



THE ST. AUGUSTINE REPORT

Local news in our Nation's Oldest City



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It's about history!!

President Clinton's 1992 campaign theme was "It's about the economy." This issue of the *Report* is about history, more specifically contributions and responses of readers to recent history items in the *Report*, as we prepare for our city's 450th birthday, just 1,954 days away.

Critical to both our commemoration and the future of our heritage program is the current effort to repeal state legislation authorizing the University of Florida (UF) to take over management of 34 state-owned historic properties here. That legislation came with the hope that the university could succeed where we had failed, to get funding to repair the properties, but the legislature's reply was the same - no money.

Today we have a City Commission commitment and Heritage Department business plan to succeed in our stewardship of these properties. The full text is at www.oldcity450.com.

And our community is urged to email UF President [Bernard Machen](mailto:Bernard.Machen@ufl.edu) to support our request for repeal, while continuing our strong academic relationship with the University.

1812 - We are not alone

We may continue to hold title to being the only city whose Constitution Monument survived orders from restored monarch Ferdinand VII in 1814 to destroy all such monuments, but ours is not the only tribute to the Spanish Constitution of 1812.

Clara Wald-hari, a former archivist at our Castillo de San Marcos, found monuments in Comayagua, Honduras, and Cadiz, Spain, where the Constitution of 1812 was created. Both were erected in later years to acknowledge the foundation of Spain's democracy.



Monuments in St. Augustine, Honduras, and Cadiz

Considering the vast empire of Spain 200 years ago, and the political turmoil of the time - the constitution was reinstated in 1820 - 1823, again briefly in 1836 - 1837, replaced in 1845, and again in 1978 with today's



1965 - Memories of city's 400th

Henry Hird (Atlantique Press) has several medallions and programs from our 400th anniversary in 1965.

Jamie Alvarez in our 450 commemoration office has an intern working on a memorabilia program for exhibit during our commemoration period.

All that's needed now is your memorabilia. Time to open those boxes, dust those files and see if you might have buttons, ticket stubs, programs, posters, advertising gimmicks and the like to contribute - or loan - to the effort.

Contact the [Report](#) or [Jamie](#) 209-4226

Anticipating a rush for official licensing of commemoration products for our 450th, it's likely such a surge occurred 45 years ago as well.

constitution - it's possible more than one passionate city stayed under Ferdinand's radar.

A La Pepa (Constitution) Consortium [website](#) shows extensive plans for the bicentennial of the Spanish Constitution in 2012.

1943-1946 - German POWs here?

Responding to a *Report* item about German POWs in prisoner of war camps in the south - featured in a traveling exhibit that visited here last week, local historian David Nolan writes, "We did have a German POW camp here, to harvest the crops. It is still standing at Spuds, on the right side of State Road 207, just before State Road 206. I tried to get the county to put



an historic marker on it - so far without success."

Folks with German ancestry were first to visit a traveling exhibit - a converted bus - hosted by our Historical Society in its parking lot last Thursday.

[Traces](#) was developed by a Midwest Quaker, Ph. D. Michael Luick-Thrams, and focuses on a

camp in Iowa, where half the population is of German ancestry. Relations with residents were so good, a video notes, the Germans left behind a massive nativity scene which is on display each December.

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1965/1976 - 400th just the beginning?

St. Augustine native and former city commissioner Sandra Parks-Kennedy notes, "The height of the interpretive program in the historic district was not the 400th as people believe, because the building of the Spanish period reproductions was just underway.

"The most buildings and corporations exhibiting our history was in 1976, the American Bicentennial," she says.

"There were glass blowers, a weaver, woodcraftsman, blacksmith shop, and numerous private businesses operating museums or conducting business in restored buildings - 12 museums between Fort Lane and Treasury Street in state or Restoration Foundation buildings, most of which had no admission. They are now shops, except for the Colonial Spanish Quarter."

Among her recollections along St. George Street: the Museum of Yesterday's Toys, Infiesta Cigars (where public could see cigar making), Pan American Building, and Independent Life building museum.

Gone with the flurry of demolition and reconstruction along St. George in the 1960s was the Parks Hotel, built by her grandfather in 1910, and razed in 1964.

A photo shows the Parks Hotel on the west side of St. George the day before the demolition, with the Arrivas House and Cathedral spire in the distance beyond. Among Sandra's recollections of the hotel, an Emmett Fritz studio, and music store frequented by a student at the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind - Ray Charles.



St. George Street 1964 - Traffic gone, buildings going

20?? - a new transportation era?



Camera catches special Amtrak train crossing San Sebastian River Saturday

Officials from eight cities along FEC rails on the east coast of Florida - including St. Augustine Vice Mayor Errol Jones - took an "inspection tour" aboard an Amtrak train Saturday, hoping it is but the first of regular runs linking Jacksonville to Miami.

"This is a tremendous opportunity for St. Augustine," Jones said after disembarking from a Daytona-St. Augustine leg of the journey that began in Miami. "It can bring more visitors here, and best of all, without cars!"

Cities along the way turned out to support the Amtrak plan: a band greeted the train in Stuart, horseback riders in Fort Pierce, "Daytona (hearts) Amtrak" signs in Daytona, and Bunnell - not scheduled for a stop in the plan - lined the trackside with American flags and sign wavers.

Our city will host a public workshop on the Amtrak effort next Tuesday at 6 p.m. in the Alcazar Room at City Hall. City

commissiones will mneet as our Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) before Monday's regular 5 p.m. City Commission meeting to consider a resolution supporting Amtrak and a station at US 1 and Carrera Street, and delegates will gather for a progress session Wednesday.

History's Highlights

1848 - Portrait: Wife and Child of Osceola

One in a series of historic features as we prepare for our commemorations, drawn from research by George Gardner

Seminole stories in the *Report* brought from one reader a paper sent to her with a picture captioned, "The Wife and Child of Osceola, The Last Seminole Indian Chief." It appears in the paper to be well documented as appearing in The Illustrated London News January 29 1848 - ten years after Osceola's death.

The paper states, "Purchased by William Ryan from documents dealer in London - original document 11 x 14 inches approx. ... The picture was reportedly made by a 'North American Indian artist' and brought to London to present to the Queen by Colonel Sherburne. Shows Pe-o-ha, wife of Osceola.

"Col. John H. Sherburne was a wonderful character. In 1837 he was the representative of Secretary of War Joel R. Poinsett to approach Cherokee Chief John Ross in July of 1837, asking (that) if Ross could quiet the Seminole firebrand Osceola, the federal government would consider this a favor to repay.

"Are you authorized by the President of the U States to guarantee safety and protection to the lives of Osceola and others of the four trusted Cherokees sent to Florida" asked Ross. When the Cherokee delegation arrived, Osceola had already been captured. Col. Sherburne was definitely with this group of Cherokees.

"Unfortunately (U.S. commander, Maj. Gen. Thomas S.) Jesup had arrested the Chiefs, and was negative to the Cherokee delegation, which later made protests back to the Secretary of War.

"Mr. Ryan believes the picture to be authentic in that Col. Sherburne was there, and wrote that Osceola had presented him with several artifacts."

Osceola is believed to have had two wives - one Indian and one black - and it was the seizure of his black wife by an Indian agent in 1835 that outraged Osceola and sparked the Second Seminole War (1835-1842).



The St. Augustine Report is published by the Department of Public Affairs of the City of St. Augustine each Tuesday and on Fridays previewing City Commission meetings. The Report is written and distributed by George Gardner, former St. Augustine Mayor (2002-2006) and Commissioner (2006-2008) and a longtime newspaper reporter and editor. Contact The *Report* at gardner@aug.com

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