



THE NORTH BREVARD HISTORICAL SOCIETY & MUSEUM

(Located at 301 South Washington Avenue)

PO Box 5265

Titusville, FL 32783

(321) 269-3658

OFFICERS

President – Bill Baldwin
Vice President – Amy Spillers
Secretary – Judy Davis
Treasurer – Linda Siano
Past President– Betty Mattingly

DIRECTORS

Gini Campbell
Michael Knight
Paul Marion
Katie McQuade
Susan Nelson
Esther Vulpus
Herman Wattwood, Jr.

MARCH 2018 NEWSLETTER

(Newsletter Editor – Judy Davis)

President’s Message

by Bill Baldwin

Following March’s BBQ picnic, the Board has plans to have the Museum undergo ‘surgery’ again. V.P. Amy Spillers has been asked to head a group whose task will begin planning for phase 2 of the Museum upgrade. Basically, we would like to redo Room 2 (the main room) not unlike the transformation of the entrance room. The planning should take longer than the actual work but, hopefully, the task can be completed this year and create an atmosphere of friendliness to go along with our historic displays. More to come. . . .



Remembering Joe Lee Merckson 1947 – 2018

When Joe Lee was elected President of the North Brevard Historical Society and Museum in October of 2001, he was humbled and very proud. He was apprehensive about whether or not he could do the job. We all assured him he’d be okay. He proceeded to do very well to take care of the business of the Historical Society and the Museum. With Joy by his side, his tenure lasted until October of 2007.

Joe’s presence at the Museum was fun, warm and friendly – one word he used for the ladies was “Sweetheart” and never failed to give a hug now and then. His “Momma” raised a polite, respectful, Southern gentleman son who grew to know everybody in town and often times mentioned he was related to most of them.

Joe had a few adversities rowing up in Titusville, his “home” but developed into a loving son, brother, husband, father and friend. His large family and extended family will miss him as well as the NBHS members and all of us at the Museum most certainly will.

Joe Lee Merckson absolutely loved the NBHS and Museum so much that at his celebration of life on February 18th at the First United Methodist Church, he wore his special shirt that had the North Brevard Historical Society logo on it. That’s the Joe we all loved and cared about.



Pictures from the Past

by Paul Marion

Does anyone recognize this handsome looking young man whose picture was taken at age 20 in San Diego in 1952? Answer on page 3.





Memorials

by Betty Mattingly

In Memory of: Donated by:

Joe Lee Merckson Connie Bradish (Titusville)
 Butch & Sandy Kittles
 (Colorado Springs, CO)
 Herman E. Wattwood, Jr (Titusville)
 Patrick & Judy Gordon (Raleigh, NC)
 Charlotte S. Carlile (Daytona Beach)
 Robert Cato (Raleigh, NC)
 Betty Mattingly- Titusville
 Mary Ellen Nolletti (Etowah, TN)
 Mr. & Mrs. John Evans (Titusville)
 Jon Alan Bennett (Titusville)
 Cindy Lennard (Titusville)

Barbara Pariso Betty Mattingly

**In memory of the
 January 23rd
 Anniversary
 of George & Pat
 Steele** Lynn Birnbaum



Member



Rodger R Cutter
 August 12, 1936 ~ February 25, 2018



Mary, the Judge, and Mullet

by Amy Spillers

While going through old newspaper clippings down at the Museum, I came across a story about an elderly black woman named Mary Rogers. I was drawn into her stories about her life and times here in Titusville. According to Mary, she worked many jobs here. From babysitting for Mrs. Anna Wordsworth, to cleaning and cooking for Mr. E.L.Brady, to being a nurse for, in her words “Botnot Pritchett’s” (Boud Pritchard’s) son. “In those early days, when Titusville was small, much smaller than today” and “In those days it was surries, horses, buggies and all like that ... it wasn’t automobiles”. Mary said “There were many good people” and everyone knew and loved her. When she worked for Senator Parrish, she would cook, wash, scrub, iron and keep everything perfect. She said “The Parrish’s had a beautiful home”. And in my mind’s eye I could see Mary polishing the Senator’s home to perfection and cooking all sorts of delicious food for their family. She often made the Senator and his guest Quail on toast after a day of hunting, “They’d always

loved the way I fixed Quail on toast” she said. Mary was used to cooking and one of her favorite dishes was stewed fish. “You brown that fish with some flour on it. I make a gravy from bacon grease and pour the gravy over fish and serve with rice or mashed potatoes and you have some good food”, she says. Sounds like comfort food from my childhood years. Mary remembered many Titusville residents when they were just youngsters and remained in touch with them at the time of this newspaper article. Many came to visit her, like Elizabeth Jones. The daughter of the late Judge Minor Jones. Mary recalled “Judge Jones is the judge famous for taking Mullet ~ figuratively that is ~ to the Florida Supreme Court, where justices upheld his decision that the creature was a fowl, not a fish, and forever after the Mullet has been regarded as the Indian River Chicken”. I had to chuckle at that, my own father always referred to Mullet as “Indian River Chicken”. He said it had a gizzard, like a chicken. Since my father told me that, I have always known Mullet as Indian River Chicken. I just didn’t know the facts behind the name until I came across this Star Advocate article about Mary Rogers, dated June 2, 1976. Gizzard or not, I love Mullet. Mullet fried, smoked, broiled, blackened, in a soup ~ you name it. If you are wondering if Mullet taste like chicken, it is on the menu at Dixie Crossroads. Well when they can get it. Mullet are vegetarians and they have to be caught by a net. Mary seemed happy and good natured. She had many stories to tell. And had she not been interviewed, I wouldn’t have had the pleasure to know her through print. We need to listen to our elders and record their life experiences and save them for those glimpses back in time when we can read of their struggles and joy, may they be great or small. And eat more Mullet ... a/k/a Indian River Chicken.



Judge Minor Jones



Construction at Main Street and Indian River Avenue

by Katie McQuade

Now that we’re more or less used to the one-way direction of Main Street between Washington and Indian River Avenue (IRA), additional changes are

coming. In early March construction will begin on a nutrient separating baffle box at the intersection of Main Street and IRA. This project will help reduce the amount of nutrient pollutants and sediment that enter the river from the 296-acre Main Street basin. During construction (which is expected to last 8-12 weeks) the intersection of Main Street and IRA may be closed, although the contractor will try to maintain a right hand (southbound) turn onto IRA. In the event that the intersection is closed, detours (from Main Street onto Mariner's Way) will be provided. Please be alert to the new traffic patterns.



Panelrama Project Complete

by Dale Marion

Years ago, Bob Hudson built this "Panelrama". Bob owned the local newspaper so he had access to hundreds of pictures from local events. Being a known historian, he used his knowledge to tell the stories he put with the pictures to create the history of Titusville and surrounding areas. The *Panelrama* sat in the backroom of the Museum and over time started to show its age. Pictures and labels were ripped and missing and the plastic sleeves that protect the panels were cracked and yellowing. Room was needed in the backroom so the *Panelrama* was moved up front. One of our very talented members, Cash Register, made a beautiful bench that was placed in front of the *Panelrama* so guests of the Museum could sit and enjoy the many pages of history Bob Hudson had compiled. The only problem was that it still was showing its age. I approached the Board of Directors for permission to refurbish the *Panelrama*. They gave me the okay, but when I started to research the supplies I was going to need, I found they were costly. Three of our members ~ Dollie Boggs and Mike and Joanne Ramer ~ graciously donated the funds for the supplies. For a few of the pages, I just replaced the plastic sleeves; because if I had attempted to redo the panel it would have destroyed Bob's work. In doing the refurbishing, I did not change any of Bob's wording on titles, labels on pictures or the stories he told ... I just retyped them. The only changes that were made from the original, were replacing missing or ripped pictures, or if an old faded black and white picture could be replaced with a color one. I also replaced all the plastic sleeves. I had such a good time doing this project. Thank you to the Board of Directors for allowing me to do it. Thank you to Dollie Boggs and Mike and Joanne Ramer for funding the project. And a special thanks to my husband, Paul Marion, for the many hours that he spent in front of the computer searching for pictures and printing all that I needed; and being patient because of the many nights that dinner was late, due to me working on the project. The biggest **thanks**

goes to Bob Hudson for leaving us a small part of his legacy.



Spotlight

This month we would like to give a shout-out to a local business that helps us every day that the Museum is open. Lori Rudolph of **Badcock Furniture** has graciously held our Museum front door key for a number of years. Docents pick up the key at **Badcock** each morning and return it after closing. In this way we do not have to provide a key to every Docent who opens the Museum. We appreciate this help, and ask our member to please shop local and visit **Badcock** for furniture and decorating needs. Thanks Lori!



Social Media

by Judy Davis

Check us out on **Facebook** and on our **website** below. If you wish to be added to any of our occasional e-mails, please contact us. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or comments at all.

- Email: titusvillemuseum@aol.com
- Website: www.nbbd.com/godo/history/
- "Like" us on Facebook:
www.facebook.com/NorthBrevardHistoricalMuseum



Dates to Remember

- **March 12th** "Afternoon in the Park" meeting 10 am (Museum)
- **March 17th** "Afternoon in the Park" 11am to 4 pm (Fox Lake Park)
- **March 19th** Board meeting 10 am (Museum)
- **April 16th** Board meeting 10 am (Museum)
- **May 21st** Board meeting 10 am (Museum)



Pictures from the Past answer: Fred Milton "Cash" Register





North Brevard Historical Museum
301 South Washington Avenue
Titusville, FL 32796
(321) 269-3658



OR PRESENT OCCUPANT



That's a wrap!
by Amy Spillers

On Saturday February 10th, a group of docents from the Museum ~ Susan Nelson, Katie, McQuade, John Autry, Paul Marion, Gini Campbell, Michael Knight and myself ~ participated in *Pioneer Day at the Sams House on Merritt Island*. We set up our exhibit on *Citrus in North Brevard* surrounded by many other wonderful exhibits. We made new friends, invited people to become Museum members and visit our Museum. We collected valuable resource information, enrolled an Antique car owner in our up-n-coming Antique car show at Fox Lake on March 17th, sold a few books, posters, and CD's, and ate good food. There were so many exhibits to see such as those from: the Indian River Anthropological Society, the Florida Wildlife Hospital, the Space Coast Spinsters, Florida Native Plant Society, Florida Bat Conservancy, Brevard Backyard Bee Keepers, Confederate Sons Association and many more. A big Thank You to our NBHS History Team. You guys rock! Hopefully we will be asked to participate again next time.