

Historical Society Celebrates 50 Years

On Saturday, December 2 the Lowndes County Historical Society recognized its 50th Year with a festive Museum Open House. The theme serving the anniversary is 50 Years– 50 Features with every year in its own way being a Feature. A Feature of events, acquisitions, exhibits, Museum relocation, researchers, Library expansion, archive advancement including textile identification, publications, building and grounds development, tours, programs, and meeting the electronic future.

This newsletter serves as a scrapbook of snapshots of the event and also features items from our archives and exhibits.

Below, the words of society founder Natalie S. Williams from the 10th anniversary reveal the spirit of the establishment and development of the society and museum. They reflect on moving into the Carnegie.

“Fellow members, the time has finally arrived for the formal opening of the museum Sunday, September 25th [1977]This is the 10th anniversary of the Lowndes County Historical Society. COME - bring your family and all your friends. You will be agreeably surprised, I am sure, at what has been accomplished.”

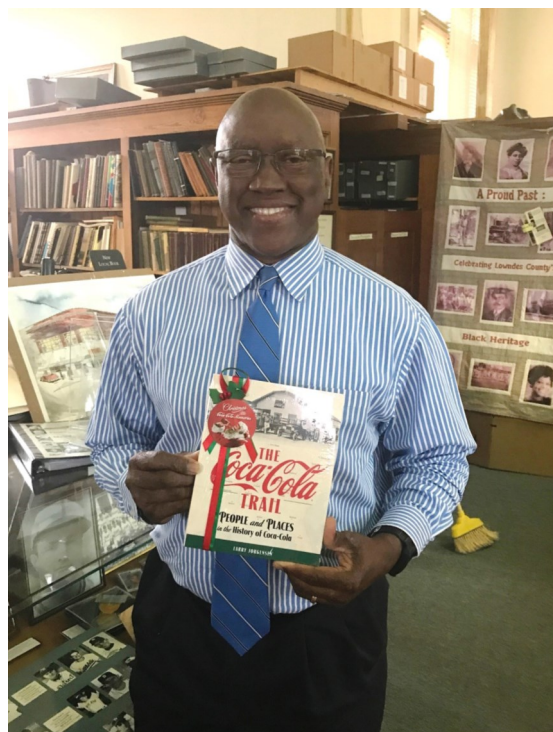
Photos: Right upper, Lowndes County Commission Chairman Bill Slaughter was a part of the standing room only crowd at the museum Open House. He was making the rounds of several events that day. **Right lower**, Coming by on Friday before the event, Valdosta City Councilman Alvin Payton became the first to purchase a Christmas wrapped **Coca-Cola Trail** book. The books had just arrived mid-week. **Below**, Former Valdosta First Lady Brenda Thrasher and LCHS President Patsy Giles joined the crowd in making toasts with their “Georgia Champagne,” Coca-Cola, garnished with Georgia peanuts,



Lowndes Commission Chairman Slaughter



Brenda Thrasher and Patsy Giles with “Georgia Champagne”



City Councilman Dr. Alvin Payton

Happy Birthday to “Y’all”

A Part of Our “Georgia Champagne” Coca-Cola Toasting



Sally Turner Querin, Ingrid Turner, Dr. Loyce Turner, Eleanor Howard, Donald Davis

After the program special toasts were made before the crowd disassembled. The toasts honored the society and two long time very supportive members. We had already planned on singing Happy Birthday to Eleanor Howard, 100 a few weeks earlier. Then Sally Querin called saying that her father would be attending and that day, December 2, was his 90th birthday.

We were very glad that our ‘Georgia Champagne’ and Georgia peanuts served even more purpose than first thought. Dr. Turner is a former society Trustee.



A Class Requirement Becomes the Anniversary Program

In August of this year Jason Brown came to museum quizzing on a potential assignment for his students. He is an Associate Professor of Mass Media at Valdosta State University. Several entities in town were going to participate. Often college students choose the film projects that interest them, but Professor Brown wanted the students to film at the request of the particular entity.

We told Professor Brown that we wanted to participate in the project but that the museum was very busy and we feared we might not properly engage the students.

The project began with each student to be given a separate topic and prepare a five minute video on the subject. These included the history of the Historical Society and Museum for the 50th year; the museum textile collections and the local stories they tell, *The Coca-Cola Trail* with the book just published this year; and ecosystem to economy, The Fire Forest, Longleaf Pine/Wiregrass Ecosystem and how it led to economic development, and also folk aspects of Wiregrass Georgia. Partially through the project the group shared that they wanted to combine the four topics into one video and we gave them the go ahead to accomplish the task. Many at the program expressed their fascination with the video as it revealed museum activity of which they were unaware. We appreciate these students and wish them the best.

Left: The crew was happy to have Eleanor Howard at their “premier.” Seated is Bryce Adair of Augusta. Standing: Chase Horne of Knoxville, TN, now Valdosta; Hyun Jeong Bae, Seoul, South Korea; and Jessica Thomas, Kennesaw.



Busy With The Books

At **left** are open house visitor Jim Halter and Dail Batchelor of the museum staff. Besides purchasing a **Coca-Cola Trail** book Jim was helpful in explaining to us some early Lowndes County script in an exhibit. At **right** are Rosetta Coyne, who also took many photographs at the event, Deanna Wagoner, in the background, who served as a hostess; and Phillip Poole who told of his father working for Coca-Cola 48 years.



Mrs. Louie Peeples White, Lowndes County Historical Society President for most of the 1990s, often called Coca-Cola "Georgia Champagne." She told about Coca-Cola parties in the 1930s and 40s. (Pronounced CoCola parties) In the 90s she held an old fashion Coca-Cola party at the Museum in memory of those days. She celebrated Valdosta's status as the second place to bottle the famous drink every chance she got.

The image below showing "Georgia Champagne" superimposed on the Savannah Avenue plant was used at Louie's parties.



Above: Maria Moore great-granddaughter of Joseph F. Holmes at the Open House. Holmes, **below**, built the Savannah Avenue Coca-Cola plant in 1925, after buying out E. R. Barber. Joseph F. Holmes, 1874 to 1936 and is buried in Sunset Hill Cemetery. James F. Holmes has the Coke bottle grave stone.



Father, Son Contributors Recognized

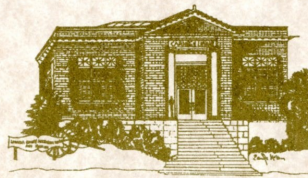
J. Edward Willis and Alfred E. Willis, Ph.D.



Three recognitions for service were presented at the 50 Years– 50 Features program.

J. Edward Willis and Dr. Joseph A. Tomberlin were granted Honorary Life Memberships in appreciation for their decades of dedication to various aspects of the Lowndes County Historical Society and Museum. Both are past presidents. Dr. Tomberlin has authored or edited several society publications and has greatly benefited the society with his thorough minutes as Recording Secretary for years.

Ed Willis continues as an active member and to be thanked for publishing calendars with approximately 200 photographs of local WWII soldiers. Ed's son Alfred Willis, Ph.D. was presented the Pendleton Award, *see below*, for his exceptional contributions in the study of early Valdosta architecture. His research is providing Valdosta with a better architectural record than probably any city of similar size.



Lowndes County Historical Society

Valdosta, Georgia

Chartered September, 1967

Alfred E. Willis, Ph.D.

is hereby gratefully presented the

Albert S. Pendleton, Jr. Award

for his

*Exceptional Volunteer Contributions to Local History as a
Researcher of Valdosta Architects and Architecture*

50th Year Anniversary Celebration,
December 2, 2017

Patricia T. Giles, President



Left: Barbara Slocum, past president of the Lake Park Area Historical Society with museum Executive Director Donald Davis and Lowndes County Historical Society President Patsy Giles.

Below: Smart early arrivals Geraldine Clifton and Francine Coppage. Geraldine is former president of the Dasher Historical Society and the Echols County Historical Society.



At the 50 Years– 50 Features Open House: Greetings, Well Wishers and Good Byes



Right: Museum Staff researcher Harry Evans greets Stuart Lynn Davis Simpson. Stuart Lynn is a neighborhood friend to Harry from childhood and youth. Stuart Lynn's grandfather, L. O. Smith, began Smith Motors in Valdosta in 1932. It was a Chrysler Plymouth dealership. She recently donated early memorabilia of Smith Motors to the museum. Stuart Lynn also donated as electronic acquisitions several 1950s photos of First Baptist activity including children's choirs.

Left: Following custom Hyun Jeong Bae of Seoul, South Korea, gave an item to the museum since she was leaving. It is a Chinese traditional costume she purchased when a student in Shanghai, China in 2013. Amy Brown has already acquisitioned the costume and it and Bae become a part of our 50th Year Celebration history. **Right:** Jane and Jack Hearn were representative of the many kind comments we received about the function and the wide range of exposure it gave the museum.





In the museum upper gallery before the program: At **left**, Dr. Loyce Turner and Rose Ware share a cheerful holiday greeting. At **right** are Eleanor Howard, Lilla Kate Hart and Gloria Boyette. A Feature exhibit in the museum covers the Berlin Air Lift in which Eleanor Howard's husband Capt. William R. Howard was one of 32 Americans to perish. Lilla Kate Hart is a former LCHS president and a current member of the Board of Trustees. Gloria Boyette was a later owner of the first site of the museum at 1110 N. Patterson Street. It was the W. L. Fender home then purchased by Dr. A. Griffin. One notation states the LCHS had been in the first museum for 8 years before moving into the Carnegie. Thus the Griffins allowed use of the home from probably 1969 to 1977. When Gloria and family lived in the home it was known as the Landmark. It was later owned by the Colbert family and now is corporate headquarters for the Manwell Organization and Manwell - DeCoudres Restaurant Group.



The event had a great crew of greeters, hosts and hostesses. **Above left** are Jimmy Manning and Lyn Thomas. **Center**; Deanna Wagoner serving punch. **Right**; Catherine Redles, Mary Young Manning, Patsy Giles and Sally Kurrie. Dick Shelton and Lilla Kate Hart also greeted. Thomas, Redles, Giles, Kurrie and Hart are members of the Board of Trustees.



The 50 Years— 50 Features program was in the morning before the SEC Football Championship between UGA and Auburn. For fun we announced that at noon the refreshment time would become a tailgate party. The Auburn fans were still smiling in the morning. **Above left** is Chase Horne with his father, Auburn graduate, Rev. Scott Horne, pastor of Redeemer Presbyterian, and mother, Marian Horne. **Above right**, Dr. Loyce Turner, Auburn Veterinary graduate, and Rev. Horne discovered each other.

Features From our Archives: VSC Nativity Scene Images

You have to be about sixty years of age or older to remember seeing the impressive nativity scene on the front lawn of Valdosta State College.

The museum has two images of the nativity scene and another appears in the 1960 college yearbook. The camels and statues are arranged differently in all three. Note that the two images below are evidently from different years of display as one has three camels to one side and the other two left and one right.

The upper image is from the museum slide collection. It was taken at night and is in color. When college students Adam Doughty and Drew Johnson came to work at the museum one of the first jobs they tackled was organizing

our hundreds of slides and preparing the images for the computer. This particular slide was processed in April 2009.

The lower photo was discovered in the museum archives during November 2011. It was found in the Chamber of Commerce photo collection when searching an unrelated topic. It has recently been repaired by museum staff researcher Harry Evans.

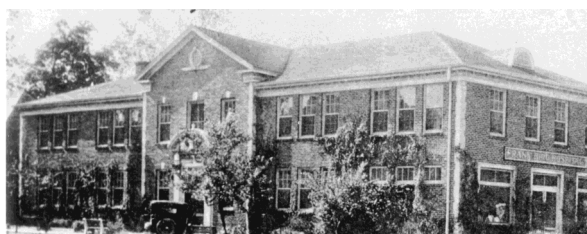
Jenny Beck Howard has been chasing information on this nativity scene for a good while. If you remember seeing the scene a specific year, for example, your freshman year at VSC, or other, please let Jenny know or email the museum. **Contact Jenny on the Facebook page, "If You Grew Up In Valdosta, GA, You Remember When ..."** Also, all VSC / GSWC yearbooks are online at the VSU Archives website.



Were You Born in the Bird Hospital?

Perhaps Bird Hospital births will become a new Feature in the future for the Museum. We have had casual mentions at the museum of people born there. Also of people getting their shots when the building became the Health Department. Reported as being born there are former Commission Chairman Fred DeLoach, Jr., in 1928, and later Tommy Hatcher. Carl Smith, Sheriff's Department retired, adds Sonny Shroyer, Enos of *The Dukes of Hazard*, to the list.

Please email the museum concerning other Bird births.
research.lchs@gmail.com





After Restoration as The Garden Center, Inc. First Wedding at the Crescent

Everett Gornto Force and Thelma 'Sister' Griffin
June 11, 1955

We initially became aware of the first wedding at the Crescent during the VHS Class of 1967 50th Year Reunion visit to the museum. We had pulled the Marie Harris Johnson scrapbooks that detail 200 plus weddings she planned from the late 1940s to early 1970s. While finding family and friends wedding photos and newspaper clippings members of the Class of 1967 noticed the mention of the first wedding in the Crescent. We at the museum knew that we needed to record this event and collect an artifact or photographs of this particular wedding. We asked Lilla Kate Hart, *below left*, to serve as our 'detective.' She surprised us in a few weeks coming to the museum with a hard bound photo book of the wedding donated by the Force family. We had another surprise when at the 50 Years-50 Features



Open House we were told that "Sister" Griffin Force was in attendance. After the crowd thinned we pulled the scrapbook to find that her page included three articles; the engagement, the wedding, and one of social activity by Elizabeth "Peachy" Ashley. *At left* Lisa Bamburg Force Lang, daughter; "Sister" Force and Cathy Malone, whose son Marc married into the family. (See related article on page 9)



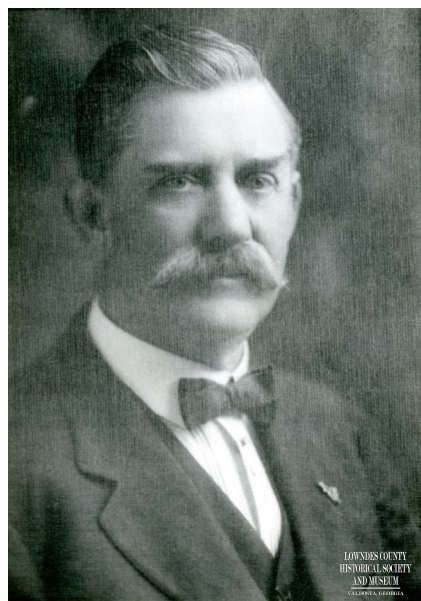
At left: The reception receiving line in the foyer of the Crescent.

In the wedding party

Bridesmaids:
Corra Clare Peeples
Maid of Honor;
Miss Mae Spivey,
Cousin of the bride;
Mrs. Charles Capehart,
Sister of the groom

Groomsmen:
William Force, Best Man,
Brother of groom;
Joe W. Griffin,
Brother of bride;
Dr. Charles Capehart,
Brother-in-law of groom

Bride's Book:
Cornelia Ashley



Law Enforcement Legacy

In discussion at the 50 Years—50 Features Open House it was learned that Lisa Bamberg Force Lang, *photo opposite page*, was the great granddaughter of two former Lowndes County Sheriffs. Their portraits are in the museum Law Enforcement exhibits.

In the photograph *at left* is J. E. Gornto, Lowndes County Sheriff 1910-1915 and 1920-1923.

In the photograph *at right* is J. L. Spivey, Lowndes County Sheriff from 1924-1948.



MEMORIALS



Tomie Jean Roberts Blanton

by
Mary C. Culbreth
Archie M. and Star H. Waldron

Diane Blankenship Corker

by
Mary C. Culbreth

Virginia 'Ginna' Copeland Drumheller

by
Mary C. Culbreth

Judge George Henry Hart, Jr.

by
Mary C. Culbreth

William Jennings 'Bill' Holland

by
Mary C. Culbreth
Archie M. and Star H. Waldron

Gene Ashley Hill

by
J. Edward Willis

Gonza Beam LaHood

by
Earle S. McKey III

Margaret Jones Langdale

by
J. Edward Willis

Lilla 'Sis' West May

by
Judge and Mrs. H. Arthur McLane

Alexander Bratton McFadden

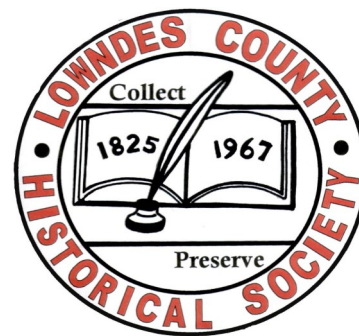
by
Patsy T. Giles
J. Edward Willis

James Russell Patten Virginia Burns Patten

Valdosta and Albany, GA
by
M. Deanna Wagoner

Lane Winston Smith

by
Mary C. Culbreth



2018 Membership Application, Lowndes County Historical Society, P.O. Box 56, Valdosta, GA 31603

Name _____
Address _____
Phone _____
Email _____

Membership Category

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

MUSEUM DATES & CALENDAR OF EVENTS**Officers and Executive Committee**

President, Patsy Giles; 1st Vice President, T. Davy Shelton; 2nd Vice President, Martha N. Gibson; Secretary, Joseph Tomberlin; Treasurer, John Bennett; Past President, Ex Officio Julie Smith; Anita Shelton

**December 22 thru January 2.....Annual Closing of Museum
January 2018.....50 Years-50 Features Exhibits Continue
January thru March 2018.....Annual Membership Drive
January 2018.....Bird Hospital Museum Renovation Begins
January 15.....Closed for M.L. King Jr. Day
February 19.....Closed for President's Day**

Lowndes County Historical Society & Museum

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Fax: (229) 247-2840

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Web page:

<http://www.valdostamuseum.com>

YESTERDAY & TODAY

Newsletter of

Lowndes County Historical Society

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Amy Brown

Textiles and Research.

Harry S. Evans

Special Collections and Research

Adam Doughty

Drew Johnson

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