

Pining for Hospitality Delights Pilau Success

World War I Centennial
Deck the Halls

Our history begins here. Let us start you on the journey.

On the cover: Smith Homestead illuminated during *Pining for Hospitality*.

Pining for Hospitality

The 2018 Fall Fundraising Dinner went off without a hitch despite a two-week delay due to the effects of Hurricane Michael. Fortunately, the History Center suffered very little damage, just a few large limbs down and other debris.

More than 150 guests stepped back in time to experience the hospitality offered to intrepid travelers, northern invalids, and adventurous pleasure seekers who came to share in the pine scented hospitality that was Thomasville during the Resort Era. The evening was inspired by the hospitality and grandeur of the Mitchell House hotel in the 1880's and 1890's. Centerpieces featured pineapples, the symbol of southern hospitality; pears, a nod to the LeConte orchards which dotted Thomasville's landscape; and palms, like those that graced the Mitchell House gardens and decorated the hotel.

Following cocktail hour, and several rides in the newly restored 1923 Cox Model T, guests entered a tent illuminated by chandeliers. Our Mitchell House "dining room" boasted a buffet catered by J.B. Crumbs that was inspired by menus from the grand hotel.



One lucky winner took home the event's raffle package which included items from several downtown businesses following the theme of pears, pineapples, and palms. Also included in the raffle were two pear trees, one of which was a LeConte.

Thank you to all who attended, sponsored, donated, and lent their time and talent. Particularly, our vendors whose flexibility following the recent storm made this event possible. More than \$20,000 was raised

from the event, all of which supports the ongoing operations of the History Center.

Thank you for your generosity!



Photography by Sue McFadden

Pilau Delights

We served more than 1,150 plates of Pilau at our 26th-annual event on November 6. Despite the soggy weather, our cooks and volunteers managed to deliver one of our most successful pilaus to date. We hope that you enjoyed our annual Election Night tradition.

Please join us in thanking our generous sponsor Thomasville National Bank for their support. Former board member and current Pilau event chair Wylie Watt, Jr. is to be congratulated for his hard work in bringing this event to life year after year.



Thomasville National Bank

We would also like to extend our thanks to the many cooks and volunteers who made the evening such a success.

We also thank the following donors, vendors, and organizations for their support and assistance:

- Flowers Baking Company
- Maryland Fried Chicken
- Horne Candy & Paper Company
- P.F.G. Powell
- Junior Service League of Thomasville
- Harvey's Supermarket



Photography by Claire Timm

1923 Model T Restored

Late this summer, the 1923 Ford Model T returned to the History Center following engine repairs completed at Hemea Heads in Nashville, Georgia. This is the same company who completed the restoration of the 1916 American LaFrance fire engine last year and is currently repairing the engine, replacing the upholstery, and stabilizing the exterior of the 1926 Chisholm Model T, affectionately known as the "Blue Bomb."

The Ford Model T belonged to William Cox, former owner of Merryway Plantation, and was donated in 2004. The Model T is once again fully operational and all of the staff have been trained in how to operate the car safely. Each of the staff have spent a good bit of time practicing their skills and taking short drives to keep the engine in tip-top shape.

Guests at the September Cocktails & Commerce and annual fall fundraising dinner at the History Center enjoyed rides in the Model T with Ephraim at the wheel. The Model T also appeared in this year's Downtown Christmas Parade with the fire engine on November 26.



World War I Centennial

In observance of the World War I centennial, the Thomasville History Center is honored to share some of the ways in which we have marked this occasion, and continue to share and interpret Thomasville and Thomas County's experiences during the World War through the use of our archives, collections, and education programs.

WORLD WAR I

On April 6, 1917 the United States joined the Allies of World War I to bring an end to the greatest conflict the world had ever seen.

World War I began in the summer of 1914 after the assassination of Austria-Hungary's Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife in Serbia. Europe's network of alliances quickly drew nations to either side of the conflict and engulfed the world in war within weeks.

After remaining neutral for the first three years of War, the U.S. government could no longer ignore the aggression of Germany and the Central Powers. More than 1,000,000 American troops were deployed to Europe as part of the American Expeditionary Forces, including many of Thomasville and Thomas County's own. Many of these men would witness the horror of trench warfare and be attacked by the soldiers' greatest enemy:

influenza. The Allied victory was secured on November 11, 1918 at a cost of over 10,000,000 lives. Of those dead, 110,000 were American, and 62 were from Thomas County. A monument to Thomas County's WWI servicemen stands at the American Legion on N. Broad St.

COLLECTIONS SPOTLIGHT

A great deal of our military collection originates from Thomas County soldiers who served in World War I including:

Lt. Thomas L. Spence, Jr., the namesake of the Thomasville American Legion, was a young aviator and Thomasville High football star. Lt. Spence tragically



Right: THC Collection: T.L. Spence, Jr. c. 1918; Left: Spence's Army aviator jacket, 1973.060.01

died just days after the Armistice.

Pvt. Ellis O. Meeks served in the American Expeditionary Forces 546th Engineers as one of roughly 40,000 African American engineers. Meeks' family worked on a farm near the Georgia-Florida border, near Metcalfe. Meeks served in Europe from September 1918 until June 1919. Following the war, he returned to the area and married Cora Jackson in December 1919. Shortly thereafter, the couple moved to South Florida. Meeks



Portrait, 1981.08.1

passed away in May 1945 and his grave is marked by a military headstone. A portrait of Meeks in his Army uniform was donated



1918-2018

to the History Center in 1989.

Lt. Eugene A. Stanley served in Europe with the 309th Engineers from December 1917 until late June 1918. Stanley was one of the first “Thomasville gold stripe boys” to return to the states from Europe and spoke about his experience at a gathering at First Baptist Church in mid-July 1918. Following the war, Stanley worked for Thomas County as an engineer overseeing the construction of roads and bridges. He left the County’s employment in early 1920 for a job with the state highway’s engineering department. On display at the History Center are Lt. Stanley’s boots and many more of his personal items held



Boots 1989.03.04a+b within the collection. We invite you to explore more of our collections online at THOMASCOUNTY.PASTPERFECTONLINE.COM.

EDUCATION

This school year, the History Center debuted several new travel trunks which are available to teachers and students across the community. Each travel trunk contains a curated assortment of primary sources and reproduction or deaccessioned artifacts to supplement classroom curriculum.

Among the trunks is one focusing on World War I; the resources introduce students to local, state, and international topics between 1914 and 1919. Students “meet” Thomas Silva, a Thomasville man who died in the sinking of the Lusitania in 1915, and Lt. Spence.

Our new education Pinterest boards expand upon the themes and content of the trunks to incorporate multimedia resources available from other repositories. Users can use the pinned materials to develop supplemental lessons to accompany the travel trunk.

Explore:

PINTEREST.COM/THOMASVILLEHISTORY

Local educators can also request

facilitated programs in their classrooms. In these workshops, students get hands-on with primary sources and artifacts and become newspaper journalists. Each student analyzes a primary source - including newspaper articles, maps, photographs, and propaganda posters - from the era, and writes a short article connecting the primary source to the larger narrative of World War I. Students’ creativity and imagination shine through in their article illustrations.

Travel trunks, outreach programs, and field trips are available for free to educators within Thomas County.

Explore:

THOMASVILLEHISTORY.ORG/EDUCATION



Memberships

This list reflects Personal and Business members who have joined or renewed their memberships between JULY 24, 2018 AND NOVEMBER 23, 2018. Thank you for your support!

For questions or corrections, please contact Amelia, amelia@thomascountyhistory.org.

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End of Year Receipts

In January, we will print and mail donation reports to all who contributed to the History Center in the 2018 fiscal year. The reports will include memberships, program registrations, fundraiser support, and other donations.

Upcoming Programs

DECK THE HALLS

November 23-December 31

This year, the Thomasville History Center will once again Deck the Halls of the Lapham-Patterson House with holiday cheer.

We Need Your Help!

Organizations, individuals, clubs, and businesses are invited to adopt a corner of the Lapham-Patterson House and add a touch of holiday cheer. Volunteers are responsible for providing all of their own decorations from star to skirt, and everything in between.

Contact us today to claim a mantle, designated tree location, or room! Donations of operable string lights, garland, etc. in new or like-new condition will also be welcomed.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

DECEMBER 7, *Enlightening*



Bites: History of Thomasville's Victorian Christmas, by

Ephraim Rotter, Thomas County Public Library, Noon



DECEMBER 13-14: *Victorian Christmas*, Holiday Card

Activity Station, 6pm-9pm, Location TBD



JANUARY 26: *Children's Day*,

Museum of Florida History, 10am-3pm, Tallahassee



LATE JANUARY: Annual Meeting,

Do You Remember? Sunnyland, 3pm



HOLIDAY CLOSURES:

Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, New Years Day

Smith Homestead Completed

SMITH HOMESTEAD & JOYNER-CALLOWAY HOUSE INTERPRETATIVE SIGNS

Since the last newsletter, we have installed new interpretive signs across the Smith Homestead and will be installing signs at the Joyner-Calloway yard later this month.



The signs describe life as the Smiths, Joyners, and Calloways would have experienced it outside of their homes, through subsistence and display gardens as well as the ways that yards were laid out and utilized. Intern Meme Hand researched and wrote the panels' content. These signs enhance the experience of visitors on self-guided tours of the History Center's campus. On your next visit to our campus, we encourage you to explore these areas and learn more about the lives of those who once called our historic buildings home!



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CALLING ALL VOLUNTEERS:

Do you have a particular historical interest, skill, or handicraft you would like to share with our visitors? We invite you to get in touch and discuss volunteer opportunities with us. Call or email Anne, anne@thomascountyhistory.org to learn more!

KEEP IN CONTACT - SUBSCRIBE TO OUR EMAIL LIST!

Subscribe today on our website to receive bi-monthly updates on upcoming programs, events, and history-related opportunities throughout the community. Please note that we have experienced difficulty sending to Rose.net email addresses. If you have an alternate service provider (Gmail, Hotmail, Yahoo, etc.) please use that address to subscribe at www.thomasvillehistory.org.



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