



AUTUMN 2023

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The OLDsLetter

A quarterly publication of the OLDSMAR HISTORICAL SOCIETY

*The past is our heritage...the present is
our responsibility...the future is our challenge*

Sharing and preserving the wealth of Oldsmar's history as a
501(c)3 non-profit educational organization since 2003

A HOT...QUIET SUMMER...

- As our museum was closed for the summer months of June, July, and August, all valuable museum artifacts were boxed and would be transported to a safe hurricane proof City facility in the event of a pending storm. Many thanks to City Manager Felicia Donnelly for her assistance.
- Longtime member and volunteer Gail Stroud passed into eternity in late June. Gail was a valuable asset to the OHS and will be missed. Gail is shown in this photo with former Oldsmar Mayor and historian Jerald Beverland and her sister Tina Stroud, posing with Jerald's treasured chair owned by Abraham Lincoln, Christmas time of 2015.



- During much of the summer and on a rotating basis, some of the “Welcome to Oldsmar” signs at various entry points, displayed the historic tidbit shown here.
- The museum re-opened for normal hours on September 5th. Hours are Tuesdays and Thursdays 10:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m. and City Council meeting nights (typically the first and third Tuesdays) 6:00 – 7:00 p.m.



- Volunteer Orientation Workshop was held on Saturday, September 9th.
- Coordination with the Leisure Services department of the City has started to post signs in each of our City parks with brief historical information.



OHS celebrated our 20th Anniversary with cake and a reception on Tuesday, May 16, 2023



We had a nice crowd and everyone enjoyed touring the museum.



OHS Board of Directors

MaryAnn Kruse, President • Bill Afonso, Vice-President

Dan Saracki, Treasurer • Jeri Antozzi, Curator • Kenn Sidorewich, Membership Coordinator

Members at-Large – Maryann Mann and Dave Pacheco

OLD Information that may be NEW to you

Ohio born Ransom Eli Olds expanded his 1892 gasoline powered engine to build a “horseless carriage” in 1897 at his Olds Motor Vehicle Company plant in Lansing Michigan. The company was later renamed the Olds Motor Works.

The “Curved Dash Oldsmobile” was the best-selling vehicle in the world from 1900 to 1904. A vehicle called the *Speedwagon* was also produced in Lansing. Wonder where that Rock group *REO Speedwagon* came up with their name?

A little known tidbit is the fact that RE Olds used an assembly line production method – albeit a stationary type – before that Henry Ford guy, who seems to get historical credit for it possibly because Ford’s was a moving one. Mr. Olds sold his interest in the Oldsmobile company to an upstart endeavor named *General Motors* in 1904.

Intrigued by the proximity of available land near Tampa and Tarpon Springs, Florida, Mr. Olds purchased 37,541 acres of land in the upper Pinellas area in 1916. Currently our town of Oldsmar is made up of 6,080 acres, so you can see that our Founder had big plans for the area. Originally our town was called R.E. Olds-on-the Bay from its founding in 1916 until 1927, when the residents, wishing to capitalize on the popularity of Tampa, called it Tampa Shores. That name lasted until 1937 when our sparsely populated hamlet voted to change the name and incorporate it into the current Oldsmar.

“Olds” of course for Ransom Eli....and the “mar” being the Spanish for “sea, or a body of water”. Even though your OLDsLetter Editor is from New Jersey, I can figure out the name composition, since our Oldsmar sits at the top of *Old Tampa Bay*.

Having lost most of his property assets (the Bank building an exception of course) to the last hurricane to make landfall in Pinellas County in 1921, Mr. Olds eventually liquidated all his Florida assets and was gone from the area by 1926.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Hopefully sometime in 2024, the OHS museum will begin the process of moving to a larger room at the Oldsmar Library. After much consideration, the OHS Board of Directors approved the City's suggested relocation. Regretfully, the museum will not be in the historic bank building any longer, but on the positive side, the library location should expose the museum to more foot traffic and visibility.

- * **Saturday, October 7th** – Walking tour of the older part of town – meet at the Bank building at 9:45 a.m.
 - * **Saturday, November 4th** – Charlie Lister, son of former Oldsmar Mayor Bud Lister will speak about his family and growing up in Oldsmar. 10:00 a.m. in the Bank building.
 - * **Wednesday, November 15th** is the day for OHS representatives to share our town's history with 3rd Grade classes at Oldsmar Elementary School as part of the *Great American Teach-In*. OHS has participated in this event for many years.
 - * **Tuesday, November 28th** – Christmas tree lighting ceremony at City Hall starting at 6:00 p.m. The museum will be open and serving beverages and cookies during and after the event.
 - * **Saturday, January 13th** – Jolly Trolley City Tours – 10:00 a.m. and 12:00 noon – \$5 discount for Members.
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VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES ARE ALWAYS AVAILABLE TO MEMBERS
PLEASE CONSIDER HELPING OUT YOUR OHS.

“Volunteers are not paid because they are worthless. Volunteers are not paid because they are priceless.” - Sherry Anderson

Tax-deductible donations are appreciated as your OHS does incur some operating expenses.

SUGGESTIONS AND IDEAS FOR THE “OLDsLetter” ARE ALWAYS APPRECIATED.
e-MAIL OR STOP IN AT THE MUSEUM

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101 State St W – Ste 2, Oldsmar, FL 34677-3601
Impact Grafx, Inc. – PUBLISHER
Kenn Sidorewich – EDITOR
(813) 716-7434 • ohs34677@gmail.com • Oldsmarhistoricalsociety.org