

PIONEERING HISTORY

THE MARCO ISLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

2020 | Vol. 27, No. 2



Museum Re-Opening | Digital Initiatives | New Staff | Cat Restoration



IN THIS ISSUE



- 3 **President's Message**
Mike O'Rourke
- 5 Re-Opening the MIHM
Rebecca Mazeroski
- 6 MIHS News
Patricia Rutledge
Emily Garcia
Heather Otis
- 7 Bricks of Honor
- 10 Staff Spotlight
Rebecca Mazeroski
Emily Garcia
- 12 Cat Statue Restoration
Heather Otis
- 18 Collections Corner

Cover image: Red-bellied woodpecker painting by John Agnew (MIHS 2016-27-36). See full artwork (image left) and other paintings by Agnew (image far left) on permanent display outside the Marco Island Historical Museum in the "Windows and Doors to History" exhibition.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



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Patricia Rutledge *Exec. Director*

Greetings to all of our members and friends.

Hoping you and your families are healthy and safe during these challenging times of the Coronavirus pandemic.

I wanted to update you on the impact and actions resulting from this major event upon our community. The Marco Island Historical Society office was closed on March 16th and the staff began working from their homes. All MIHS programming in the Rose History Auditorium was cancelled, as were the outside rentals for this facility. The Marco Island Historical Museum was closed on April 3rd which included the MIHS operated Museum Gift Shop.

The MIHS staff has quickly adapted to working remotely and embraced creative solutions to staying connected with our members, donors, and supporters. For example, our social media followers have enjoyed two unique historical posts per day, MIHS members and friends have opened over 16,000 emails from the MIHS and our MIHS website has been enjoyed by over 5,500 visitors. We are expanding the use of video in our communication **and have developed and released "History at Home" interactive activities.** All this is intended to maintain our connection with you and to continue to deliver the unique MIHS experience during a challenging environment.

Meanwhile the Board of Directors, Finance Committee and Development Committee have worked to analyze the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic upon the MIHS and adapt our operational and financial plans accordingly. This included quickly identifying and applying for SBA-EIDL Assistance, The Paycheck Protection Program (PPP Program) and various grants. We have learned the American Alliance of Museums anticipates that one-third of the museums and historical societies in the country will not reopen their doors following the crisis.

Our plan is to reopen the MIHS office on June 1st and the Marco Island Historical Museum is tentatively scheduled to reopen on June 8th. Both organizations have developed reopening plans that follow established guidelines and best practices. MIHS activities have traditionally involved person to person interactions such as programs, museum visitors and gift shop customers. There is uncertainty as to how quickly this will return or how it will evolve. Our challenge is to craft a strategy that expands our mission beyond the walls of the museum to a broader audience through virtual experiences and digital content.

Special thanks to Board Member Jory Westberry who wrote a terrific article in the Coastal Breeze Newspaper on May 28th about the unique and special attractions offered by the Marco Island Historical Society and Museum. To support our community the MIHS is honoring those on the front lines of the Coronavirus pandemic with a free membership. Your participation and contributions are vital to making this wonderful experience possible. Please consider a gift to MIHS to celebrate a special person or leave your mark on history.

Stay well and take care!

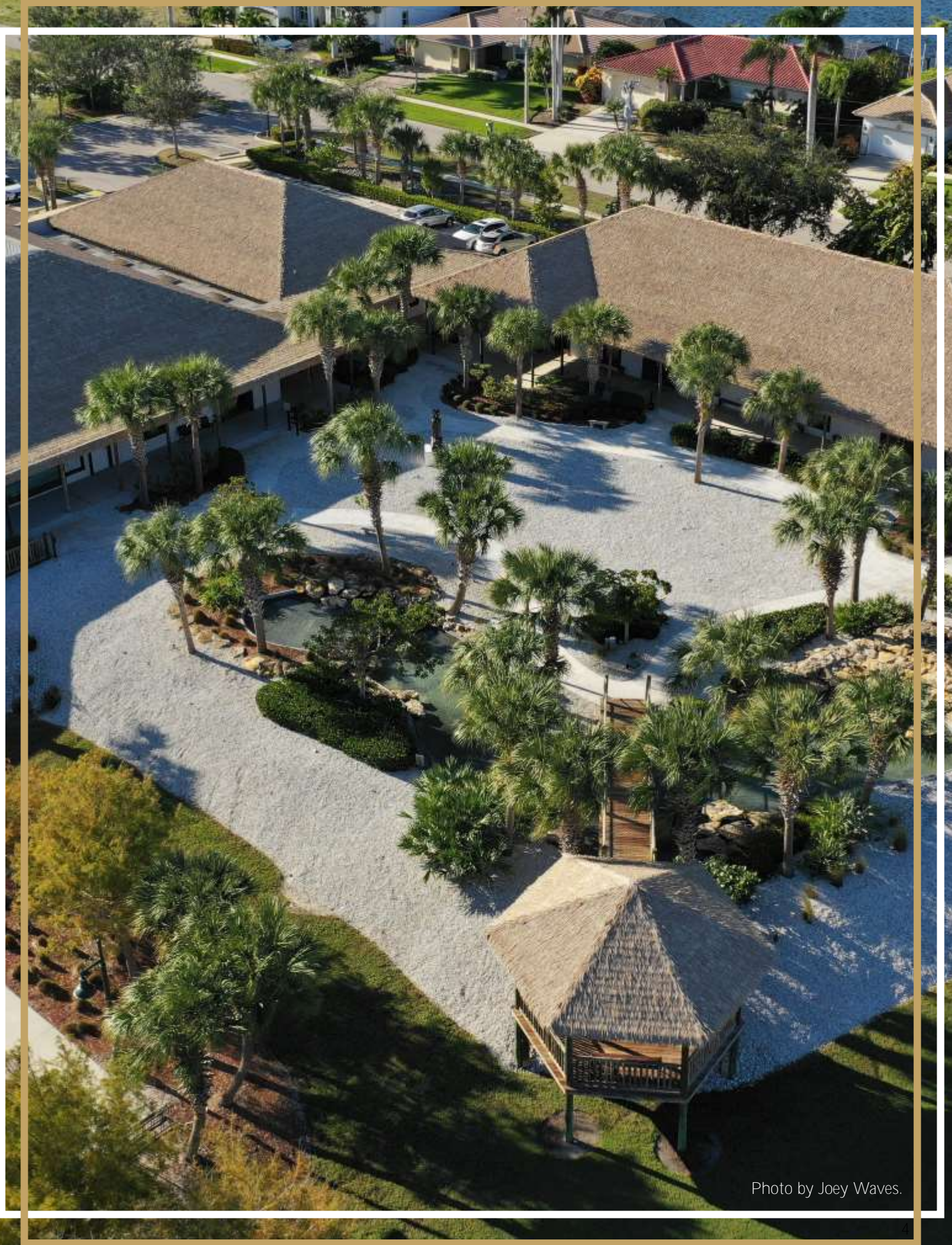


Photo by Joey Waves.

RE-OPENING THE MARCO ISLAND HISTORICAL MUSEUM

REBECCA MAZEROSKI

Those of us at the Marco Island Historical Society and the Marco Island Historical Museum would like to share our joint plans for re-opening the Museum and campus.

While Governor DeSantis gave museums across Florida the right to re-open in early May there have been many practical concerns for us to resolve before taking this step. First and foremost, the safety and health of all the visitors, staff, and by extension, the Marco Island community has been considered when developing our plan. On the Collier County side, all plans needed to be approved by the County Manager. Finally, as you many of you have experienced as well, there were some supplies that needed extra time to procure.

We re-opened the Museum on June 5th and 6th for **friends and family as a 'soft opening'**. We welcomed the public back formally on Tuesday, June 9th. Many of you likely saw our emails, social media postings, and website announcement.

As we've re-opened, the staff, including volunteers, have been required to wear face masks. There are Plexiglas splash guards in highly public areas, like the admission desk (see picture, right). A flow through the museum has been developed to allow for social distancing. The staff will monitor the number of visitors. Once social distancing capacity is reached, we encourage additional visitors to enjoy the grounds until the museum can allow for more guests.

The interactives in the exhibits are all covered or taken offline for the foreseeable future. However, the Key Marco Cat is still available to view. All the films and audio elements that make the exhibits so enticing are still available for visitors to experience. Areas that are frequently touched – door handles, railings, display cases, etc. – are cleaned on an hourly basis.

Volunteers, who are such a vital part of the Museum and Historical Society, are happily welcomed back. In the initial phase of re-opening, we have asked volunteers to limit their shifts to one person per shift with a small

time overlap to share information with the next volunteer. The space behind the admission desk and in the gift shop area proved too small to provide proper social distancing. However, Emily and Rebecca, the Museum Assistant and Museum Manager, respectively, will be on hand to assist volunteers and guests in an enjoyable but safe visit to the Museum.



The Historical Society staff have returned to the campus full time as of June 1st. **Like the Museum's operations, some modifications to the Historical Society's operations** are also necessary. The Administrative offices are open but safe social distancing when entering is very important. Visitors who would like to drop off donations to the MIHS collections or speak with someone about the historical significance of an object in their possession are required to make an appointment. Rose History Auditorium is closed to the public for the foreseeable future.

As we move forward through this process of re-opening during a pandemic, the staff at the Marco Island Historical Society and Marco Island Historical Museum promise to remain cognizant of our duty to ensure a safe and healthy environment. This continues to be a changing situation that requires flexibility and kindness to each other and our community.

With the Museum open again, we are excited to be an active part of the Marco Island community.

A SIGN OF NEW BEGINNINGS

Patricia Rutledge, Executive Director

As the Marco Island Historical Museum (MIHM) prepares to reopen to our visitors, there is a sign of new beginnings on the museum campus grounds. The new MIHM sign replaces the original that was destroyed in an unfortunate automobile accident in 2019. The sign has a modern design and prominently recognizes both the Collier County Museums and the Marco Island Historical Society (MIHS) for their **roles as preservers of Marco Island's history.**

But the original sign held an important place in our history as well. A July 2006 MIHS Newsletter contained the following:

“The Old Deltona sign that stood for many years in front of Dr. Gursoy’s medical building has been donated to the MIHS by Dr. Guidry and is to be placed on museum site within the next few weeks. Mrs. Joan Gursoy contacted the City of Marco Island officials to save the sign. Jim Miller, Project Manager, his contractor Jack Ashcraft and Don Blaylok of the Planning Department helped. The sign represents the last of Deltona History and is a connection to the development of the island in the 1960’s. City and county officials will be invited to a pig roast on Saturday, October 21st for a special celebration, unveiling of the sign, and dedication of the site as the home of the future museum of Marco is being planned. Mrs. Gursoy is preparing a history of the sign for the occasion...”

So while we welcome the impressive new sign directing visitors to our award-winning museum, the old sign will always hold a place in our hearts and our history.



The old museum sign on the day it was struck, March 26, 2019.
Photo by Austin Bell.



The old museum sign in 2017. Photo by Austin Bell.



The new museum sign in 2020. Photo by Pat Rutledge.

Marco Island Historical Society

Bricks of Honor

LIMITED OPPORTUNITY

In order to create lasting memories you must first pave the way. Preserve your place in history. Celebrate a loved one, hero, pet or special occasion. Your generous donation will be a permanent part of sustaining the Marco Island Historical Society.

Mark your place in the community for as little as \$125 and sponsor a brick along the path to the Key Marco Cat today!

Complete the attached form or go online to themihhs.org



For more information contact
Pat Rutledge at (239) 389-6447 or
exec@themihhs.org



Artwork by Merald Clark

The CARES Act, recently passed by Congress, provides a universal deduction for contributions, including ticket donations, made in 2020, of up to \$300, even for taxpayers who do not itemize. Additionally, for tax year 2020, Congress has lifted the existing cap on annual contributions for itemizers from 60% to 100% of Adjusted Gross Income (AGI)

The Marco Island Historical Society is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization and is registered with the State of Florida Division of Consumer Services and the IRS. Federal Registration number - EIN 59-3425001. A copy of the official registration and financial information may be obtained from the Division of Consumer Services at 1-800-435-7352 or www.floridaconsumerhelp.com. Registration does not imply

COLLIER COUNTY CREATES VIRTUAL TOUR

Emily Garcia, Museum Assistant

In the past few months, many industries have needed to reevaluate how their daily functions are performed, and we at the Marco Island Historical Museum are no exception. Museum staff have reworked different facets of the museum experience to keep visitors safe; however, many individuals may not feel comfortable entering public spaces yet. We understand this and have been working on a digital experience to welcome those who would like to enjoy our history from home.

Our museum has crafted a virtual tour that offers an in-depth perspective on the Calusa Indians, their culture, and the discovery of the Key Marco Cat. We are given the unique opportunity to focus our efforts on a specific topic featured in our museum, providing the viewer with further research, stories, and fun facts not normally featured in a typical docent tour.

While the guided Calusa tour is our inaugural video, we anticipate this to be a series featuring other exhibits in our museum and other interesting aspects of Marco Island history.

If you would like more information about viewing our virtual tour or want to give feedback on a tour you've seen, please reach staff at (239) 252-1440 or Emily.Garcia@colliercountyfl.gov.



MIHS DOUBLES ITS DIGITAL EFFORTS

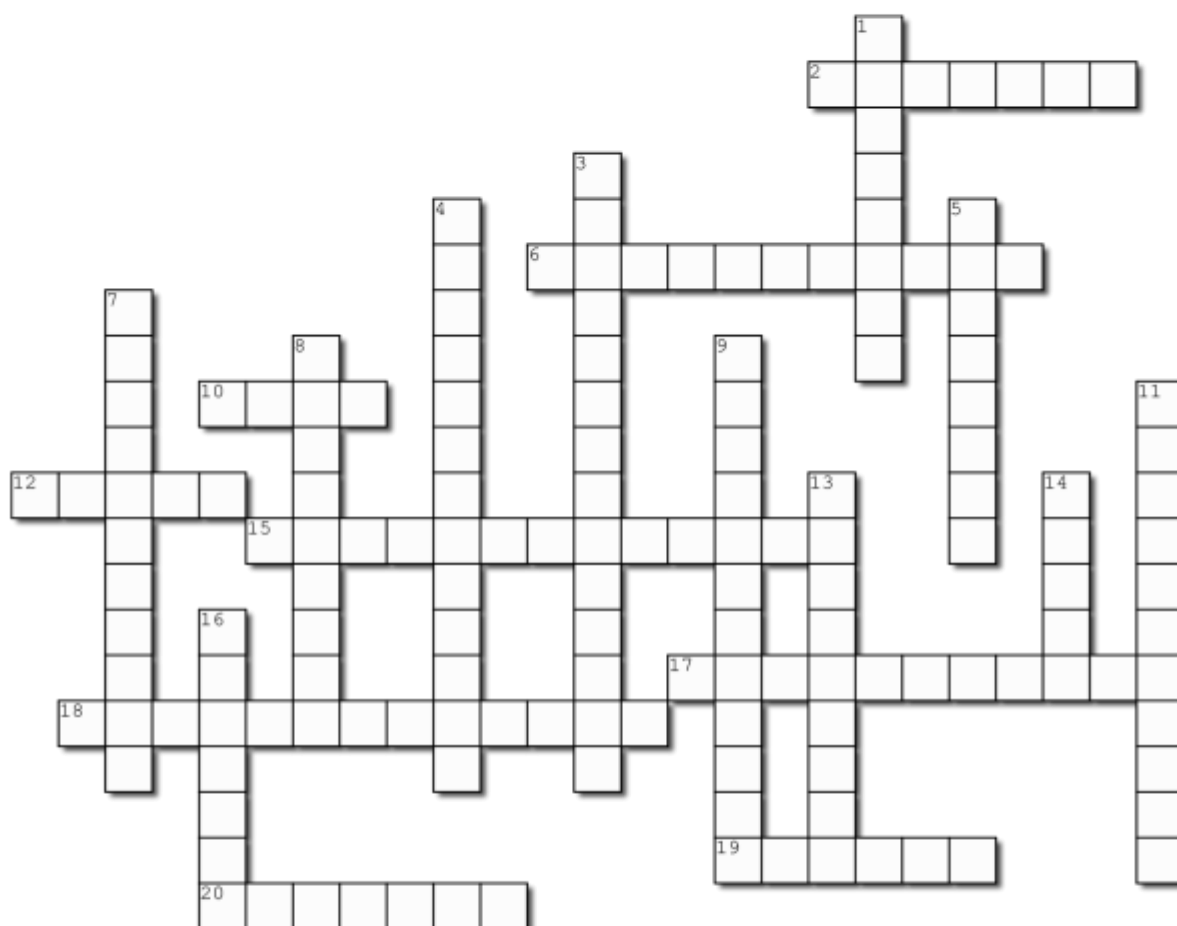
Heather Otis, Collections Manager

Committed to doing our part to mitigate the spread of Coronavirus in our community, the MIHS suspended all programming and entertainment on March 18th, and shortly thereafter, transitioned staff to working remotely until our reopening on June 1st. Although our doors were closed, the MIHS strongly believed in **maintaining a digital presence through which we would continue presenting Marco Island's unique and fascinating history to our members and visitors.** In addition to updating our searchable online database at <https://themihs.info/collections/>, where the public can now view over 19,000 objects, photographs, artwork and more from the **MIHS collections, we also doubled our social media output in an effort to stay connected and meet our community's needs.**

The MIHS was also pleased to launch History at Home, a page on the MIHS website dedicated to entertaining and educational activities centered around Marco Island history. These activities are geared towards all ages and include a **Marco Island word search, coloring pages, crossword puzzles, "Mad Lib" diary entry, Merald Clark mural "I Spy" game, MIHS website scavenger hunt, and virtual jigsaw puzzles featuring objects and art from our collections.** Try your hand at one of the crossword puzzles (page right), and then visit the History at Home page at <https://themihs.info/2020onlineactivities/> for the puzzle's answer key and other activities!

Pioneer Marco Island

Complete the crossword puzzle below



Across

2. Central school for Marco Island (c. 1928)
6. Employer of Frank Hamilton Cushing
10. Chokoloskee chicken
12. Pioneer road material
15. First Caxambas postmaster
17. Painter and photographer that captured Key Marco artifacts
18. Deaconess who worked with the Miccosukee and Seminole Indians
19. Late 19th century popular game fish
20. Specialty crop of the Olds Family

Down

1. Multi-masted pioneer vessel
3. Collier County's first superintendent of public instruction
4. Caxambas Kid
5. South end settlement
7. Vessel that carried Cushing's crew to Key Marco
8. Leading export of Marco Island (c. 1900)
9. Name of Cushing's Key Marco expedition (1895-1896)
11. Island's original incorporated name
13. Owner of Marco's first hotel
14. How one got a car to Marco Island before 1938
16. Island's first clam factory (est. 1904)

STAFF SPOTLIGHT:

REBECCA MAZEROSKI, MUSEUM MANAGER

Rebecca Mazerowski joined the Marco Island Historical Museum as the Museum Manager on April 13th. Prior to joining Collier County museum system, she worked for the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum of the Seminole Tribe of Florida for 7 years, starting as the Exhibits Coordinator and leaving as the Manager of Interpretation. She and her team developed, fabricated, and installed 6 exhibitions each year, as well several community and event displays, and managed a traveling exhibition program.

At Marco Island Historical Museum Rebecca will care for the facilities, coordinate scheduling with our (fabulous) volunteers, and manage exhibition installations. She is excited to be working with the Marco Island Historical Society because of the so many great projects she has seen come from MIHS. Rebecca is joined with Museum Assistant, Emily Garcia.

Previously, Rebecca received her MFA in Museum Exhibition Planning and Design at the University of the Arts in Philadelphia. She has also work for the Yager Museum, the American Swedish Historical Museum, the Clay Studio, and the National Archives and Records Administration. While her undergraduate degree is in Art, curiosity and a desire to always be learning are what led Rebecca to a career in the Museum field.

On a personal note, Rebecca married life-long Naples resident, Jason Mazerowski, last May. They have two cats and dachshund (mix, but don't tell her that!)



Photo by Heather Otis.

STAFF SPOTLIGHT:

EMILY GARCIA, MUSEUM ASSISTANT

Emily Garcia, the Marco Island Historical Museum's new Museum Assistant, began her role in December 2019. Her primary responsibilities include maintaining everyday museum functions, developing educational programming, creating and leading group tours, and assisting the Museum Manager with exhibits and other duties. Having fun is an extra perk.

With a bachelor's degree in history, political science, and classics from the University of South Florida, Emily has a strong background in research and teaching to all ages. She has always maintained a strong connection to local history as a Collier County native, recalling her first visit to Collier County Museums through a field trip with her elementary school. Since then, Emily has followed history and museology through her studies at USF and the teaching positions she maintained in her undergraduate program. After graduation, Emily became a volunteer with Collier County Museums, where she became fully immersed in Collier history before accepting her current position at MIHM.

In her free time, Emily enjoys experimenting with new art forms, browsing local thrift stores, and enjoying the newest Animal Crossing game on the couch with her cat. She is excited to pursue her passions at the Marco Island Historical Museum and learn much as she can from the exhibits there and the welcoming Marco Island community.



Photo by Heather Otis.

Cat Statue Restoration

Marco Island Historical Museum

May — June 2020

Article and Photos by Heather Otis



The MIHS is thrilled to announce that the Key Marco Cat sculpture on the Marco Island Historical Museum campus has received a feline facelift. A beloved icon and favorite with visitors, the 6-foot commissioned bronze piece was completed by sculptor Carl Wagner in January 2010 and generously gifted to the MIHS by Emil and Gail Fischer. It has been welcoming guests to campus with its golden gaze for the last decade, but the direct hit from Hurricane Irma damaged its protective surface lacquer, leading to paint loss and exposure of the bronze beneath.

The MIHS's efforts to restore the sculpture began in November 2019, and with sponsorship by Gail Fischer, we were able to hire Naples art conservator and sculptor, Casey Koehler, and his team to complete the project in late May. Casey, JC, and Joe worked over a ten-day period stripping and buffing the remaining finish from the piece and then repainting it with layers of primer, a color base coat, glazing, flat bottom clear coat, and clear satin finish. Before beginning the restoration, the team studied the real 6-inch wooden statuette currently on loan at the museum to guide them in recreating the artifact's look on the 6-foot bronze. The van Dyke brown glaze Joe applied by hand with a rag and brush and the flattening agent in the first clear coat gives the sculpture its wooden appearance. Although our bronze cat's coat has changed, its signature gold eyes remain true to Carl Wagner's original vision and shine brighter than ever with gold leaf paint.



(L to R) Joe Portner, Casey Koehler, and J.C. del Rio.

The MIHS plans to implement a regular in-house sculpture conservation program to maintain “The Key Marco Cat” now that it is conserved, which includes bi-annual washing and waxing. If you are interested in volunteering with this program, please contact Collections Manager, Heather Otis, at collections@themih.org for more information. In the meantime, we invite you to stop by and check out our friendly feline's new look!



New and Renewing Members

MARCH - MAY 2020

Single Membership

Ballentine, Dave
Berger, Litha
Boltz, Beverly
Burton, Delores
Case, Evelyn
Child Hittler, Susan
Chronowski, Kecia
Dunn, Joyce

Hammond, Elisabeth
Heeter, Beverly
Jankowski, Mary Lou
Jermanok, Herbert
Johnson, Wesley
Kenning, Susan
Lindgren, Eva
McDaniel, Berths

Mendygraw, Catherine
Owen, Laura
Polson, Peggy
Reynolds, Joyce
Wilson, Mary Alice*
Woolaway, Shirley

Family Membership

Arsenault, Paul & Eileen
Bari, Kathi*
Barrow, Deborah*
Blackwell, Karen & Wes
Brinkoetter, John & Martha
Burfield, Tim & LuAnn
Schieferdecker
Camm, William & Ellen
Crane, Cindy & Ed
Dahlquist, Bruce & Peggy
DeFeo, Robert & Dale
DeLucia, Anthony*
Devon, Nancy
Dolezel, Lisa*
Feller, Brenda & Doug
Gillespie, Nolberto & Karen
Yuskaitis
Green, Connie & David
Green, Kathy & David

Greusel, Craig & GERALYNN*
Gruca, Ned & Delores
Hartsell, Arlene*
Holzgrafe, Jerry & Ginger
Johnson, Vicki & Tom
June, Gladis*
Kelly, Dr. Dennis & Theresa
Kramer, Cindi & Tom
Lemke, Tammy*
Levine, Michael & Linda
Magdalener, Kaitlen*
Marr, James & Linda
McCreanor, Terry & Andrea
McGowan, Robert*
Merco, Paul & Marlo
Murphy, Mike & Barbara
Pecora, Donald*
Peppe, Mike & Cathy

Purvis, George & Jackie
Riley, Steve & Julie
Robertson, Bruce
Ross, Sini*
Schneller, MaryBeth*
Smith, Allison*
Sommerfeld, Terese*
Steward, Beth*
Sussman, Stephen & Jane
Terrerri, Jackie*
Thieme, Carl & Sheila
Tipka, Alan & Sarah
Tomaino, Joseph & Nina
Westberry, Paul & Jory
Wilsbach, Michelle*

*New Member

New and Renewing Members

MARCH - MAY 2020

Patron Membership (\$250)

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David Caruso
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Nancy Gady
Francine Klein & Albert Golden

Kevin O'Neill & Ann Boyce
Warren & Nancy Rasmussen
Sandra Schmadeke
Ricki & Jay Terzis

Benefactor Membership (\$500)

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Michael & Carolee Levison
Little Bar

Tommie Barfield Circle¹ (\$1,000)

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Rene & Tish Champagne
David & Vicki Curtis
Doug & Margaret DeCamp
Darcie & Peter Guerin
Raymond & Louise Jean
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Jean King
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Shiva Neyestani
Jeffery Lutz & M.C. Nowosielski
Aldo & Mary Pat Palombo
Scott & Brenda Rhinehart
Jim & Allyson Richards
Myrt Rose
Ron & Pat Rutledge
Alan & Linda Sandlin
Cherry Smith
Preston & Keely Stiener
Paul Tateo



¹Active Members
*New Member

Artwork by Malenda Trick.



THANK YOU!

All Healthcare Workers,
First Responders,
Teachers and Volunteers
can enjoy a

**FREE MIHS Family
Membership**



The Marco Island Historical Society is grateful to
you for keeping our communities safe during
this unprecedented time!

To redeem your FREE Family Membership
please go to themihhs.org, click "Get
Involved" and then "Thank You" or
call 239-389-6447

Please share this invitation
with all of those you know

Become a Member

Since 1994, the Marco Island Historical Society has been preserving and sharing the history and heritage of our community. Join us as we make history!

Student (\$25 annually)

- Email Notification of Upcoming Events
- Free Entry to our MIHS Monthly Program & Exhibit Openings
- Free or Discounted Admission for Other Special Programs

Single (\$75 annually)

- Email Notification of Upcoming Events
- Free Entry to our MIHS Monthly Program & Exhibit Openings
- Free or Discounted Admission for Other Special Programs
- Receive NARM benefits for addtl. \$25

Family (\$125 annually)

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- Free Entry to our MIHS Monthly Program & Exhibit Openings
- Free or Discounted Admission for Other Special Programs
- Receive NARM benefits for addtl. \$25

Patron (\$250 annually)

- All the Benefits of Family Membership
- Listing as a Patron on our Website & Newsletter
- Invitations to Sustaining Membership Events

Benefactor (\$500 annually)

- All the Benefits of Family Membership
- Listing as a Benefactor on our Website & Newsletter
- Invitations to Sustaining Membership Events

Tommie Barfield Circle (\$1000 annually)

- All the Benefits of Family Membership
- Listing in the Tommie Barfield Circle on our Website & Newsletter
- Invitations to Sustaining Membership Events
- Exclusive Invitations to Exhibit Previews & Receptions with Visiting Museum Guests
- Annual Luncheon with MIHS Staff and Tour of Collections

All Membership Levels include special Gift Shop promotions.

Yes! I/We Want to Make History & Join the MIHS!

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- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$25 Student | <input type="checkbox"/> \$250 Patron |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$75 Single | <input type="checkbox"/> \$500 Benefactor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$125 Family | <input type="checkbox"/> \$1000 Tommie Barfield Circle |

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Thank You For Your Support!

COLLECTIONS CORNER

Thanks to your generous support, the MIHS works every day to preserve and share the more than 50,000 items in its collections. Each issue, we will feature a new item from the collections.



From the donor:

“Between 1942 and 1949, we used to get these dishes in a box of Quaker Oats oatmeal.

I liked when my mama would send **me to “Grit’s”** G&G Mercantile to get oatmeal.

I could choose between a box with a cup, saucer, or **bowl.”**

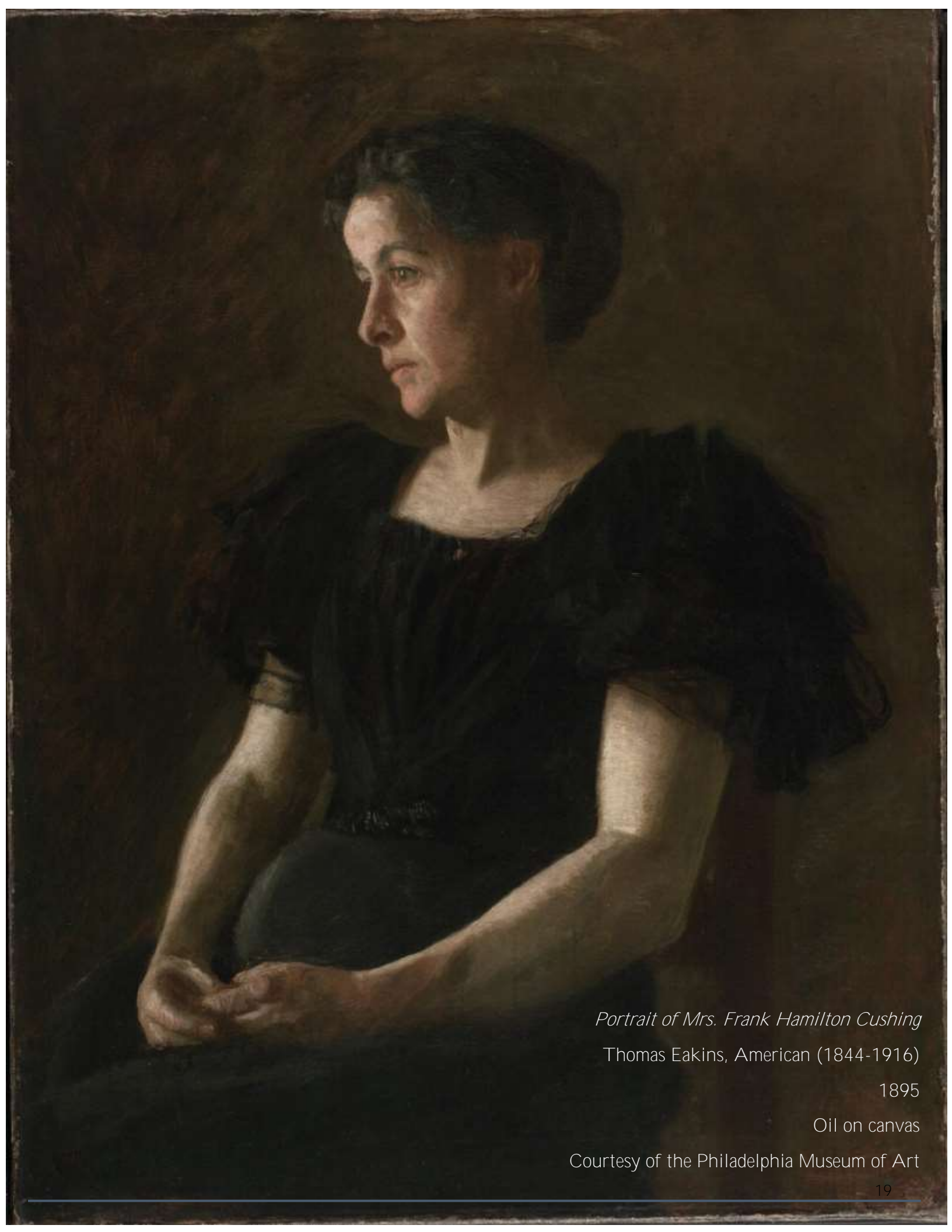
Cereal bowl, ceramic (“Harvest” pattern)

1942 - 1949

Homer Laughlin for Quaker Oats

Purchased from G&G Mercantile

Gift of Faye Brown (MIHS 2011-11-001)



Portrait of Mrs. Frank Hamilton Cushing

Thomas Eakins, American (1844-1916)

1895

Oil on canvas

Courtesy of the Philadelphia Museum of Art

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Cushing Society

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