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VALDOSTA, GEORGIA

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Our thanks go this month to Mrs. Jon Schroer for her history of the Schroer family. She called it a memoir and titled it, "An American Saga". It was most interesting and well done, a modern American success story. We have it on tape, and were also given a copy.

There will be no meeting this month. Our tour is taking the place of it - however, the tour is Saturday, May 5, the best date we could settle on. Make reservations by May 3, using the form in the newsletter. It is \$5.00 apiece in advance and this includes lunch at Ocean Pond at 1:00. We will meet at the Museum, tour Arthur McLane's redecorated office building on North Patterson. It was designed by Otis Sanders, local architect, in Federal design; then to the marker at Franklinville site; possibly to Hahira, and/or Troupville; but definitely to Mrs. Lane's house in Clyattville; then to Lake Park and the Ocean Pond Fishing Club House for delicious lunch. Before we leave Valdosta, we will see the Primitive Baptist Church on East Central Avenue, the oldest church building in Valdosta. After lunch, if there are any interested people with us who might want to see the Museum, we will stop by there on our return to Valdosta.

This tour is not just for LCHS members, but for prospective members, friends and relatives. Let this be known, and bring someone.

The articles in this month's newsletter concern places we will have on our tour. I had asked "Auntie" (Mrs. Kathleen Roberts Winn) to write me about her recollections of Ocean Pond, and I asked this question, "Did you have the first houseparty at Ocean Pond?" This is her answer.

First Houseparty at Ocean Pond

by

Mrs. Kathleen Roberts Winn

I did have the first houseparty at Ocean Pond. This was the summer of 1903, my vacation after the first year of college, with several of my classmates there as my guests.

I don't know the exact date when Ocean Pond was open for reservations - Abial (her future husband) was secretary and I know reservations had to be made far ahead, as it was very popular for whole families of the members to vacation there.

When we went Papa sent a wagon of groceries and other things needed. The first night we were there, on the five o'clock train a number of boys came down to meet my guests and for supper. What a time Mama had feeding the crowd. We had to take our own cook as at that time there was not anyone in charge.

The next day the board met and ruled only members could go, so that cut down on the number of dates for the girls.

The train arrived about five in the afternoon and one returned to Valdosta at eleven p.m. So that was the way the visitors came and we used to walk over to Lake Park to meet them.

Our activities were swimming, dancing, sitting in the big rockers of the porch and singing - some fishing. The halls were not enclosed then, but with the breezes was a nice place for our dances. There were no beds upstairs. We slept on mattresses on the floor.

We were fortunate to find out that John Sineath worked in Lake Park and was quite a musician, so arranged music for us.

Abial and I later chaperoned several houseparties, as my sisters attended some of them. We had the first motor boat on the lake and spent many weekends enjoying rides on the lake.

I have a number of pictures and will be glad to give some to the society as part of Ocean Pond History. My eighty-fifth birthday was celebrated there!

It is recorded in the Lowndes County History book that Dr. N. A. Williams, acting in conjunction with several prominent Valdosta citizens, took a most active part in the early organization of the Ocean Pond Club. Dr. Williams was president at the time of the organization in 1904, and he held the office until 1912, near the time of his death.

Franklinville

Here are a few facts about Franklinville and portions of newspaper articles from "The Valdosta Times". Franklinville was located a few miles east of Hahira.

The old Coffee Road brought settlers into that portion of Irwin County that later became Lowndes County. The first real town to be settled was Franklinville in 1828, in lot 50, the 11th District. Places were cleared in the pine areas and there were a few houses built. There was a machine shop or two. The officials sold town lots to build a court house and jail. And they later levied an extra tax to build this jail. The settlers built one room log cabins, two rooms at the most with a dog trot in between the rooms. There was an abundance of game: venison, possum, raccoon, wild turkey, and bacon from their own hogs.

The Franklinville marker was placed in 1938 by the General James Jackson Chapter of the D. A. R. Mrs. R. Walter Bennett dedicated the marker, after which Mrs. T. A. Baker presented it to Mr. J. C. Hunt, chairman of the Lowndes County Commissioners. The program consisted of the song "America" by students of the Hahira School led by Mrs. C. M. White; a negro spiritual, "I Couldn't Hear Nobody Pray", was sung by pupils of the Red Flag School, a colored school across the road from the marker; a speech by Judge J. F. McCrackin; and the presentation of the marker by Mrs. T. A. Baker. Here are portions of Mrs. Baker's talk: "... in 1821, four settlers moved to that part of Georgia which is known as Lowndes County, bringing their families with them in covered wagons ... in 1825 an act was passed by the General Assembly creating Lowndes county, which was named in honor of William Jones Lowndes, a distinguished son of South Carolina, whose father was a leader in the Revolutionary War ... The town ... was made up of a few small houses and one or two stores, where the settlers met to exchange goods and talk over matters of the day ... When we read of what those pioneers endured, we feel there can be no greater patriotic work than keeping before our people and the youth of our land, the brave example they have left us ... McCauley says 'A people which takes no pride in the noble achievements of remote ancestors, will never achieve anything worthy to be remembered by remote descendants' ... We are indeed grateful to our colored friend, Sylvester and Essie Mae Register for permitting us to place our marker on their land."

Others present were Mrs. H. Y. Tillman, First Vice Regent of the D. A. R., Mr. A. V. Folsome, Superintendent of Lowndes County Schools, Mrs. Mattie Stevens, Mrs. F. S. Harrell, Mrs. Ben Burton, Miss Ruth Tullis, Miss Sara Belote and two of the county's oldest residents, Joe S. Jones of Hahira and J. N. Griffin of Valdosta. The article was written by Mrs. Lamar Wilson.

Troupville

In 1836, four commissioners were paid two dollars a day to lay off lots for Troupville. Thus, Lowndesville, a few miles south of this site, was no more and Troupville, as of December 14, 1837, became the county site until its evacuation in 1859. Three times our settler-ancestors had cleared out places for homes and town, finally settling in Valdosta.

People continued to live at Troupville, a few who did not care to leave their property. Several social parties were held at Troupville during the years after the move, and people would entertain with fish fries there. They continued to have "the races".

Here are some interesting newspaper items from "The Valdosta Times":

September 4, 1875,

"The Fall Trade

There is but one toll bridge that we know of in the County, the property of Andrew Bailey, col'd., across Little River at Troupville. The Grand Jury

at the Spring Term of the Superior Court recommended that the County Commissioners purchase the bridge from Bailey, if it can be bought for three hundred dollars. The Commissioners have closed the trade with Bailey for that sum, and as soon as the tax for 1875 is collected the bridge will become a free bridge - the property of the County."

September 11, 1875: "The trade between the County Commissioners and Andrew Bailey for the bridge over Little River, at Troupville was confirmed last Monday, the money paid and from thence it ceases to be a toll bridge."

May 17, 1902: "The old house of Elbert Forrest which was moved here from Troupville is being moved out on Oak Street to make room for a large residence."

Could this house that was moved be the present home of Mr. and Mrs. J. S. Knight, which is the second house from the corner of Eager Road and Oak Street Road (2810)? Mrs. Knight said it was a former Negro house and was added onto many times. I believe she said that no two rooms were on the same level. If this is the house, it is among our oldest in the city and county.

More Newspaper Items from "The Valdosta Times"

May 15, 1886: "Death of Mr. Parrott. Mr. George W. Parrott died at his residence near Boring's Mill in Lowndes County, on the 8th inst., in the 55th year of his age. Mr. Parrott had been sick some months prior to his death. He was a devoted husband and father. He leaves a widowed wife and four fatherless children to mourn his death."

June 13, 1885: "Elder W. H. Goodloe, an old citizen of Valdosta, and a minister of the Christian Church, who has been living in Texas for several years, has moved back to Valdosta with his family. We are glad to welcome them back."

January 13, 1883: "The Valdosta Cornet Bank played on our streets last Saturday afternoon. The boys are improving very rapidly under the leadership of Mr. Lester Goodloe. They have a lot of new and choice music now and have recently ordered more."

June 19, 1886: "Married, on the 14th inst., at the residence of the bride's father, Mr. W. F. Munroe, of Savannah, to Miss Kizzie Roberts, daughter of Rowland and Mary Roberts. J. C. Thompson, N. P., performed the ceremony."

April 22, 1905: "Frank Darnell Rose will entertain a number of his little friends at an Easter egg hunt."

September 29, 1883: "Tom Smith is the happiest man in town. It's a handsome boy!"

Please use the form below to make your reservation for the tour on May 5. Be sure to include your \$5.00 per person. See you then.

Albert Pendleton

TO: LOWNDES COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, P. O. Box 434, Valdosta, Georgia.

Name _____

Address _____

Number of reservations _____ . Amount of money enclosed _____ .

TOUR IS MAY 5, SATURDAY AND INCLUDES LUNCH AT OCEAN POND.