



SARASOTA TIMES II

Winter/Spring 2013

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

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Conversations at The Crocker – Building an Audience and Increasing Membership

Since the initial Conversations at The Crocker event in October this community-wide series of interactive panel discussions has been building steadily in attendance and has helped HSOSC increase membership and elevate the Society's profile. Every month we see new faces in the audience and many of them return the next month as members. We've gained 60 new members since last September. To date Conversations panels have covered politics, integration, the visual arts, real estate, the circus, and we still have architecture and the performing arts to go before the series ends with the April event. But, there will be another series of Conversations at The Crocker next season so please alert HSOSC to topics that you'd like to see covered. The topic should relate to people or events in Sarasota's past that have helped shape the city and county today. If you have an idea for a panel topic, send it to the co-chairs, Lynn Harding at hardingpal@verizon.net or Marsha Fottler at fottler@verizon.net. They will set the schedule over the summer months.

HSOSC thanks the following moderators and panel members who contributed their time and expertise to serve on Conversations panels. We are truly grateful to Kelly Kirschner, Elmer Berkel, Mollie Cardamone, Kerry Kirschner, Fredd Atkins, Carolyn Mason, Lou Ann Palmer, Dorothy Smith, Ed James, Ron McCarty, Deborah Walk, Kay Kipling, Kevin Dean, Heidi Connor, William Hartman, Bob Plunket, Jeff LaHurd, Lynn Robbins and David Jennings. There are two more Conversations to go. Don't miss these:

Tuesday, March 12: **Why We Look The Way We Do.** A discussion of architectural styles that characterize Sarasota. Moderator, Harold Bubil, Real Estate Editor of the Sarasota Herald-Tribune.

Tuesday, April 9: **A City of the Performing Arts.** Moderator, Howard Millman. A discussion of how Sarasota evolved into a cultural destination and became famous for its performing arts.



In December, Deborah Walk and Ron McCarty from the Ringling Museum presented a lively lecture (with photos) about how the Ringling brothers and their families guided the development of Sarasota starting in 1912. The Ringling influence continues today.



The topic of Newtown Before and After Integration was tackled by Dr. Ed James, County Commissioner Carolyn Mason, former Mayor of Sarasota Lou Ann Palmer and educator Dorothy Smith. All of these people were personally impacted either as teachers or students when high schools were integrated in Sarasota in 1968.

What's Going On

It was a struggle initially, but Gift Shop Manager Jane Kirschner-Tuccillo reports that the HSOSC Gift Shop is finally becoming recognized in the community as a destination for discovering artisan-created objects that are locally made. "This year we have about 35 craftspeople, artists and authors who consign with us," said Jane. "Besides books by local authors we stock jewelry, bird houses, garden art, woven rugs, post cards and note cards, pottery, tote bags for spring and summer, table linens and lots more. What's so great is that word has gotten around and community people looking for an unusual gift or home decor item are finding us. This means a higher profile for the Historical Society and revenue for us that goes into maintaining the Crocker Memorial Church and the Bidwell-Wood House as well as producing special community events." The Gift Shop is located in the detached kitchen of the Bidwell-Wood House. Credit cards welcome. "We need volunteers to staff the shop," added Jane. "Call me at 366-1323 or write to me at jane@jaskdesigns.com and we'll work around your schedule.



Good-looking beach or shopping totes are available at the HSOSC Gift Shop. Besides regular hours of 10-2 weekdays, the shop is open an hour before all events on the property and before each monthly meeting.



In January, Judy Alexander organized a High Tea at The Crocker that brought out romantic hats and fetching frocks. Here is Judy getting ready to welcome guests. Morton's Market and The Breakfast Place provided a traditional tea time menu. The tea party raised \$1,000.

For more than a decade well known author, historian, actress and preservation activist Sue Blue has organized and conducted enormously popular trolley tours of historically important destinations in the Sarasota area. Recently the Ordinary Historians of HSOSC produced a video interview with Sue that is available for viewing at HSOSC. It is also in the permanent collection of videos that comprise the oral history archives at the History Center. Sue lives in a 1925 Florida cottage that was built by her grandfather and her memories about growing up here deserve a wide audience. She's quite a community resource.



Events, Gatherings, Enrichment and Fun at HSOSC



Working the flea market on Designer Tag Sale day, Kate Holmes (a co-chair of the event), Viola Goldberg, former President of the Historical Society and current Advisory Board member, and Linda Garcia, Site Manager.



Former mayors of Sarasota who appeared at The Crocker for a panel discussion about city politics then and now: Kelly Kirschner, Fredd Atkins, Mollie Cardamone, Elmer Berkel and Kerry Kirschner.



The Designer Tag Sale in November raised \$5,000 for HSOSC. Thanks to Lynn Harding, Kate Holmes, Marsha Fottler, Jerry Chesley (above) along with dozens of volunteers and contributing interior designers.



Capturing Moments Photography LLC



Humor writer and self-confessed real estate junkie Bob Plunkert moderated a panel discussion on the history, present and future of real estate in Sarasota County. Joining him were author/historian Jeff LaHurd and Realtors Lynn Robbins and David Jennings.

Site Manager Linda Garcia reports that in 2012 the Crocker Memorial Church was the location for seven weddings. This year we have booked six so far. "The building can hold about 100 and since the church was de-commissioned in 2006, we do both religious and secular ceremonies," said Linda. "Wedding rentals are \$100 an hour with a three hour minimum and the wedding party has the use of the gardens and the Bidwell-Wood House, which is where the wedding party often changes clothes." Linda also notes that photo opportunities at the two historic building are a big draw. Revenue from wedding rentals helps to maintain both buildings and to fund community enrichment projects. Besides being used for weddings, community groups such as the James Joyce Society, Great Books Club, and the Earlye Musike Consort regularly use the Crocker Memorial Church for meetings and events. Because of the commitment of the HSOSC Board to adaptive use of our historic buildings, the community has begun to take ownership of these vital historic properties. Funds generated by events, membership dues and contributions help preserve these buildings for future generations. Docent-led tours of the buildings support the HSOSC mission to spread awareness of Florida history. Please let your friends know about the availability of the Crocker Memorial Church for a memorable wedding or meeting space. The pews can be moved to set up tables and chairs and we have a sound system.



Historical Society of Sarasota County Board Members, 2012-2013

Howard Rosenthal, President
Marsha Fottler, Vice President
JoRita Stevens, Recording Secretary
Meade Ferguson, Corresponding Secretary
Greg Dickinson, Treasurer
Linda Garcia (Site Manager)
Lynn Harding
Margaret Hoffman
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You Are

WANTED



AMERICAN TROUBADOUR Bill Schwartz & SIX GENERATION FLORIDIAN Author Gene Jones

REWARD: An Afternoon of Civil War Songs & Stories

for just **TEN DOLLAR BILLS**

DATE: Sunday, Feb. 24, 2013 3:00-6:00 pm

PLACE: The Historical Society of Sarasota County
in Pioneer Park at 1260 12th St. bet. N. Trail & Coconut Av.

**CIVIL WARTIME GRUB AVAILABLE AT THE
BAR ON THE PORCH**

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You don't want to miss this great family event organized by your Historical Society at Pioneer Park. It features Bill Schustik, The American Troubadour, and Gene Jones, author of the book, **Suwannee Divide**. This wonderful presentation (Sunday, Feb 24) is the ideal way to learn about Florida history no matter what your age. It's an afternoon of songs, stories, food and socializing and it's part of the HSOSC celebration of Viva Florida, a full year of statewide programs and projects that observe the 500th anniversary of the discovery of Florida. Donation \$10.



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