



MIHS

Marco Island Historical Society

Rediscovering Yesterday

Celebrating Today

Preserving It For Tomorrow

March 2016

Patrons of the MIHS got to meet the artists and get a sneak peek of their sketches for the **Windows and Doors to History**, at the "Coming Out Party" held on Saturday, February 13, with much fanfare and appreciation for what lies ahead as we move forward with creating an outside gallery. Then, on Sunday, we hosted the community-wide event which was well attended and sparked lots of interest and excitement.

All seven artists were in attendance and thrilled the crowd with their plans to make the outside walls come alive with the story of Marco Island's amazing history.



John Agnew, Malenda Trick, JJ Stinchcomb, Muffy Clark Gill, Tara O'Neill, Paul Arsenault, Merald Clark joined by Lori Wagor, Chair and Enterprise Manager and Pat Rutledge, Board President and Executive Director

The roster is very impressive and here's a brief look at each of our esteemed artists:

Merald Clark

Merald Clark hails from the University of Florida and has communicated science and history to the public through visual arts, writing, teaching and performing. He holds a Master's degree in Anthropology and two Bachelor degrees in Zoology and Biological illustration.

Clark has made thorough use of his education in various positions as museum artist and museum designer, underwater archaeologist, science teacher and living history interpreter.

For the last nine years he has worked as an interpreter of Florida's Native American heritage with freelance work for the Florida Museum of Natural History, and the Marco Island Historical Museum's Calusa Gallery, among others, and now we are thrilled to have Clark bringing to life the Pleistocene, Archaic and Glades-Muspa eras in three windows along the east side of the Admin Building.



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Paul Arsenault

Paul's incredible talent was first discovered at the age of 16 when he won the Vining Smith Award, competing against many adult painters. Following graduation from the Art Institute in Boston, Paul joined a crew on a research vessel that landed on Florida's east coast. It was then that he met Beanie Buckus, legendary leader of the Highwaymen, who told Paul "to jump ship and start painting" and, fortunately for us, he followed that advice.

He established the Arsenault Gallery over 25 years ago and continues his travels and special commissioned pieces to individuals, corporations and museums.

Paul has been a friend of the MIHS for many years and we are proud to have some of his original artwork displayed on our Museum walls, and now in five windows covering the Calusa era along the walls of the RHA.

John Agnew

John Agnew, hails from Cincinnati, and is regarded as one of the country's premier artists. With a degree in Fine Arts, his work in museums and zoos fostered a dedication to authenticity and realism in his paintings of the natural world.

His travels have taken him around the globe designing and painting large dioramas and murals as well as exploring and getting inspiration from other habitats and animals. He is also a master of "scratchboard art," a very technical and life-like imagery of nature's creatures, and he recently received the prestigious "Patricia Bott Award for Creative Excellence." John has graced the lobby walls with his enchanting world of nature paintings, which generously benefited the MIHS, and now he is painting the Windows & Doors to History "Signature Piece Mural" on the south side of the Museum Building.

JJ Stinchcomb

If you have ever wandered into the Ace Hardware store on Marco Island and seen the mural and vignettes of our famous forefathers, you would know why we chose JJ Stinchcomb for this project. JJ is a home-grown prodigy and his romantic and compelling works are done in the style of the masters.

He has the talent of a veteran artist and brings his own unique approach to his commissioned art work in murals, portraits and artistic faux finishing as evidenced by the amazing transformation of our docent counter in the Museum.

JJ will be portraying the pioneer era in four windows and one door on the south side of the Museum building.

Muffy Clark Gill

Muffy Clark Gill is an award-winning artist (50 to date) and her career spans over 30 years. Her batik paintings have been widely exhibited throughout Florida in prestigious venues such as the LaMoyne Center and the Art Gallery in the Florida State Capitol Building.

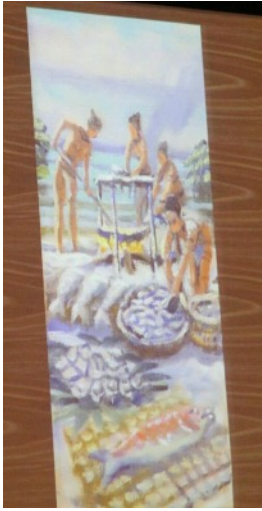
She recently received the United Arts Council of Collier County's "Stars in the Arts" awarded by a jury of her peers.

Muffy created a number of amazing artifact images for the MIHS including a colorful rendition of the Key Marco Cat that has appeared on one of our Patron's plaques as well as sold through the Museum Gift Store.

Muffy lives in Naples and is one of our distinguished local artists painting three Modern Marco windows on the west side of the Museum building.

Tara O'Neill

Tara O'Neill's family came to Marco Island in 1967 just as Deltona Corp. started building the Island that we know today. Her connection with the Modern Marco period is first hand and a perfect fit for her part in the Windows & Doors to History. (Continued on next page.)



Tara achieved her BFA in Studio Arts at South Florida in Tampa and Oxford University in England and continues to stretch her artistic reach by attending workshops around the world.

Her paintings hang in collections throughout the US and Europe and she has earned numerous awards including “Art’s Afire” and MIFA’s “Artist of the Year.”

Best known for her vivid oil paintings, O’Neill operates a thriving mural business and works out of her home gallery on Marco. Tara is painting two Modern Marco Doors on the west side of the Museum, and a graphic interpretive map in collaboration with graphic designer, Sherri Morrison, of the stories depicted in the Windows and Doors project .

Malenda Trick

Malenda Trick sold her first piece of artwork to Howard Kron, the designer of the “Kitty Kat” lamp when she was 3 years old for a nickel and she has been painting ever since.

Early on she started to dissect the works of the impressionists, and she quotes, “the old masters taught me how to paint.” And paint she did as the Tennessee State Museum found her and she produced 66 paintings in 35 days for fundraisers, display and educational purposes. She was on her way! Malenda has created over 60,000 paintings which are displayed around the world and she is regarded as one of the most pre-eminent artists in the home décor market. Her skill as a portrait artist was vividly and beautifully displayed for all to see as she painted the stunning “Veteran’s Mural Wall” in the lobby of the Historical Museum for over 3 months. Who better than Malenda Trick to paint our famous forefathers and mothers? Her three portraits will be located on the west side of the Admin Building.

Story by Lori Wagor Enterprise Manager



President’s Letter

Pat Rutledge
MIHS

President and Executive Director

After some very cold and rainy weather this winter it actually feels like spring is in the air today. But this is Southwest Florida and we all know how quickly things can change. Speaking of changes, in this issue of the Marco Island Historical Society Newsletter you will read about a number of important ones.

- The first change is the announcement of the 2016 MIHS Officer Slate. Your Executive Committee for this year is as follows: Pat Rutledge - President and Executive Director, Bruce Graev – President Elect, Gene D’Onofrio – Treasurer, Sam Miloro – Assistant Treasurer and Katherine Hunt - Secretary. We also installed three new Board of Directors members at our January meeting; Donna Fiala, Sonja Laidig and Linda Sandlin – Welcome! The Historical Society is so fortunate to have a group of such capable and passionate leaders to guide us along our path to “World Class” status.
- The next change is that the Marco Island Historical Society has been awarded the designation of Cultural Sponsoring Organization by the Florida Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs. The receipt of this designation is extremely important as it represents a major part of our plans to grow the Society’s Endowment Fund. With this designation in hand, the MIHS plans to submit an application next to receive a State Matching Share grant to grow our fund. The Endowment Fund is critical to ensuring that we continue to learn from the people in whose footsteps we walk decades, centuries and millennia later. To learn more about how you can help through your matching funds to preserve and protect our heritage, please call me at (239) 389-6447.

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Change comes in many forms. In this issue of the Newsletter you will read Lori Wagor's article introducing you to the Windows and Doors to History. When completed, this project will not just change but will transform the outside of the Marco Island Historical Museum campus. This is one of the most exciting and important things to happen to your museum since we opened its doors so please read on. Many of you have asked about our progress in securing the return of the treasured Calusa artifacts on loan from the various institutions where they reside. Here is an update. We continue to work with the institutions, specifically the University of Pennsylvania and the Smithsonian, on the submission of our loan requests. Both institutions have expressed their willingness to consider our applications and we are in the final stages of preparing the documentation. Our Collier County Museum System partners are working closely with the Historical Society to ensure that the proper support is in place for the artifact loans to be approved. Rest assured that behind the scenes we are working hard and making good strides toward securing the loans that will bring these precious objects back to Marco Island. Before I close, I would like to extend a very special thank you to all of the members and supporters who contributed to our Annual Appeal. With your help we are now in an excellent position to create another world-class exhibit for the Marco Island Historical Museum in the Pioneer Room. We are so grateful. When this room is complete, all three of the permanent exhibit galleries in your museum will be built. Once again, I thank all of our members for being a part of the MIHS family. You are at the heart of our Society. It is because of you that we are able to fulfill our mission to preserve and share the history of Marco Island and the surrounding community. For those of you who are reading this Newsletter but not yet members, please consider joining us. Together we will continue to make history.

Happy Spring!



View from the CATapult Campaign – Spring 2016

Dear MIHS Friends,

We have great news to share and cannot wait to tell you the latest from the MIHS CATapult Campaign. As we write this Newsletter column, it is almost Valentine's Day and we are about to announce our Windows & Doors to History project to the entire community. Make sure to see the pictures and news from that event elsewhere in the Newsletter.

Thanks to the Windows & Doors to History, along with all of your generous support we have raised just over a \$1.0 million in gifts and pledges toward our \$1.2 million goal. This is an exciting time for all of us who have helped the MIHS achieve our dreams. Speaking of dreams, if you want to own a Window or a Door, we are down to only two windows left.

GOING - GOING – GONE?!

Now is your opportunity to participate in this history-making project that has fueled our CATapult Campaign. The following windows are left to sponsor:

•**A Pioneer Window – on the coveted South side of the Museum's exterior.** •**The important Map Window which will graphically serve as the key to this entire project.** If you would like more information on how to purchase one of these remaining windows, contact Pat Rutledge or Lori Wagor at 239-389-6447. (Continued on next page.)

A CHALLENGE GRANT FOR THE MIHS!

The latest breaking news comes from the State of Florida and will impact the MIHS for generations to come. We have received the Cultural Sponsorship Organization (CSO) designation from the State of Florida Department of Cultural Affairs. That CSO designation means we are eligible to apply for the Cultural Challenge Endowment Match. The State of Florida Challenge Grant Program awards \$240,000 to CSO organizations who raise \$360,000 in gifts to match the challenge. When we meet this challenge the MIHS will add \$600,000 to our endowment! Gifts of all sizes are welcome and securities donated also count toward the match. Please contact either of us at our e-mail addresses below for more information.

Thank You!

Tom Wagor (tomwagor@ffibank.com) & Paul Tateo (paul@mymarcoisland.com)
CATapult Campaign Chairmen

New Membership Cards

By Susan Pernini

The Marco Island Historical Society (MIHS) has started 2016 off with a bang! The MIHS team along with Sherri Morrison, owner of Creative Design, have been working very hard on creating the membership card you see below. Going forward, each new and renewing member(s) will receive their very own membership card in the mail. This membership card will serve as their key to the many adventures that they will be able to enjoy as they time travel with the MIHS. By this time next year, all new and renewing members will have received their membership card. As always, if you have any questions or concerns please feel free to call Susan Pernini at 239-389-6447 or stop in the Administration Building Monday – Friday 9am to 5pm.



MIHS's First Annual *History Live Festival*

By Gail Thawley

Ever think of George Washington deliberating whether or not he should run for a second term of office? MIHS is proud to provide the opportunity to embark on a truly unique look at four of America's most distinguished leaders within the presentation of **The Men of Rushmore and Their Wives**. This unprecedented event is going to feature Marco's most talented youth performing in a uniquely entertaining play sure to entertain those from six to ninety-six.

The play's uniqueness is owed to its writer and director, our island's own outstanding children's drama teacher, Gina Sisbarro. Thanks to the support of MIHS's Lori Wagor and Pat Rutledge (and to Gina's giving back the gate to the Society's Education Fund) this Spring's presentation is to be the first of what is to be a long standing tradition of children bringing history to life for children and for the island community each Spring.

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It is especially heartening to note that the whole project would not be possible without the generous sponsorship of the Marco Island Woman's Club, Marco Office Supply, Mary Kay Independent Director Tammy Miloro and the Board of the Marco Island Historical Society.* Mark your calendars now for MIHS's First Annual **History Live Festival** April 15, 16 and 17.

**Additional Sponsorships and/or donations to re-enactment costumes for the Festival will not only be gladly accepted, to say the least, but most appreciated.*

Pirate Day Success

By Jennifer Perry

Dear Friends:

Who could imagine the positive impact that inclement weather would have on the museum this past month? People are visiting in record amounts! I am tremendously proud of the support from the community, our volunteers, the Marco Island Historic Society, our exhibits and programs that have continued to put this museum on the map. And it is great to be a part of all the progress that is happening here at the Marco Island Historical Museum.

I am happy to report our Annual Pirate Day was a *Yo, ho, ho* success!!! Hundreds of people showed up for our annual Pirate Day. Six hundred and twenty eight people to be exact, making this an event even Jack Sparrow wouldn't want to miss! Chilly weather (*Shiver me timbers!*) and a *little* wind didn't stop our patrons from enjoying fun pirate activities here at the Marco Island Historical Museum. Young and the young at heart participated in scavenger hunts, visited several "Pirate Islands" and created their own pirate loot. Even our neighbor, Marco Island County Library joined in the festivities with a stop on the treasure map!

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Additionally, I am pleased to announce our newest exhibit: *'Isles of Capri . . . A Place in Time'*, a collection of watercolors by artist Donald Sunshine. This collection of art celebrates the history and community of the Isles of Capri and will be on display now through April 26, 2016. This collaboration between Donald Sunshine and Betsy Perdichizzi illustrates and narrates the charming story of the Isles of Capri and its development.



With a few months under my belt here at the Marco Island Historical Museum I can wholeheartedly say that I am inspired every day by the people here on Marco Island, from the MIHS Staff of professionals to the countless dedicated volunteers- YOU help make the Marco Island Historical Museum a must see place! Thank you for all the support.



MIHS Inks Book Deal

By Austin Bell

The Marco Island Historical Society (MIHS) is proud to announce that it has signed a contract with Arcadia Publishing to produce a "Marco Island" volume in Arcadia's popular "Images of America" book series. MIHS Curator of Collections Austin Bell will be authoring the book, which will feature more than 180 black and white images detailing Marco Island's fascinating history. The book will be released in 2017 and proceeds will benefit the MIHS. The book will mark the MIHS's first official large-scale publication as an organization, another important milestone toward making the Marco Island Historical Museum a "world-class" institution.

An Exciting Month at the MIHS Rose Auditorium

By BJ Henning, Program Director

On February 2nd, Lisa Andrews substituted for Melissa Timo. Lisa Andrews is the outreach and educational Director for the Big Cypress Swamp National Preserve. The presentation was "A Walk through Time". Lisa arranged to have 4 of her Rangers portray: Game Warden Guy Bradley, Kirby Storter, Marjorie Stoneman Douglass and a Cypress Logger. The team was fabulous and taught us a lot. I really liked the fact that they had pictures of the Characters as the re-enacted them on our big screen. What a great way to learn history. (Continued on the next page.)

On February 18th Jeff Klinkenburg returned to talk to us about the "Ten Places Every Floridian Should Visit". He is always funny and informative and it is always a pleasure to have him as our presenter. His last lecture was "Alligators in B Flat" He listens and hears the humor and lifestyles of our old Floridians.

Robert MaComber, a historian, comes to us on February 29th, to tell us about "Marco Island during the Civil War". He is very popular and has written many books on our History.

I am excited to announce we have a new speaker for the first of March. It is true when one door closes another opens. Let me tell you this door is a barn door. (huge) Because we are members of the Florida Humanities I can get lots of leads for good speakers. Lynn Waddell had agreed to come fill in our March 1st opening. Lynn's travels through Florida has introduced her to the "Underbelly of Florida". Her Presentation is entitled "Fringe Florida: Travels among Mud Boggers, Furries, Ufologists, Nudists and Other Lovers of Unconventional Lifestyles' ". How fun this program is going to be. We all have enjoyed our large audiences. It makes us happy to see that our Marco Visitors and members are appreciative of our efforts.



Some of the art to be used in our
Windows and Doors to History
murals.

Top left-Muffy Clark Gill

Middle-Tara O'Neill

Top right- JJ Stinchcomb

Bottom left-Malenda Trick

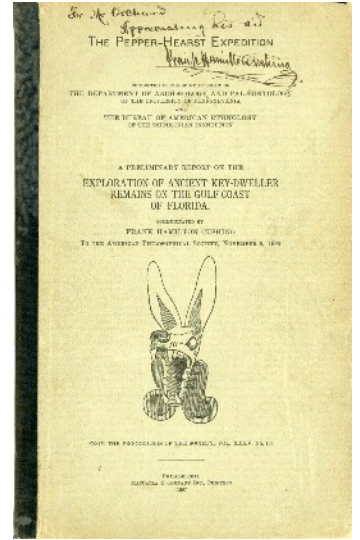
Bottom right- John Agnew



The MIHS Starts Its Own “Cushing Collection”

By Austin Bell

In 2015, the Marco Island Historical Society (MIHS) added two unique objects to its growing collections, both of which are directly related to Frank Hamilton Cushing's famous 1896 Pepper-Hearst Expedition to Key Marco. The first is an original copy of Cushing's 1897 preliminary report on the Pepper-Hearst Expedition and the “Ancient Key-Dweller Remains on the Gulf Coast of Florida.” Cushing produced this report immediately upon returning home from Marco Island and presented it to the American Philosophical Society on November 6, 1896 (it was printed in 1897). He was working on a more comprehensive report until his untimely death in 1900 at age 42, leaving this report as his only published work on Key Marco for more than 100 years – until the discovery and publication of his “lost” manuscript and field journals in 2005. At present, it is unknown just how many copies of the publication were originally printed in 1897, but at 119 years old it is an exceptionally rare find. Making it even more rare is the fact that it is signed by Cushing himself! His flamboyant handwriting is immediately recognizable, as he personalized this particular copy to a “Mr. Orchard, appreciating his aid.” Preliminary research indicates that this could refer to William C. Orchard, a preparator at the American Museum of Natural History (1895-1909) and University of Pennsylvania (1909-1915) prior to being hired as a curator at the Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation in 1915. William Orchard likely traveled in the same circles as Cushing, and given his similar interests and Cushing's remarks, likely aided him in some area of his research.



The second object is a remarkable bronze casting of the Key Marco Cat. A generous gift of Alan Sandlin and Craig Woodward, who contributed equally to purchase the item from an antique dealer in Pennsylvania, the casting is strikingly similar to the original wooden artifact now housed at the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History (NMNH). According to the dealer, the casting once belonged to Cushing and was passed down to family members before landing in his shop many years ago. Due to the presence of a mold in the NMNH Key Marco Collection, presumably created by Cushing himself, the provenance provided by the antique dealer is not out of the realm of possibility, especially given Cushing's propensity for replication. It is possible that Cushing could have used his mold to produce such a casting. A visible patina seems to indicate that the bronze has some age to it, as patina typically takes many years to form under natural conditions. Interestingly, many of the details not known to people who haven't had direct access to the Key Marco Cat (such as

asymmetrical ears, the underside of the carving, and the location of numerous cracks or fissures) are precisely correct in this casting, lending more credibility to the theory that it once belonged to Cushing. More research is necessary, however, and the answers could lie in the National Anthropological Archives, where much of Cushing's correspondence related to the Pepper-Hearst Expedition is preserved in perpetuity. At some point, likely later in 2016, I will be making a trip to these archives in search of answers, hoping to find a “smoking gun” that makes mention of a bronze cat (or a Mr. Orchard, for that matter).

As part of its loan request from the NMNH, the MIHS is going to request Cushing's original Key Marco Cat mold so that it may be displayed alongside the bronze casting and autographed report in the museum. Wouldn't it be exciting if we were able to verify the casting's authenticity by fitting in into the mold and finding some associated documentation? Stay tuned for updates on these exciting items.

Re-enactors Take On the Presidency

Story and picture by Elaine Michaelis

For the past several years, Marco Island Historical Re-enactors, in cooperation with the Historical Society, has produced a series of remarkable productions, all centered around the First Ladies of the United States. This year, the men traded places with the women and took on the roles of several former Presidents of the United States. Their performance, aptly named Mr. President, was held on Tuesday, February 8th, at Rose History Auditorium.



“We were so excited to shine a light on the Presidency, especially in this election year,” said Betsy Perdichizzi, who played Abigail Adams in a past performance of the First Ladies and who was the production’s producer and director.

This year’s Presidential lineup included two Founding Fathers of the United States, John Adams and Thomas Jefferson, and two distinguished generals, Ulysses S. Grant and Dwight D. Eisenhower. They were portrayed by Anthony “Tony” Buckun, Craig Greusel, Lee Lindberg and Robert “Bob” Sargeant, respectively.

Buckun, Greusel and Sargeant were new to the Marco Island Re-enactors, and neither Buckun nor Sargeant have ever acted before. “I was taking a chance on using three people new to the Re-enactors,” said Perdichizzi. “But, I had great faith in their abilities, and my faith definitely proved well-founded.”

No sooner had last year’s performance ended than preparations for this year’s production began. The re-enactors conducted their own research, whittling it down to what they deemed important, and wrote their own 15- to 20-minute scripts. Several rehearsals later and they were ready to go.

According to Perdichizzi, the actors’ challenge was to present their character without breaking the code of historical perspective by using modern slang or references. “Re-enactments are so much more believable when the actors stay in character.”

The audience must have loved what they saw as they all wanted to meet and congratulate the actors. “This was the longest receiving line I have ever experienced in many, many years,” said Perdichizzi. Next year, expect another breakthrough production for the re-enactors, the lives of Abraham and Mary Todd Lincoln.

**A special thank you to these people who have helped us
as we strive to be the best that we can possibly be!**

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 • William & Pricilla Tyson