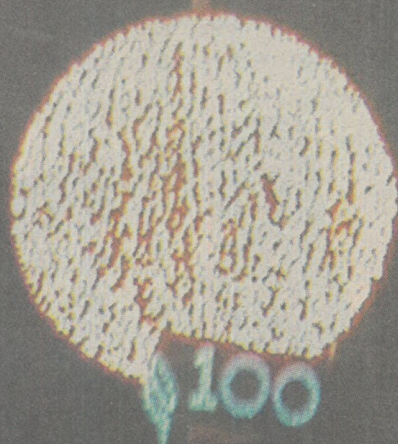


CITY OF FAIRHOPE

1908 ~ 2008

CENTENNIAL



• First of city's 15 mayors
elected in 1908
PAGE 5

• Pharmacy's roots reach
back to founding
PAGE 13

• New museum a dramatic
setting for presenting rich
history of Fairhope
PAGE 14



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Dr. Jerry Henry, Pastor

City set to celebrate its 100th year birthday

By Sheila Propp

Editor

courier@gulfcoastnewspapers.com

The first nod to the city of Fairhope's centennial year was given at the stroke of midnight on New Year's Eve. At the culmination of the evening's festivities, a glittering sphere adorned with a lighted, blue "100" was dropped to welcome the city's entry into its three-digit age.

"We began planning (the centennial year) the first quarter of 2007," said Sherry Sullivan, Fairhope senior center director. "The museum plans were already in place, and we knew it would be the focal point of the celebration."

MUSIC AND MOVIES

Next on the schedule is an event that will be repeated four times during February and March, Sullivan said. Titled "Music and Movies," this family oriented celebration will be held outdoors on the grassy field at the back side of the Faulkner State Community College Fairhope campus (facing Morphy Avenue).

Families should bring blankets or lawn chairs from which to enjoy the entertainment that will begin at 5:45 p.m. with music provided by local musicians. Following this live concert, participants will be treated to a video presentation of Fairhope in earlier days.

"Mr. Curtis Willard, who worked as a technician at WALA Channel 10, made a tape of the Fairhope area in 1964," said Fairhope Museum of History Director Donnie Barrett. "The tape he put

together shows what daily life in Fairhope was like in the early '60s," Barrett said, adding the compilation shows businesses of the time, residences, activities and folks who lived in the city then.

"It also includes local footage from the 1950s that others gave to Willard," Barrett said.

A different segment of this video collection will be shown at each of the four events. These presentations will last about 20 minutes. After that, a feature film the whole family can enjoy will be shown at around 7 p.m., Sullivan said. At press time, only the movie for the first Music and Movies had been selected: "Charlotte's Web." Visit www.cofairhope.com or call 929-1466 for the other movie titles. The event is expected to conclude each evening by 9.

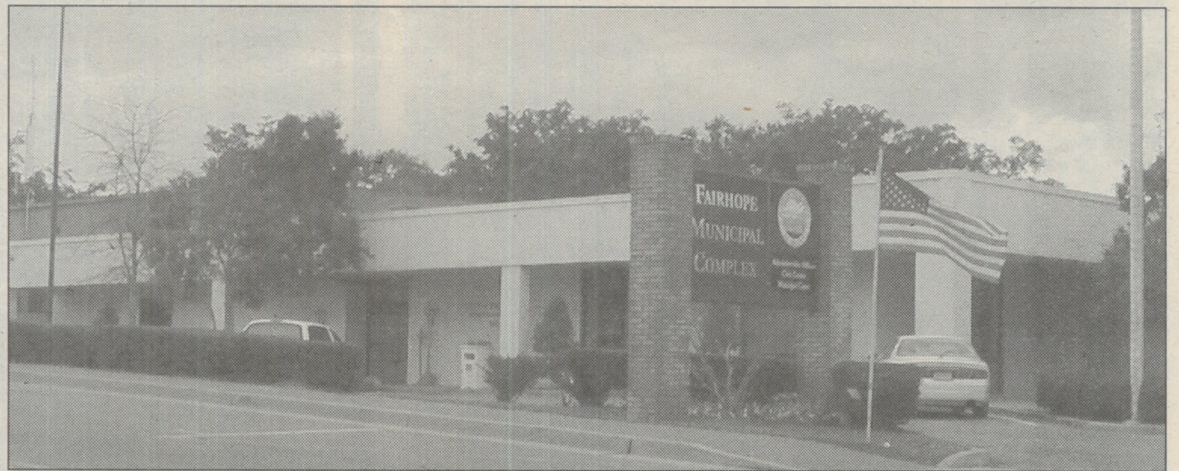
Music and Movies will be held on Feb 16 and 23 and March 1 and 18. While the event is free, attendees should bring some money to purchase refreshments, which will be offered by local organizations.

"This is one event we hope to continue (after 2008) because it is real Fairhoppy, and family friendly," Sullivan said.

OPEN HOUSE

The museum's grand opening will be held Saturday, April 5, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. This free event will include a ribbon cutting led by Mayor Tim Kant, the City Council, Fairhope Single Tax Corp. board and museum representatives. Everyone will

SEE CITY, PAGE 27



Sheila Propp/Staff Photo

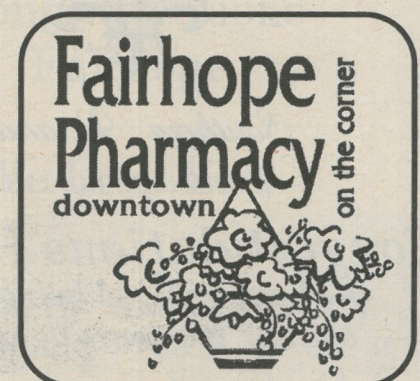
Fairhope Municipal Complex, 2008.

From one centenarian to another . . .



Happy 100th Birthday!

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CITY OF FAIRHOPE CENTENNIAL

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Photo courtesy of the Slosson Family Collection

Local vistas remain a draw

Fairhope continues to be noted for its scenic beauty and picturesque atmosphere. This early photograph by Stewart the Picture Man demonstrates the draw of its bay side vistas.



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New municipality elects first mayor, council

By Sheila Propp

Editor

courier@gulfcoastnewspapers.com

A hundred years ago, residents of Fairhope greeted the new year much like their counterparts in 2008: They celebrated.

In 1908, Fairhoppers gathered at the "new school room" New Year's evening for a banquet to mark the 13th anniversary of the colony's founding. The Jan. 3, 1908 Fairhope Courier reported that 116 attended. Each was charged 35 cents for their meal. The Fairhope orchestra played and several talks were given by residents on a variety of subjects. The festivities concluded with dancing.

INCORPORATION TALK

While these turn-of-the-century residents were not talking about a presidential "Super Tuesday" primary, they were heavily engaged in the discussion of a move to incorporate the colony, which would lead to an election of town officials.

On March 12, a petition was filed with J.H.H. Smith, judge of probate for Baldwin County, requesting such a referendum. The petition was signed by the following Fairhope residents: J. Bellangee, W.E. Sweet, L.S. Massey, C.L. Mershon, M.D., N. Mershon, A.H. Mershon, E.B. Gaston, P.A. Olson, C.E. Littlefield, L. Barnhart, L. Lancaster, J.W. Lawrence, J.M. Pilcher, Orrie Stapleton, C.K. Brown, H.C. Oswalt, E.W. Jefferson, W.S. Baldwin, H.M. Ewalt, Daniel Shepherd, H.S. Greeno, A.O. Berglin, G.W. Bell, C.L. Coleman and H. Cresswell.

Early discussions were pretty solidly in favor of the change. The March 20 Courier reported that "About the only opposition that has come to our attention has arisen among a number of our colored neighbors on the south who do not want to be taken into the corporation."

On April 9, an election was held at the Fairhope Public School building to vote on incorporating Fairhope. The boundaries for the proposed town were published in the April 3 Courier:

"Commencing at a point one quarter mile south of the southeast corner of section 17

township six (6) south of range two (2) east, thence west to the shore of Mobile Bay, thence northeasterly along the meanderings of the shore of Mobile Bay to a point where the quarter section line one-quarter mile north of the north line of sections 17 and 18 intersects the shore of Mobile Bay, thence east along the quarter section line to the east line of section eight, thence south along the east line of section eight, 17 and 20 to the point of beginning, making a territory of about one and one-half miles square."

CENSUS REQUIRED

The incorporation vote of the qualified electors was favorable by a vote of 18 to 1. The next step, the Courier reported on April 10, "in the process of making Fairhope a full-fledged municipality" would be the enumeration of residents living within the town's territory, which the newspaper stated would be accomplished by inspectors appointed by the probate judge. When that was accomplished, the judge would order an election for a mayor and five aldermen.

The April 24 Courier reported the completion of the census, which showed 569 residents living within the limits of the proposed municipality: 466 Caucasians and three African-Americans.

ELECTION DAY SET

The May 1 Courier reported that Probate Judge Smith had entered the municipality of Fairhope into the official record and set an election



Photo courtesy of the Fairhope Single Tax Corp.

In the spring of 1908, the colony of Fairhope became a town and elected its first municipal mayor and City Council. Above, the town's first mayor, Dr. H.S. Greeno, is seated. Surrounding him, from the left are councilman J.M. Pilcher, treasurer James Bellangee, councilman William Sweet (appointed in August after the resignation of councilman J.W. Lawrence), councilmen C.L. Coleman and C.E. Nichols, town clerk R.Y. Albright and councilman N. Mershon.

date of May 30. The Courier listed the names of qualified electors who would participate in the town's first election. On that date, the list contained the names of 25 men (women didn't yet have the right to vote). Another 13 men were named as being eligible to qualify to register. The qualifications were: American citizenship, two years residence in Alabama and payment of the poll tax. The Courier's report concluded

with encouragement for every eligible voter to register, and stated that the Board of Registrars would be at Bay Minette on Friday and Saturday, May 15 and 16 for that purpose. It was hoped, the Registrar's office would also come to Fairhope prior to the election to register eligible residents. And the board members (Messrs. Kee, Bryant and Bryars) did just that, on May 22 and 23.

election passed off quietly, on Saturday, last," the June 5 Fairhope Courier reported, "and resulted in the election of Dr. H.S. Greeno as mayor, by 21 votes to 19 for Mr. (E.B.) Gaston and of the following aldermen by votes as given: N. Mershon 36, C.L. Coleman 36, C.E. Nichols 34, J.M. Pilcher 26, J.W. Lawrence 25."

"Fairhope's first municipal

SEE FIRST COUNCIL, PAGE 25

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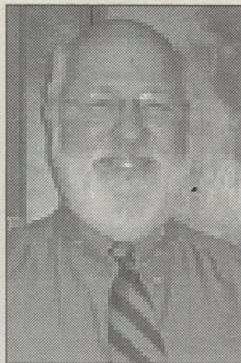
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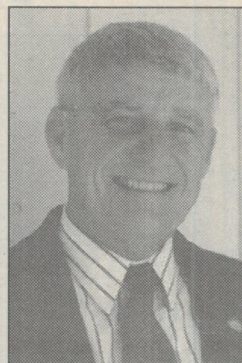
CURRENT FAIRHOPE OFFICIALS



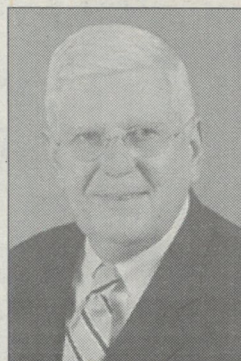
Timothy Kant
Mayor



Cecil Christenberry
City Councilman



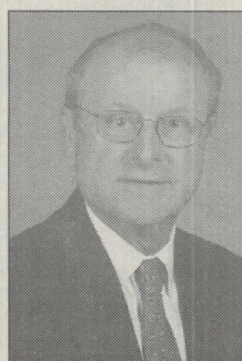
Mike Ford
City Councilman



Bob Gentle
City Councilman



Debbie Quinn
City Councilwoman



Dan Stankoski
City Councilman

Residents will have an opportunity to vote in a city election during this centennial year

Alabama will hold its Presidential Primary election on Tuesday, Feb. 5.

Baldwin County is allowing for early voting in the election on Wednesday, Jan. 30 because Mardi Gras Day is also on Feb. 5 this year. Anyone who wants to vote on early must vote at the Foley Civic Center on Jan. 30.

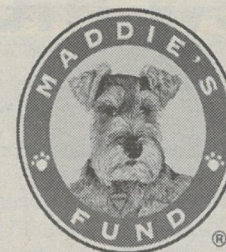
Residents must be registered to vote by Tuesday, Jan. 22 to participate in the primary election. Each voter registration card will include the precinct a person resides in so they know where to vote, as well as what district for their municipality, county and school district.

Fairhope municipal elections for the five City Council places and the office of mayor will be held on Tuesday, Aug. 26. If a run-off election is needed, it will be held on Oct. 7.

Municipal candidates must qualify for the election between July 1 and July 15. After qualifying and completing all necessary forms, candidates have up to five days to go to the probate judge's office to declare their campaign manager. The last day to file will be July 20 if a candidate does not qualify until July 15.

To qualify for a City Council seat, a resident must live in the district they are running for for at least 90 days prior to the election and be 18 years old.

City officials will take office on the first Monday in November, Nov. 3.



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THEN & NOW

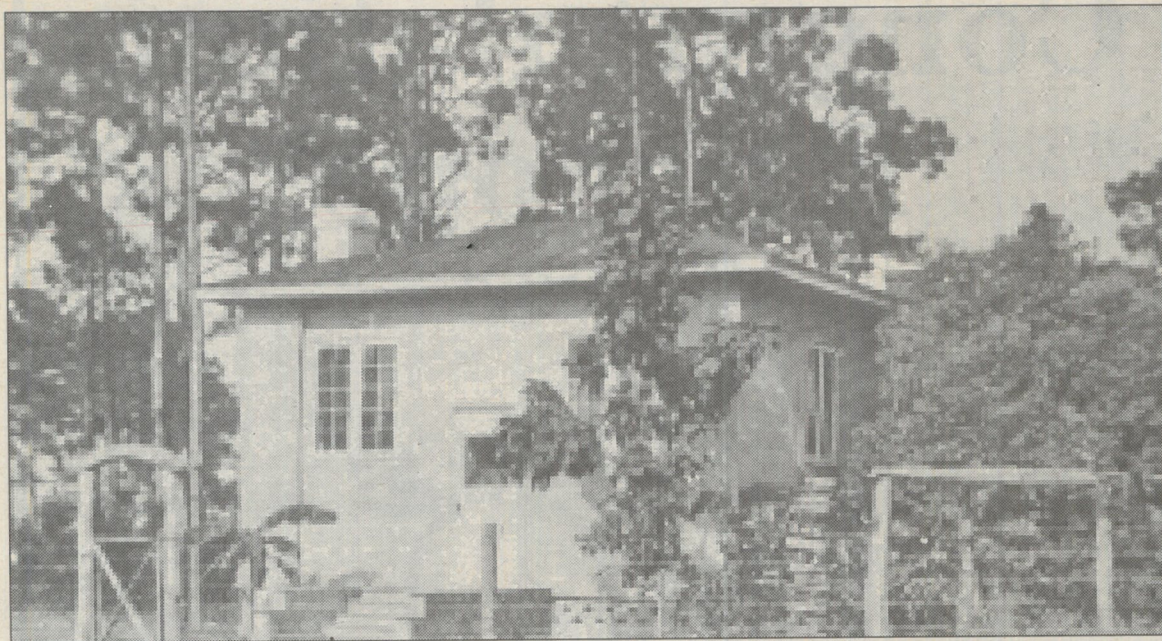


Photo courtesy of the Slosson Family Collection

Above, the Fairhope Public Library in 1908; below, the new FPL, which opened in 2007.



Sheila Propp/Staff Photo

Volunteers wanted to clean up grounds

An article in the June 12, 1908 Fairhope Courier follows.

"The library building is completed, the cases are in process of construction and soon the books will be moved. Until then, the library will be closed, to be opened in the new building, but the grounds are in great disorder.

"On Tuesday morning, June 16, you are invited to come to the library with rake, etc., to help put the grounds in order.

"Lunch will be served at noon to all working during the morning. Will those to help furnish the lunch please notify me.

Submitted by Lydia J. Newcomb Comings, president, Library Association"

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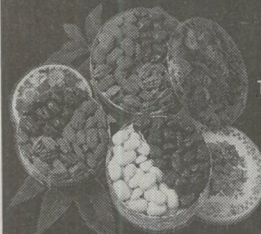
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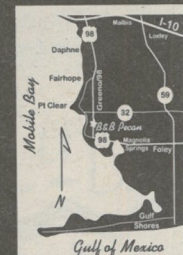


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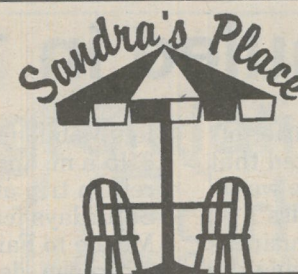
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Photo courtesy of the Fairhope Single Tax Corp.

Steamer Fairhope overhauled in 1908

The Fairhope Courier of April 10, 1908 reported that the steamer Fairhope was being put in "first-class shape" for summer business. Repairs included having the hull scraped and painted as well as a new inspection. The steamer was also taken to Mobile where the boiler and machinery were overhauled. Last, but not least, the crew was giving the Fairhope a new coat of paint.

"She is expected to return to service next week." It was also reported that the steamer "led the bay fleet last season for speed" and a "strenuous summer business" was expected in the upcoming months.

In the summer of 1908, according to advertisements in the Courier, the Fairhope departed from the town pier at 7:20 a.m. every day but Sunday and daily departed Mobile for a return trip at 3 p.m. On Sunday, the steamer

left Mobile for Fairhope at 8:45 a.m. and made the return trip at 5 p.m. Saturdays featured a second Mobile to Fairhope run in the afternoon, departing Fairhope at 6 p.m., which gave "Mobilians an excellent opportunity to spend an hour and a half on the eastern shore bathing and fishing."

"It is a safe, clean swift boat, with good accommodations for white and colored passengers," the advertisement stated.

One-way fare that year was 25 cents. Owen Roberts, Master; and C.A. Murphy, Purser.

This was the second steamer to carry the name Fairhope. The previous one burned, and that was to be the fate of the second, also. Both of these bay boats were gone by 1913. Others continued to ply the bay waters for about 30 more years.

Congratulations Fairhope!

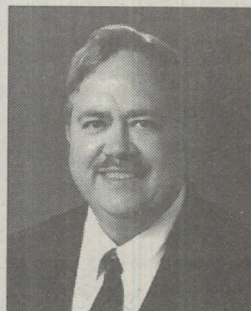
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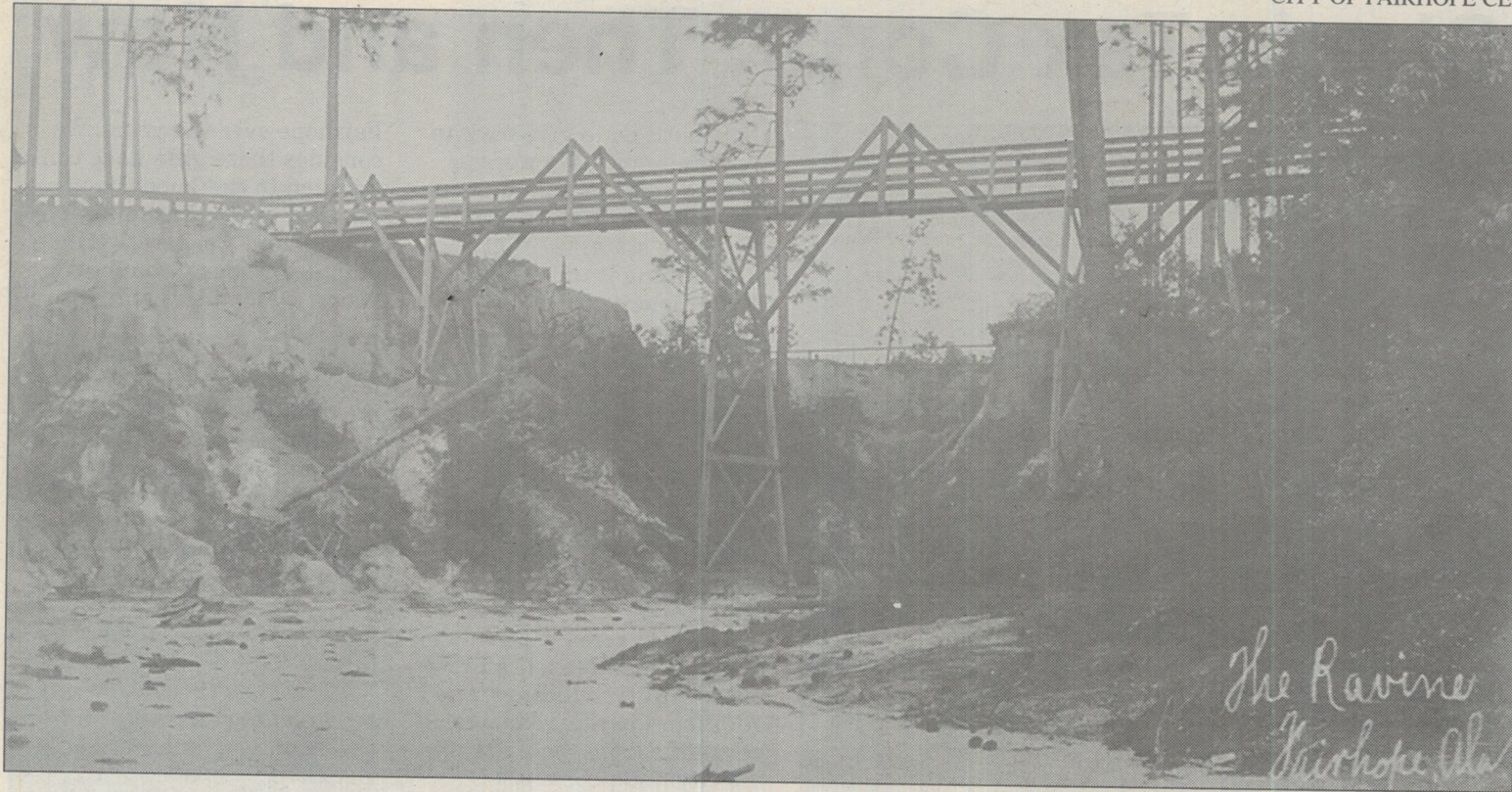


Photo courtesy of the Slosson Family Collection

Gully solutions

In the April 24, 1908 Fairhope Courier, the editor opined, "We should like to see an experiment made in protecting the banks of our gullies — or ravines, the word "gully" seems hardly sufficient to designate a chasm 30 feet deep and 50 to 100 feet across by planting the common honeysuckle — Chinese, we think it is called, which grows so profusely here. This is a beautiful evergreen vine, almost a perpetual bloomer, and grows with great luxuriance. Bermuda grass is all right where the slope is not too great, but we think the honeysuckle would climb the most precipitous banks and clothe them with a beautiful and wash-resisting verdure.

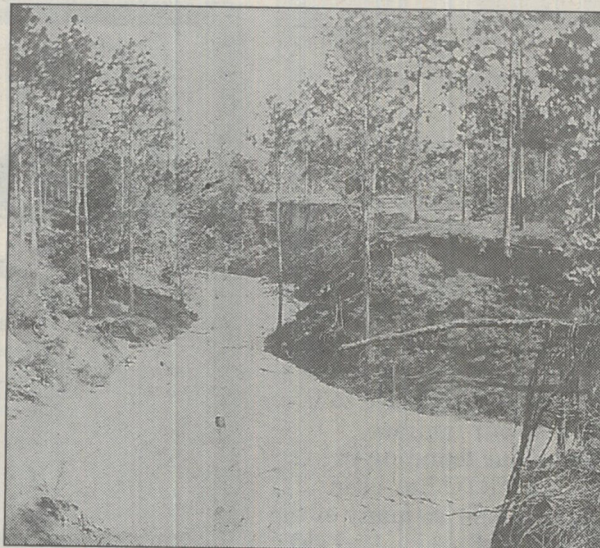


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Fairhope Single Tax Corp.: Then and Now

By Dean Mosher

Contributing Writer
for the Fairhope Single Tax Corp.

There is an ancient Chinese curse, "May you live in interesting times." Well, Fairhope is living in interesting times, with growth and management problems that often threaten to undermine the heart of who we are and what we share as a community.

Lately there has been a great, and in my opinion unfair, increase in property values in Fairhope. In reaction to this, the Fairhope Single Tax Corp. has filed a blanket appeal with the Baldwin County Tax Assessor to fight this injustice and to help our lessees. We voted to flatline any increases in our demonstration fee beyond the 2005 level. Yet there are still complaints from a few who criticize the Corporation's generous contributions to the community and feel we are taking advantage of our lessees.

First, let us all understand where the contributions come from and how they are distributed. Because of our history of giving back to the community in a responsible manner and the understanding of the investment that this has represented for all of Fairhope, we have in recent years been granted 501(c)(4) (not for profit) status. That means that we have a gener-



Sheila Propp/Staff Photo

Fairhope Single Tax Corp. office, 336 Fairhope Ave.

ous amount (approximately \$200,000) available each year that we are required to put back into the community.

To add to that, we have been through a thorough review and reorientation of many of our assets, which has resulted in a much higher yield while maintaining the same stability, which has produced additional funds that bring our yearly level to approximately \$400,000 to \$500,000. Couple that with

the long-term nature of many of our commitments, such as the library (\$85,000 per year for 10 years), and you have what the FSTC board considers a very sound and responsible path to preserve and enhance the historical contributions that have made the city such a great place to live and raise our families.

From our founding in 1894, the FSTC has been responsible for so many of the bedrock institutions and gifts

that continue to give back to the community. We were instrumental in founding our public library (the second-oldest in the state) in 1899 and maintaining it until 1965, when the city assumed responsibility for it. The purchase, creation and maintenance of the parklands and pier was all the work of the FSTC until 1933, when we transferred them to the city with protective covenants that we have defended against development all the way to the state Supreme Court.

Over 38 acres of streets and parking areas, the first public utility, buildings, and additional parklands have all been gifts from the FSTC to the city and people of

Fairhope over the years. We consider these gifts have contributed to the "model community," "shared community values" and "cooperative individualism" ideals that our visionary founders stated so long ago.

As the world's oldest and largest utopian community of its kind, the FSTC today feels an immense sense of gratitude and responsibility to continue the vital work our founders began by preserving, maintaining, and enhancing the community we all call home, which I believe has "a fair hope of success" for the future.

Dean Mosher currently serves on the executive committee of the Fairhope Single Tax Corp.

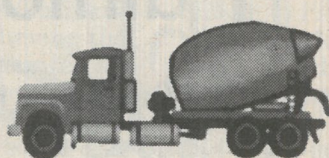


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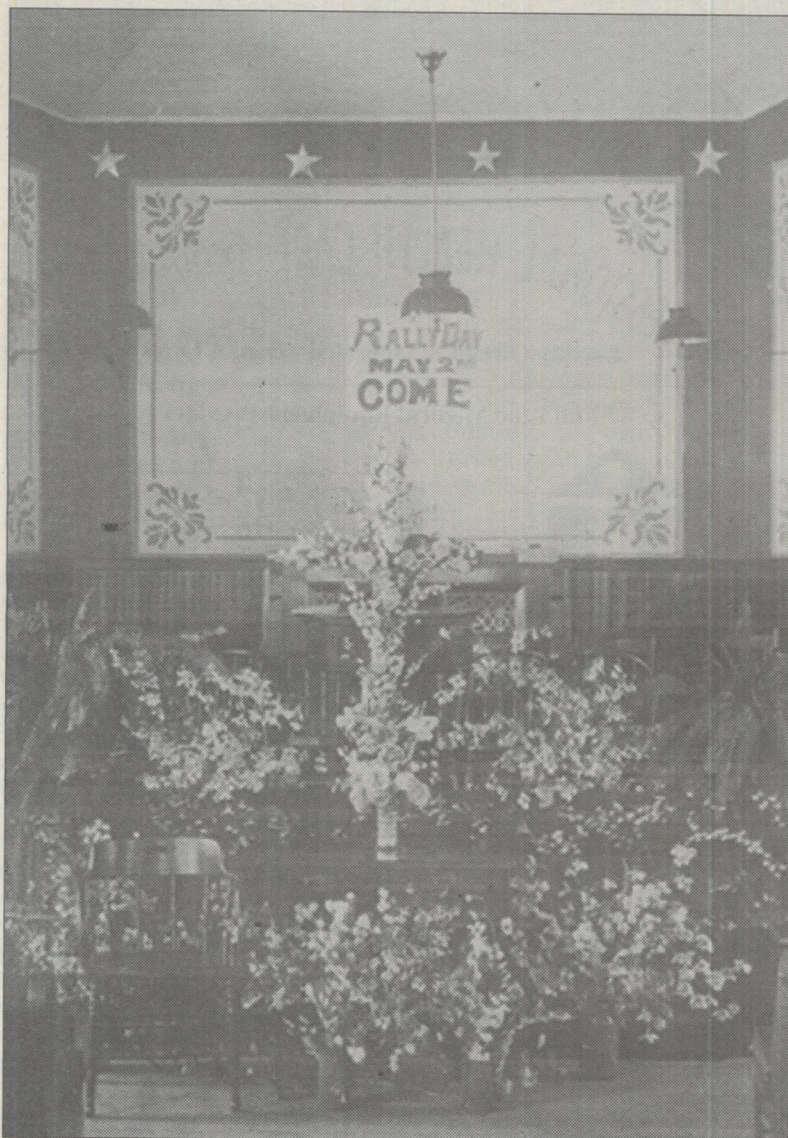
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EASTER IN FAIRHOPE

The April 24, 1908 Fairhope Courier reported that Easter was observed by the Christian Church Sunday School and congregation with special music and an appropriate Easter sermon by the pastor. The decorations were very beautiful. A note accompanying the photograph at right stated that the building across from the church shown was where the Organic School started.



Photos courtesy of the Slosson Family Collection



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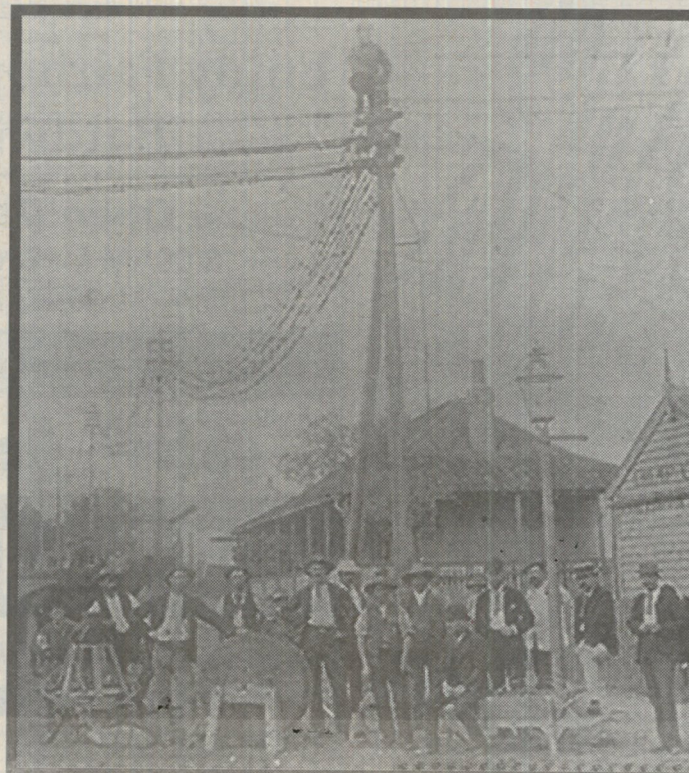
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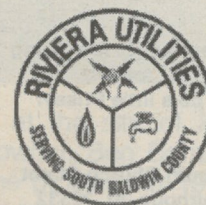
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Farmers meet at Fairhope

The quarterly conference of the Farmers, Educational and Co-operative Union was held at Fairhope on Tuesday and Wednesday. Delegates were in attendance from Perdido, Loxley, Bay Minette, Belforest, Euclid and Silverhill as well as Fairhope.

There was a short open session on Tuesday at which addresses were made by Dr. Greeno, Mr. Holt of Perdido and T.N. Freeman. There was also a short open session on Wednesday afternoon, at which Mr. Powell spoke on transportation.

The good roads committee reported that there was \$5,013 in the road fund to be divided among the four commissioners' districts.

Fairhope local furnished the dinner for the delegates attending on Tuesday and Euclid on Wednesday, and all were entertained during the remainder of their stay at the homes of local Unionists.

The general feeling among the farmers was of encouragement over the conditions of the crops and as to the advantages to be gained through their organization.

From the April 25, 1908 Fairhope Courier.



Photo courtesy of the Fairhope Single Tax Corp.



Photo courtesy of the Slosson Family Collection

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Drugstore predates city's incorporation

By Curt Chapman

Staff Writer

cchapman@gulfcoastnewsletters.com

If it seems like the corner pharmacy has been around forever, that's because it nearly has. Fairhope Pharmacy has been located on the southwest corner of Fairhope Avenue and South Section Street since 1900, eight years before the young town was incorporated as a municipality.

Owner Ben Barnhill said the pharmacy can actually trace its roots across the street, where founder Dr. Clarence L. Mershon set up his practice in 1898. The young doctor, an Iowa native, had moved to Fairhope to be near his parents, who had migrated here in 1894.

Mershon saw patients in one room and dispensed prescriptions from another small room inside the office.

Two years later, he moved the medicines to a small wooden building where the current pharmacy now stands. Dr. George A. Sheldon, also a practicing physician, was the first druggist at the new location.

It wasn't long before the business outgrew the structure. Additional space was added to the back of the store, along with a soda fountain and additional display space in the front. Sheldon left the pharmacy and returned to Mobile soon after the expansion was completed.

When Mershon decided in 1916 the extra elbow room still wasn't enough, the pharmacy building was moved to the back of the property to make way for construction of the current drugstore, which was fashioned using blocks cast from sand collected at the beach in Fairhope.

Before it was finished, the hurricane of July 5, 1916 caused the east wall of the building to collapse, forcing workers to start over on that portion.

Mershon sold the pharmacy business and rented the new building in 1918 to Dr. W.C. Mason. The dentist treated patients upstairs while continuing to operate the drugstore on the ground floor.

Mershon died on Thanksgiving morning in 1925, due to complications



Photographs courtesy of Ben Barnhill

from contracting tuberculosis.

Mason continued to operate the pharmacy until 1948, Barnhill said, when he sold the business to Ford Patterson, who by that time had worked there for 30 years, and Sammy Sandt. It was sold again in 1956 to W.C. Todd, a retired wholesale druggist, who wanted to try out the retail business.

Barnhill had worked for pharmacies in Mobile before crossing the bay Jan. 22, 1957 to work for Todd.

"He called me and said he heard I wanted to move back to Baldwin County," Barnhill said.

The pharmacy changed hands again May 1, 1959, when Barnhill bought the business from Todd. He bought the building from the Mershon estate in 1972.

Barnhill said water seeping through the original sand blocks prompted the erection of the building's once familiar metal façade in the early 1960s. The metal was torn away in 1979 by Hurricane Frederic, but it was quickly replaced.

When Hurricane Ivan stripped the metal from the building again in 2004, the public outcry to leave it off was deafening. Barnhill said, "People in Fairhope didn't want it back."

He said Mac Walcott told him of a substance that was available to seal the blocks, and the architect helped

Barnhill by designing a plan for renovating the structure to its 1916 appearance.

The roofline cornice was rebuilt, impact-resistant windows were added and nostalgic signage was replicated. The pharmacy was again ready to face the elements, as well as the competition from chain drugstores.

"While I was in college, I made a decision to go into pharmacy," Barnhill said. He was attending Auburn University at the time, and realized his credits would easily transfer into the program where many of his friends were enrolled.

Although the switch from the university's school of science meant three more years of study than he planned, Barnhill said it set up a good running joke.

"I sometimes tell people I wanted to go into farming, and they (Auburn administrators) thought I said pharmacy," he said with a laugh, because he never really intended to become a farmer. Auburn is, however, well-known as an agricultural institution.

The drugstore has become somewhat of an institution itself. Barnhill said, "Fairhope Pharmacy has been good to me because the people of Fairhope and the surrounding area keep coming. Despite the competition, good old peo-



Prescriptions have been dispensed at the site of Fairhope Pharmacy since 1896. The current owner, Ben Barnhill, purchased the business in 1959 and the property in 1972. The black and white photo above shows the store, located at the corner of Fairhope Avenue and Section Street. Above, Barnhill, an Auburn University graduate, gives quality service to Alabama fan Jim Diegmann during the 1989 Christmas season.

SEE PHARMACY, PAGE 19

Museum design helps tell the story of Fairhope

By Mike Odom

Staff Writer

modom@gulfcoastnewspapers.com

The Fairhope Museum of History, located in the heart of the city's downtown, makes a strong and clear statement about the importance of historical preservation efforts and of looking with vision and creativity toward the future.

The new museum, scheduled to open April 5 and estimated to cost \$1.5 million when completed, also presents the first-time visitor with a historical choice:

Do you enter through the front doors on Section Street into the restored City Hall complex originally constructed in 1928, or from the back doors on Bancroft Street into the building's stunning new two-story wing on a more imaginative journey to Fairhope circa 1908, the year it was incorporated.

Which building door to enter is rarely a monumental decision, but this time it's worth knowing your options.

The Section Street entrance gives you the experience of actually being in the city's first official municipal building, that place where Fairhope mayors, chiefs of police and city clerks shared crowded ground-floor offices during the early- and mid-20th century.

But the Bancroft Street entrance puts you in the shoes of the city's earliest residents and visitors, imagi-

natively looking through their eyes as they arrived by ship and bay steamer at the main entrance to the young town, the Fairhope wharf, built shortly after the town's founders settled here in 1894.

"Everybody knows that Fairhope is a special and unique place," said longtime Fairhope resident Dean Mosher, an artist specializing in historical murals of the area and vice president of the Fairhope Single Tax Corp., which teamed up with the city of Fairhope to split the cost of building the new museum. "This place is to tell that story."

Once the ongoing construction of the building's interior is finished in time for the April grand opening, the Fairhope Museum of History promises to be a dazzling blend of 1920s-era Spanish stucco and modern architectural styles with soaring 20-foot-tall floor-to-ceiling windows. There will also be a park in back with a fountain and sculpture.

"People had been giving us objects and documents for years," said museum director Donnie Barrett, who was volunteer curator for 15 years at the tiny city museum on the Faulkner State Community College campus. "But we just



Mike Odom/Staff Photo

Entering the new Fairhope Museum of History via the Bancroft Street portal offers visitors a chance to get a glimpse of Fairhope as it was in 1894, the colony's founding year.

didn't have the space, we were also hidden over there. That important work and history is now getting some day-

light."

The meticulous restoration of the original building, combined with a contemporary

two-story addition, where existing historical artifacts

SEE MUSEUM, PAGE 16

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'Organic School set the atmosphere for Fairhope'

By D. Fran Morley

Contributing Writer
for the city of Fairhope

Founded as a social and economic experiment, Fairhope has attracted interesting and educated people from around the world since its earliest days. Even when the town was nothing more than dirt streets and a few scattered businesses, it had something special that drew people to it. Helen Porter Dyson, who has lived in Fairhope for most of her 100 years, believes that it was Marietta Johnson's School of Organic Education that made the difference.

"The fact that there was the Single Tax Colony was important, but it was the school and the work that Mrs. Johnson was doing in education that really made the town what it was. In those early days and for decades to come, everything in Fairhope centered around the Organic School."

Mrs. Dyson first arrived in Fairhope as a 7-year-old on a business trip with her father, a civil engineer from Kentucky. She frequently traveled with him on business, and it was one of her childish whims that brought them to the new town of

Fairhope.

"I loved riding the train and eating in the dining car, she recalled. "I told him that I wanted to do that again, so he said he would look for a place we could go where he could bid on a job. Eventually, he discovered that Fairhope was taking bids on utility work. We took the train to Mobile, and then a bay boat to Fairhope, which was about the only way to get here then."

Mrs. Dyson remembers being impressed by the tall pine trees, something she came to associate with the area, but her father wasn't overly impressed with the town when they first arrived. "He thought it was the most poverty-stricken town he'd ever seen," she said, noting the poor conditions of the community founded by highminded colonists fewer than 20 years before.

But what the town was lacking in material goods, it apparently made up for in other more important ways. "We stayed because my father was impressed with what Marietta Johnson was doing with her school. The town was very forward thinking. It was an interesting time in Fairhope."

The school set the atmos-



Photo by D. Fran Morley

Helen Porter Dyson reflects on her life in Fairhope. Born in 1908, the longtime resident will celebrate her 100th birthday during the city's centennial year.

phere for the town, Mrs. Dyson said. "So many people came here because of their interest in the school. There was always something going

on." Today, Mrs. Dyson recalls many famous people who passed through Fairhope. "Of course, when I was a child, I didn't pay much attention to

them. And it wasn't an unusual thing; we always had someone interesting visiting

SEE DYSON, PAGE 17



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MUSEUM

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 14

are displayed amid creative new exhibits, will make a trip to the museum an educational, but inspirational, voyage through the small scenic town created as a utopian experiment.

"When they look down on this, they will get the feel of what the wharf boathouse was like," Barrett said, pointing from the second-floor balcony, which also overlooks a replica of the People's Railroad that carried people and freight from the wharf up the hill into downtown Fairhope. "Dean (Mosher) had the foresight to have this wonderful giant space here."

But the historical preservation of the original building, with the creation of a modern museum, might not have happened.

"It's a lot easier to bulldoze old buildings," said Gary Cowles, who grew up in Fairhope and was the main engineer on the project. "Had we destroyed it, we could never have gotten that history back. It was constructed with a lot of blood, sweat and tears."

The creation of the new museum is reminiscent of the way Fairhope itself was envisioned and built by a few idealistic people from Iowa, who searched the country for a place to build a city based on the "single tax" philosophy of economist Henry George. He believed that land, not capital or labor, should be taxed, and Fairhope's first residents also put a premium on setting aside property for parks and other public places.

Mosher said that vision of the city's founders is still evident in Fairhope's network of green space and open vistas — not blocked by high-rise condominiums — and the museum was designed with that spirit in mind, to reflect the founder's ideals of preservation and planning for the future.

"So many people drive through here and notice this charming town," Barrett said. "But they don't realize how much planning went into making it what it is."

Although Fairhope was founded in 1894 and incorporated as a municipality in 1908, the city did not build its first City Hall until 1927, with construction finished a year later. During the first 20 years, the City Council met in



Mikd Odom/Staff Photo

Donnie Barrett, director of the Fairhope Museum of History, stands next to one of the new exhibits being readied for the museum's grand opening.

the upstairs of a school building now a park at the corner of Church and Morphy streets.

The first City Hall was a 2,300-square-foot building constructed by Oswalt Forester and sons, using local materials such as the famous Clay City block, made in large kilns a few miles east on Fish River.

"There are very few of the

buildings left built by those guys," Cowles said. "You can't find craftsmanship like that any more. I'm very grateful that we could put it back to its original look."

Cowles said that he was invited to visit the original building about two years ago by Mosher and Larry Thomas, the president of the FSTC, to determine what it would take to save the struc-



Mike Odom/Staff Photo

The Section Street entrance of the Fairhope Museum of History allows visitors to glimpse what City Hall was like in the late 1920s and '30s.

ture that had stood vacant for a few years.

"Certainly, it had some deterioration," he said. "But we felt like it could be restored, utilized and brought up to today's building codes. So, we brought in an architecture firm we had worked with in the past."

Cummings Architecture Corp. from Mobile designed the new building with the input of Mosher, Cowles, Barrett, and a few others, creating a 5,500-square-foot building overall.

So, let's say you do decide to enter from Section Street, wanting to see the original building up close and save that more imaginative journey back in time at Fairhope wharf for the end.

Leaving the mayor's office, a few steps will bring you to the the fire truck bay, where a gleaming 1935 fire engine is on display. Going upstairs, you will walk the same steps

traveled by many others on their way to the original City Council chambers and fire chief's office. Downstairs again, you can do time in the old jail block, see the graffiti etched in the walls, and think about the history those walls encompass.

The new Fairhope Museum of History was designed to give you a dramatic experience and historical understanding of the town and city: to learn about the place where Fairhope's first government employees got their work done, and how and why the town with the memorable name came to be.

You'll probably want to come more than once.

The Fairhope Museum of History is scheduled to open Saturday, April 5. After that, it will be open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Saturday, and 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. on Sunday. Visits to the museum are free.

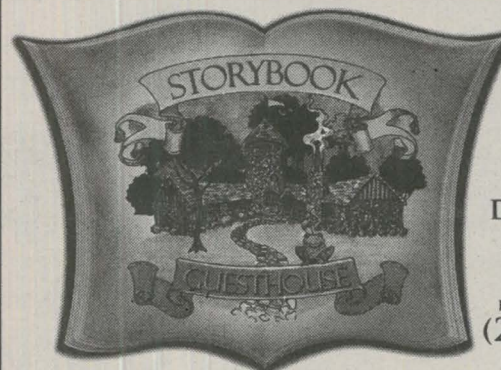
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In our next centennial special tabloid, which will be published in June 2008, we will run a photo and a bit of information on each

individual who turns in a picture and biographical information by May 30.

Please send your submission to: Fairhope Courier Editor, 325 Fairhope Ave., Fairhope, AL 36532; or by e-mail to: courier@gulfcoast-newspapers.com.

For more information, call 928-2321.

DYSON

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 15

in Fairhope."

Then, as now, people from all over the world came to Fairhope. But instead of arriving as tourists or vacationing snowbirds, people came to study the town and learn from Mrs. Johnson and her school.

"We always had people observing in our classrooms. In fact, Mrs. Johnson called it a 'demonstration' school. She traveled around the world promoting her ideas on teaching, and she invited people that she met to come to Fairhope to see the school. I remember having teachers visiting from Germany, Spain, England and other places. The teachers came to study and observe at the school, but some of them stayed to teach here. For a small town, Fairhope was very cosmopolitan because of all these influences."

Throughout her schooling, Mrs. Dyson spent September through May in Fairhope and summers back in Kentucky. After graduating in 1926, she left Fairhope to attend college



Helen Porter Dyson as a young woman

in Florida, but she returned to Fairhope a few years later to once again study at the Organic School — this time, to train as a teacher.

"I always wanted to teach, and it was wonderful to learn from Mrs. Johnson. She lectured on her theories and methods, but she also placed us in classrooms with teachers, so we were able to learn

from their experience."

Mrs. Dyson went on to teach what the Organic School called First Life (6- and 7-year-olds) for many years. In 1934, she married her childhood sweetheart, Sam Dyson, and the couple raised their family in Fairhope as the town grew and changed around them.

"Of course change is inevitable. But there's always been something special about Fairhope. There's always been a certain charm. It's different today than it was years ago, but it's still a charming place to live."

Commenting on a popular expression, Mrs. Dyson said she doesn't know what "makes Fairhope Fairhope." She laughed, "You hear people say that, and I don't know what that means, and I'm not sure they do either. It probably means different things to different people. My husband always said this was the 'biggest small town in the world,' and it still is. You can travel around the world and meet people who have heard of Fairhope. It's always been that way."



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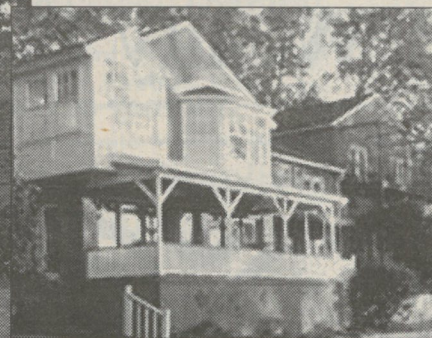
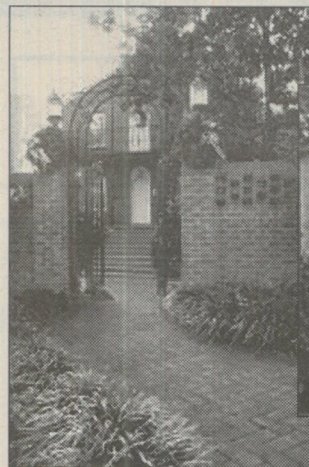
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Wharf update

The April 3, 1908 Fairhope Courier reported that "The new wharf is progressing rapidly, and if lumber can be secured rapidly enough, will be finished in a few days. The barge is also nearing completion."



Photo courtesy of the Slosson Family Collection

Wendy Pierce

Attorney at Law



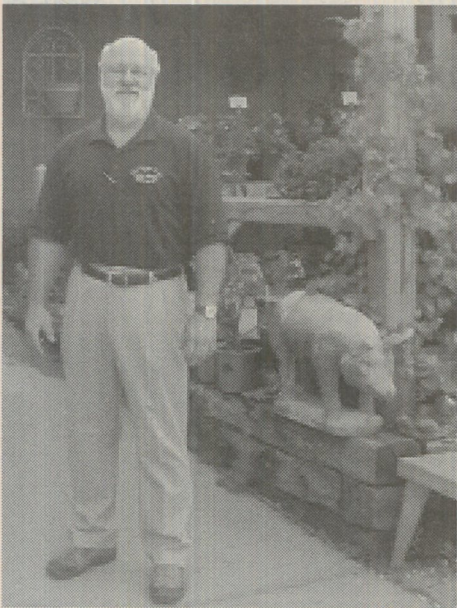
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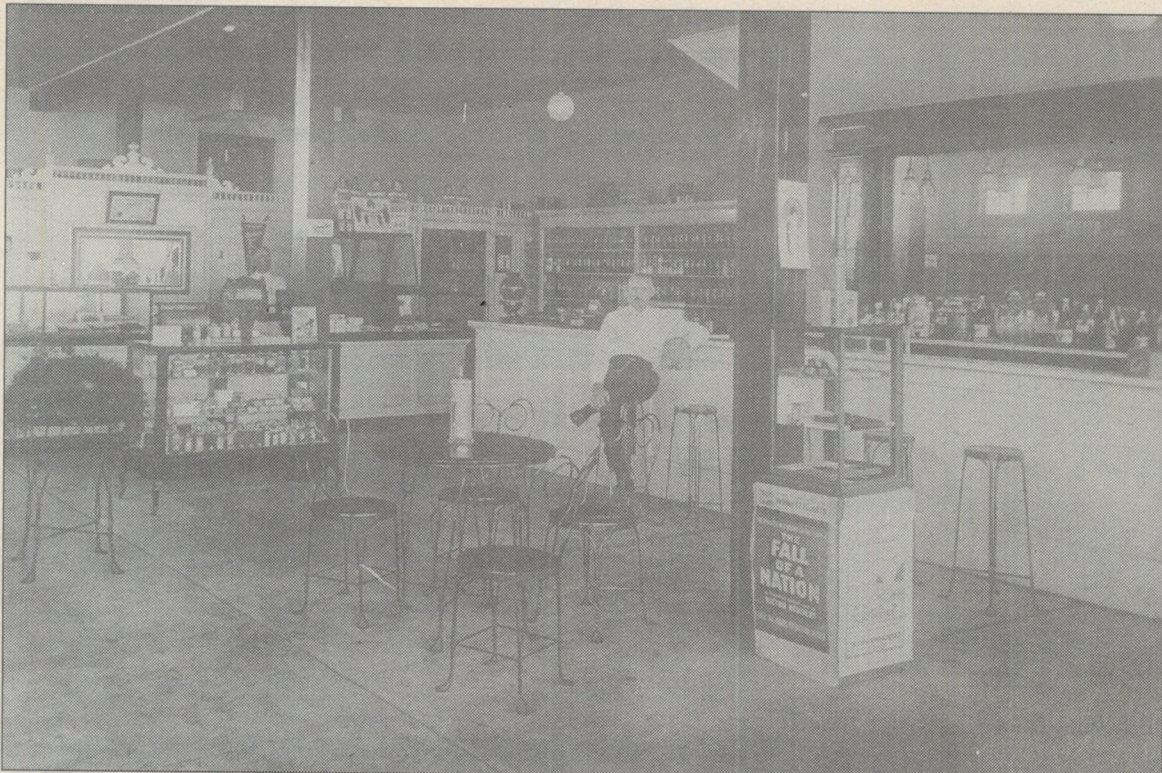


Photo courtesy of Ben Barnhill

This picture of the inside of Fairhope Pharmacy was taken in October 1929. The identify of the man seated on a stool is not positive, but some think it is Nathaniel Mershon.

PHARMACY

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13

ple keep on coming."

Barnhill said the business' bottom line has grown every year despite steep competition from a myriad of chain pharmacies on Greeno Road.

"We have tremendous tourist business at the Christmas shop (a branch of the pharmacy located next door)," Barnhill said. The drugstore also profits from its own large gift collection, a longtime staple of mom and pop operations.

Barnhill has also helped the store thrive by maintaining an old-fashioned level of service, sometimes coming down in the middle of the night to fill an emergency prescription.

There were pharmacists on call when the drugstore was closed for the recent Christmas and New Year's Day holidays, and Barnhill said they were summoned by people who had run out of their medications.

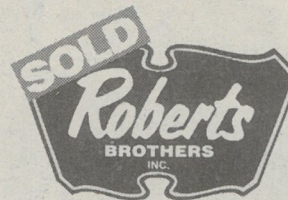
"They have that good feel-

ing. They know they can always get into Fairhope Pharmacy," he said.

Barnhill is mostly retired now, but he still pops into the pharmacy once a day to check on things.

Just as the pharmacy stands as a testament to Fairhope's longevity, Barnhill also represents the kind of shopkeeper who has helped make the city become so attractive to visitors from around the world.

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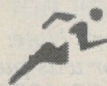
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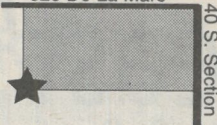
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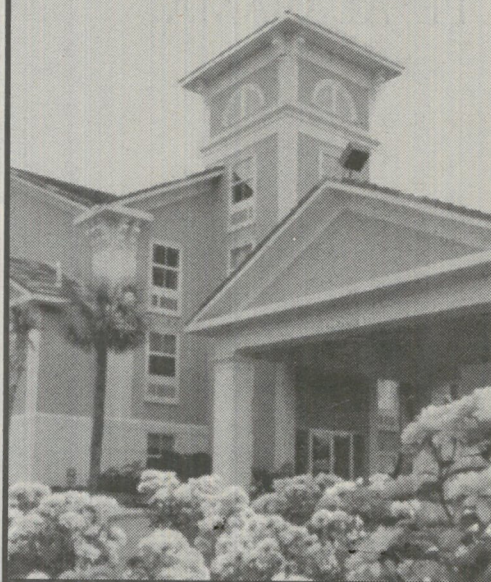


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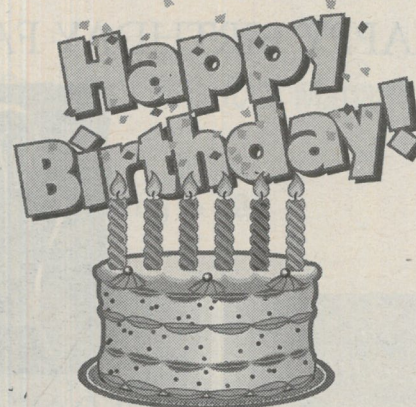
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OPINION FROM THE PAST



Sheila Propp/Staff Photo

No cows, hogs or goats were in sight when this recent photograph was taken at the intersection of Summit Street and Fairhope Avenue.

The Cow Bell in Disgrace

Editor's Note: This letter to the editor was published in the May 22, 1908 Fairhope Courier.

The intersection of Summit Street and Fairhope Avenue seems to be the favorite picnic place for a herd of nondescript piney woods cattle which is bent upon giving us a "Bell Chorus" during the still hours of the night. Not alone at night but during the day they are a nuisance, and woe to anyone leaving a gate ajar. It seems to one on the fence, that a little civic pride of the owner of this nuisance, would

suggest to him the undesirability of pasturing a herd of hungry half-fed cattle on the streets of our town.

There is a hope that our new mayor will have this thing stopped, when he ascends the throne. A few more such rural scenes in our pretty little town will aid greatly to dispel that agreeable first impression, which we are trying so hard to create in the minds of our visitors.

The hog nuisance seems to have been suspended for the present, the goats are also held in leash to some extent;

but these horned and belled critters are still with us until the owner takes the hint from a mass meeting called for his benefit by some of the citizens mostly afflicted or other means adopted to make him "think some."

Knowing your fair mindedness, and to give everyone a "square deal" when it comes to abating a nuisance so detrimental to Fairhope and its appearance, we ask for your kind indulgence and permit us this space to air our grievance.

By one who is tired of this "Bell Nuisance"

Christmas is always just around the corner at

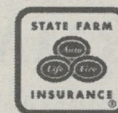


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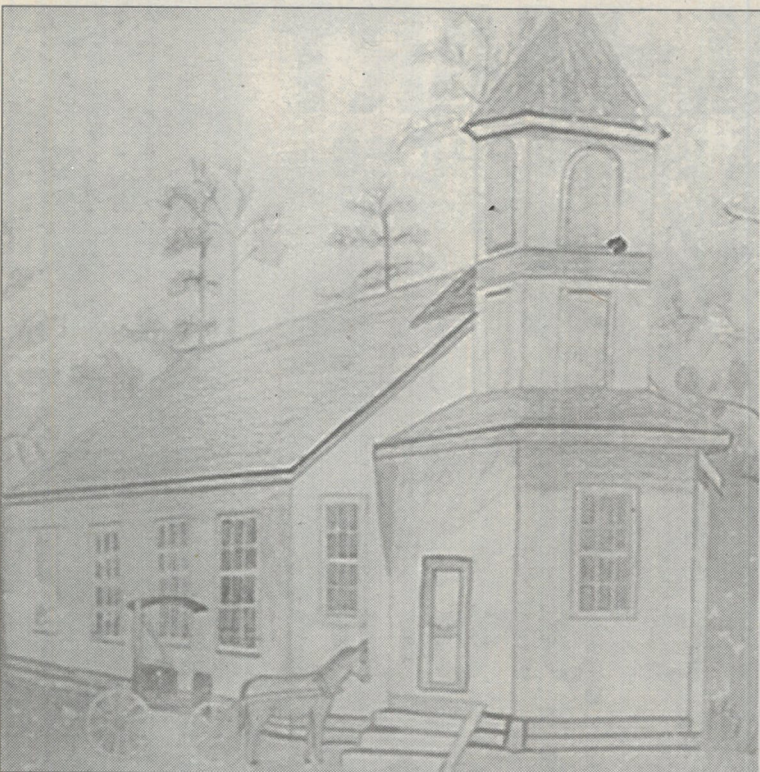
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OPINION FROM THE PAST



Sketch by Eleanore Harpe

This pencil drawing by Eleanore Harpe depicts one of the early church buildings built by members of the Twin Beech A.M.E. Zion church south of Fairhope.

Twin Beech Sunday School Celebrates

Editor's Note: This letter to the editor was published in the April 24, 1908 Fairhope Courier.

The Easter program of the Twin Beech A.M.E. Zion Sunday school was a grand affair. The very entertaining and well-rendered program was under the direction of the capable teacher of the school.

Above all worthy of notice among our people is their phenomenal awakening and revival of interest in educational improvement.

Mr. Powell of Fairhope delivered a fine address on Sunday night, full of logic and of sympathy for our people and their efforts. It was received with much enthusiasm and encouraged our people greatly.

I hope the time may come when our people can and will unite their efforts and accept the policy of equal rights to all, presented by Mr. Powell and held by others of our friends.

Yours truly,
J.B. Carter, teacher, Battles School

CONGRATULATIONS FAIRHOPE
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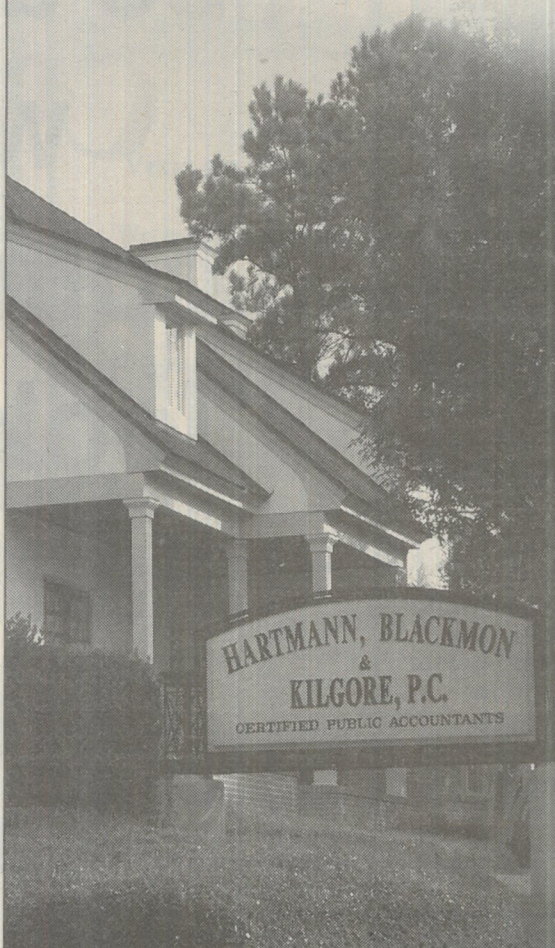
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Sheila Propp/Staff Photo

New Fairhope home owner

The March 20, 1908 Fairhope Courier reported that Dr. and Mrs. Slosson purchased Mr. Mogg's residence, located at the intersection of Magnolia Avenue and Bayview, on March 19 and expected to take possession around April 15. Mr. Mogg built the house, which was considered in that day the most beautiful home in the town. It was further reported that Mogg would spend the summer on Lake Geneva. Apparently, the Slossons moved to Fairhope a bit later, as the April 24 Courier reported that Mr. and Mrs. Oscar Johnson entertained a number of their friends at dinner last Sunday in honor of Dr. and Mrs. Slosson of Silverhill, who intend to make Fairhope their future home.



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Photo courtesy of the Slosson Family Collection

A day at the beach park

"The newly organized Beach Improvement Association has done most excellent work on improving beach park," it was reported in the June 6, 1908 Fairhope Courier. J.M. Pilcher was in charge of the work. "An abundance of substantial heavy tables with seats attached have been provided for dinner parties. It is also planned to fix a number of the abounding springs with concrete tile curbings so as to furnish an abundance of clean pure water; and if funds sufficient can be secured, to put up a shelter pavilion north of the Alabama City gully, to afford shelter in case of storm."

Congratulations !



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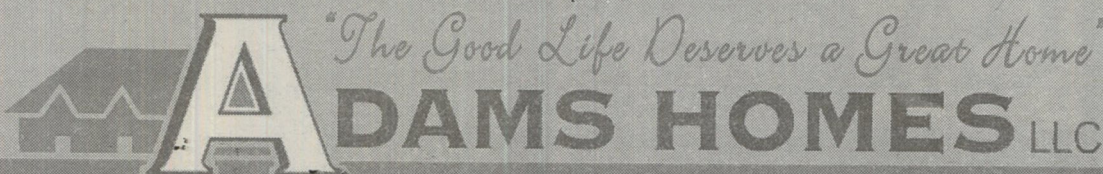
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FIRST COUNCIL

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5 COUNCIL TAKES ACTION

The first meeting of the mayor and council was held Monday, June 8, 1908, at 2 p.m., in Woodman Hall over the Mershon store. The oath of office was administered by G.W. Wood, notary public.

The council elected P.Y. Albright as clerk and J. Bellangee as treasurer. They also established the following committees: Ordinances, Pilcher, Coleman and Albright, with power to employ counsel; finance committee, Nichols, Mershon and Lawrence; committee to confer with Single Tax Corp. In regard to use of the school building and support of the school, Mayor Greeno and N. Mershon; and committee to confer with the STC and other land owners in regard to conveyance of streets, parks, etc., Coleman and Lawrence.

The council set their next meeting for Monday, June 15, 7:30 p.m. when they elected George R. Cain as town marshal and authorized him to charge the same fees as the deputy sheriff in similar cases. The mayor was empowered and instructed to raise funds for immediate and pressing needs and to issue town warrants "in such denominations as he may deem expedient, not exceeding \$300." The committee on ordinances was given further time to report.

At the June 22 meeting, Elliott G. Rickarby of Mobile

Mayors of Fairhope

1. Dr. H.S. Greeno	1908-1912
2. Joseph F. Johnson	1912-1914
3. Adolph O. Berglin	1914-1916
4. Mike A. Bowen	1916-1918
5. William McIntosh	1918-
6. William Call*	
7. Issac M. Galbraith*	1922-1926
8. Manly Felix Northrop	1926-1934
9. Howard Ruge	1934-1948
10. T.J. (Anthony) Klumpp	1948-1954
11. Edward B. Overton	1954-1960
12. Joe Schneider	1960-1964
13. R.C. (Richard) Macon	1964-1972
14. James P. Nix	1972-2000
15. Timothy Kant	2000-present

* Following his election in 1918, Mayor McIntosh became ill. City Councilman William Call was appointed to fill the office. He served for a time and resigned. City Councilman Issac M. Galbraith was then appointed mayor. He served the remainder of McIntosh's term, then entered the next mayoral race and was duly elected.

Source: Donnie Barrett, Fairhope Museum of History director

was selected as the town's attorney and The Central Trust Co. of Mobile designated as the town depository.

The council voted to pay \$4 a month for the use of Woodman Hall as Council Chamber.



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City will plant 100 trees during 2008

Submitted by Sherry Sullivan

The city of Fairhope has committed to planting more than 100 long-lived trees as part of its centennial celebration.

During the current winter-spring planting season, trees will be planted in prominent locations in parks and on other public lands. The Fairhope Tree Committee and the Fairhope Horticulture Department are leading the project.

Private residents, businesses and institutions are encouraged to participate by contributing money.

Tree species included are ones that typically live a century or longer: live oak seedlings from the famous Jury Oak at Historic Blakeley State Park, sand live oak, post oak, turkey oak, white oak, swamp chestnut oak, blackgum, Tupelo, longleaf pine, mockernut hickory, bald cypress, pond cypress, Atlantic white cedar, Southern red cedar, flatwoods plum, ironwood and others.

Plantings are being done at Knoll Park, the Fairhope campus of Faulkner State Community College, Fairhope beach park, Founder's Park, along South Mobile Street, along North Section Street and Bayou Avenue adjacent to the school grounds, adjacent to the public library and museum grounds and other locations.

Trees will be marked with a special Centennial Medallion, and participants will be given certificates acknowledging their support. The memorial will be placed on the back of the medallion.

Memorial trees may be purchased for \$50. Checks should be made payable to the City of Fairhope Tree Fund and mailed to: P.O. Drawer 429, Fairhope, AL 36533, ATTN: Jennifer Fidler.

The Single Tax Corp. and the Wisteria Garden Club have already donated money toward the plantings. Other groups interested in contributing should contact Fidler (928-8003) or Tree Committee Chairman Tom Ellis (990-6049).



Centennial medallion design that will be placed on the memorial trees.

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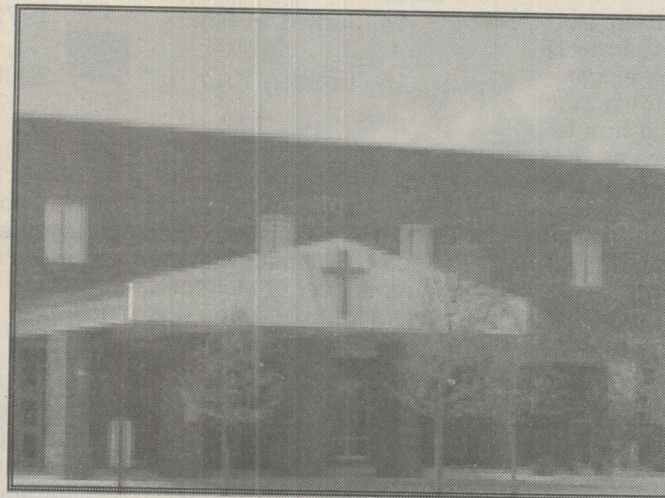
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6:30 pm Home Prayer Groups
7:30 pm Sr. High Student Worship

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Congratulations Fairhope!

A Brush with the Past

Submitted

The Eastern Shore Art Center will commemorate Fairhope's Centennial with a special exhibition in April entitled "A Brush With the Past."

Local artists, including amateurs, professionals and students, will decorate a series of 3-by-5-foot plywood panels with scenes from Fairhope's past based on photographs supplied by the Fairhope Single Tax Corp. The exhibit will make its debut at the ESAC ArtWalk, scheduled for Friday, April 4, 6 p.m.

After the exhibit closes at the Art Center, the panels will be hung around the city for the remainder of the centennial year and will then be donated to the permanent collection of the new Fairhope Historical Museum.

The Art Center is located at 401 Oak Ave. For more information, call 928-2228.



Photo courtesy of the city of Fairhope

Centennial banners up

Electric Department employee Caleb Northan hangs centennial banners as Fairhope celebrates 100 years. The banners were designed by Centennial Committee member Rebekah Webb with the Eastern Shore Art Center.

CITY

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

have an opportunity to explore the museum and take in all the exhibits that showcase the Fairhope area from the Colonial era to the present, Barrett said.

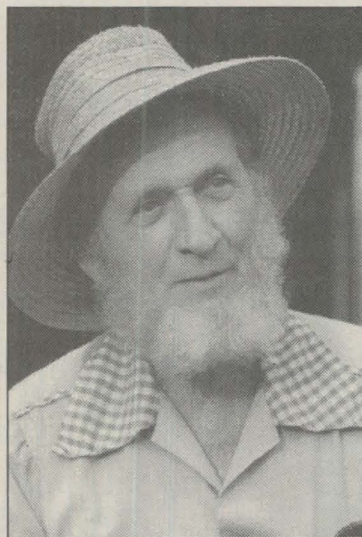
Other attractions, Sullivan said, will include music by local musicians on the plaza, folk dancers, and the Dogwood Trail Maids will be in attendance. "And there will be hands-on activities for children," Barrett said adding that the museum wants to have exhibits and activities that encourage school field trips.

Museum tours will be given throughout the day.

Representatives from the Fairhope Single Tax Association will give presentations on single tax theory and Fairhope earliest settlers at 10:45 a.m. and 12:45 p.m., in the Town Hall Room on the second floor of the museum.

Fairhope resident Flo Schneider will tell the story of her grandfather, Clendell Lefevre Coleman, who served on the first Colony Council in 1894, at 10:45 a.m., in the Town Hall Room.

Other activities will take place at the plaza, the open area between the museum and the new public library. The family of the late Craig Sheldon will be present to



Craig Sheldon

unveil the Stephen Spears sculpture of Fairhope's noted artist. This will take place at 10 a.m.

Family members will tell stories about his contribution to the town and about his remarkable life throughout the day at the plaza.

The Fairhope Public Library will host historical storytelling that day, and a display of historical books on Fairhope will be exhibited during the entire month of April, Sullivan said.

In addition to student folk dancer performances at the museum, Maggie Mosteller Timbes will be in the museum telling the story of

Marietta Johnson, Fairhope's well-known Organic School educator.

"The plaza was conceptualized as a green space to provide connectivity between the museum, Fairhope Welcome Center and public library," Sullivan said.

Tour buses are using the turn-around drive on the Bancroft side of the museum as a drop-off point, "so the plaza is a central gateway to the city for visitors and is designed to make a positive and attractive impression of our city," Sullivan said.

INCORPORATION DAY

The last major centennial event for the year will be the Incorporation Day Concert by the Baldwin Pops, which will be held April 25, 6:30 p.m., at Henry George Park. "The concert program will feature some special music in tribute to the event," Sullivan said.

Due to the municipal election, subsequent centennial tributes for the remainder of the year will be more subtle, Sullivan said, but include special activities during the Fourth of July and Lighting of the Trees, to name a couple. More details will be published as they become available.



Fairhope Courier file photo

Artist's work 'circles' FSAC campus

Craig Sheldon's tribute to the return of the brown pelican has been on display for everyone's enjoyment on the front lawn of the Fairhope campus of Faulkner State Community College. The late artist will be honored during the city's centennial celebration.



Fairhope Single Tax Corporation Executive Council

When our Founders created Fairhope in 1894, they envisioned a model community with beautiful parklands, wide avenues, and a sense of cooperative individualism. Because of their vision, sacrifice, and faith in this dream, Fairhope is the oldest community of its kind in the world, with a strong committment to preserve and enhance their vision.

We salute the City of Fairhope as it celebrates its centennial and look forward to continuing to work together to keep this wonderful city such a great place to live.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY CITY OF FAIRHOPE!

