



# HISTORIC LAKELAND *Quarterly*

A joint publication of the  
City of Lakeland Historic Preservation  
Board and Historic Lakeland, Inc.

## CALENDAR

**Jan. 10, Feb. 14, Mar. 14, Apr. 11:** **Historic Lakeland, Inc. Board Meeting,** 5:00 pm, Hauger-Bunch, Inc., 415 S. Kentucky Ave., Lakeland

**Jan. 11, Feb. 8, Mar. 8, Apr. 12:** **Polk County Historical Assoc.,** 7:00 pm, Polk County Historical Museum, Bartow

**Jan. 13, Feb. 10, Mar. 14:** **Florida History Lecture Series,** 7:00 pm, Hollis Room, Florida Southern College

**Jan. 20, Feb. 17, Mar. 17, Apr. 21:** **City Historic Preservation Board Meeting,** 7:30 am; **City Design Review Meeting,** 8:00 am, Building Inspection Conference Room, Lakeland City Hall

**Feb. 5:** **Historic Home Workshop,** 8:00 am to 12:00 pm, Ordway Building, Florida Southern College

**Feb. 8:** **Polk County Sesquicentennial Kickoff,** all over Polk County

## Mac Midyette Inducted as HLI's New President; Assumes Reins of Leadership from Roger Haar



The photos above show Incoming HLI President Mac Midyette with his predecessor Roger Haar and with two of his fellow officers for 2011, Treasurer Judy Cline and Secretary Tisha Shelden. Vice President Jon Kirk was not present when the photo was taken. The photo below shows Midyette speaking at the HLI induction ceremony.

Pledging Historic Lakeland Inc.'s (HLI) ongoing involvement in the restoration of the Federal Building in downtown Lakeland and the year-long celebration of Polk County's 150th anniversary in 2011, William "Mac" Midyette was recently installed as the newest president of HLI.

In addition to aggressively supporting these two key initiatives, Midyette also vowed to work hard to increase membership in HLI by getting more people with Lakeland roots actively involved in the organization.

Midyette assumed the reins of leadership from Roger Haar, who served two consecutive terms as HLI president, in an induction ceremony attended by an estimated 50 members and friends of HLI in the Hollis Room at Florida Southern College.

"I look forward to serving as your new president and continuing the fine work



performed by Roger Haar and all of the other great presidents of this organization who have served before me," Midyette said.

Other officers who will serve HLI in the coming year along with Midyette are Jon Kirk, vice-president; Judy Cline, treasurer; Tisha Shelden, recording secretary and Haar, immediate past president. Members of the 2011 board of directors are Jesse Bryant, Jean Bunch, Mike Denham, Larry Durrence, Ann

**See Officers Inducted, page 3**

## Front Porches Making Strong Comeback

With Historic Lakeland Inc. (HLI) and the City of Lakeland Historic Preservation Board leading the way, front porches are making a strong comeback in Lakeland, especially in historic districts where they once were a key design element of almost every bungalow-style home.

"As people research their homes and learn to appreciate their original design, they are restoring front porches," said Rick Nicholson, chair of HLI's front porch restoration committee. HLI encourages this trend by presenting design awards to homeowners who complete exceptional front porch restoration projects.

Nicholson said front porches were eliminated from many homes back in the 1950s when homeowners began enclosing them with jalousie or awning windows to create more air conditioned interior space. Since this practice frequently marred the exterior beauty of the home and usually yielded a room that was small and of little functional value, this trend is now being reversed, with many homeowners now restoring their front porches.

**See Front Porch, page 4**

## HLI Federal Building Rescue Effort Update

*Historic Lakeland, Inc.'s (HLI) long-time goal to save the historic Federal Building in downtown Lakeland from demolition is now on the way to being fully realized. Thanks to a high level of cooperation between MidFlorida Federal Credit Union, the City of Lakeland and the State Historic Preservation Office, an agreement paving the way for Mid Florida to invest \$800,000 in the restoration of the 1919-era building at the corner of Lemon Street and Tennessee Avenue is now being finalized. Mid Florida plans to use the restored*



*building as a conference center, and as a goodwill gesture to the community, will make some interior space available for public use. Details on the agreement, including renderings depicting the exterior and interior after restoration, will appear in the next issue of Historic Lakeland Quarterly. (Federal Building photo courtesy of The Ledger)*

## HLI Perspective

by  
**Mac Midyette**



At the outset, let me thank Historic Lakeland, Inc. (HLI), its board and members for vesting in me the office of President for 2011. The footsteps I have to follow in are large, well-measured

and accompanied by a great deal of experience, something I also hope to acquire during my tenure.

The tasks facing HLI this year have not lessened but remain a steady agenda to meet our goals and foster appreciation of the legacies of Lakeland and Polk County, especially as the latter observes its 150th anniversary with a year-long Sesquicentennial celebration set to kick off on February 8, 2011. HLI will play an active role in this major milestone.

Just one year ago, Roger Haar launched his second term as HLI's president by identifying the saving of the 1919 Federal Building in downtown Lakeland as our top goal for 2010. Happily, HLI succeeded in this worthy effort as evidenced by the recent approval of renovation plans by MidFlorida Federal Credit Union that will result in the restoration and continued daily use of this significant architectural building. This is the latest in a series of Lakeland historical sites that HLI has been instrumental in preserving for future generations.

In addition to playing a key role in saving the Federal Building, HLI had many other noteworthy achievements in the past year, including the following:

- Continued distribution of a DVD pictorial history of the Lake Mirror Promenade and Park, an important landmark and community gathering place. Much thanks to Jean Bunch for leading the effort to educate new HLI members and Lakeland citizens about the city's proud history with the use of this DVD;
- Continued active involvement in national Preservation Week by recognizing people on the local level who support preservation through sensitive remodeling or new construction projects that enhance the historical look so prevalent in the City of Lakeland and its individual neighborhoods;
- Co-sponsorship and active participation in the Historic Homes Workshop. We will continue this tradition by being actively involved in the workshop scheduled for February 5, 2011;
- Sponsorship of Florida Southern College Florida History Lecture Series speaker Dale Gyure, who inspired and educated us with

See HLI Perspective, page 4

## Florida Lecture Series Going Strong

Everyone with an interest in Florida history is invited to attend the three remaining lectures in the 2010-2011 Florida History Lecture Series sponsored by the Lawton M. Chiles, Jr. Center for Florida History at Florida Southern College (FSC).

All of the lectures will be presented free of charge starting at 7:00 pm in the Hollis Room at FSC. The dates, speakers and topics they will discuss are as follows:

**January 13: Gary Noesner**, retired FBI negotiator, discusses law enforcement's response to prison riots, terrorist embassy takeovers, airplane hijackings and overseas kidnappings of American citizens in a talk titled *"Calm, Creative Communications in Crisis: My Life as an FBI Hostage Negotiator."*

**February 10: Canter Brown, Jr.**, a native of Polk County who serves as executive vice president and chief legal officer of Fort Valley (GA) State University, discusses some of the events and extraordinary people, including heroes and scoundrels, who have left their mark on Polk County since its inception 150 years ago in a talk titled *"I Can't*



Architectural historian Dale Gyure (left) and Mike Denham, executive director of the Florida History Center

*Believe All That Happened in Polk County! Are You Sure?"* This talk is very timely, coming just two days after the kickoff for the Polk County Sesquicentennial celebration.

**March 10: Steven Noll**, senior lecturer in history at the University of Florida, and **David**

See Lecture Series, page 4

## Historic Preservation Board News

By **Michael Tamney, Chairman**



In 2002 the University of Florida's Center for Governmental Responsibility (CGR) issued the results of a study of the economic impacts of historic preservation in Florida. The study researched job creation, visitor spending, revitalization through Main Street programs, history museum attendance, grant funding and property values. Four Lakeland historic districts and comparable neighborhoods were compared in the original study.

An update to this study released in September, 2010 revealed that from 2007 to 2008, historic preservation activities in Florida, including historic rehabilitation projects, heritage tourism, Main Street programs and history museums created 111,500 jobs. It also showed that in the period from 2003 to 2008, about \$13.5 billion was spent on the rehabilitation of residential and non-residential properties.

In the study period from 2001 to 2009, property values in many of Lakeland's historic districts were compared with non-historic neighborhoods. East Lake Morton was compared to the Lake Bonny neighborhood; Dixieland was compared to Cleveland Heights; Beacon Hill was paired with Southwest; and South Lake Morton was compared to Lake Hollingsworth, Horney and Lakeshore.

Across the board, the historic districts saw

greater increases in property values between 2001 and 2006 and smaller declines in 2007 through 2009. While Beacon Hill had a slower rate of appreciation from 2001 to 2006, it had no decrease in values from 2006 to 2009.

The encouraging news from this study is that all of the public and private investment in Lakeland's historic districts has benefitted property owners. Historic districts continue to be desirable places to live and raise families. Amenities such as mature landscaping and tree canopies, sidewalks, brick streets, historic streetlights and welcoming front porches are popular with young families, as well as senior citizens. These "walkable" neighborhoods and the strong sense of community they foster enhance the quality of life of residents.

Lakeland has been extremely fortunate to be included in these studies over the past 20 years since they substantiate what historic preservationists have long believed: That historic preservation not only benefits residents of historic districts but also the state as a whole through job creation, increased tourism spending, increased state and local taxes and higher property values. Due to the efforts of preservationists, Lakeland's history and character continues to be preserved for future generations.

These research findings are included in a 52-page executive summary and detailed in a technical document that comes with it. Both will be available soon at the CGR Web site at <http://www.law.ufl.edu/cgr/publications.shtml>.

# Polk County Plans Year Long Sesquicentennial Celebration in 2011

Polk County will observe its 150th anniversary or Sesquicentennial in 2011 with a year-long celebration set to launch on February 8.

Why is February 8 the starting date? Because that's the day way back in 1861 when former Florida Governor Madison Perry signed a law officially creating Polk County as Florida's 39th county. The geographic entity known as Polk County occupies land that was once part of Hillsborough and Brevard counties. The county was created so its then 1,500 residents would have their own local government.

While the Polk County Historical Commission is spearheading the Sesquicentennial, many other organizations, including Historic Lakeland, Inc. (HLI), will play prominent roles in implementing this high profile, county-wide event. The last big event of this nature came in 1961 when Polk County celebrated its Centennial.

"With our deep interest in local history, HLI and its individual members will play a very active role in the Sesquicentennial. This is something we all look forward to



very much," said HLI President Mac Midyette.

One of the first steps taken by the Polk County Historical Commission was to commission Clark Nikdel Powell of Winter Haven to develop the official logo for the Sesquicentennial. The logo, reading "Polk Proud 150 Years," illustrates this story.

In addition to the official kickoff on February 8, the celebration will include a series of special events throughout the year, including many tied to long-standing events such as Mayfaire by the Lake. Other proposed initiatives include the publication

of a commemorative newspaper section and a campaign designed to encourage residents to visit areas of Polk County they've never been exposed to. An old fashioned community picnic will be staged as the anniversary year draws to a close.

The committee planning the event is also considering community wide cleanups, a history themed scavenger hunt, special local music and storytelling programs and a blog that will give citizens a chance to record how they view the future of Polk County. Local restaurants will be encouraged to develop dishes and meals unique to Polk County.

According to a recent story published in *The Ledger*, most funding for the event will come from private sources although Polk County Tourism and Sports Marketing has agreed to contribute \$27,000 for an advertising campaign designed to lure overnight visitors to the county so they can enjoy certain events tied to the Sesquicentennial celebration.

For more information, contact the Polk County Historical Commission or the Polk County Board of County Commissioners.

## Officers Inducted, from page 1

Hilliard, Sean Malott, LuAnn Mims, Rick Nicholson, Jim Rogers, John White and Ann Wilson.



Roger Haar (left) holds a special pin presented to him by Jean Bunch.

After turning the presidential gavel over to Midyette, Haar was presented with a special pin by Jean Bunch for providing the leadership that led to the creation of Lake Mirror Park back when he served as Lakeland city manager.

The meeting was followed by an interesting dissertation on Frank Lloyd Wright architecture and Florida Southern College by Dale Gyure, an associate professor of architecture at Lawrence Technological University. Gyure's talk was part of the Florida History Lecture Series presented by the Lawton M. Chiles Center for Florida History at FSC.

## 10th Historic Home Workshop Feb. 5

People with an interest in restoring and maintaining older homes, as well as keeping them safe, attractive and operating efficiently will get a chance to acquire a wealth of information on these topics by attending the 10th Historic Home Workshop on Saturday, February 5 at Florida Southern College (FSC).

The workshop, scheduled for 8:00 am to 12:00 pm and featuring presentations by experts in a wide range of fields, is being presented free of charge by the City of Lakeland Historic Preservation Board in cooperation with Historic Lakeland, Inc., FSC and BB&T Bank.

Panels focusing on structural issues and the experts who will lead them are as follows: "**Wood Window Rehabilitation**" (Steve Quillian, Wood Window Makeover), "**Home Energy Efficiency**" (Kevin Jones and Rico Dunsmore, Lakeland Electric), "**Front Porch Renovations**" (Historic Lakeland, Inc.), "**Interior Preparation & Painting**" (Gary Witte, Walt Witte & Sons, Inc.), "**Fireplace Care & Safety**" (Robert Westerfield, Chimney Sweep of Florida) and "**Hands on Plastering Repairs**" (Charlie Swedberg, contractor).

Landscaping and other exterior enhancements for a home will be covered in these panels: "**Landscaping on a Small Lot**" (John King, King Landscaping), "**Care and Maintenance of Trees**"

(Kimberly and Bruce Paulson, The Tree Lady Company) and "**Earth Boxes**" (Bob Whisenant, Earth Research Center),

Panels focusing on design guidelines, building permits, financing and protecting an investment in a



One of many informative exhibits at a previous Historic Home Workshop at FSC.

home or rental property are "**Design Guidelines**" (Lynn Schindler, City of Lakeland), "**Building Permitting Process**" (Herman Blom, City of Lakeland), "**Financing and Insuring Your Home & Projects**" (BB&T), "**Crime Prevention & Neighborhood Watch**" (Dr. Gregory Robinson, Lakeland Police Department) and "**Tenant Screening & Evictions**" (Gene Lord, Lakeland Police Department).

After the workshop, FSC staff members will lead tours of the famed "Child of the Sun" collection of Frank Lloyd Wright-designed structures on the FSC campus.

## HLI Perspective, from page 2

his outstanding dissertation on Frank Lloyd Wright architecture and Florida Southern College in a talk following our 2010 annual meeting on November 4.

Clearly, I am challenged in accepting the torch of leadership from Roger Haar but am delighted that he will continue lending his knowledge and expertise to HLI by remaining an active board member. I am extremely pleased to know that I will have the support of many other dedicated preservationists, including Jon Kirk, as vice president; Tisha Shelden, who is returning as our secretary; and Judy Cline, who has agreed to serve as treasurer. Of course, I also have many

wonderful and supportive board members who I know I can depend on in the coming year.

One of my major goals and/or challenges in the coming year will be to expand our organization by recruiting new board members, including Lakeland residents who have roots in our community and are dedicated to investing time in their hometown as we continue our march to protect and preserve our history.

The bottom line is that I remain committed to working closely with all board members and our general membership to invest in Lakeland's future by protecting its past. Once again, I truly appreciate the opportunity you have given me to serve.

## Front Porch, from page 1

Homeowners who wish to learn more about restoring a front porch are invited to attend a free panel titled "**Front Porch Renovations**" that will be presented by HLI and the HPB as part of the Historic Home Workshop on February 5 in the Ordway Building at Florida Southern College (see story on page 3 for details on the entire workshop).

More information on the workshop and front porch restoration initiative can be obtained by calling Nicholson at 944-1321 or e-mailing [munropaints@yahoo.com](mailto:munropaints@yahoo.com). Other committee members are Jean Bunch, Sean Malott, John White and Ann Wilson.

## Lecture Series, from page 2

**Tegeger**, associate professor of history at Santa Fe College, team up to discuss the political, economic and environmental controversies that doomed the Cross Florida Barge Canal in a talk titled "*Ditch of Dreams: The Cross Florida Barge Canal and the Struggle for Florida's Future.*"

The most recent presentation in the series came on November 4 when **Dale Gyure**, an architectural historian who serves as associate professor of architecture at Lawrence

Technological University, offered a scholarly look at the Frank Lloyd Wright-designed structures on the campus of Florida Southern College in a talk titled "*Frank Lloyd Wright and Florida Southern College.*" Gyure, who based his presentation on his most recent book titled "*Frank Lloyd Wright's Florida Southern College,*" was the featured speaker at Historic Lakeland, Inc.'s annual meeting (see story page 1).

Now in its 14th year, the 2010-2011 installment of the Florida History Lecture series began on September 24 with a

lecture by **Douglas Brinkley**, professor of history at Rice University titled "*Saving Wild Florida: From John James Audubon to Barack Obama.*" On October 14, photographer **Carlton Ward, Jr.** gave a presentation titled "*Florida Cowboys: Keepers of the Last Frontier.*"

For more information on the lecture series, contact Mike Denham, executive director of the Lawton M. Chiles, Jr. Florida History Center at 860-3001 or e-mail [historycenter@floridasouthern.edu](mailto:historycenter@floridasouthern.edu).

### Officers

William "Mac" Midyette, president  
Jon Kirk, vice-president  
Judy Cline, treasurer  
Tisha Shelden, recording secretary  
Roger Haar, immediate past president

### Directors

Jesse Bryant  
Jean Bunch  
Mike Denham  
Larry Durrence  
Ann Hilliard  
Sean Malott  
LuAnn Mims  
Rick Nicholson  
Jim Rogers  
John White  
Ann Wilson

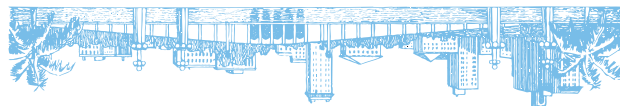
### Historic Preservation Board

Michael Tamney, chairman  
Andy Snyder, vice chairman  
Ken Brower  
Mery Butler  
Jon Kirk  
Brad Lunz  
C. Rick Mall  
L. Burl Wilson, Jr.  
Tom Winslow  
Mary Ann Zender  
Lynn Schindler, city liaison  
Matthew Lyons, city staff

### Members

# HISTORIC LAKELAND QUARTERLY

P.O. Box 5347 • Lakeland, Florida 33802



Historic Lakeland Quarterly is the official newsletter of Historic Lakeland, Inc. and the City of Lakeland Historic Preservation Board. The newsletter is published quarterly.

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Permit # 512  
Lakeland, FL