



## Reception & Exhibit:

# Honoring WWII Veterans, Remembering Those Who Did Not Return

by Donald O. Davis

Heavy rains did not dampen the attendance nor the spirit of those coming to the museum for the *WWII Veterans Voices Project* reception on Saturday, April 23. The reception was an appreciation to those who participated in the project. The interviews of veterans were conducted chiefly by students of VSU Lecturer of English Bobbie Warren, Project Director. A grant from the Georgia Humanities Council made the project possible.

In conjunction with the reception the museum opened an exhibit with emphasis on WWII, the conflict and the home front. World War I items are also on display. The exhibit will be up at least through September.

**Above right:** Kim Carapucci of WCTV: Tallahassee-Thomasville-Valdosta television came early to the reception and interviewed Dr. Lloyd Burns, who spoke with her concerning the importance of WWII veterans' stories and their life philosophies being recorded. Dr. Burns provided many personal items for the museum exhibit including framings, documents, intricate airplane models and his flight jacket, which he can still wear.

**Middle right:** Dr. John Hiers, retired VSU English Professor, is a board member of the Georgia Humanities Council and represented them on the program. In the photograph with him is Frances Westberry, the only female interviewed in this particular project. She served as a Navy nurse at Walter Reed Hospital from October 1944 to May 1946. She later settled in Valdosta.

**Below right:** Joyce Paine enjoys music and song provided by Gemini, Roger Warden and John Patterson. Roger Warden called the museum a few days before the reception offering to bring his piano and provide entertainment. The reception chair, Bobbie Warren of VSU, gladly approved Warden's offer of performing WWII era music. The combo plays at The Bistro restaurant on First Fridays among other bookings. The piano Warden brought to the museum has a special story. It is called an ODGI piano – Olive Drab Government Issue. Warden explained that during WWII there was practically no piano production as brass, steel, etc., were needed for the war effort. However, The Department of Defense contracted with Steinway and Sons piano company for 3,000 pianos to be used for troop entertainment. In some areas the pianos were dropped by parachute. The musicians, their songs, piano and story, were a pleasant entertaining addition to the function.



Kim Carapucci and Dr. Lloyd Burns



Dr. John Hiers and Frances Westberry



Joyce Paine, Gemini, Roger Warden and John Patterson





**Above:** Buddy Johnson, Sue Bentley and Arthur Brown. Buddy Johnson organized the Honor Flights from Valdosta to the WWII Memorial in Washington, D.C. Sue Bentley served as a guardian on the flights. Brown is a WWII Navy veteran in the Pacific on the USS Narwhal SS-167.



**Above:** Dr. Lloyd Burns speaks about his WWII experiences in the Army Air Corps with brothers Garrett and Hunter Spence of Eatonton, Georgia. Garrett is attending VSU and Hunter, a Georgia Tech graduate, was visiting Valdosta.



**Above:** Ed Willis, former LCHS president, twice, is pictured with recently elected Superior Court Judge, Jim Tunison. Ed was recognized for the effort he gave in 1995-96 producing the WWII photo album calendars.



**Above:** Loree and Charles Hatcher and Frank Christian visit after the program. The WWII calendar information shows that Frank Christian served in the Army in the 1915<sup>th</sup> Engineer Aviation Battalion., 7<sup>th</sup> Air force. The unit served in the Pacific in support of the Army Air Corps. Hatcher was in the Army, 121<sup>st</sup> Infantry regiment. He was cadre with the 8<sup>th</sup> Division and later assigned to the Fort Ord Infantry Training Center.



**Above:** Virginia Brightwell, Martha Gibson and Pam Rickman were part of the standing room crowd at the recognition reception. Pam Rickman's St John's school students participated in the veteran interviews.



**Above:** Jane Ferrell came by in respect for the service of her first cousin Everett 'Pete' Young. He had been interviewed for the project but died recently before the reception. She read the WWII story of Bill Burgsteiner while at the museum. Her daughter Jane is married to Butch Burgsteiner, son of Bill.





Joyce and George Aigen look over bound sets of European Theater *Stars and Stripes* newspapers. The late Art White was a correspondent during WWII and his widow, Louie Peebles White, past LCHS president, provided them for use during their exhibit. George Aigen's WWII unit liberated Dachau concentration camp.



Above are shown Diana Culpepper, Jessica Culpepper, Herman DeLoach and Sandy Griffin, Saturday at the museum function. At the Sunset Hill Cemetery Memorial Day ceremony on Monday, Mayor John Fretti thanked Jessica for her continued efforts in remembering veterans.



**Above:** Freling H. 'Fritz' Scarbrough and Clarence M. Paine fellowship at the function. Scarbrough served in the Navy onboard the USS Pasadena CL-65. Paine served in the 627<sup>th</sup> Engineer Light Equipment Company, 1<sup>st</sup> Army, European theater. **Below:** Dr. John Dunn of the VSU history department and Emily Crews, VSU honors graduate and museum employee, Emily and Amy Brown spent weeks preparing the WWII exhibit.



**Above:** Wade DeLoach, James E. Herring and G. Robert Carter enjoy refreshments after the Veterans' program. The WWII photo album calendars show that Carter served in the Army, Americal Division, Company A, 519<sup>th</sup> Military Police Battalion., 8<sup>th</sup> Army. He served in the Pacific Theater. **Below:** Andrew Rumker and Harold Keen during the function.







### 100 this July 8th

John Boyd Newman, called 'John Boy' in his family, plans to celebrate his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday July 8, 2009. The above photograph, with John Newman at left and Louie White in the center, was taken in Valdosta in 2006 at the century celebration of the Newman, Oliver, Mobley house at 108 W. Park Avenue, also called Park Place.



### 405 North Troup Street

The above photograph, recently supplied to the museum by Mildred Sheffield Evans, is of the home formerly at 405 N. Troup Street. John Newman's story of the "Chicken Named Fire Escape" took place at this address.

The Newman family lived in this home until about 1919 when they moved to Park Avenue. John Newman told me that Hyta Plowden (Mederer), who would now be 97, lived across the street; and the Holcombe family lived at 403, the William Holder family were neighbors and the impressive Judge Griffin family home, lost later in a fire, was across the street. John Newman remembered that the front of the 405 N. Troup Street home featured two gables.

The John C. and Elsie Daugharty Sheffield family moved into the 405 N. Troup home in 1940. Of their six children, three daughters and one son continue to live in Valdosta, Mildred S. Evans (Jack), Emma Lou S. McConnell (Joe), Geneva S. Taylor (Bob) and J.C. Members of the Sheffield family occupied this home over sixty years into the 2000s. After their ownership the house was lost in a fire in 2005.

# Things We Didn't Know

## John Newman Remembers His Boyhood In Valdosta

By Donald O. Davis

In 2006 William H. (Bill) Mobley called me about attending a luncheon in recognition of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Mobley home at 108 W. Park Avenue. The Mobley's have owned the home since 1946. He and wife Roseanne live in Alexandria, Virginia, but spend a good bit of time in Valdosta. Bill was particularly glad because members of the Newman family were coming from Orlando and other areas. Bill Mobley explained that the Newman family, although not the builders of the home, had lived in there from about 1918 to 1923. The Newman's sold the home to the Oliver's when they moved to Orlando. He was particularly pleased that John Newman, age 97 at that time, would be attending.

Upon arrival I felt somewhat conspicuous as Bill Mobley was insistent that I sit beside John Newman who held the seat of honor at the head table. I soon knew why Bill Mobley placed me beside John Newman whose mind was clear and full of remembrances of his boyhood and youth in Valdosta. He began talking and I began listening and more was learned from later telephone conversations and writings.

When talking with John Newman he told me that he had written some about his Valdosta days. When he was about 95 he took a creative writing class at a nearby community college and that resulted in his writing "John Boy and a Mallard Duck, Fire Escape, Frolic and Ring." The "Fire Escape" portion of the story is included in this newsletter.

He said that the "Boy" in John Boy came from his middle name being his mother's maiden name, Boyd. He said that the name John Boy has been used for years.

John Newman attended the teacher Training School at South Georgia State Normal College for the first two grades, then the Adair Street School and one year at Valdosta High before moving. I asked him if they took the trolley to school and promptly replied, "No, we walked or rode a bicycle." He said that to his memory school did not close during the 1918 pandemic bird flu but they did wear masks to school.

If you look closely at the VHS 8<sup>th</sup> grade photo on page five, you will see that the boys wore knee pants and stockings. John Boy had visited Orlando before they moved and after seeing the style of the young men in Orlando he asked his father to please buy him a pair of long pants. He said that his new long pants came from Davis Clothing at 100 S. Patterson, the location the 1923 city directory confirms.

John Newman also mentioned that his family belonged to First Methodist Church remembering Bascom Anthony. John Newman fondly recalled enjoying the nature of Two Mile Branch and hunting in the area all the way out the Eager place.

**Note: To thank John Boyd Newman for telling us about early Valdosta, and perhaps greet his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday, you can contact him at 607 Lake Avenue, Altamonte Springs, FL 32701-2707.**

## A Chicken Named Fire Escape

*Taken from a story by John Newman  
about his boyhood days in Valdosta*  
"John Boy and Mallard Duck,  
Fire Escape, Frolic and Ring"



**Above:** The eight grade freshman class (only 11 grades then) at Valdosta High School in 1922-23, the first year of classes in the then new Williams Street VHS. The photograph is from *The Dosta* yearbook. The roster of students shows John Boyd Newman in this class photograph. After this school year, the Newman family moved to Orlando, Florida. He did not have a copy of this yearbook, and before we mailed him a scan of this picture he said that from his Valdosta days he remembered Earle McKey, Powell Puckett, John Robert Dasher, Vallie and other Daltons, Theron Hornbuckle, Louise Holcombe, the Statens, and Evelyn Murphey, a girl who moved in from Alabama. When he visited Valdosta in 2006, he broke into Dr. A. G. Cleveland's "*Rah bicca bah ... Dosta, Dosta*" cheer. In trying to establish when Dr. Cleveland penned the cheer, John Newman said he knew it when he lived in Valdosta. **Note:** Recently passed Nan Pope Allen is the fifth girl on the front row.

John Boy had three sisters, one named Ellen Elizabeth whom we called "Betty," and two younger, Edna Earle, whom we called "Dolly." Mother said when Edna Earle was a tiny baby, John Boy toddled over to her crib, looked in and asked "Whose baby doll is this?" Mother responded "That's your new baby sister, Edna Earle," Well! John Boy answered, I like "Doll Baby" best. So from then on all her life, Edna Earle was known as "Dolly."

John Boy's third sister came two years later and was named Joy Julianne, but from the beginning she was known as "Judy," which brings us to the pet named "Fire Escape."

Around 1916, when we lived at 405 N. Troup Street, Dad had bought a car for the family, before that, we had a horse and buggy. One cold night, dad came home and put the car in the garage which was in our back yard and which was originally a cow barn and feed room.

Earlier John Boy had decided he wanted to make some money to add to his small allowance. His Mother asked, "Why don't you raise some chickens?" Then I could buy eggs and an occasional chicken from you instead of the store."

This sounded good, so John Boy talked to his Dad about getting started. First, he loaned John Boy \$10 to buy his first baby chicks. Day-old baby chicks cost 20 cents each. So John Boy ordered 50 day-old baby chicks. When they arrived, we decided to put them in the old feed room for the night. So we put them in a long, metal tub and put a blanket over the top to keep them warm and all seemed well.

It was in the dark of the night when John Boy was awakened by the sound of a fire siren right out side of his bedroom window. He looked out the window and saw the sky was red from fire. My, oh my, was he frightened!

His mother came into the room where the children were gathered and said, "Don't be frightened, our garage is on fire but the firemen are here to put it out."

Dad came in a little later and told us, "The fireman said there must have been a short circuit in the wiring of the car as the fire had started there, but by the time they got here, the car and garage was all burned up and all they could do was keep the fire from spreading to the house.

"But oh!" John Boy said, "What about the biddies?" Dad took John Boy in his lap, gave him a hug, and said gently, "Son, I'm sorry,

(continued from column one) but the fireman said they were all gone."

Early the next morning after breakfast ( Mom always insisted we eat breakfast before days of importance like Christmas, 4<sup>th</sup> of July, and fires, I guess), Dad took us out to look at the burned car and smoking pile of burned stuff left of the garage. With tears in his eyes, and with a choking voice, John Boy said, "I'm so mad with the fire for taking my biddies away." Dad answered, "Son, these kind of bad things happen to us sometimes. It's not our fault, so we'll just have to keep going and be thankful for the good things that happen to us each day."

About that time, we heard a noise coming from some tall, green weeds nearby. It was a little cheep! cheep! cheep! My sister Judy ran over and picked up a little yellow fuzzy ball, now a two-day old biddy. "Look! This one must have gotten out," she said. "Most likely, we missed putting him in," replied Dad. John Boy answered, "I'm glad, too, he missed the fire, but I really don't feel like I want to bother raising just one chicken."

Judy piped up immediately, "Brother, may I keep him as a pet? She'll be my pet and I'll call her 'Fire Escape.'" John Boy said, "Sure, but you'll have to feed her and raise her and "Fire Escape" is a cuckoo name for a chicken." So that's how Fire Escape got her name and Judy did a good job with her pet. Mother made her an apron with big pockets in it in which Judy always had chicken feed. Fire Escape knew this and would follow Judy around waiting for a handful of feed – and being a good pet to her.

### "Working" for the Trolley

On Park Avenue Newman lived at the top of the trolley line. Some summers the trolley men let him do odd jobs, turn the seats when direction changed, etc., for a nickel for candy at Varn's Grocery. He also talked about the area of double tracks on Patterson north of the Crescent. All our images show one track. We never knew.



## The Flying Anvil

Another story John Boyd Newman related concerning his childhood and youth in Valdosta was the instance of the flying anvil. It seems that one year, during or near WWI, no fireworks were available, nor cannon to shoot, for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July - but the town had to celebrate. Newman told the story of the flying anvil, the location being the northwest area of the courthouse square. Automobiles were replacing the horse and carriage, so the anvil had lost some of its "prestige."

To give the town a "boom" for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July a good-sized anvil was set on the courthouse lawn. A handful of black gun powder was placed on this anvil. A second anvil was placed on top of the first, with a long roll of paper serving as the wick. The paper was lighted and soon Valdosta's 4<sup>th</sup> of July anvil was flying through the air.



## When the Tank Tanked

A copy of the photograph above is in the museum archives. It is labeled "1919, tank in Mile Branch." We had no idea what meaning it had until we quizzed John Newman. His father was Food & Fuel Administrator for Valdosta during WWI. Tanks were new and of first effective use in battle in Europe in 1916. Mr. Newman arranged for the tank visit and John's older sister Betty got to be the passenger. At the demonstration, the tank stalled in Mile Branch, repeatedly grinding into the bank rather than climbing it.

John Newman stated that there was some water flow in the branch and that his sister had to be "rescued" from the tank. The tank had to be assisted out of Mile Branch. The photo is dark, but close inspection shows the area filled with spectators to view the WWI tank that tanked on a visit to Valdosta.



## Mr. J.J. (Jules) Newman, Active in the Community

Above is the 1922-23 Valdosta School Board, the first here to have female members. John Julian (Jules) Newman is on the back row, second from the left. Jules Newman was active in the Valdosta community. He was city clerk in 1908-1909. Soon after he founded Southern Stationery and Printing Company, and was joined by a partner, W. H. Oliver, Sr. Newman is shown as President of the Chamber of Commerce in 1917-1918.

In 1919 he helped bring Valdosta Rotary Club into existence. At first Jacksonville, Florida, Rotary thought Valdosta too small to begin a club, but Jules Newman and company convinced them otherwise. He was charter president of Valdosta Rotary and repeated as president the next year. The son John Newman told me an early Rotary story of his father and Dr. A.G. Cleveland, school superintendent and third Valdosta Rotary president. Once when a speaker did not show, Dr. Cleveland was asked on the spot to give the program. Dr. Cleveland responded by speaking on a topic for 15 or so minutes, all in Latin. And for some reason all expressed agreement with the speech.

**Concerning the photo above:** Row one; Ms. Peebles, C.L. Smith, Ms. Tillman, not identified. Row two; not identified, J.J. Newman, J.R. Dasher, A.J. Little. Three names are listed that can be the two that are not identified: L.L. Daughtery, J.G. Cranford and E.P. Rose. **If you can ID, let us know at the museum.**



**Left to right:** Estelle Etheridge, Rosalie Chauncey and Edna Earl 'Dolly' Newman, Park Avenue girls, c1922, in their 'play' dresses made from flour sacks. The Etheridge home, east on the corner at Patterson, was demolished. The Chauncey home still stands on the west, and is currently the Samuelson home.



The Valdosta Rotary Club, organized in March 1919 and chartered in June 1919, recently celebrated its 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. Jules Newman was organizer and charter president of the group. John Kinser, VSU public relations major from Macon, spent many hours in the museum researching Rotary history. We appreciate him leaving the museum an electronic file of his report and photographs. Three Lowndes County Historical Society members that are also Valdosta Rotary members offered him suggestions after a Rotary meeting: Ed Willis, Judge Mac McLane, John Kinser, and Tyson McLane

## New Memberships and Renewals

*Continued from the January February 2009 newsletter  
Place of residence included for those outside Lowndes County*

*John and Helen Bennett  
Betty Sue Mixson Bickerstaff  
Jacksonville, FL  
Tomie Jean Blanton  
Dr. Amanda Brown  
John Buckholtz  
Atlanta, GA  
Marion Anise Cross  
Mr. & Mrs. Chris Coleman  
Mr. & Mrs. Compton Coleman  
Mr. and Mrs. Justin Coleman  
Miss Wilby Coleman  
Mr. and Mrs. Wilby Colman  
Edith J. Elder  
Garner, SC  
Jack L. Estes  
Atlanta, GA  
Frances V. Fisher  
Evelyn T. Ford  
Patricia Williams Futch  
Lougenia G. Gabard*

*Rusty & Barbara Griffin  
Joanne W. Griner  
Colby Hall  
Macie Hall  
Dr. Sallyann C. King  
Decatur, GA  
Hank and Claire S. Lee  
Shirley H. Martin  
Renate K. Milner  
Dr. & Mrs. Lamar Pearson  
Leona R. Pendleton  
Emmett and Jean Pipkin  
Cora L. Pugh  
Davy and Susan Shelton  
Charlene B. Scholey  
Meniffee, CA  
Dr. Briggs & Lane Smith  
Mitchell Smith  
Catherine F. Wells  
Garey and Marie S. Wood*

## MEMORIALS

### Botie Quinn Chitty

by  
Mr. and Mrs. Wilby Coleman  
Anita Hatcher Shelton

### Nell Shiver Cothron

by  
Donald O. Davis

### James Hershel Hammond

by  
Patsy T. Giles  
Mr. and Mrs. J. Edward Willis

### Corinne 'Sis' Smith McGehee

by  
Dorothy Dalton Paine  
Gloria Dalton Sorenson

### William 'Willie' Meindl

by  
Barneta O. Davis  
Donald O. Davis  
Patsy T. Giles

### Courtland Winn 'Cody' Smith

by  
Mr. and Mrs. John B. Lastinger  
Mr. and Mrs. J. Edward Willis

### Elizabeth 'Libby' Fender Thomas

by  
Barneta O. Davis  
Donald O. Davis

### Georgia Smith Thomson

by  
Donald O. Davis  
Capt. & Mrs. Warren C. Graham, Jr.  
Dorothy Dalton Paine  
Leona R. Pendleton  
Gloria Dalton Sorenson  
Mr. and Mrs. J. Edward Willis

### Carolyn Talley Williamson

by  
Mr. and Mrs. John B. Lastinger

## Membership Application

Lowndes County  
Historical Society

P. O. Box 56  
Valdosta, GA 31603-0056

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone/Email \_\_\_\_\_

## Membership Category

Individual	\$25. ____
Family	30. ____
Business	50. ____
Contributing	100. ____
Patron	250. ____



**MUSEUM CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

Through September WWII Exhibit, Valdosta's Military Legacy  
July 3 & 4 Closed in observance of Independence Day  
October History 100 Dinner: *Valle d' Aosta, Valdosta;*  
*A Sesquicentennial Preview*

**Officers and Executive Committee**

President, Patsy T. Giles; 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, H. Lamar Cole; 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President, Martha N. Gibson; Secretary, Joseph Tomberlin; Treasurer, Redden Hart; Past President, Julie Smith; Mary McRee, Anita Shelton, and Susie Thomas

**Lowndes County Historical Society & Museum**

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**YESTERDAY & TODAY**

Newsletter of  
Lowndes County Historical Society

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Amy R. Brown  
Textiles and Research

Erin M. Blanton  
J. Adam Doughty  
Andrew W. Johnson

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