

West Pasco Historical Society / Apr 2018



Our oldest newspapers, from 1918 to 1947, have been digitized



We are happy to announce that the early years of the *New Port Richey Press*, our local weekly newspaper, have been digitized.

This is important because it ensures the long-term survival of these newspapers, as the files will be widely distributed.

The scanning of the microfilm was done by MicroImaging Source Inc. of Dunedin. The microfilm, created in 1986, has all of the surviving newspapers from 1918 to 1947.

The files are on both computers at the museum for viewing by the public. The newspapers are not currently searchable, but are arranged by date.

The *Port Richey Press* was founded on Nov. 21, 1918. The name of the newspaper was changed to the *New Port Richey Press* two years later. The newspaper eventually became the *West Pasco Press* and declined in influence before becoming absorbed by the *Tampa Tribune*.

Some issues of the newspaper are presumed lost, including all of 1932 and 1933 and the second half of 1921. So if you happen to have one of those newspapers, please let us know! There is a missing newspaper from January 1930 that probably had a banner headline announcing that Gloria Swanson would be visiting New Port Richey. It's understandable why the newspaper is missing. Her trip to New Port Richey never took place.

Newspapers after 1947 were never microfilmed. The majority of them are in the Avery Room at the New Port Richey Public Library. The library is looking into digitizing those newspapers. It would be a more expensive project, as the scanning would require manual turning of the pages of bound volumes of the newspapers, whereas scanning the microfilm was a mostly automated procedure.

Message from the WPHS President



By **BOB LANGFORD**

Our facility has been seeing an uptick in new visitors, as well as many repeats, since the beginning of the year, and our volunteers have been over the top, in all of the exciting things they're doing. That's where I'll stick my plug for volunteers. If you even think that you would like local history, this is the place to be. If you're considering volunteering for an organization I would strongly recommend here. We are considering trying to be open on Sundays again this year so we will need extra volunteers to take care of that day. When school is out, the splash pad and playground get lots more visitors. Many come to the museum and the Sunday interest is high. Maybe this would be good for you. If you are a local resident, you will be amazed at where you live. If you're not living here, you will enjoy learning of the remarkable history of our area.

We have shared a few events with our counterparts in history here in New Port Richey, the Hacienda Hotel and the Richey Suncoast Theatre, and will again in the near future. Our gift shop is growing too. We have added more books, tee-shirts and other things you may be interested in picking up while you're visiting.

The nominating committee has met and has forwarded the following nominees for the board: David Prace, Antonia Miernik, Ken Weightman, Trishia Rich, and Bob Langford. Nominations will be accepted April 11 by the board meeting at 6:00 pm. A General Meeting will be held to elect the new directors. Nominees can be submitted from the floor at that time on May 9th at 6:00 pm. A Board Meeting will follow. Then on Saturday, June 9th at 1:00 pm the officers will be installed by the Honorable Rob Marlowe. You will not want to miss the presentation by Terry Kline afterwards: "The True Story of the Florida Indians and Chasco."

Speaking of elections, if you're a resident of New Port Richey, you have two City Council seats to fill. This is so important to all of us for you to use your right to vote for the two candidates who will be representing the city for the next 3 years. Two folks here will have 40% of the votes. I have no endorsement for you. Just please vote on April 10th for two council members. There are 7 folks running for 2 seats. Every vote will count.

It's hunting season at the museum!

By **BRIAN SCHMIT**

Need a great way to get to know the Historical Society Museum better? Try your skill at one of our three new scavenger hunts located on the wooden barrel as you enter the museum. Each scavenger hunt has a different level of difficulty to it. The easiest of our scavenger hunts is intended for children ages ten and under. It involves counting different items in the museum. The next scavenger hunt is of medium difficulty intended for the average person who wants to discover some of the more interesting items the museum has in its collection. The final scavenger hunt is our most difficult. For those of you who are up for a challenge, this scavenger hunt features some of our rarest artifacts. So if you have a little time on your hands and would like to try a fun activity, come on down to the historical society museum and pick up one of our scavenger hunts. And for those parents that want to keep your kids busy while you browse the museum, we'll offer a lollipop as an incentive to any of the kids who get all the answers correct. So come on down to the historical society museum and have fun going on a scavenger hunt!
(camouflage clothing and duck calls optional)

Thank you for your donations!



Missy Brown (left picture) was a visitor to the museum on Feb. 17. She donated an old scrapbook from the Ridin' Hi Saddle Club, of which her father was President. Some very nice old photos from the 1960s and early 1970s are on our web site and Facebook page. Carol Szarowicz donated three 1920s photos of the George Sims family. The photos were in the scrapbook of her grandmother, Hattie May Palmer-Sargent, a first cousin to Mrs. Sims. One of the photos is on the right. We had seen it before, as it was published in the New Port Richey Press in 1922, but now we have the original photo.



Kenneth Weightman (left), a Gulf High School teacher, was a visitor to the museum on Dec. 30. He allowed us to scan a large number of cards from his excellent collection of old New Port Richey picture post cards, which he has been collecting since the 1980s. On the right is a Cottee River scene from 1924. The cards can be found on our web site and on our Facebook page. Mr. Weightman has since become a volunteer at the museum.



What's new in the museum library

The museum library has a small but growing collection of old school yearbooks. We have the Gulf Middle School yearbooks from 1990 to 2010 and the Ridgewood High School yearbooks from 1987 to 1990. We have the 1963 and 1972-74 Gulf High yearbooks, and the Hudson High School yearbook from 1975. (The 1974 GHS yearbook is actually a combined GHS-HHS yearbook.)

A new book in the museum library is *The Saltworks Near Hopeville*, published last year, written by William Holcomb of Largo. The saltworks was an operation at Salt Springs, behind Gulf View Square Mall, which supplied salt to the confederacy. Not a lot is known about it, but probably everything that is known is in the book. Hopeville was an early name for Port Richey.

Jennifer Sorenson, a teacher at GHS, is working on putting tags on all of the books in the library which will display the Dewey Decimal Classification number and the books will be sorted by those numbers. (Interesting fact: Each county in Florida has its own Dewey Decimal number, so the Pasco County history books will remain together. The Pasco County number is 975.969.) Jeff Miller is working on the vertical files, the collection of pamphlets and old newspaper articles.

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