



## **BUDDY SULLIVAN RETURNS**

### **Gule Society to Meet Tuesday, November 9 Gule Room, St. Marys Library**

Program Chairman Rodney Sheffield announces that Buddy's subject will be BRYAN COUNTY - his latest book. This prolific writer and gifted speaker always presents an outstanding program. Each time he has spoken, he has brought his subject to life for his listeners. You will want to be early to be assured a seat.

EARLY DAYS ON THE GEORGIA TIDEWATER, THE DARIEN JOURNAL OF JOHN GIRARDEAU LEGARE, MEMORIES OF MCINTOSH AND SAPELO, A HISTORY are among his publications. He also assisted with THE NEW GEORGIA GUIDE.

For you newcomers, Buddy is the manager of the Sapelo Island National Estuarine Research Reserve. In his "spare" time, he teaches coastal history at Community College and in an ongoing series for Coastal Georgia Historical Society.

## **ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

Come to the November meeting prepared to vote. As you note, no active campaigning is taking place - but feel free to nominate someone! These are up for re-election: Eloise Thompson, vice president; Mildred Walko, treasurer; Susan Lee, secretary. President's and corresponding secretary's slots are vacant. Directors will be up for re-election in 2000.

## **WHAT IS THERE TO KNOW ABOUT BRYAN COUNTY?**

This old Georgia county just south of Chatham (Savannah) was established in 1793 and is bounded by Chatham, Liberty, Evans, and Bulloch. When it was created, it took land from Chatham and Effingham and surrendered land when Bulloch was created in 1796. It is 439 square miles in size and has two major rivers, Ogeechee and Medway.

Bryan County was named for Jonathan Bryan (1708-1788), who helped establish the Georgia colony.

The dead town of Hardwick on the Ogeechee was the first county seat. During colonial days, it was proposed that the town replace Savannah as Georgia's capital. Pembroke in the western part of Bryan County is the county seat.

Fast growing Richmond Hill is best known for its association with Henry Ford, who built his home on his 70,000 acre holdings, the site of antebellum rice plantations. Mr. Ford set to work supplying jobs for a then impoverished county. He built medical clinics, chapels, schools and a community center for the area. Some buildings remain. (For more details, see THE VIEW FROM STERLING BLUFF by Glen McCaskey.)

A favorite site for tourists is the remains of Fort McAllister near the mouth of the Ogeechee River. This was built to defend Savannah from Union forces and, as a state historic site, it offers camp sites, picnic area, boat ramp and a nature trail. The restored earthworks fortifications and museum give the military history of the area.

## **FROM CAMDEN TO BRYAN COUNTY**

This information comes from CAMDEN'S CHALLENGE and Dr. Robert Brandon's THREE QUARTERS: A MEMOIR.

J. S. N. Davis and George Brandon began their joint timbering business in 1905 as Woodbine Timber Company, operating at Owen's Ferry on the Satilla River. J. O. Dyal

was the general manager. Soon timber camps were located all through Camden County, and later in Glynn. Timber leases on various tracts supplied the timber. Upon Mr. Dyal's death in 1922, the business became Brandon Timber Company, but was more commonly called, "Davis and Brandon."

The business included sawmills and turpentine stills. At the peak of operation, Davis and Brandon ran seven stills with the largest at Halifax east of Woodbine. Brandon Timber Company was one of Camden's largest employers for a number of years. The sawmill in St. Marys burned in 1918, and as timber resources were becoming depleted in this region, Mr. Brandon looked to other areas, and relocated in Kilkenny in Bryan County.



George Brandon of Davis & Brandon Timber Company. Grandfather of Mayor Jerry Brandon and Pete Brandon of St. Marys. [Photo credit - Martha Brandon]

George Brandon's son Robert describes Kilkenny: "Kilkenny was truly a mill village, a one-industry community. The only buildings not owned by Brandon Lumber Company were the old plantation house where we lived and its environs. ... There was a little railroad, with a wood-burning steam locomotive that carried logs from the river to a pool at the end of the mill. Logs from the river were loaded on the train by a 'skidder' mounted to a 'lighter' tied to the dock..."

"The mill grew and the community grew with it. Lumber for the workers' houses was produced on the site. The houses, even those occupied by the supervisors and foremen, would not be considered by today's standards. A hotel was the first building erected; it could house more people than smaller units ... the 'quarters' were built, black and white, different in content, but similar in construction..."

"We sent naval goods, rosin and turpentine, to Savannah

or Brunswick by lighter for reshipment to larger markets. The lighters returned loaded with mule feed, salt pork, nails, ropes, kerosene, and other supplies.

"Daddy (George Brandon) built the school and desks and benches; not much of an undertaking, as there was only one room and about twelve desks accommodating twice that many students in the six grades. This was not a public school and we had one teacher, Marion Talley, for all grades and subjects. The outhouse was bigger than the school...

"The mill burned in the summer of 1925. ... The fire was in the mill proper and gave enough light to last until dawn. We brought in trucks and pulled down the railway that carried all the lumber from the mill. In that way the fire was contained and only the mill was lost... There was enough lumber to fill two more boats. A little piling was cut after that, but Kilkenny was almost history."

### FROM BRYAN-LANG HISTORICAL LIBRARY

Welcome to Darren Harper, who comes to Bryan-Lang from Brunswick. He will begin work on November 15. Details in February newsletter.

Volunteers are needed at Bryan-Lang. If you can spend some time helping with filing, indexing or misc. other activities, please call Eloise Thompson at 882-4587 or the library at 576-5841.

### FROM OTHER SOURCES

The Georgia Historical Society has planned the 2000 Georgia Local History Conference for February 4 & 5, 2000 at the Jekyll Island Club with the local hosts Friends of Historic Jekyll Island and Coastal Georgia Historical Society. The conference will include all-day workshops, tours of local historic sites, a reception and Affiliate Chapter Book Fair. All Gule Board Members make plans to attend. This will be discussed at January's executive work session.

Upcoming Georgia Historical Society lectures: November 11 - Dixie Rising: How the South is Shaping American Values, Politics and Culture - with speaker Peter Applebome of the New York Times.

On December 2 - What's Still Southern About the South? - by Dr. John Shelton Reed of the University of North Carolina.

Both lectures will be held at the Georgia Historical Society in Savannah at 6:30 p.m.

### WE GET LETTERS

Larry and Marlys Lang of Tifton, Georgia are among the Society's newest members and they wrote they had found the mailing address for Gule on the Internet. Larry was a descendant of Isaac Lang, Sr. through his son Isaac, Jr. Welcome, cuz'n!

From Bill Davis of Atlanta as he renewed his membership: "I can't do without my monthly 'fix.'"

A note from Harrell descendant Mary Cassels let us know that she has married, is now Mary Merritt, and has moved from Jacksonville to Brunswick. Congratulations!

### BOOKS AND BOOKS

A new book for those of you with Brunswick ties or are interested in World War II — **THE MEMORIES OF THE MARSHES OF GLYNN, WORLD WAR II**, compiled and edited by Thora Olsen Kimsey and Sonja Olsen Kinard. This series of interviews gives a vivid picture of the shipyard days when Brunswick's population more than tripled and housing was nonexistent for some. Many recalled the sinking of ships and rescue of survivors in sight of St. Simons. This is a "must read" for coastal residents. Check your local bookstore or order from WWII MEMORIES BOOK, PO Box 1844, Decatur, GA 30031. \$32.50 with \$5 shipping.

If you have never bought a copy of **CAMDEN'S CHALLENGE**, the county history, you may order from Bryan-Lang Historical Library, PO Box 725, Woodbine, GA 31569. \$30 plus \$4 mailing.

The library also has James Vocelle's 1914 **HISTORY OF CAMDEN COUNTY**. \$11 plus \$2 shipping.

Pay a visit to Bryan-Lang for other publications.

You may still order **ST. MARYS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH 1799-1999** from St. Marys United Methodist Church, 106 E. Conyers Street, St. Marys, GA 31558. \$15 plus \$3 mailing.

### MEMBERSHIPS

Sad to say, bid farewell to some of our members who failed to renew in 1999, although they had gentle and not so gentle reminders. October is the cut-off month for renewal. Also, any new members joining in October are considered members for the coming year 2000.

New members in '99: Fred Mercier Family, John Bowen Family, Charles Curry Family, Lanny Morton Family, Larry Lang Family (Tifton), John Bailey Family, Kathleen Luke/Bill Herman, John Neff Family. Individuals: David Baldwin, Tara Fields, Joyce Warren (Baldwin), Nancy Wynn, Joyce Steinecke, Roland Loveless (St. Augustine), Wilbur Sheffield, Joyce Padgett, Clay Adams (Lutz), Jeanne Legner, Gary Dickey (Union City, CA), Libby Dawson (Yulee), and June Jones (Anderson, Indiana).

### EARLY BIRDS FOR 2000

Kent Chauncey of Orem, Utah; Dr. Bill Davis of Atlanta; Wm. J. Kelley Family; W. C. King of Avondale Estates (2001); John Love Family (2001); Patricia McMillan; Frank Stagl Family (new); Wm. E. Thompson of Savannah.

January is renewal month — if you would like to send your dues in before you forget, that will be fine. Send dues to Mildred Walko, 800 Margaret Street, St. Marys, GA 31558.

Family \$15      Individual \$8      Student \$2

This is the last issue until February — so Happy Holidays one and all!