

To Be Continued . . .

A PUBLICATION OF THE UPPER DORCHESTER COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Mission Statement: To Research, Record and Preserve Dorchester County's History

PO Box 15, Dorchester, SC 29437

May 2014

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A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Members,

The Dorchester County Archives & History Center is underway. Hopefully our Director, Christine Rice, will be in her office in the next couple of weeks. Once the computers are installed, a collection of historic documents, photographs, maps and such will get underway. Volunteers are needed. If you would like to help in anyway, please let me know.

Our annual Spring Tea at Brosnan Forest is on Saturday, May 10th. If you can donate an item for the silent auction or for a door prize, please let me know soon, so that the item can be collected in time for the event. This is our most profitable fundraiser each year. All proceeds go toward insurance and maintenance of the Historic Koger House. Special thanks to Norfolk Southern Railroad for the use of their beautiful Lodge.

The historical marker for Harleyville is on order from the SC Archives & History Center and should be available to erect in the fall of 2014. This is our 6th marker. A suggestion was made to mark the old St. George Elementary School, which is now the Kenneth Waggoner Building.

Thank you all for your continued support. I look forward to seeing you at our next meeting on Thursday, May 15th .

Phyllis

DON'T FORGET THIS DATE

Thursday, May 15th 7:00 PM

Membership Meeting

At Koger House

Meet Our Lifetime Members

Deborah Appleby	Bob McKinnon
Coe McMahan Atherton	Bobbie McKinnon
Edith Axson	E. O. McMahan
Ann Bailey	Diane Minus
George Bailey	Dickie Minus
Dr. Ed. Behling	Timothy Mizzell
Jean Behling	Charlie Mooror
Bettie Berry	John Mooror
William Blakely	Agnes Morrison
Ed Carter	Margaret A. Myers
Theresa Carter	Mary Pearson
Jessie Cockcroft	Dickie Phalen
Terry Collier	Peggy Phalen
Frances George Connelly	Florence A. Pitts
James Connelly	Mary Platt
Dr. Paul Cooler	Douglas Reeves
Richard Cooler	Sandi Reeves
Mary Walters DeAntonio	Danny Rhode
David Felkel	Mary Margaret Riser
Randy Floyd	Robby Robbins
Frank Furtick	Marguerite Wamer Sanders
Andrew Gentry	Laura Knight Schipman
Harold George	Linda Skelton
Beverly Gilmore	Jack Smith
Susan A. Greene	Betty Sojourner
Mildred Heatley	David Sojourner, Jr.
William Herman	David Sojourner, Sr.
Darrell Hinton	Charles Spell
Sissy Williams Howell	Fitzhugh Sweatman
Carrie Jane Hughes	Martha Sweatman
Herbert Hughes	Frank Thomas
Phyllis Hughes	Marie Thomas
Heyward Hutson	Janice Walker
Wehme A. Hutto	Grace Walters
Mayor Anne Johnston	Hugh Walters, III
Will Kirby	Jim Way
Mike Kizer	Pete Weathers
Wallace Kizer	Dr. Frances Welch
Sheriff L. C. Knight	Dr. Brunson Westbury
Rep. Patsy Knight	Laura Westbury
Douglas M. Koger	Robert Williams
Jack Limehouse	Dr. Chris Wimberly
Dean McCracken	

Welcome New Lifetime Members:

Bettie Berry

Bowman, SC

Special Thoughts and Prayers

Family of Mattie Lee Browning

Family of Ben Barton

Family of Captain Ed Chaffin - Killed in Action

Family of George Howard Muckenfuss

Family of Mike Westbury

Get Well

Edith Axson

Linda Baker

Margaret Spell

Fitzhugh Sweatman

Grace Walters

Ernest Westbury

Membership Dues

Payable by March 1, 2014

Annual dues: \$25.00

Lifetime Membership: \$250.00

Please Mail to:

Mrs. Jean Behling

113 Bryant St.

St. George, SC 29477

(Please include current home and email address.)

2014 Calendar of Events:

UDCHS Annual Tea	Saturday May 10	12 Noon	Brosnan Forest
Membership Meeting	Thursday, May 15	7 PM	Koger House
Membership Meeting	Thursday, August 21	7 PM	Koger House
Membership/Awards Meeting	Thursday, November 21	7 PM	Koger House

Please check our website for updates at www.upperdorchestercountyhistoricalsociety.com

**MEMBERSHIP MEETING
AT KOGER HOUSE
Thursday 15 May 7:00 PM**

MEMORIALS GIVEN IN LOVING MEMORY OF

Mattie Lee Browning By: Dr. Frances Welch

By: Phyllis Hughes

By: Mildred Heatley

In Memory of Mattie Lee Browning

On March 3, 2014, a very dear friend of the UDCHS was laid to rest. Mrs. Mattie Lee Dowling Browning of Ridgeville was a true historian. She came to Ridgeville as a young teacher and later married John Henry Browning of Ridgeville. She spent most of her adult life researching and recording the history of the town. She was a devout Christian and loved her church and the Cypress Camp Ground. She was known as the Cypress Camp Ground Historian.

Mrs. Mattie Lee was a charter director and member of the UDCHS. Her input into the organization of this society was invaluable. She served as the original membership secretary until she was no longer able to travel to the meetings. I thank God for having known such a truly wonderful, kind person. She will truly be missed. Our sympathies go out to her family.

"Confederate Cavalry"

A movie filmed at the Koger House and Charles Kizer's Farm in St. George will play at the Lourie Theatre in St. George on June 14th at 2:00 PM and at 7:00 PM.

The Director and some Cast members will be at both showing, come out and support this movie filmed at the Koger House.

Memorial Stones

To date over 270 books have been sold. This book is a wonderful source of genealogy. You can purchase through the mail or pick up locally at the Tri County Regional Chamber of Commerce in St. George. (843-563-9091). The book cost \$45 add \$6 for S/H if purchased through mail.

A View Of The Past

Recently our society received 200 reprinted copies of *A View of the Past*. This book is a collection of homes and sites in Upper Dorchester County prior to the 1940s. This is our 3rd printing. If you would like to have a copy for your collection or for a gift, you can pick up locally at the Tri County Chamber of Commerce, Main Street, St. George or by mail: UDCHS, POB 15, Dorchester, SC 29437. The book cost \$45 add \$6 for S/H if purchased through mail.

Electronic Newsletter

Once again there has been another postal increase so again we are asking you to share your email address with us so we can send your newsletter electronically to save on postage costs. Please provide your email address to Bill Blakely, Corresponding Secretary at the address below and put in the subject line 'UDCHS Address'. Thank you for your continued support.

bill.blakely@upperdorchestercountyhistoricalsociety.com

ST. GEORGE THE TOWN OF FRIENDLY PEOPLE (Part 1)

St. George, the county seat of Dorchester County, is located just off Interstate 95 and nine miles south of Interstate 26. State Highway 15 forms its Main Street, renamed Parler Avenue to honor the memory of long-time Senator James Dantzler Parler, and intersects Highway 78, its Memorial Boulevard. Highway 15, was constructed, the main artery of transportation from New York to Miami. The 2000 census showed the population of St. George to be 2,092.

A civilization has existed in the area for at least 4,000 years, according to carbon dating of artifacts found on English Percy's farm east of Indian Field Campground. Percy also claims there was evidence of fields having earlier been cultivated by an Indian population. John H. Walters, Jr. has unearthed hundreds of arrowheads and other Indian artifacts in his bulldozing operations around the area south of the town limits. People of Indian descent still live in the Rosinville and Ridgeville areas.

The first white settler was James George (1789-1867). He was the son of Dennis George, a Frenchman who came to the colonies with Lafayette to assist them with the war for independence from England. In 1791, the South Carolina Legislature made provision for the disposal of "vacant lands." Through this act, Dennis George received a grant dated September 5, 1814, for 2000 acres of land.

By 1810, James had already opened a small log-cabin store located just north of where the railroad lies. The South Carolina Railroad Company planned to lay a track connecting Charleston to Hamburg near Augusta which would pass through his property. At regular intervals along the track, stops were needed to take on wood for fuel and water for steam. Such a stop would have fallen at Byrds, two miles east, but George's gift of land for the depot determined the location of this station. Construction on the track began in Charleston in 1830 and the section through George's Turnout, later known as George's Station, was completed in 1833, giving the community impetus to grow. Bryan Kirby (1908-2000) remembered as a boy cooling off in the water tank near the depot. The word "Station" was dropped from the town's name, and the Postal Department removed the apostrophe "s." Saint was added at some later point, probably in deference to the area once being in Saint George's Parish.

By 1847, a church organization existed in George's Station increasing in such numbers as to warrant the building of a local Episcopal Methodist Church. George donated an acre of land and a frame structure was erected. Upon its completion, George boarded the train to Charleston and purchased two pulpit Bibles, one for the Methodist Church, of which his wife Mary was a charter member, and the other for Old St. George Baptist Church, two miles out of town.

Though the railroad was built primarily to facilitate transportation of cotton to the Charleston harbor for export to Europe, it was a main artery pumping life's blood into the development of the interior of the state. George's Station was surrounded by swamps which impeded travel in any direction. The trains provided fast, easy, affordable transportation for passengers, merchandise, and mail.

The train passing through town became a big event several times a day, with people turning out to watch and wave. In the 1850's George built a residence near the track. The house, still standing as of this writing and owned by Memorial Baptist Church, has undergone a number of renovations. It originally rested on seven-or-eight foot pillars to allow storage of wagons and buggies underneath. The house was lowered in 1929 and some of the original architectural features were changed. Upon George's death, the house was left to his widow, Mary, for her lifetime, and at her death, to his daughter Louisa, wife of Emory Murray.

James George owned most of the land which constitutes the town of St. George. The research of Stephen Davis and Sarah Frick in the 1997 Survey shows him to have owned a large plantation with nineteen slaves. His will (August 24, 1865) refers to properties extending to the "fork of Polk or Indian Field Swamp" and also a large tract on the Edisto River. His vast plantation estate was divided among his widow, Mary, his three daughters, Mary Pryborowski, Elizabeth Fewox, and Louisa Murray, his son, R.E. George, and the heirs of his deceased son, W.K. George. Witnesses to his will were D.L. McAlhany, G.W. Razor, and J.W. Fairy. George appointed as executors "my son-in-law Emory Murray and my friend David Gavin."

The final entries in David Gavin's Diary consist of the names of his friends and acquaintances and brief comments about them. Of James George, he writes "-----died May 10th, 1867 of pneumonia. He was over 70 years old perhaps 80, and had many good qualities. When I first knew him 35 or 40 years ago, he was a poor man, but the So. Co. R.R. ran through his land near his house, and made a Turnout, this made him rich, but the Yankees destroyed his property, like that of most other persons in the Confederate States, and he was again poor. We held property individually, but it did no good, it was taken from us, and we are now reduced to poverty."

Contributed by Jean Behling, *To be Continued....*