



Women's Suffrage: First Local Women to Hold Elective Office 1922 Valdosta Board of Education

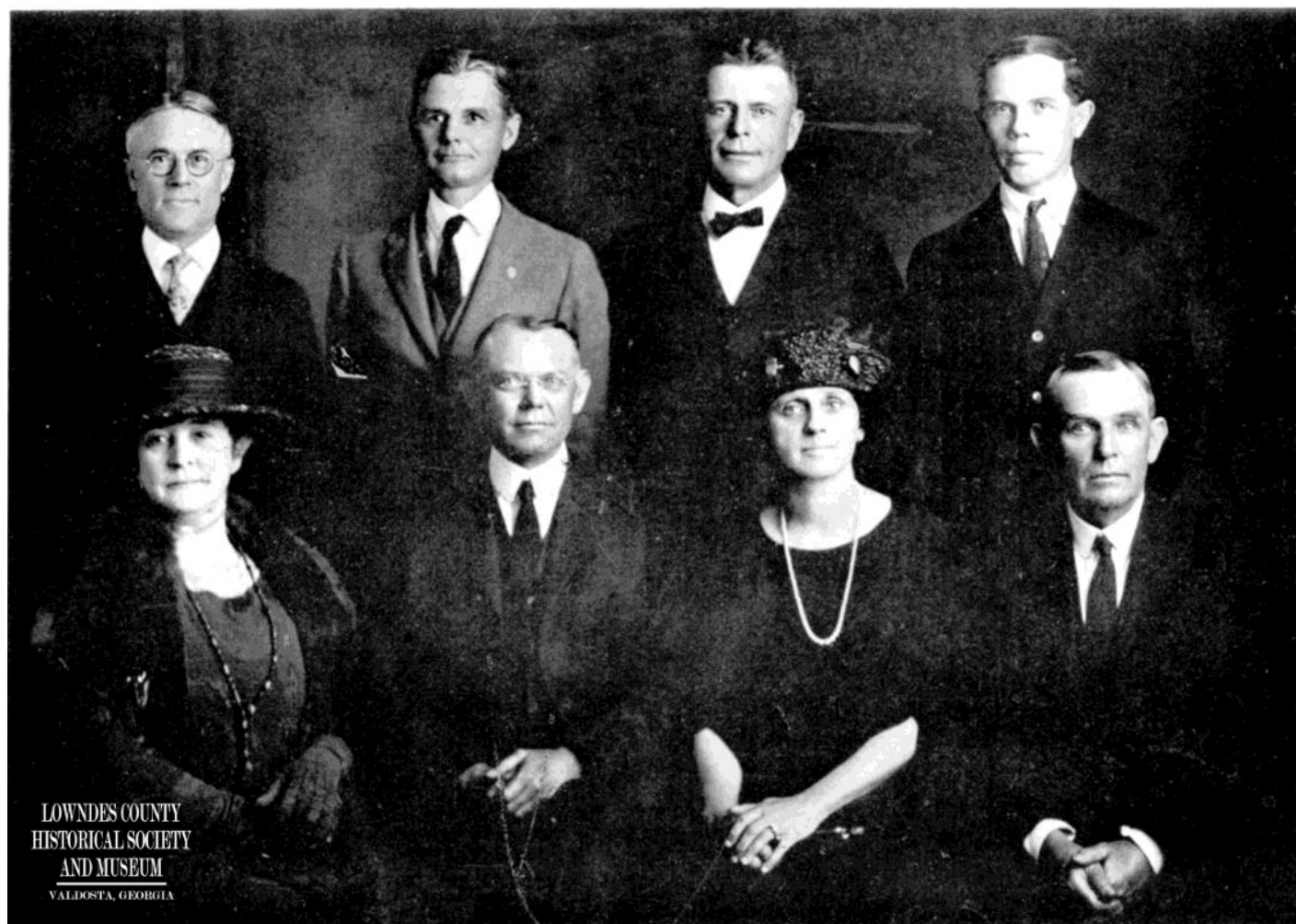


Photo above: 1922 members of the Valdosta Board of Education. **Front Row:** Mrs. R. A. Peeples, Clarence L. Smith, Mrs. H. Y. Tillman, Judge J. G. Cranford. **Back Row:** L. L. Daugherty, J. J. Newman, Robert Dasher, A. J. Little. *The History of Lowndes County Georgia, 1825– 1941*, records that “In 1922 two women were elected to membership on the board, Mrs. R. A. Peeples [Maude Jenkins] and Mrs. H. Y. Tillman [Marie McKey]. They were the first women to hold any elective office in Lowndes County and remained on the board eighteen years.”

The photograph is taken from the 1923 *The Dosta*, an early sporadic series of six VHS yearbooks from 1913 to 1928.

The Lowndes County Historical Society and Museum supplied a letter supporting the Valdosta State University Archives grant application to the American Library Association to cover the topic “Lets Talk About it: Women's Suffrage,” and in that letter noting we would support the topic via publications and promotion. VSU Archives was one of only 25 libraries nationwide that received the grant.

Wymodausis Club Members Prepared Well for Participation In the 1922 Election

Editor's Note: We came across the article *below* only a few weeks ago, glued in a scrapbook, in the museum archives. It was discovered at an opportune time as we had planned on covering the first women to hold elective office in Valdosta/ Lowndes in this newsletter issue.

The *Valdosta Times [VDT]* is not searchable online for this period so the article appearing was a nice "surprise" to us. The article is dated Thursday January 12, 1922. The Wymodausis meeting was Wednesday, January 11. The election would be Monday, January 16. It is noted in this article that this election was the primary.

Other information will probably be found searching the **Georgia Historic Newspapers** site online. but it will be in articles from other Georgia newspapers that were repeated or paraphrased from issues of the *VDT*.

In this newsletter "[information bars]" are inserted between some paragraphs for clarity and ease of reading.

Mrs. Mattie Stevens Was Named As Mayor Club Women Have An Election and Selected A Full Ticket of Officials

While two candidates for mayor and thirteen candidates for members of the city council were more or less busy Wednesday afternoon "running" for the places to which they aspire, Mrs. Mattie Stevens was elected mayor of Valdosta and Mrs. J. J. Newman, Mrs. J. G. Cranford, Mrs. F. H. Ramsey, Mrs. Joe Wisenbaker and Mrs. C. W. Barnes were elected councilwomen, while Mrs. Charles Daugherty and Mrs. J. C. Hunt tied for sixth place and will have to run the tie off.

[Mock election, no detail omitted]

This was the result of a mock election conducted at the January meeting of the Wymodausis Club which was held at the home of Mrs. E. E. Dekle. The election was carried out in regular form, no detail was omitted, giving the members of the club practiced experience in the casting of a ballot. The polls were duly opened being in charge of the necessary manager and clerks. Each lady made out her ballot in the regular way and deposited it, after her name had been checked from the poll list.

[Election manager, clerks and policewomen]

The election was held with Mrs. D. B. Small as manager, with Mrs. J. F. McCrackin, Mrs. W.E. French, Mrs. J. J. Murray, Mrs. Abial Winn and Mrs. L. C. Holtzendorff as clerks, while Mrs. Tom Cook, Jr., and Mrs. B. T. Bentley discharged the duty of policewomen about the polls in a most efficient manner.

[Candidates stated their platforms]

The various candidates for office were duly announced and they stated their platforms, made speeches and otherwise conducted an aggressive campaign against each other. They shook hands in regular political style, not omitting to frankly ask their friends for surge and support in their aspirations.

This mock election was not carried on frivolously, but most seriously that each member might understand before next Monday just what it means to really vote. In carrying out this novel part of the afternoon's agenda much real enthusiasm

was developed among the candidates and their friends and it was all so well put through that each one was well and practically instructed in the art of preparing and depositing a ballot.

[The Program for the Meeting] " Election Day and What You Will Do."

Mrs. D. B. Small was the leader for the afternoon, the topic of which was "Election Day and What You will Do." Col. J. B. Copeland was the speaker, consenting to take the place of Col. O. H. Dukes, who was suddenly called out of town. Mr. Copeland spoke of the primary, and told in a general way what the primary is, how it comes about and how it works. He went into minute details in explaining the entire machinery of the primary, presenting it in such a way that everyone present got a clear idea of its workings.

[Business Session]

The newspaper article covered other business from this club meeting. We include these items in this newsletter.

[Request Protest with Lowndes BofE]

"A resolution was passed requesting the Chamber of Commerce to lodge a strong protest with the Lowndes county school board against the discontinuance of the home economics work and to make a strong request for the reinstatement of Mrs. L. V. Thorpe." Other explanations follow in the original article.

[Mrs. Eager named to state position]

Also noted by Mrs. Strickland, club president presiding, Mrs. W. G. Eager has been named to the state publicity committee of the Federation of Women's Clubs, regarded as a high compliment to both the club and Valdosta.



Above left; Mrs. J. C. Hunt 1920s, and right, 1960s.

At left in the article, Claryce Knight Hunt (Mrs. J.C.), is listed as tying for sixth place in the Wymodausis 1922 mock city election. In 1952 she became the first woman elected to the Lowndes County Board of Commissioners. She won a special election to fill the seat of her late husband who died in office. Many people will remember her, *at right*, as the lunchroom supervisor at Valdosta High School into the late 1960s. In 1978 she donated a very important professional photo album to the museum. Coming from her husband's family, it contains all our known 1902 Valdosta photographs of Gypsy the Elephant, among other images.

Bell Ringing Events, Our 1889 Valdosta Institute Bell

The historical society for the fourth consecutive year sponsored the **Bells of Peace** program on November 11 at 11 o'clock signifying WWI Armistice Day. We were joined by the James Jackson NSDAR Chapter, The Ebenezer Folsom NSDAR and the Valdosta Chapter Sons of the American Revolution. On September 17 at 4 p.m. the Folsom Chapter led bell ringing in recognition of the signing of the U.S. Constitution in 1787. We note that the 19th Amendment to the Constitution, ratified August 18, 1920, guaranteed women the right to vote.

"Blue Star Museums" is a collaboration among the National Endowment for the Arts, Blue Star Families, the Department of Defense, and museums across America, offering free admission to the nation's active-duty military personnel and their families, including National Guard and Reserve. The 2022 Blue Star Museums program begins on **Armed Forces Day, Saturday, May 21, 2022** and ends on **Labor Day, Monday, September 5, 2022**. We took this opportunity to introduce other local historical museums in our area to the program. We contacted: Barbara Slocum, Lake Park Historical Museum; Tim Coombs, Hahira Historical Society; Julian Copeland, City of Dasher Historical Museum; Linda Booth, Quitman, Brooks County Cultural Center and Museum; Gail Hughes, Cook County Historical Museum and Cathy Wells, for the Huxford-Spear Genealogical Library whose halls display much Clinch County history. Also the VSU Public History Advisory Committee was informed of the project.....

Georgia Association of Museums

The 2022 GAM State Conference occurred in Thomasville February 4 thru 6. Donald Davis attended the three days as a day delegate. GAM is a private, nonprofit statewide organization dedicated to encouraging growth and improving professional practices of museums and nonprofit galleries throughout the state. The theme of this year's conference was "The Next Normal." The sessions and workshops ranged from developing education programs, designing eye-catching exhibits, fundraising, etc. There were museum and other learning tours, including one to an old growth longleaf pine/wiregrass forest.

Volunteerism at its Best

At right: Janet and Gene Toffolo, Christmas time at the museum.

Gene Toffolo has been of exceptional service to the Lowndes County Historical Society, with his wife Janet assisting. Gene had been active with The Friends of the Library. When the library was moving to the new location on Julia Drive he contacted the museum concerning the considerable amount of library furniture and fixtures that would not be used in the new location. Not only was he a detective in making us aware of the furniture, he spearheaded our physically moving the items to the museum. It was an arduous task. He also was our primary help in moving many floor display cases from businesses around town that had offered us bargain prices. Because of Gene Toffolo the museum has much furniture that we could not have afforded. We asked that they drop by the museum during the holidays to receive a small token of our appreciation. Gene is a Navy veteran and volunteers to drive vets to their VA Hospital appointments in Lake City, Florida.



FAMILY REMEMBRANCE MEMORIAL GIFTS

Mr. & Mrs. T.N. Holcombe, Jr.

Virgil M. Beck
by
Candace Beck Hollinger
Gainesville, FL

by
Ginger Holcombe Dees
Guyton, GA

John M. & Gloria D. Sorenson

by
Michael and Sally Sue Christopher

Edward D. Burch

by
Joe Burch
Macclenny, FL

Latrell Locher

by
Zella Octavia Fuller

Bonnie M. Sorenson

by
Michael and Sally Sue Christopher

Elizabeth 'Betty' Allred Dame

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Jeffery & Caroline D. Carpenter
Bluffton, SC

Mr. & Mrs. T.W. Paine Frances Paine Tapp

by
Helen Preston Tapp
Atlanta, GA

Alfred C. 'Dick' Walden

by
Nell J. Walden
Byron, GA

Molly Huckabee Hardy

by
Janet Booth Scott

Edward D. Puckett, Jr.

by
Patricia S. Miller
Lakeland, GA

Claire Wiggins Wilson

by
Dr. John Russell Wilson
Leawood, KS

Paul, Sr. & Martha C. Hatcher

by
Paul B. Hatcher, Jr.

James B. Sineath Brannen P. Sineath

by
John Sineath

Taylor Crockett Williams

by
The Ron & Lynn M. Williams Family

Neon History of Patterson Street

Includes the McKey Building

Photos from the Prewitte Collection



The background in photos often provides information we are seeking. **Above:** Far left shows the complete Luke Brothers sign on the McKey building. **Below:** The neon tubing is evident in the sign at upper right. The museum archives has additional Prewitte images of this 1950s Shriner Ceremonial parade. The "Yaarab" car sign indicates their Atlanta district.

At a recent Chamber of Commerce Business After Hours Daniel Bayman said that he had something to tell me that we at the museum were going like. He now has Gud Coffee in operation on the street level in the building he purchased that formerly housed Christ the King Episcopal Church. His news was they are naming the coming hotel "The McKey."

He also told of and showed an image of a 1953 of era muted-color post card that revealed neon signage had been on the building. He had to have historical evidence to get approval for current neon usage. I told him we would get other images to him from the museum archives that further document neon on the building.

Bayman reported, "The McKey will be opening late fall of this year. We will be functioning as a boutique hotel with 12 rooms[3rd and 4th floors], an event space [2nd floor], and Gud Coffee will be our lobby/bar area. We look forward to being our areas only boutique hotel for hosting weddings, events, and stays."

The McKey Building opened in 1906. It was built by brothers Wm. Harrison McKey and Thomas Sylvester McKey with profits from an orange grove, reported as a single year bumper crop. "T. S. McKey" is on the 1905 courthouse plaque as Lowndes County Commission Chairman.

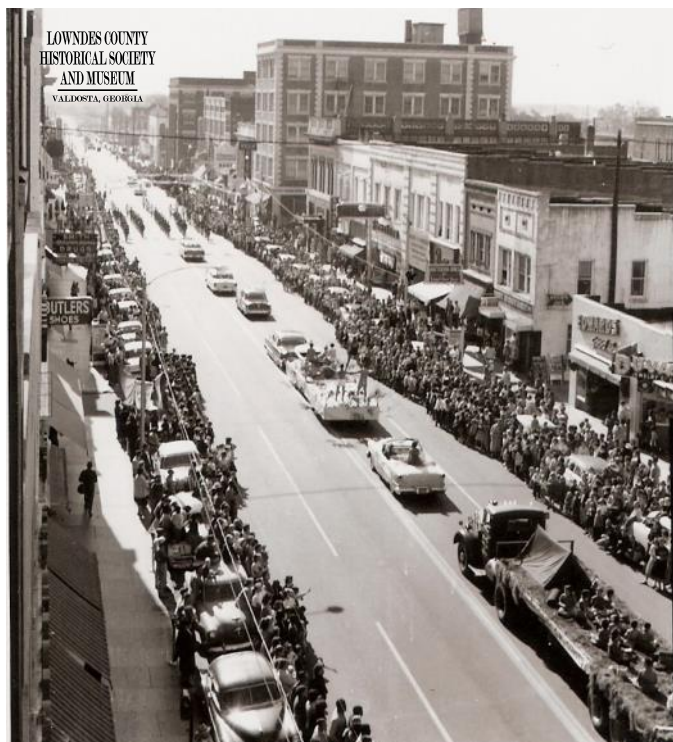
Michael Luke best recalled that Luke Brothers occupied this building from probably 1947 to 1958. Then across the street Olan H. Luke Men's Shop occupied the Dasher Building where they relocated the entrance. In 1964 Luke's moved south on Patterson. Architect Blake Ellis was awarded for this design work which included the store front arches.



Rescued by Ed Willis, The Prewitte Photo Collection is Valuable to Local History

The hundreds of photos, etc. in the Owen K. Prewitte Collection are Acquisition 1999-030. We recently called Ed Willis to confirm his story of rescuing this collection from the side of the road and then added his pertinent information involving this rescue to the documentation on the original acquisition.

The images in this collection cover many aspects of community: Athletics especially golf at Valdosta Country Club and youth football; parades; demolition of structures; police department; the 1895 City Hall and demolition of same; street paving; public utilities; city trucks; vehicle accidents; restaurants; friends; 1958 snow and more. **Example Below:** A parade on Patterson Street looking south, taken from the McKey building.



Right: William V. Prewitte, A Memorial Day Soldier. His mother's WWII Scrapbook Covering his Service, A Part of the Prewitt Collection.

In checking for information in the several Prewitte Collection archive boxes a small separately boxed WWII scrapbook about William Prewitte emerged. William was the brother to Owen K. Prewitte. We were glad to locate this particular photograph/article on him. The WWII Calendars published by the Historical Society in 1995 and 1996 have a more casual military photo of Lt. Prewitte.

The notation at the top of the article indicates the clipping was taken from the Emory University Alumni Magazine, November-December 1944 issue.

299th SAE Gold Star Member

Of note in the Emory University magazine is (SAE), indicating that he was an initiate of Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity. In the scrapbook is a letter of sympathy from SAE national fraternity to his mother that also requests a photo of Lt. Prewitte to be placed in the fraternity's memorial hall. The letter also states that he was SAE's 299th Gold Star member. At the museum we are around much information on local citizens who gave their lives for our freedom. It is an honor for us that we can share information such as this on Lt. Prewitte.

*Emory
Alumni
Nov. Dec. 1944*



PILOT KILLED

Lt. William Vivien Prewitte '40B (ΣAE), Army Air Corps, of 1200 N. Ashley St., Valdosta, Ga., was killed in action in the European theater on August 16, while serving as pilot of a B-24.

Lieutenant Prewitte enlisted in the Air Corps in December, 1941, and received his Wings and commission at George Field, Ill. He served as aide to Brigadier-General Hornsby at Perrin Field, Tex., later being assigned to combat training in Smyrna, Tenn., and El Paso, Tex. He went overseas in May, 1944, and was stationed in England. He held the Air Medal and two Oak Leaf Clusters and had received a citation for "meritorious achievement while participating in several bombing missions over enemy territory."

Lieutenant Prewitte is survived by his mother, Mrs. Julian Prewitte, and a brother, Cpl. Owen K. Prewitte, both of Valdosta.



MEMORIALS



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'Fred' Anderson, Sr.**

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Santa Rosa Beach, FL

Gloria Caudle

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Santa Rosa Beach, FL

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Karen Cothron

by
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Marion Anice Roberts Cross

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by
Bobbie W. Lester

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Marilyn Kemper
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Macon, GA

Leona Redles Pendleton

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Ed and Rita Hightower
Dr. and Mrs. William W. Oliver, Jr.
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Rebecca Anne Odom

Daphne Thresher Stephenson

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James and Teresa Steinberg

Gladys Fletcher Troup

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Lakeland, Ga

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Class of 1956
Sylvester GA
Stout, Sheffield & Associates, P.C.
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'Catfish' Williams
by
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Macon, GA



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2022 Membership Roster

The annual roster of Lowndes County Historical Society members will appear in the upcoming newsletter. You may clip and use the form below for renewal or to become a new member. The Trustees and Staff greatly appreciate your memberships as they affirm our place as an important cultural entity in Lowndes County.

Mail to: LCHS

P.O. Box 56
Valdosta, GA 31603

2022 Membership Application

Lowndes County Historical Society

Name _____
Address _____
Phone _____
Email _____

Membership Category

Individual	\$25. ____
Family	30. ____
Business	50. ____
Contributing	100. ____
Patron	250. ____
Life	1,000. ____

MUSEUM CALENDAR: DATES AND EVENTS

Officers and Executive Committee

President, John Reid Bennett; 1st Vice President, Ron Irwin; 2nd Vice President, Mary Young Manning; Secretary, Carol M. Irwin; Treasurer, Ed Hightower; Past President, Ex Officio, Sally S. Kurrie

May 26, Thursday 4 p.m. Meeting with Program
Early Valdosta Autos & The Cabin Fever Car Club
May 30, Monday..... Memorial Day
June 19, 20 Monday.....Juneteenth Day, Holiday
July 4, Monday.....Independence Day
September 5, Monday.....Labor Day
May 21—September 6.....A Blue Star Museum
Mid May thru June..... Exterior Repairs to Carnegie

Lowndes County Historical Society & Museum

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P.O. Box 56 Valdosta, GA 31603
(229) 247-4780

Fax: (229) 247-2840

E-mail: research.lchs@gmail.com & ddavis.lchs@gmail.com

Web page:

<http://www.valdostamuseum.com>

YESTERDAY & TODAY

Newsletter of
Lowndes County Historical Society

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Special Collections and Research

Volunteers
Textile Advisor
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