

School Days Remembered at Annual Dinner

On March 31, 2006 Lowndes County Historical Society members and guests gathered at the Valdosta Country Club to remember school days at our 31st annual History 100 Dinner. Mrs. Nan Allen was featured educator for the function. Julie Smith prepared an enjoyable PowerPoint presentation with school days background music that highlighted many aspects of education history at Valdosta State University, Valdosta Technical College and in Valdosta, Lowndes County, and private schools in the area. Wood crafted slate boards, historic textbooks, notepads, pencils, etc. decorated each table. The dinner also brought emphasis to the bell tower construction project on the grounds of the museum. The belfry will house the Valdosta Institute bell, which has a casting date of 1889.

Awards presented include:

- Presidents Award to Catherine Redles for her many years of service to the Historical Society
- Harold M. Bennett Preservation Award to The Garden Center, Inc. for their dedication to maintaining The Crescent.
- Albert S. Pendleton, Jr. Intern Award to Julie Lumsden for exemplifying Albert's love of history during her internship at the Museum.
- Keepers of History:
Geraldine McLeod Clifton and Dorothy Peterson Neisen for their compilation, *Church and Family Cemeteries in Lowndes County, Georgia, 1825-2005*

Eleanor Howard for collecting and donating material pertaining to the Berlin Airlift.

David S. Waller for gathering and coordinating material for the Valdosta Wildcat Football Museum.



Anita Shelton, Eleanor Howard, Bootsie Smotherman and Julia Bess Scott before the History 100 Dinner. Eleanor Howard was presented a Keeper of History Award for her Berlin Airlift Collection. Within the collection is the story of her late husband Cap. William R. Howard who was one of thirty-two men to die in the airlift and was buried in Sunset Hill Cemetery.



Lonie Pendleton goes over items in the program with her granddaughter Lexie Miller.



When it was learned that the football museum did not yet have cheerleader information on display, former cheerleaders present were given the opportunity to introduce themselves. Of the former cheerleaders present, the three with the most "practice" were, (left to right) Sis West May, Valdosta High 1940 and '41; Louie Peeples White, Valdosta High 1936; and Gloria Dalton Sorenson, Valdosta High 1938. Louie once said that even though she was a cheerleader that she knew nothing about football. The reply to her statement was, "and Louie we can tell."



Attending the dinner were Mike Davis, Chairman of the Lowndes Co. Board of Education; with Fred Davis, board member; Ron Irwin, retired from the Lowndes Board of Education Central Office; and Fred Wetherington, board member.



Galena Goddard, on the right, offers congratulations to Jeannette Partin, president of the Garden Center, Inc., for receiving the Harold M. Bennett Historic Preservation Award for 2006. The Garden Center, Inc. was recognized for decades of ongoing maintenance and preservation of their historic headquarters home The Crescent.

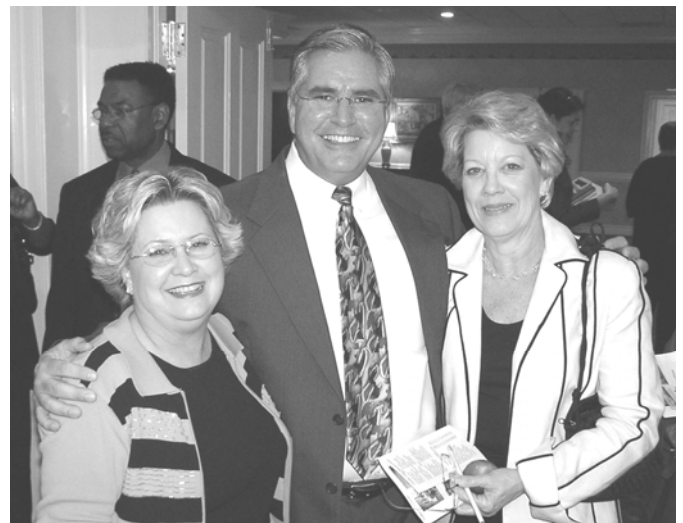


Mrs. Nan Allen, former school principal, was the honored guest and featured educator at the History 100 Dinner. Mrs. Allen is a long time member of the LCHS and former officer. We also took a copy of her senior yearbook, The Dosta 1926, and showed many

attending her high school photograph.



Lamar Cole, LCHS Trustee, congratulates David Waller for receiving a Keeper of History Award for developing the Valdosta Wildcat Football Museum.



Jane Sherwood, Bill Lastinger, and Lynn Shelton



Julie Lumsden of Ashburn, Georgia was presented the Albert S. Pendleton, Jr. Intern Award. Julie is a teacher at Crisp County High School and a master's degree student at Valdosta State. She was

Boy Scouts Involved in Backyard Project

We are truly excited about the progress we are making with our Outdoor Exhibit Project. After a meeting with the Boy Scouts of Troup 415 from Park Avenue United Methodist Church, several parents and scouts approached me about working with the historical society on service projects. Recently, Wade Ingram submitted his proposal for his project required for the rank of Eagle. Wade decided to help us get started with our sugar cane structure by planning and pouring the foundation. Bright and early on Saturday, March 25th, Wade and his crew broke ground for the first in our farm area exhibits. Wade procured the cement from Scruggs Concrete and worked with Mr. Louis Wright of Wright Construction Company to ensure that the slab was correctly framed, poured, and smoothed. Assisting Wade from Troop 415 was Andrew Smith and Tommee Mason. The boys worked with Rusty Ingram to lay out the area and helped oversee the removal of the grass. They also worked with Dr. Marvin Smith to make sure all archaeological material in the area was collected.



Andrew Smith, Wade Ingram and Tommee Mason from Troup 415.



The scouts worked with professional builders to prepare the



Scruggs Concrete and Wright Construction helped Wade with supplies and in areas where professional skills were necessary. In the photo above, Wade oversees the project as the concrete slab is poured.

PRESIDENT'S LETTER



Dear Members,

Thanks to each of you who attended our 31st Annual History 100 Dinner. We had a wonderful time and remembered school days. Thanks also to those who could not attend, but sent a donation to our bell tower project or the museum fund. We appreciate all you do to help us reach our goals. I contacted Glenn Gregory in April and started the ball rolling on the bell tower. Please continue to help us build this monument to education in our community.

Our May members meeting was well attended. We discussed current Historical Society projects—the backyard, bell tower, and mural. We also gave the attendees the opportunity to make suggestions for future programs. The suggestions were great, so look forward to some informative programs in the future.

Elections were held for Trustees for the 2006 – 2009 term. They are:

Anita Shelton - Jennifer Altman - Redden Hart
Julia Lumsden - Pat Puckett - Patsy Giles - Beulah Hennly

Each of our new Trustees is involved with the Historical Society and attends meetings and other events. They have wonderful ideas and we can expect great things from them. We appreciate those who are willing to serve on our board for the Historical Society. We also appreciate those who have served in the past.

Please get involved. We need the input of our members whether they serve on the board or not. Find a committee where you can fill a niche and give us ideas for projects, and programs.

Sincerely,

Julie Smith

Exhibit Showed Georgia's Impressive Collection of County Courthouses

The Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Historic Preservation Division, Courthouse exhibit ended Wednesday afternoon March 29, being moved to the Troup County Courthouse in LaGrange for April. The exhibit contained fine new photographs along with some special selections from the Vanishing Georgia Collection from the Georgia Archives. Being used to our 1905 Lowndes County Courthouse, it was surprising to see how many county courthouses are 1950s construction and newer, and to learn that the historic courthouse in most of these counties was demolished. Several historic courthouses have attractive cupolas, but Lowndes County seems to have the only courthouse with domes on each corner of the structure. The project was supported by the Georgia Humanities Council and the National Endowment for the Humanities and through appropriations from the Georgia General Assembly.



Georgia Thomson, widow of the late Conner Thomson, poses beside a photograph of the Echols County courthouse. The script states that the International style courthouse was constructed in 1956 from plans by Valdosta architect Conner W. Thomson.



Cook County students in Mrs. Bonnie Tyndal's political science class at Georgia Military College found their local Adel courthouse among the many photographs in the exhibit. Three Political Science 101 and two History 102 classes from GMC came to view the exhibit and museum.



Five classes of Pine Grove Elementary School students visited the museum during the courthouse exhibit. They located the photograph of the Lowndes County Courthouse in the exhibit and had fun having pictures made with a finial from the 1905 courthouse construction.



Bruce Green of Atlanta and a Valdosta native is Tourism Product Development Manager for the Georgia Department of Economic Development. Bruce came by with others to see the exhibit while in Valdosta to address the Georgia Main Street meeting. He entertained and enlightened us with stories relating to some of Georgia's courthouses.

MEMORIALS

Margery C. 'Mardi' Barnes

by
Jan L. and Bobby Boal

Joe J. Boughton, Sr.

by
Mr. and Mrs. Robert T. Daugharty

Jamie D. Carroll

by
Mr. and Mrs. Robert T. Daugharty
Mr. and Mrs. John B. Lastinger

Mittie Hayes Chitty

by
Mr. and Mrs. Robert T. Daugharty

Dr. Thomas W. Gandy

by
Hank and Claire Lee
Mr. and Mrs. J. Edward Willis

Mary Carey Willis Hammond

by
Susan McKey Thomas

Dugald W. Hudson

by
Jan L. and Bobby Boal

Joe L. Lee, Jr.

by
Dr. and Mrs. Frank T. Corker
Mr. and Mrs. Robert T. Daugharty
Barneta O. Davis
Donald O. Davis
Mr. and Mrs. John B. Lastinger
Anita Hatcher Shelton

Sam J. Mitchell

by
Mr. and Mrs. John B. Lastinger

Thomas Richard Nisbet, Jr.

by
Dr. and Mrs. Frank T. Corker
Mr. and Mrs. J. Edward Willis

Kitty Davis Nolan

by
Jan L. and Bobby Boal

Vernon Pizer

by
Jan L. and Bobby Boal

Jack Rosemond

by
Hank and Claire Lee

Vera S. Tomlinson

by
Donald O. Davis
Mr. and Mrs. David C. Foutz

Joseph E. Vallotton

by
Nic Daugharty
Mr. and Mrs. Robert T. Daugharty
Donald O. Davis

Albert S. Pendleton, Jr.

by
Emory Pate Bass, Jr.
Tommie Jean Blanton
Jan L. and Bobby Boal
Jane K. Caudle
Preston Cobb
Jeanette Tillman Cole
Mr. and Mrs. Felton Davis, Jr.
Ginna C. Drumheller
Vera W. Drynan
Martha N. Gibson
Capt. & Mrs. Warren C. Graham, Jr.
Jim and Beulah Hennly
Dr. Ben H. Jenkins
Jep E. Johnson
Sis West May
Judge and Mrs. H. Arthur McLane
Dr. and Mrs. William W. Oliver
Val and Lucy Lane Sharp
Clare Peebles Sheffield
Dennis and Leigh Smith
Quinnell D. Wiggins



The Valdosta Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution hosted their state president George Thurmond of Alpharetta at a meeting held at the museum. SAR members were able to view the courthouse exhibit while here. Mr. Thurmond graduated from North Georgia College in Dahlonega. He showed his wife Betsy the old Lumpkin County courthouse in the exhibit, which is now the Dahlonega Gold Mine Museum. The exhibit will be at this site in June. Mr. Thurmond gave our museum copies of a booklet produced by the Georgia Society of the SAR named *The History of Georgia Counties During the American Revolution Time, 1775-1783*. Fifty-seven Georgia counties are named for Revolutionary patriots and the booklet gives information on each patriot.



Before a Sons of Confederate Veterans meeting Tommy Strom noted that the current Greene County courthouse, built in 1848, would have been in use during the Civil War. From the SAR county patriot booklet that George Thurmond donated, they learned that Greene County was named for Major General Nathanael Greene. Greene, a Rhode Islander, began his Revolutionary War service as a private and rose to rank second only to General George Washington. The state of Georgia gave him Mulberry Plantation near Savannah where he went to live in 1785. Seventeen states named counties in honor of Greene.

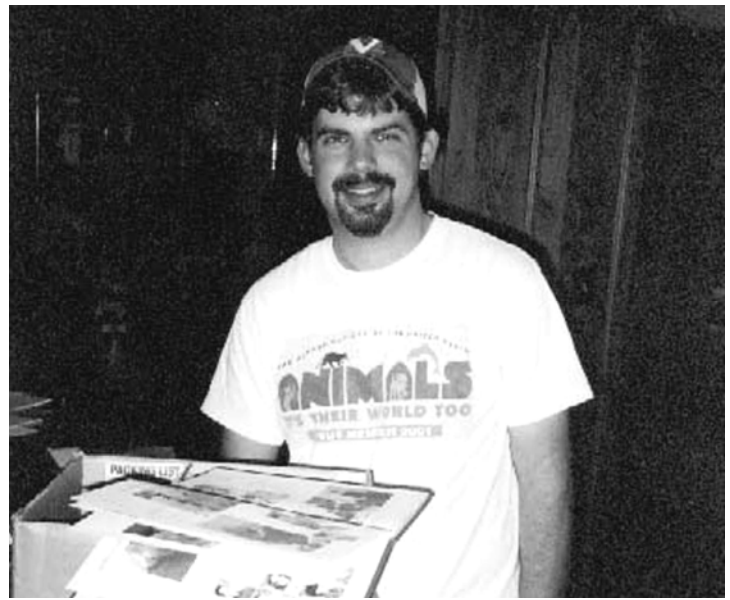
MUSEUM NEWS



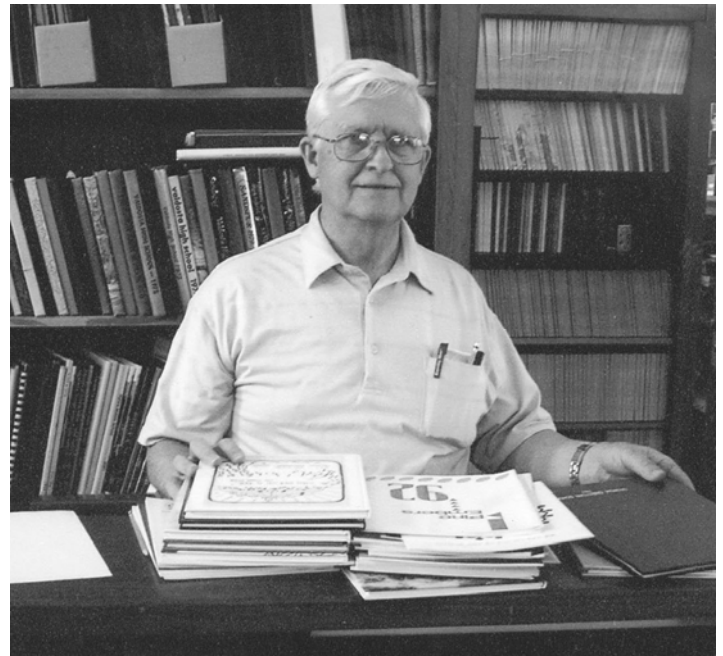
Mrs. Ruth Chastang called the museum on Monday, February 6, 2006 to give an update on her collection of memorabilia about the annual Lowndes County Ham and Egg Show. Her uncle, J. W. Saunders, began the show in the 1950s. While talking with her I asked if she had seen the LCHS newsletter with the article on Louis Lomax, which she had not. The newsletter was just back from the printer, had not yet been mailed, but had been distributed to five historically black churches on Sunday morning. This Sunday distribution was to inform local people of a Valdostans part in the Civil Rights movement before the funeral of Coretta Scott King that was taking place on Tuesday, February 7. Mrs. Chastang told that she was going to the King funeral and asked if she could come by the museum for Lomax newsletters to distribute to people she would see in Atlanta with ties to Valdosta. When she came to the museum she explained that her family knew the Kings well and that her brother, J. T. Johnson, was to be an honorary pallbearer. They were also to attend a function with Atlanta mayor Shirley Franklin. After returning to Valdosta Mrs. Chastang reported that people took all two dozen newsletters she carried to Atlanta and that the King family had also requested a few of the copies.

AN INVITATION FROM WILLIAM H. MOBLEY

The home at 108 West Park Avenue in Valdosta is 100 years old this year. The Mobley family will celebrate the event with a birthday party on Saturday and Sunday, July 1 and 2, from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. with cake, tea, and lemonade on the front porch. Family, friends, the Lowndes Co. Historical Society, and home preservation supporters are invited. The house is known as Park Place—the Newman-Oliver-Mobley house. The son of the builder, John Newman, who is 97 years old, will be there on Saturday afternoon.

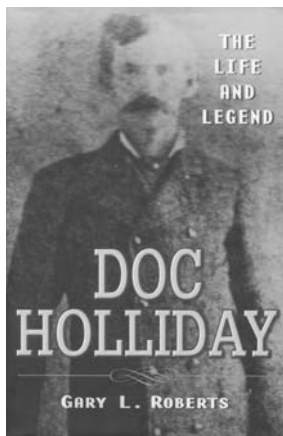


Late in May, Jeremy Petrella, former Valwood history teacher and soccer coach, brought in seventeen volumes of the Valwood School yearbooks. We had none before this appreciated donation. The volumes given are 1971, '72 and '78; 1983, '84 and '89; 1990, '91, '92, '93, '94, '97, '98 and '99; 2000, '04 and '05. The books are a donation from the school. The museum would appreciate receiving the missing years if you have them available to give.



We appreciate Garner Walker for bringing in over thirty yearbooks from various schools in our area. Mr. Walker formerly worked for Olan Mills Studios. Their school portrait division has produced many yearbooks over the years. His donation gives us coverage for over ten schools for which we had no yearbook record. His yearbooks came in time to be helpful with the education theme of the History 100 Dinner. The yearbooks from schools with a senior division were the Georgia Christian School *Pine Embers* 1992 and '93; and Open Bible Christian School *The Shield* from 1991, '94, '95 and '96. Other school yearbooks are from St. John Catholic School, Valdosta Middle School, and the elementary schools include Clyattville, Faith Christian, Lake Park, Moulton-Branch, Pine Grove, and West Gordon.

Roberts Finishes long awaited book on Doc Holliday



In April of 2006 over thirty years of work culminated for Gary L. Roberts of Tifton with the publication of his book, *Doc Holliday, The Life and Legend*. Roberts designates at the beginning of his book "For Susan McKey Thomas, John Henry Holliday's cousin, a true Southern lady in the finest sense of the term and the inspiration for this book." Gary Roberts, an Emeritus Professor of History at Abraham Baldwin College, is the author of over 75 articles on Western history. He spent several hours in the museum doing research.

An independent reviewer for the History Book Club wrote, "To Gary Roberts' great credit, he has produced a book that makes Doc Holliday a more interesting historical figure than the various legends that have clouded his life. His biography provides a highly enlightening reading experience." The reviewer states that the book has 480 pages and further shares that "Holliday had bad health and a short life but his luck has changed. Gary L. Roberts has written an exemplary biography that provides the most complete, balanced, and thoughtful account of Doc Holliday yet published."

The following excerpt is from pages 30, 31 and 32 of the book and concerns Major Henry Holliday making plans to move the family to the just established town of Valdosta:

Confederate forces consolidated at Dalton, Georgia not far from the Chickamauga battlefield, now commanded by General Joseph E. Johnston, who had been manhandled by Grant and William Tecumseh Sherman in the West because of his predilection for defensive tactics. Now he faced a Union force in Tennessee more than twice the size of his own army, which reinforced his conservative tendencies. Johnston dug in, waiting for General Sherman to make his first move. The mood was somber. One Georgian wrote that the "gloom and unspoken despondency hang like a pall everywhere."

Valdosta was about as far away from the war as his family could get in Georgia, near the end of the rail line deep in the piney woods and wiregrass of an area still largely undeveloped in 1863. When Major first saw it, Valdosta was a dismal place. The town had been founded in 1859 with high expectations, when the Atlantic & Gulf railroad missed Troupville by several miles, and several prominent citizens of that place decided to move their businesses to the railroad tracks. Believing it unlucky to transfer the name, but not wanting to insult former governor George M. Troup, for whom Troupville was named, they named the new settlement after the former governor's plantation, Val d'Aosta.

It was then that Major, as Henry Holliday was now almost universally called, concluded that he needed to get his invalid wife and his son and young sisters-in-law out of harms way to a safer place. He recognized that because of the railroads Atlanta would be the Union's primary target in Georgia. He began to sell property in Spalding County to prepare for the move. Between August 1863 and April 1864 Henry raised \$23,700 in Confederate currency from the sale of real estate in Griffin and Spalding County. He also decided to move his family to the little town of Valdosta in southern Georgia. How he decided on Valdosta as a refuge is not clear from the record, except that contemporary papers referred to it as a "safe retreat."

Valdosta was "just cropping up out from the woods when the war began," as the *South Georgia Times* explained it a few years later, but "the impetus the railroad gave was suddenly checked by war, the buildings, half finished were left to rot." The Union blockade and two bad crop years threatened to finish the town off. By the time the Major first saw the place, both the Methodist and Baptist churches had blown down, and the town seemed anything but prosperous. Growth had stopped, and what was there seemed to be falling apart. The only thing the town had to recommend it was that it was distant from the war.

In fact, though, the gathering refugees made the place even less attractive. The local population made room for the newcomers as best it could. Most crowded into the only hotel in town, "a long, rambling building, two stories high," on Central Avenue, with narrow hallways and a dark interior. The "furriners" gathered at the courthouse to talk about land and more permanent lodging. Some of the locals expressed their concern about the invasion of newcomers. "I would like to know what so many of you 'furriners' is a'coming here fur," one of them asked a slave owner looking for land to buy. "You is gwine to hem us in and ruint our ranges." To outsiders that did not seem likely, and Major must have seen something there, because on February 9, 1864, he purchased 2,450 acres from the estate of James D. Shanks on Cat Creek northeast of town for \$31,500.

Henry may have had second thoughts almost at once, because that month [Confederate] troops from Charleston and Savannah were ordered into Florida to stop reported Union advances west from Jacksonville to Pensacola. The Thirty-second Georgia Volunteers traveled by train to Valdosta and camped briefly south of the railroad before marching into Florida. On February 20, 1864, the Confederates stopped the Yankee incursion in a bloody fight at Olustee (or Ocean Pond) near Lake City, Florida, which was just south of the Georgia line. It was as close to Valdosta as the war ever came. Union forces at Jacksonville never ventured west again, and Major Holliday was reassured that he had made a good choice.

Major returned to Griffin, settled his affairs, closed his house, gathered his family and slaves, and took what personal belongings he could when he boarded the train south with other refugees. It was a hard trip to Macon on the Macon & Western Railroad, then east to Savannah on the Central of Georgia. From Savannah, the family moved briefly on the Savannah, Albany & Gulf Railroad, before taking the Atlantic & Gulf into Valdosta.

The book is available at most local bookstores.



Author Gary Roberts and Susie McKey Thomas at the Valdosta book signing on May 20, 2006.

MUSEUM CALENDAR OF EVENTS

August 27	Trustee's Meeting	2:00 PM
September 17	Member's Meeting	2:00 PM
September 25	Sons of Confederate Veterans	7:00 PM
October 30	Sons of Confederate Veterans	7:00 PM
November 4	History Festival	11:00 AM – 4:00 PM
December 2	Jingle Bells Festival – Downtown Valdosta	

Lowndes County Historical Society & Museum

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YESTERDAY & TODAY

Newsletter of
Lowndes County Historical Society

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