



SARASOTA TIMES II

September-October, 2009

1260 12th St., Sarasota, FL 941-364-9076

www.hsosc.com

Discovering History, Personal and Beyond

Joanna Hapner Fox, Booker Middle School creative writing teacher led a class of 10 youngsters this summer when the Historical Society sponsored its first Creative Writing Camp. The campus of the Crocker Memorial Church and Bidwell-Wood House provided inspiration for the three Wednesday classes. After visiting Pioneer Cemetery, the students composed elegies to things lost. Some wrote about pets, lost time, lost friends or moving from elementary to middle school.

"The Bidwell-Wood House with its inviting porches beckoned participants," said Joanna. "The sounds of the past mingled with the dialogue of birds chatting in the trees, dogs barking out a warning and the gentle hush of a summer shower." Students roamed the grounds on the last day.

HSOSC Annual Boat Tour Offers a Floating History Lesson

Our annual Historical Society Le Barge event takes place on Sunday, November 1, from 11 a.m. till 1 p.m. when up to 120 guests board Le Barge at Marina Jack for a unique sightseeing tour and Sarasota history lesson.

The narrator is John McCarthy, Director of Sarasota County Parks & Recreation. He tells stories about Old Sarasota that you won't see in print and points out significant sights while guests enjoy a continental breakfast and take in serene views of our beautiful waterways and shores.

Tickets are \$30 per person. To reserve a seat, phone Brenda Lee Hickman at 921-9392. This is an annual event that you won't want to miss and it's a delightful way to introduce a newcomer to the pleasures of discovering Sarasota's rich past.



Writing teacher Joanna Hapner Fox with her students inside the Crocker Memorial Church.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Oct. 13, 2009: Membership meeting at Crocker Memorial Church, 7:00 p.m. Sue Blue, speaker.

Nov. 10, 2009: Membership meeting, Crocker Memorial Church 7:00 p.m. Deborah Dart and Judy Ball are the guest speakers.

Nov. 14, 2009: Pioneer Day and the grand opening of the Bidwell Kitchen Museum Shop. 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. Artists, craftsmen, demonstrations. Food and drinks, live music, authors and books too.

Dec. 5, 2009: Victorian Christmas at the Crocker Memorial Church and Bidwell-Wood House from 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. Make a tree ornament. Music, food, arts and crafts of the period.

Jan. 28, 29, 30, 2010: Historical Society sponsors a three-day antiques show and sale at Phillippi Estate Park Mansion from 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. Donation at the door, \$5.00. Terrace Café serves lunch.

Jan. 30, 2010: History Day in the Park II at Phillippi Estate Park from 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. Kick-off of the Bertha Palmer Centennial Celebration. Arts and crafts, flea market, books and authors, live music, food and drink. Admission is \$5.00 per carload.

Historic Tours Full schedule coming soon, but see page 3.

Moving Forward With A Strong Mission

By Arnold Berns, Executive Director



After five years as your president and having accomplished our foremost goal – to obtain, restore and put in use a building that would be the home of the

Historical Society of Sarasota County – we can now embark on our extended mission.

Now that I am the executive director my job for you is to organize monthly membership meetings and manage all special events and fundraisers. I'll be promoting the rental of the Crocker Memorial Church for community functions and I will manage all grant applications to keep the buildings and the Society up and running.

Additionally, I will plan and participate in historical, educational and cultural events and work with local schools to provide educational outreach opportunities for children to experience on our property. I will be coordinating the content of the website and overseeing our online networking, newsletters, regular press releases and brochures.

Part of my job is encouraging and expanding our docent program. I will also be devoting considerable time to getting our gift shop in the Bidwell-Wood House kitchen up and running since it has the potential to be an important source of revenue for the Society in coming years.

I intend to collaborate with other local historical resource organizations for events and projects that benefit the community and support our mission.

I strongly believe in what Darwyn Lumley wrote, "We can learn from history how past generations thought

and acted, how they responded to the demands of their time and how they solved their problems."

Now, let's move forward.

DOCENT TRAINING



Arnie Berns, Howard Rosenthal and Harold Bubil.

Docent Coordinator Howard Rosenthal is proud to announce that after a summer of intense study, a small band of docents will be ready in October to begin conducting tours of the Bidwell-Wood House and the Crocker Memorial Church.

Sue Blue, author of many published articles about Sarasota history and the narrator of Sarasota's Historic Downtown Trolley Tours, spoke to the trainees about the history of the two buildings we operate. Clifford Smith, senior planner in the Historic Planning/Redevelopment Department of the City of Sarasota, spoke about the process of local historic certification.

Lorrie Muldowney, historic preservation specialist for the Sarasota County History Center, discussed the architecture of our buildings. Harold Bubil, real estate editor of the Sarasota Herald-Tribune and a local historian, presented a detailed lecture about the Bidwell family and the Sara

Sota Vigilance Committee. In addition, local historian and author Jeff LaHurd provided a guided tour of the Sarasota History Center Museum.

"We will be hearing from additional speakers in order to enhance our knowledge of the history of Sarasota County," said Howard. "And we are currently working on the preparation of our tours of the Bidwell-Wood House and Crocker Memorial Church. Historical Society members who would like to take preview tours (tentatively planned for September and/or early October) before the public ones begin should contact the HSOSC office. Tours start in October."

Docents-in-training are: Ted Bell, Mary Powers-Boss, Kathryn Chesley, Marsha Fottler, Viola Goldberg, Ann Haddad, Kate Holmes, Joan Marcher and Howard Rosenthal.

Howard is guiding the development of a core information manual that each docent can refer to in planning a tour. "I don't want there to be a script, since every tour is different and every docent will have his or her own style," he said. "But we will all be secure in the knowledge of basic information as it pertains to the two buildings and to the time period."

Howard was born and raised in Philadelphia. After earning an undergraduate degree at Temple University and a law degree at George Washington University Law School, he began a 30-year career with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

After retiring from government service, Howard became a docent at the Rosenbach Museum and Library in Philadelphia. Howard and his wife Alice moved to Sarasota in 2007.

Membership is a passport to living history

By Jane Kirschner-Tuccillo, Board President



If there was ever a time to join the Historical Society, now is that time! We are finally in our new home, although it's

not really so new, since the Bidwell-Wood house is one of Sarasota's oldest buildings. Our offices are upstairs and we'd love to have you come by and visit, although it might be wise to call ahead first.

We've spent the summer gathering furniture, putting the finishing touches on the Bidwell kitchen in anticipation of opening our gift shop on November 14. Housed in the charming detached kitchen, the gift shop will be officially open for our Pioneer Day in the Park. We are looking for more consignors of historic crafts and for artists who would be willing to display and sell appropriate objects in the shop.

Everyone at the Historical Society is hoping that you will feel inspired to get involved with this vital organization and make it your favorite volunteer destination this year. We need volunteers of every kind from hostesses to sales people in the gift shop, from weed pullers, to painters. You name it, we could use your particular talent.

We now have a dedicated group of docents who have been in training all summer, but docent coordinator Howard Rosenthal welcomes more.

We offered an exciting creative writing workshop for children this summer in the Crocker Memorial Church and it was so successful that our award-winning teacher will be offering an adult course this winter.

Expect an expanded children's course next summer.

Mark your calendars for our Second Annual History Day in the Park, Saturday, January 30 at the Phillippi Estate Park. It honors the centennial of Bertha Palmer's arrival in Sarasota. We are already at work organizing demonstrations, tours, craft displays, music and food. A three-day antiques show and sale will kick off the festivities. We'll need a small army of volunteers for this grand event, so please plan to help.

On Saturday, December 5, the Historical Society is hosting a Victorian Christmas Celebration featuring music, food and crafts of the season. It promises to be a festive time of living history and I'm personally inviting all of you to be part of it. And what could be a nicer holiday gift for someone you love than a membership to the Historical Society of Sarasota County.

This & That

For Sale: Two matching Victorian velvet love seats, one pre-owned side chair, one Early American country-style small sofa, one large Chinese rug. Call 364-9076 to inspect at the Bidwell-Wood House.

Wanted: We need volunteers to paint the gift shop. Call Arnie Berns at 364-9076 if you have a few hours to donate to this cause.

Bravo: Raul Herrera has agreed to volunteer for various computer projects for the executive director. And Sherry Svekis, a new member, is going to volunteer her time to the Society by writing grant applications.

This greatly expands our outreach to possible regional and national funding sources. Our thanks to computer teacher and graphic designer Billy Elkins for his considerable expertise in designing our new newsletter. Continuing thanks to Ramsey Frangie for doing whatever needs to be done.

Retail Guru: We are looking for that special volunteer willing to serve as Gift Shop Manager. Should have retail experience and be comfortable managing a small staff of volunteers as well as organizing inventory.

Thank You To: David Stokes for help furnishing the Bidwell-Wood House. We are grateful to Historic Spanish Point for returning several items of furniture that were on loan, from the Historical Society. Edward Alley donated a cherry drop leaf table and Gary Roberts gave us a chestnut hall table and mirror. Josephine McPhail donated several pieces of china depicting scenes of early Sarasota. Two Windsor kitchen chairs were received from Victor Reiling and Nancy Bushnell, as well as two cane-seat chairs from Barbara Calvert. A pump organ came to us from Mike Lesnick. Lynard Jennings has loaned us several pieces of furniture and is searching for more items for us.

HISTORIC THURSDAY TOURS

A bus trip to the State Fair in Tampa is scheduled for Feb. 11, 2010. Bus trip to Englewood's Historic Downtown, (including the Hermitage Artist Retreat on Manasota Beach) is in March. A behind-the-scenes-tour of Spanish Point is also upcoming.

Members: please send us your current email address.



**Historical Society of Sarasota County
Board Members**

*Arnold Berns, Executive Director
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Historical Society of Sarasota County

Membership Application

(Memberships are based on calendar year. New memberships after August 1, 2009 are valid through 2010)

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Renewal: _____ Volunteer special interests: _____

First time: _____

Individual, \$25 ___ Family, \$40 ___ Corporate, \$100 ___ Life, \$250 ___ Donation, \$ _____

Checks are payable to the Historical Society of Sarasota County. Mail to P.O. Box 1632, Sarasota 34230. The Historical Society of Sarasota County is a not-for-profit 501 (c)(3) corporation.