

The Palm Coast Historian

Published by the City of Palm Coast Historical Society

Editor: Kay Stafford

Spring 2010

Dinner at Yacht Club Commemorates City's First Decade

Ten years in the life of Palm Coast have seen many changes and these, singly and collectively, have been recorded and are now being preserved by the Palm Coast Historical Society. The society, formed ten years ago at the request of former Mayor Jim Canfield and city council, has been at the heart of many events, including the annual dinner (or breakfast) held most years plus a great big outdoor birthday bash – everyone invited – held in celebration of the city's fifth anniversary.

This year's event at Palm Coast Yacht Club on January 21 had a bevy of guests from the golf, tennis, and boating citizenry as well as the city, county, and business community. Receiving special *Citizen of Yesteryear Awards* were Jim Miskelly and Capt. Bill Donnelly (USN Retired). Other awards were presented to the Friends of Golf and Debby Geyer, long-time president of the Historical Society.



Jim Miskelly, accompanied by Reggie Hunter of the Palm Harbor Golf Club, received a *Citizen of Yesteryear Award* at the 10th anniversary dinner for the City of Palm Coast which was hosted by Palm Coast Historical Society. Historian and president Art Dycke, along with vice president Jack Pitman, presented the award.

A brief writeup by George Libonate, Jr. on how tennis has impacted Palm Coast appears inside the Historian. It will be followed in the near future by a more complete history.

New in Town: Canfield's



Mayor Jon Netts presented a framed photo of the Palm Harbor Golf Club ribbon cutting ceremony to former Mayor Jim Canfield at the dedication of Canfield's Restaurant at Palm Harbor Golf Club on March 12.

A contest was held to name the restaurant, which has been open and serving delicious meals since November. Jim Jones received a \$125 Pro Shop gift certificate for his winning entry. He said "Canfield's" was the obvious name for the restaurant since the former mayor was instrumental in getting support for the rebuilding of PHGC, the first course in Palm Coast.

This article provides a brief overview of the crucial role that tennis played and continues to play in the development of the City of Palm Coast. A more detailed series of articles entitled THE GOLDEN AGE OF TENNIS IN PALM COAST will be published in the near future.

The Role Tennis Played in the Development of Palm Coast, Part 1

by George A. Libonate Jr.

The historical development of population centers is an interesting study in contrast. A large number of cities owe their location, settlement and prosperity to geographic features like mountain passes, river junctions, inlets and protected harbors. Many other cities come to prosperity near transportation hubs or in proximity to industrial, production or manufacturing centers. Few cities, however, owe their existence to conceptual forethought, deliberate site selection, thoughtful planning and carefully orchestrated development. That was typical of the comprehensive planning that went into International Telephone and Telegraph (ITT) Corporation's decision to acquire a 70 percent stake in Levitt and Sons, a community development company, and Rayonier Corporation, owners of more than a million acres of land, 65,000 of it here in northern Florida.

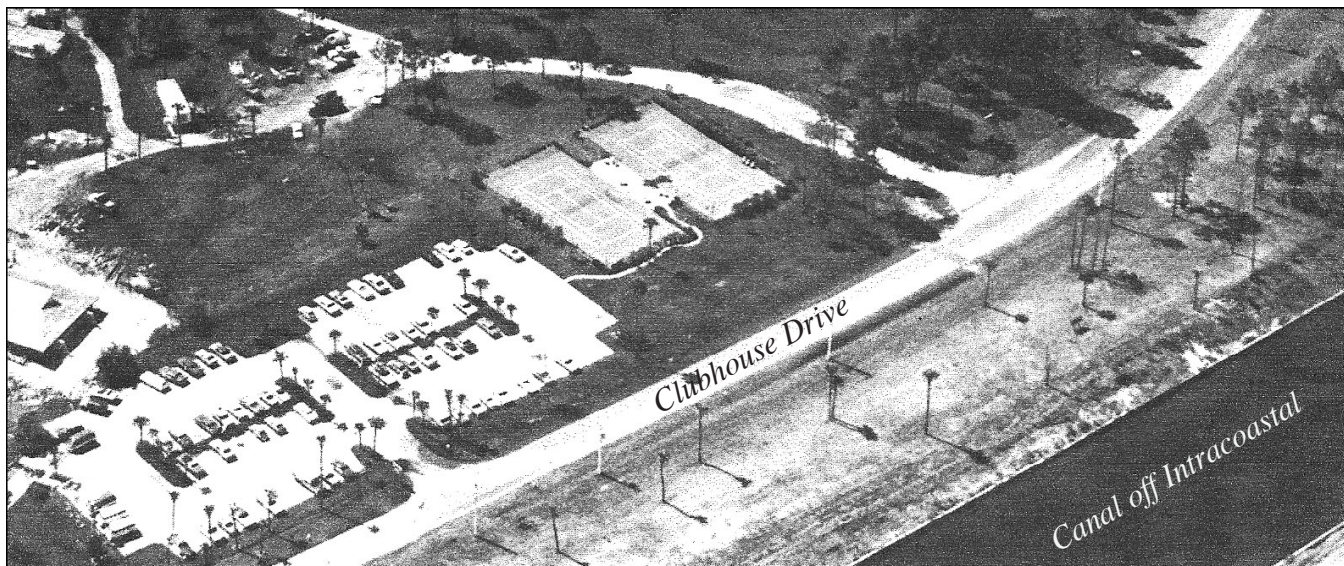
The Palm Coast we live in today is a unique community because it was initially based on a

planned vision of "the perfect place to live." This vision was publicly voiced on June 16, 1969, at Princess Place before 175 county and state officials, guests and members of the press. Dr. Norman Young, spokesperson for ITT/Levitt and Sons, made an announcement, "of great importance to all of Flagler County..." He went on to explain that ITT/Levitt was determined "to incorporate and merge the beautiful, balanced, and diverse environment that already existed in the area with the recreational inter-



Dr. Norman Young

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The first tennis courts were built next to the parking lot of the original Welcome Center

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ests of its prospective residents.” Inherent in that plan was Dr. Young’s intention to build the new community of Palm Coast around the recreational amenities of tennis, golf and water sports. These three amenities were also intended to serve as magnets to attract potential residents and investors. And magnets they were. Potential residents and investors flocked to the area; they purchased land and built homes as Palm Coast became one of the fastest-growing communities in America. And true to his vision, Dr. Young established the guiding principle for community development that would eventually give rise to the Golden Age of Tennis in Palm Coast.

Within a year, ITT/Levitt completed the first building, the Welcome Center with its 64-foot tower, and soon after two tennis courts were built nearby next to the parking lot just off what would eventually become Clubhouse Drive. By September 1971, the first nine holes of a golf course were opened to residents, followed by the original yacht club at the marina, two additional tennis courts and a swim club located near the intersection of the Intracoastal Waterway and the main canal. During the pioneering stages of community development, the tennis facility played a crucial role by providing a social hub, a center where new residents from diverse localities could first begin to make new friends, bond and develop a sense of community spirit. ITT/CDC wisely promoted access to this popular amenity on billboards and in printed advertisements using the provocative slogan, “Love is a big thing in Palm Coast.”

By October of 1974, with only 850 residents, this new-found community spirit became apparent when tennis players decided to enter the First Annual Regional Life and Breath Tennis Tournament. Participation in this fund raising activity established a tradition of community service that players continue to support to this day.

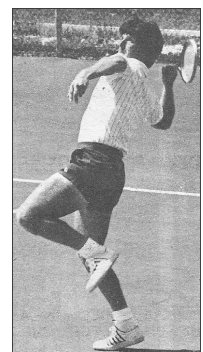
Two months later, this community spirit inspired tennis players to join together to form the Palm Coast Tennis Association. Participation on the tennis courts and membership in the new asso-



Officers of the newly-formed Tennis Association: Dot Griffin, secretary; Bill Collier, president; Alberta Maloney, membership chair; Jackie Salley, treasurer; (standing) Mark Sundloff, youth representative; Pat Maloney, vice president.

ciation grew rapidly.

By early 1976, there were over 1500 residents in Palm Coast; the courts at the yacht club had become so over-crowded that the Tennis Association began urging the corporation to expand the facilities. Agreeing that there was a need, Alan Smolen, new President of ICDC, approved construction of four new courts, resurfaced the original two and added a pro shop and lights for night play. The facility was renamed the Palm Harbor Tennis Club. Leon Aragon was hired as the pro and a fee-for-play was established. For the official dedication of the new facility on May 15, 1978, Tom and Tim Gullikson were invited to play in an exhibition match. Shortly thereafter, ICDC

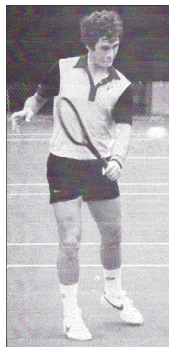


Leon Aragon

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Tom Gullikson

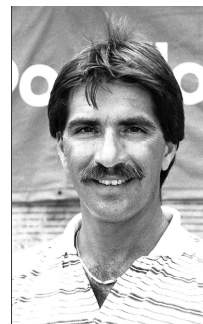
decided to hire Tom as the Palm Coast Tennis Pro when he was not actively participating on the professional players' tour.

With this new facility, Dorothy Griffin, spokesperson for the Tennis Association, was able to enroll five women's doubles teams to represent Palm Coast in the newly expanded Greater Volusia Tennis League, GVTL.

The men's teams joined the new league the following spring. In November 1978, Palm Coast women won their first league match against Ormond Hotel Racquet Club, marking the beginning of Palm Coast's long and stellar record of play in the GVTL. Today, some 32 years later, over 40 teams representing the Greater Palm Coast area are competing in the league at a variety of skill and age levels. In the season just completed, 2009-2010, 43 men's and women's teams produced five division championships.

In the spring of 1980, ICDC completed and dedicated a recreational facility called the Belle

Terre Swim and Racquet Club on the west side of I-95. The Belle Terre club included four tennis courts, a pool and a fitness center. With the earlier hiring of Tom Gullikson as a touring tennis pro, the eventual hiring of Jim Vidamour as director of tennis, and the addition of these four new tennis courts, the Golden Age of Tennis in Palm Coast was clearly advanced. The opening of the I-95 interchange in May 1981 brought accelerated growth to the community. As a result, demand for additional tennis facilities stimulated their inclusion in private communities like Fairways, Pine Lakes Village, Woodhaven, Plantation Bay, Matanzas Shores and Marina Cove as they were built out over the next 10 years.



Jim Vidamour

When ICDC decided to build Hammock Dunes and its golf course and a toll bridge over the ICW, it required the dismantling of the oceanfront Sheraton Inn. This, in turn, required the construction of a new Sheraton Hotel on the site where the six tennis courts were then located. ICDC asked Tom Gullikson and Jim Vidamour to work with the corporation's architects to plan and create a new world-class, multi-surface tennis facility – the Players Club. It opened to stellar reviews in 1986. And true to form, tennis players from all over came to play and train at this beautiful facility, including famous pros, the likes of Andre Agassi, Michael Chang, Monica Seles, Manuela Maleeva, Jimmy Connors, Todd Martin and Jim Courier, to name just a few.

Players had the option of playing on grass, clay or hard courts at a facility that featured two 400-seat stadium courts and a

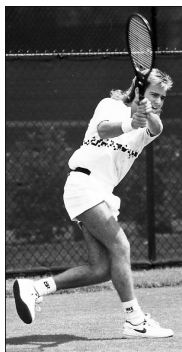


The Players Club

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The Role Tennis Played in the Development of Palm Coast

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Andre Agassi

two-story, full-service clubhouse with a restaurant overlooking the grounds, all of it laid out on a beautifully landscaped site. In 1987, the Players Club won worldwide acclaim as one of a select handful of multi-surface facilities available to the serious tennis pro and novice alike. It also won an award as one of the ten best tennis facilities in the world. With

the opening of the Players Club, the Golden Age of Tennis in Palm Coast was no longer an aspiration; it had become a reality. For the next eight years, with ITT's support, the Players Club was home to social play among members, championship tournaments, spectacular exhibitions and fund-raising events that brought players together, national recognition to the community and prospective residents to Palm Coast.

Unfortunately, the national economic recession of the early 1990s and slumping sales for ICDC saw the reevaluation of ITT's willingness to invest in further development of Palm Coast. As a result of financial pressure on the bottom-line, ITT began rethinking its larger corporate structure and reorganizing its conglomerate business model. Initially, these decisions forced ICDC to surrender its monopoly on and control of planned community development when it sold 13,000 acres of its land to Palm Coast Holdings. ITT also scaled back its plans for developing additional sections of Hammock Dunes and eventually sold the northern beachfront property. As a part of its downscaled commitment to development of the larger Palm Coast community, ICDC sought a delay in its plans for the River Club and



Jimmy Connors

the community's fifth golf course. This project was eventually sold and renamed Grand Haven. By the middle of the '90s, ITT had completely reorganized its corporate structure and had made a firm decision to divest itself of all its holdings in Palm Coast.

In February 1996, the Players Club, Belle Terre Swim and Racquet Club, the golf courses (except Grand Haven and Hammock Dunes), the Marina, and the Sheraton Hotel were all sold to a division of Lowe Enterprises called Destination Hotel and Resorts. Lowe decided to contract with the world renowned Peter Burwash International to assume management and operational control of the Players Club and brought in Dave Neuhart as head tennis professional. In his new capacity, Neuhart took over for the departing Jim Vidamour who resigned in September of 1996, after serving 15 years as director of tennis for the community. A year later, on September 13, 1997, Tom Gullikson ended his 17-year relationship with the tennis community in Palm Coast. With the loss of the guiding influence of these two men and the sale of Palm Coast's amenities, the facilities were separated from the community's assets and the role they played as unifying social hubs ceased to exist. Too few in positions of leadership seemed to fully appreciate the eventual impact that this sale would have on residents' quality of life and the overall unifying vision that, up to that point, had guided development of Palm Coast. ITT's decision to divest itself of its holdings and leave the community marked the beginning of the unraveling of the Golden Age of Tennis in Palm Coast.

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Since 2005, I have been compiling artifacts related to the history of tennis in Palm Coast. Unfortunately, some of the information vital to that record is incomplete or is completely missing. In my effort to piece together an accurate record of the past 40 years, I'm asking for your help.

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Corresponding Secretary and Membership Update

Submitted by Eileen Carter

The 10th anniversary celebration for the City of Palm Coast, hosted by Palm Coast Historical Society, was held at the Palm Coast Yacht Club on January 21. The event was a tremendous success.

The society mailed letters of appreciation to the following contributors to the silent auction: Grand Reserve Golf Course; Diana Minotti; Cindy Boyer of Hammock Beach Resort; Tom Cioffi, General Manager of Palm Harbor Golf Club; Andrew Dailidonis of Pine Course Golf Club; Marc Ray, General Manager of Hammock Dunes Club; Jon & Priscilla Netts; Ronald Pizer; and Jim Landon, City Manager of Palm Coast. Patricia Eldridge and Carol Lemieux also contributed to the silent auction.

Special thank you notes were sent to Peg Conrad for a framed photograph of the 2002 Palm

Harbor Golf Club Golf Council and to Toni Loretta for a framed "Golfer of the Month" article about her from the News Tribune dated May 29, 1999. This framed article was originally presented to her by Jim Miskelly, who is now on our Board of Directors. Both are on display at the Historical Society.

As of May 5, 2010 we have 64 paid memberships and two honoraries. Acknowledgements were mailed to all with a membership card and notice of upcoming events.

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you have information relevant to the history of tennis please contact me, George Libonate, at Galcoiv@yahoo.com. Your help will be greatly appreciated.

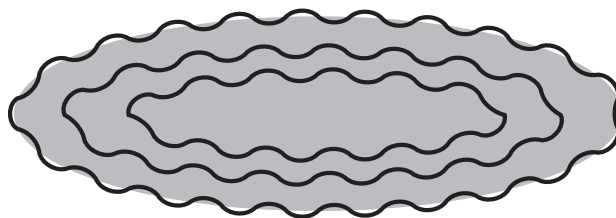
Watch for Part 2 of this abbreviated history of tennis in Palm Coast in the next Historian, to be followed later by a much more complete writeup by Mr. Libonate.

IMAGES OF AMERICA: PALM COAST and ALAN SMOLEN: FATHER OF PALM COAST, 1975-1985, both by Art Dycke, Palm Coast City Historian, can be purchased for \$21.99 and \$15, respectively.

Contact Art Dycke, 446-8636, for additional information.

Welcome, New Members

Marianna Bell	Arnold & Muriel
Jim Bishop	Levy
Kaye Boyer	Joanmarie Livoti
Betty Buchanan	Stewart & Alice
& Steve Ripley	Manthey
June Carlson	Diana Mariano
Peg Carque	Gladys Moore
Rick Cimino	Gus & Willa Prince
Joan Davis	Gendra Sennello
Inge Fricke	Charlotte Siegmund
Dee Glass	Dudley & Betsy
Ray & Sondra	Thomas
Henderson	Gene Thrower
Mary Huber	Arlene Tobia
Richard & Barbara	Yerdis Trexler
Jacoby	William & Jean Venne
Steven & Rita Jones	Donald Wall
Warren & Catherine	Denise Watson
Larson	Marie Wolfe
Art & Mary Ann Leiz	



President's message – YTD

by Art Dycke

The Palm Coast Historical Society is celebrating the 10th anniversary of its existence and has started this year with high energy and enthusiasm for fulfilling its mission of accumulating, preserving, cataloging, and making the history of Palm Coast available to the community.

We started the year with the election of new officers, highlighted by the retirement of Debby Geyer from a presidency she has held for much of the existence of the organization. Please see the full new slate of officers and board members printed on the last page of this publication. This new team effectively presented a 10th birthday dinner honoring the City of Palm Coast's "Dynamic Decade," as well as the society's own 10th anniversary, for 140 guests at Palm Coast Yacht Club on January 21. Our recording secretary and editor, Kay Stafford, had prepared a special issue of The Palm Coast Historian for the occasion which featured major articles on "How Palm Coast Became a City" and "A Short History of the Palm Coast Historical Society." This edition has been widely distributed throughout the community. Please contact us if you have not received a copy. Proceeds from a successful silent auction reported by Patricia Eldridge and new memberships reported by Eileen Carter helped fund the replacement of an ancient broken laptop and the updating of our computers and photo library systems at the society office during April and May. We are grateful to Larry at NetFX Computers for his generosity and assistance in this process.

The City of Palm Coast Historical Society office is located in building 10, room 216, at Matanzas High School. Office hours are 1:30 to 3:30 PM every Wednesday that school is in session. School security requires that you make an appointment before visiting. Our telephone number is 447-1575, extension 7216. Please call Wednesday afternoon or leave a message any time. Please address mail to COPCHS, PO Box 352613, Palm Coast 32135. E-mail the president

at artpchistory@bellsouth.net.

Each Wednesday the office is a beehive of activity as board members, officers, and volunteers pursue their responsibilities and interests. Volunteers Betty Buchanan and Robert F. Evans clip, copy, and file newspaper



Buchanan & Evans share time at the files.

articles as well as assist in researching and helping with society mailings. Cataloging chair, Patricia Eldridge, keeps everything in order and enters content and location data on our sophisticated museum program software. She will be traveling until later in the

summer. Ed Moore is our education chairman and outreach coordinator with the other historical organizations within our community. Researcher George Libonate is publishing the first part of a definitive history of tennis in Palm



Moore catches up on "reading."

Coast in this issue with a continuation to follow in the next. Vice president Jack Pitman, who monitors our finances and legal matters, is vacationing in France during early summer. Debby Geyer has returned home after being hospitalized in April and recuperating at Grand Oaks. Eileen Carter has registered many new members and sent each a welcome letter and membership card. She would be glad to do this for many other people who would like to join our society. So please spread the word, share this newsletter with friends and encourage them to join us in support of our endeavors.

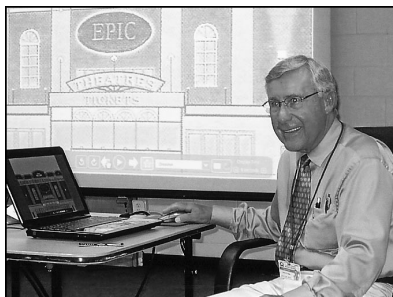
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President's message – YTD

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In my role as city historian, I presented a three-part series of slide programs and exhibits outlining the history of Palm Coast from three billion years ago to the present time. Each was held at Palm Coast Community Center with exhibits being open from 1:30 until 8 PM and the slide presentation being given at 2 PM and repeated at 6:30 PM.

On March 22, the slide show covered our history from three billion years ago until 1969 with exhibits showing those Palm Coast archaeological and historical sites of which we have knowledge from this time period. On April 19 a total of 52 participants viewed “ITT from 1969 to 1994” and the exhibits showing the various



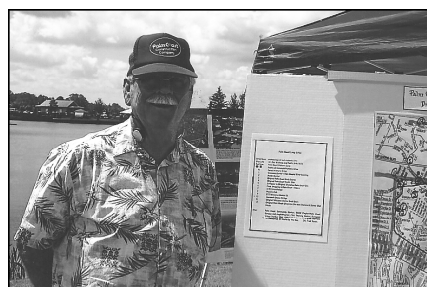
Dycke prepares Power Point program.

community constructions built by our original developer during these years. On May 17 the slides showed our community from 1995 to the present as did the exhibits. Steven R. Jones, a 1984 ITT engineer, contributed his knowledge and there was a spirited discussion about the effects of the corporation leaving the community. There were exhibits about the incorporation of Palm Coast and its 10-year anniversary “Dynamic Decade.” There was also an ongoing study of all identifiable archaeological and historical sites in the Flagler/Palm Coast area undertaken at a signage symposium at 4 PM on each of the above dates by an interested number of Flagler history lovers, including Mary Ann Clark, Sisco Deen, and Bill Ryan.

On May 8 the society packed up its tent and easels and took its show “on the road” with an extensive display of past and recent Palm Coast his-



Kendrick (top) & Jones (bottom) man Historical Society tent.



tory exhibits at the city's Arbor Day celebration in Town Center. An enthusiastic response to the exhibit made the constant battle with wind and the tedious transportation of our materials worthwhile on a beautiful spring day.

We will attempt to maintain our Wednesday afternoon office hours

throughout the summer with an occasional break for a vacation day, so please contact us before coming to visit. We will be researching and writing about the 40th anniversary year of 1970 and the development of the core historic district of Palm Coast.

A second area of concentration will be the Palm Coast years from 1985 to 1998, especially the development of Hammock Dunes, the sale of its remaining lands by departing ITT and the building of new communities upon these lands. New member and volunteer Steven Jones will be helping with a mapping project tracing the development of our community over the years. Please contact the historical society with pictures, information and stories about any of these featured areas as well as others.

We are very grateful for the facilities being provided us by the Flagler School District and the city of Palm Coast. We will continue to explore ways to make our historical materials more available to the public, including the establishment of a new website, community center programs, and

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President's message – YTD

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finding affordable, accessible space for continuous public access.

Please contact us if you wish books and other materials to enhance your studies of the history of Palm Coast and please see the “We Want You” article in this newsletter if you’re looking for some stimulating summer volunteer work.

Our next edition of The Palm Coast Historian will detail our schedule of events for the fall. Have a happy summer, History Lovers.

We Want YOU

We’re looking for adult and student volunteers interested in local history and willing to devote two hours Wednesday afternoons during the summer working in a fully equipped and air conditioned office. We need computer organization of a large file of historical photos and possibly establishing a website. We clip, duplicate, and file past and present historical material and research and write historical articles. If you’re interested in volunteering for the summer, please call 447-1575 extension 7216 and leave a message telling us how we can contact you.

The Palm Coast Historical Society is also seeking one of its members to become its treasurer. Duties, as defined by the by-laws, include collecting all money and dues of members, depositing funds in the bank, and preparing disbursements authorized by the board of directors. An accurate record of transactions must be kept for the treasurer to report at all board meetings, plus an annual report at the January meeting.

We know you’re out “there” and waiting to be invited to serve, but we don’t know your name, so please call a member of the nominating committee (Ed Moore, 446-5452; Kay Stafford, 445-5704; Jack Pitman, 446-2511) and they’ll be glad to invite you.

That’s what we’re all about

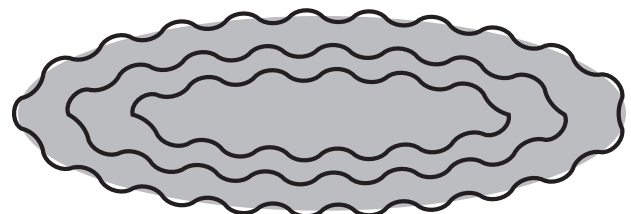
DeAnna O’ Flaherty, project coordinator for Enterprise Flagler, called Patricia Eldridge, cataloging chair for Palm Coast Historical Society, asking for assistance in gathering information on the history of business in Palm Coast. She explained that she was seeking marketing material to be used in attracting business and industry to the Flagler/Palm Coast area. An appointment was made for May 5 at the Historical Society office on the campus of Matanzas High School whereby DeAnna came to view our available resources.

City historian Art Dycke pointed out the earliest businesses pictured in his book and Patricia Eldridge presented her with a thick folder of articles about Palm Coast business over the years. DeAnna copied and absorbed selected information and returned two weeks later for more. She expressed delight as to its quality and quantity.

Art and Patricia were overjoyed that the Historical Society’s materials they have spent so much time and effort accumulating and cataloging was being so well used because “that’s what we’re all about.”



Patricia Eldridge (left) shares clippings on local businesses with DeAnna O’Flaherty, Enterprise Flagler executive.



Officers – 2010

Art Dycke, President & City Historian; Jack Pitman, Vice President;
Jim Miskelly, Acting Treasurer; Kay Stafford, Recording Secretary;
Eileen Carter, Corresponding Secretary & Membership Chair

Board Members

Jim Canfield, Patricia Eldridge, Debby Geyer, (Immediate Past President);
Connie Horvath (Honorary); Norma Kendrick, Ed Moore

The City of Palm Coast Historical Society
P.O. Box 352613
Palm Coast, FL 32135

Thank you, History Lover



The City of  Historical Society

Membership Form – 2010 (please print)

First Name/s _____ Last Name _____

Street Address _____

Mailing Address _____ Phone _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

E-Mail Address _____
(you will be notified of meetings/Historical Society information via e-mail)

Single membership – \$10 Family – \$15 Renewal New Member

Payable to The City of Palm Coast Historical Society Mail to Palm Coast Historical Society
P.O. Box 352613
Palm Coast, FL 32135

Contributions to The City of Palm Coast Historical Society are deductible for Federal Income Tax purposes.

All members receive **The Palm Coast Historian**