



THE MIHS NEWS

Summer, 2013

Marco Island Historical Society
Established May 17, 1994



The Marco Island Historical Society Welcomes Austin Bell as Curator of Collections

The addition of Austin Bell as Curator of Collections to the Marco Island Historical Society's museum staff promises to accelerate the completion of the long awaited Calusa Gallery Exhibit. Although the shell of the exhibit has been there for some time, it has just been a preview of what is to come. From the start, plans for the exhibit to tell the story of Marco Island from its geological formation, the arrival of archaic Indians and, later, the Muspa and Calusa in the region, have been carefully laid out. Particular attention will be given to the 1896 Key Marco expedition by famed anthropologist Frank Hamilton Cushing, which yielded some of the most spectacular wooden artifacts ever discovered in North America.

Austin's background in Anthropology and Museum Studies, as well as his five years of experience at the Florida Museum of Natural History under Curator William H. Marquardt, will allow this dream to be realized. His primary role initially will be as the point person for communicating with Creative Arts and ObjectIDEA, the companies hired to design the gallery. He will also be working on constructing the

exhibit's narrative with Dr. Robin Brown of Fort Myers, author of "Florida's First People: 12,000 Years of Human History." Locally, Austin will be able to add to his knowledge base working in conjunction with Craig Woodward, who has spent great quantities of time learning about the history of Marco Island and its surrounding areas. Lisa Marciano, the museum's manager and liaison with the Collier County Museum, will also be a part of the collaborative effort. Together they will work to illustrate, via the exhibition of well-researched text, graphics, and artifacts, the fact that people have lived on Marco Island for thousands of years.

Museum Hours:
Tuesday - Saturday
9-4

Marco Moment: 1927 - In May, Collier City (Marco Island) is incorporated by the state Legislature. It was abolished in 1957.

"Preserving the history and heritage of our community."



Greetings!

I would like to start this Quarter's Newsletter by recalling part of my first Newsletter as President back in January: "When I think back to the early Capital Campaign fund raising days, I am struck by the fierce determination of those involved to build our Museum. I said many times while speaking to potential donors at the fund raising events that I have never been associated with a more dedicated or determined group of individuals. We now enjoy the fruits of that labor of love that all involved brought to the effort of creating the fabulous property we have now. That dedication is now embodied in our tireless group of volunteers that are busy as docents, manning the museum store, serving as set up crews for events at the Rose History Auditorium, serving on the Board of Directors, and much, much more. We wouldn't exist without their large contributions of time, professional, and personal skills, and love for the Museum and MIHS, day in and day out. Our donors, large and small, deserve a resounding thank you for their generous gifts. None of this would have happened without you!"

We have many "opportunities" ahead in 2013

- * Increase visibility and visitors
- * Grow our Endowment Fund
- * Stabilize and grow our membership base

The reason I shared that with you again is because while we need to celebrate our success in raising the funds to build our Museum, we should also recognize that we must take the necessary Steps to "run the day to day business" of our Society. Now is also the time to take steps to secure the long term financial health of the Society through our Endowment Fund.

Your Board of Directors is taking those steps.

Our Strategic Planning session held on Monday June 3, confirmed what we believe are our TOP 5 PRIORITIES FOR THE SOCIETY AND MUSEUM.

PERMANENT EXHIBITS: Number one priority
By completing the permanent exhibits, we will accomplish several things:

- * Enhance Museum visibility, and bring in more visitors
- * We expect to return the Marco Cat to Marco on first a temporary loan basis, then possibly on permanent loan

* Accreditation. We will be in better position to attain accreditation.

Austin Bell will be working under the direction of Kathy Miracco on all of these expectations. Here is a quote from Past President Miracco: "With the hiring of Austin, the MIHS has moved into the world of "collections." In addition to his work on the Calusa Gallery, Austin will provide the expertise necessary to develop a Collection Policy for the MIHS and this is a very important step in our goal to gain museum accreditation." More on Austin later.

INCREASING REVENUE and the ENDOWMENT FUND tied as our number two priority.

* We are planning multiple ways to increase revenue. Through enhanced Store sales, the rental of the RHA, possibly beginning an annual fund raising drive, and we want to continue to deliver exciting fund raising special events.

* Through our recent Membership Survey, we learned from you that you would like us to review membership pricing, and enhance our membership value by adding additional benefits. One of which is to eliminate the \$3.00 charge to members for the Monthly Programs. We expect to finalize any changes at the June meeting and begin the notification process in July.

* We must build our Endowment fund to a point where it can help sustain the operation of the Museum and provide for traveling exhibits, permanent exhibits, historical or education programs and capital expenditures. The Endowment can and should be the lifeblood of our financial future. It is critical that we dedicate ourselves to growing it.
ADDING STAFF/CONSULTANTS: Number four priority

As much as we would like to, your Directors do not have all the necessary knowledge or experience in, merchandising for example, to stock the Museum Store, price merchandise, or train volunteers to work the store. Nor do we have the expertise in Archeology or museum design to organize our collection of artifacts or help write the story line to make the Exhibits come to life in the Museum. We need people with those skill sets to help us. That is why we have hired Lori Wagor to Manage the Store and the RHA in June of 2011, and more recently Austin Bell on June 3 or this year. This news letter has a separate piece on Austin and his education and experience, and we are extremely fortunate to have him here working on our Exhibits, and organizing our collection of artifacts. Both Lori and Austin have huge rolls to fill for the Society.

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from our Curator of Collections....

Austin Bell

As I stepped into the empty Calusa Gallery on June 3, 2013, my first official day as Curator of Collections at the Marco Island Historical Museum, my mind brimmed with both excitement and trepidation. The blank "canvas" in front of me simultaneously presented an enormous challenge and tremendous opportunity, the kind of project I went to graduate school for in the first place. In time, I knew the trepidation would subside, replaced by an optimistic self-assurance instilled over years of training in the museum field. Still,



having such an opportunity right out of school was an incredible blessing, one for which I am interminably grateful. I promised myself then and there that I'd give everything I had to this exhibit, not just in fulfillment of my contractual obligations, but also in hopes of repaying the MIHS for believing in me. Given the "blockbuster" archaeological history of Marco Island, the years of previous hard work by the MIHS Board of Directors and Collier County Museums, and the boundless enthusiasm of the local community, I knew that the Calusa Gallery could be something special.

Sentimental hogwash aside, the Calusa Gallery was not going to complete itself. I quickly immersed myself in all sorts of literature, learning more about the fantastic history of Marco Island. Much of this information is already held in the minds of our board members and exhibit consultants, but in order to fully comprehend the exhibit's scale and direction, I had to play catch-up on the past. After all, though I have some familiarity with the Calusa Indians and Cushing's Key Marco expedition via my work at the Florida Museum of Natural History, I am certainly no expert on Marco Island. I grew up on the east coast of Florida while in school. Luckily for me, folks such as Robin Brown, Kathy Miracco, Alan Sandlin, Tom Wagon, and Craig Woodward had thought extensively about this exhibit for years, providing me with valuable insight and test. My first priorities would be to review their notes, imagine how they could be woven into a coherent story and displayed within the Calusa Gallery, and establish a "big idea" for the exhibit. Frequently used in the museum field when developing exhibits, a "big idea" helps exhibit makers limit the scope of their content while deciding what the overall message of the exhibit should be. By the end of the first week, we had decided on our "big idea": "people have lived on Marco Island for thousands of years." This is the theme that will be consistent throughout the exhibit, weaving the overall narrative together and facilitating visitor comprehension of the idea that Marco Island has been "home" for five millennia.

In addition to establishing a "big idea", we recently completed a preliminary layout and text hierarchy, to be submitted to our design consultants for review. This hierarchy will tell the designers how much space to dedicate to each section of the exhibit, allowing them to move forward as we continue to flesh out the details. This was a crucial first step in reuniting the process, which had stalled in recent months. With a better idea of "what will go" where, we can start thinking more about specific text and the types of artifacts to display. Speaking of artifacts, I will be in London in early July, where I have the good fortune of touring the Key Marco collection at the British Museum. Dr. Jago Cooper, Curator of the Americas at the British Museum, generously offered his time on the afternoon of July 4th, a date that has slightly different connotation in England than it does in the United States. I am happy to forgo the usual barbecue and fireworks this year in the name of international collaboration, as I'll come face to face with the very artifacts excavated from Key Marco by Col. Durnford in 1895. His finds are ultimately what brought Frank Hamilton Cushing to Marco Island a year later, which of course produced such spectacular artifacts as the "Key Marco cat." Don't worry, MIHS is not footing the bill for my international adventures, I had planned for this family vacation long before I came to Marco Island. The opportunity to see the collection was simply too coincidental to ignore, so I'll be taking my work, if you call it that, with me on vacation, at least for one day. With my feet under me, I look forward to returning to work and carrying on with the momentum for a productive July.

If anyone has any questions, comments, or input on the exhibit or my new position, please do not hesitate to contact me at austinjbell@gmail.com.

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CALENDAR OF PROGRAM EVENTS

BJ HENNING

We have wonderful speakers lined up for July, August, September, October, and November. We all have enjoyed this years presenters and have learned a lot about Florida's history, what it was like to be a black man in the state of Florida, the roads that were created, the animals that share our environment, St. Augustine and it's myths, the Collier County, how Marco looked in it's beginning stages, the history and the life of the Seminole. What our outstanding Tiger Tail Beach is all about, and how Florida has survived from Ponce DeLeon to Chavis. We know after you have heard these speaker, you will say, "Wow, I did not know that! July 9, 2013 - "Movie Mania", Dave Johnson, former Sheriff, will talk about the biggest drug bust that took place in Collier County. We will also be showing the movie about the times and drug busts, presents "Square Grouper"

August 6, 2013 - Bill Hughes presents, "Marco In The Making", Filmography of Marco, 2-30 minute movies
September 3, 2013 - Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki, "The Life of the Seminole". A Seminole village representative will teach us about the Seminole Tribe and the Museum they have depicting their life.

Meetings are held the 1st Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m. in the Rose History Auditorium, unless noted, and are open to the public.

Watch for EXCITING details.

News From the Museum Volunteers

The "snow birds" did fly and the "sun birds" have landed. Thank you all!!!

Last week we had a tour of 60 plus visitors.

First Lisa took them to the "Rose History Auditorium" where they watched the video on Marco history.

Then they came into the museum where there was a volunteer in each of the galleries to answer questions and further tell the great story of Marco. "Best Tours will return again in July and August. We volunteers look forward to their coming.

The month of May we had 500 visitors and a total of 7000 visitors since January.

If you have 3 hours to give as a volunteer, we'll take them, and you'll never regret it. Call or e-mail me - Louise Russell 394-1960

Continued from Page 2

RECRUITING LEADERSHIP: Number five priority Many of you have served on "Not for Profit Boards" in your career so you are familiar with responsibilities of the Directors. You are also familiar then with the importance of recruiting people with a passion for the mission of the organization and professional or life skill sets that will help the organization prosper. Just so you know, you MIHS Board has many responsibilities:

Grant writing for funding, publicity of the organization, assuring financial records are maintained properly, submission of all IRS and State requirements for the organization, fundraising, developing the monthly programs, creating traveling exhibits, promoting membership, and developing educational programs for school children, just to name a few. The current Directors will be doing our best to find and recruit the type of people that can help continue to fulfill the mission of your Historical Society.

Now that you've heard more about why we are moving in the direction we are, and what your Directors are doing to get us there, let me make one thing very clear. We need our VOLUNTEERS now, more than ever...As I said in the January Newsletter and at the beginning of this one, "We now enjoy the fruits of that labor of love that all involved brought to the effort of creating the fabulous property we have now. That dedication is now embodied in our tireless group of volunteers that are busy as docents, manning the museum store, serving as set up crews for events at the Rose History Auditorium, serving on the Board of Directors, and much, much more. We wouldn't exit without their large contributions of time, professional and personal skills, and love for the Museum and MIHS". We simply will not succeed in our efforts to move the MIHS forward without a strong volunteer corps.

You should know that we are also in the process of establishing quarterly volunteer social events, to show our volunteers how much we appreciate what they are doing for us. If you are a current volunteer, look for more news on these events shortly. If you have interest in joining our fabulous team of volunteers, please call the museum for more information!

Finally, I am thrilled to announce another new program called MIHS PEOPLE PROFILES. In a separate monthly E blast, we will be profiling one our volunteers, our two professional consultants (Lori and Austin) and Board members so that we can all learn more about the unique people involved in the daily operation of you Marco Island Historical Society.

Have a wonderful summer, and we'll see you in the fall!!!

Tom Wagon

A People Without the Knowledge
of Their Past History, Origin and
Culture is like a Tree Without
Roots.

Marcus Garvey

"Preserving the history and heritage of our community."

Welcome.....
and Thank you to our NEW MEMBERS

Janet DeAnna
Muffy Clark Gill
Tom and Cindy Jones
Bob and Joanne Schrimjz



The Results Are In! MIHS Membership lets their thoughts be known!

In May, the Board O Directors commissioned a survey of the members to ask for their feedback on the value of membership in the Society. Using an on-line survey tool, a series of multiple choice questions were asked concerning the types of programs presented, the quality of speakers featured, the preferred methods of communication utilized and the potential ways to increase the value of membership.

We are pleased to report that the response was excellent. Here is what we learned from you: The quality of the programs and speakers presented at our monthly meetings achieved high marks.

The sense of community experienced by belonging to the Historical Society was very important to our members. As a result, more social events and member interactions were recommended.

Email and our Quarterly Newsletter are important methods of communication with the membership. Finishing our permanent exhibits and returning important artifacts to the Museum would greatly increase the value of membership in the MIHS.

We also leaned from you that you would like us to review membership pricing, and enhance our membership value by adding additional benefits.



The Marco Island Historical Museum recently received a 2013 TripAdvisor Award of Excellence. The accolade, which honors hospitality excellence, is given only to establishments that consistently achieve outstanding traveler reviews on TripAdvisor, and is extended to businesses world wide. Only the top-performing 10 percent of businesses listed on TripAdvisor receive this prestigious award. "Florida Shorebirds and Birds of Prey" by photographer Marie Adams opens June 29, 2013 and will be displayed until August 30, 2013. The opening reception will be held July 11 from 5 PM to 7 PM. For the last 20 years, Marie Adams has served as the Fort Myers City Clerk. Since 2007, she has spent her off hours capturing Southwest Florida's shorebirds and birds of prey in all seasons and in every light level, from dawn to dusk. The photographs depict the lives of these birds in their natural environments, capturing flight and landing, mating rituals, nest building, feeding their young, seasonal plumage and more. None of her photographs have been retouched or taken with a flash.

Lisa Marciano, Museum Director

One item under consideration is to eliminate the \$3.00 charge to members for the Monthly Programs. We expect to finalize any changes at the June Board of Directors meeting and begin the notification process in July.

In addition, the open ended question yielded valuable comments and suggestions such as increasing the number of field trips scheduled, offering daytime programs, combining art, history and music in our programs and involving children and young adults in the MIHS. Your Board of Directors greatly appreciates your feedback. As part of our Strategic Planning process we will use all that we have learned from you to shape our future direction. Thank you.

Pat Rutledge
Publicity Chairperson

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The MIHS Mews

from the "Ground Up", Alan Sandlin, Museum Grounds Committee Chair



A look at the Past:

Greeting from Your Marco Island Historical Society, summer 2013. I have attached a photo of your beautiful museum grounds after some recent rains. When your design committee was penciling the museum grounds, we wanted to re-create an atmosphere that conjured up visions not only of a Calusa village, but a picture of the kind of environment the Calusa may be actually experienced. Note in the photo the estuary around the "Shell mound" is filled with water. We know the Calusa used their "water world" much to their advantage for food, transportation and their very way of life - It was unique to their heritage. Now imagine a Calusa dugout translating our very own "waterway". As Dr. William Marquardt noted in his visits to us, we have re-created the finest replica of a Calusa Village that he has seen. With a little imagination, one can transport your mind back in history to that period when Marco Island played a dominant role in the Calusa Empire!

A glimpse of the Future:

Look for a "volunteer grounds clean up" day coming in the fall and please invite your neighbors and friends to our next museum or Rose History Auditorium event and by all means, invite them to join our Marco Island Historical Society. See you on the "Mound" soon!



NEW WEBSITE LAUNCHED BY THE MARCO ISLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Marco Island Historical Society is pleased to announce the official launch of the new MIHS website. A dedicated team of MIHS volunteers and members have created a vibrant and informative web presence that showcases all the best of the MIHS including its mission, Marco Island's history and MIHS events. Members that participated in the MIHS Member Survey in May had a preview after completing the survey. For those of you who have not yet seen it, we encourage you to explore its many new features and pages at the mihs.org.

Our goal is to use the site as an important source in information about the Historical Society and its programs for members and non-members alike. We think you agree that this next generation website is one that we all can be proud of.

The Website Committee of Volunteers Diane, Kathy, Lisa, Lori, Nancy, Pat and Ron
Dedicated Technical designer, John Ribar



Free family-friendly MOVIES! Free candy! Air-conditioning! You can find them all this summer in the Rose History Auditorium at the Marco Island Historical Museum complex, 180 S. Heathwood Dr.

Showtimes for the entire series will be 1:00 PM.

Come and see "Twelve Miles Beneath the Reef" on July 16, "A Farewell to Arms" on July 23, "Sherlock Holmes and the Secret Weapon" on July 30, "Little Shop of Horrors" on August 6th, "Cross Creek" on August 13, "My Pal Trigger" on August 20, "Meet John Doe" on August 27, and bid farewell to summer with "Topper Returns" on Sept 10. Come an hour early and stroll through the museum and gift shop, also free. To print out your ticket for free candy and to read more details about the movies, go to www.themihs.org.

If you are not receiving the hard copy of the MIHS Mews by mail and would like to, please contact Mary Helen Masters at 394-3917

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The MIHS MEWS

Our Sponsors:

A special "Cat's Meow" to our supporting sponsors. We are very grateful and appreciative!



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Hoot's, 394-4644

Little Bar, 394-5663

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Others:



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MIHS Officers

President:	Tom Wagar	642-3411
VP Programs:	BJ Henning	389-4495
Treasurer:	Sam Miloro	642-9186
Record. Sec.:	Heldl Moss	394-3882

Membership Fees

Student:	\$15.00
Individual:	\$35.00
Family:	\$50.00
Business:	\$75.00
Patron:	\$150.00
Life:	\$2,500.00
Make Check Payable to MIHS	
Mail to PO Box 2282, Marco Island, Fl. 34146	

Notes from the Editor!

Hopefully, everyone has read all of the very inspiring and informative articles that appear in this edition of your newsletter. Yes, MIHS is on the move with many exciting happenings from the hiring of a curator, movie mania, afternoon movie program, and of course, the moving ahead on our exhibits. Come and join the fun!

Mary Helen Masters



**Larry W. Richardson,
June 4, 2013 Speaker to
MIHS**



MIHS MEWS

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180 S. Heathwood
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