencing that the landowner provided. They are members of Boy Scout Troup #440 which is sponsored by Hahira United Methodist Church. Eric Broyhill contacted the museum about this project and we worked with him in identifying those buried in the cemetery and had him contact Geraldine Clifton and Dorothy Neisen. Geraldine and Dorothy are updating the *Survey of Lowndes County, Georgia Cemeteries, 1825 – 1987* and are aware of which cemeteries in Lowndes County need restoration or reclaiming from vegetation overgrowth.

Eric also brought before-and-after photograph copies of the Franklinville county seat historic marker site. Eric cleared and cleaned this site as a project for attaining his Eagle Scout recognition. Other scouts are currently planning work on other remote cemeteries. Contact us at the museum for information on Lowndes County cemeteries.



Sgt. Kenny McDonald

Sgt. Kenny McDonald of the Valdosta Police Department made several visits to the museum attempting to trace the descendants or other relatives of officers slain in the line of duty. Some were found, but the descendants of the first slain officer, James S. Allen who died October 16, 1883, moved to central Florida soon after his death and were not traceable for this event. Other officers listed on the Valdosta Police Law Enforcement Memorial are: Asa D. Mullis, Sr. died August 12, 1924; Raymond H. Jenkins, died December 16, 1941; George W. Green, Jr., died August 2, 1971; and Lee A. Crews, died January 24, 1984. The memorial was dedicated in February 2005.

## MEMORIALS



**Will Davis 'Bill' Burgsteiner**

by

Mr. and Mrs. Robert T. Daugharty

**Norma Frances Zant Delaney**

by

Mr. and Mrs. Robert T. Daugharty

**Dr. Franklin G. 'Tex' Eldridge**

by

Mr. and Mrs. Robert T. Daugharty

**Sarah Sasser McClenahan**

by

Miriam Quinker Brown

## MUSEUM CALENDAR OF EVENTS

August 28	Trustee's Meeting	2:00 p.m.
September 17	History Festival	10:00 a.m. -5:00 p.m.
September 17	Historical Society Meeting	2:00 p.m.
	Archaeology in Our Backyard - Before the Carnegie	

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## YESTERDAY & TODAY

Newsletter of  
Lowndes County Historical Society

### President

Julie Barnes Smith

### Newsletter Editor

Donald O'Quinn Davis

### Editorial Advisor

Albert S. Pendleton, Jr.

### Kid's Page Editor

Andrew P. Smith with  
Julie Barnes Smith

### Museum Staff

Donald O'Quinn Davis  
*Administrative Director*

Renate K. Milner

*Museum Director*

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### YESTERDAY & TODAY

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