



HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD MINUTES

June 6, 2024

5:30 PM

Administration Building,
4th Floor, BCC Meeting Room,
477 Houston Street,
Green Cove Springs, FL 32043

Call to Order

Present: Gerard Casale, Chairman
Deirdre Murphy, Vice-Chairman
Billy Gould
Randy Harris
Melissa Clearman
Gabriella "Bella" Franco

Absent: Dr. Maureen Jung

Staff Present: Beth Carson, Deputy Director of Planning
Kimberly Morgan, Director of Tourism and Film Development

Chairman Gerard Casale called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm.

Approval of Minutes

Minutes from the May 2, 2024 Historic Preservation Board Meeting

Minutes from the April 30, 2024 Keystone Heights Subcommittee Meeting

Minutes from the May 21, 2024 Keystone Heights Marker Subcommittee Meeting

Billy Gould made a motion for approval of the May 2, 2024, Historic Preservation Board Meeting Minutes, April 30, 2024, Keystone Heights Subcommittee Meeting, and May 21, 2024, Keystone Heights Marker Subcommittee Meeting, seconded by Vice-Chairman Deirdre Murphy, which carried 6-0.

Public Comment

Chairman Gerard Casale opened the floor for public comment at 5:32 pm.

Hearing no comments, Chairman Gerard Casale closed public comment at 5:32 pm.

Old Business

1. Update on Historic Marker Progress
Historic Preservation Board Members will provide progress updates on the historic marker projects.
 - A. Middleburg Colored School - Dr. Maureen Jung
 - B. Fort 11 - Billy Gould
 - C. Keystone Heights - Deirdre Murphy

- D. St. Mary's Episcopal Church - Gerard Casale
- E. Middleburg Museum/Civic Center - Gerard Casale

Historic Marker Progress can be seen at www.claycountygov.com/government/clay-county-tv-and-video-archive/committees/Historic-Preservation-Board/June 6, 2024, beginning at 2:34 and ending at 50:34. Below is a summary of the discussion.

Middleburg Colored School Update:

There was no update due to Dr. Maureen Jung's absence.

Fort 11 Update:

Billy Gould addressed the Board to provide details and information regarding the update for Fort 11. There was some insight given by a local expert, and a draft of the language was made and provided for review.

There were comments, questions, and discussions regarding additional information and material found and research done, the material provided for review, two-sided marker vs. one, limitations for text, attendance by Tom Parham at the subcommittee meeting, request to visit other properties, Google Earth - historical view, location, and timeframe for the existence of Fort 11, searching for artifacts and how to move forward.

Keystone Heights Update:

Deirdre Murphy addressed the Board to provide details and information regarding the update for Keystone Heights. See Attachment A.

Comments, questions, and discussions were had regarding the text for the marker and the timeline and information needed for the placement of the marker.

St. Mary's Episcopal Church:

Chairman Gerard Casale and Pat Garlinghouse of St. Mary's Episcopal Church addressed the Board to provide information regarding the update for St. Mary's Episcopal Church marker. See Attachment B.

There were comments and discussions regarding the recommendations by Vishi Gehrig, sending information to Tallahassee or meeting with the state to discuss and review the text to move forward with the marker, current character count, details and deletions, marker size and timeframe for production, funding, information needed and location for placement and other material options for a marker and costs.

Middleburg Museum/Civic Center:

Chairman Gerard Casale addressed the Board to provide information regarding the update on the Middleburg Museum and Civic Center.

There were suggestions, comments, and discussions regarding having a county marker vs. a state marker; character count for a county sign, location for the marker, references for the language, cost difference, and thoughts for moving forward.

2. Selection of New Historic Preservation Board Officers

The Historic Preservation Board will select officers for 2024-2025.

Selection of HPB Officers can be seen at [www.claycountygov.com/government/clay-county-tv-and-video-archive/committees/Historic-Preservation-Board/June 6, 2024](http://www.claycountygov.com/government/clay-county-tv-and-video-archive/committees/Historic-Preservation-Board/June%206,%202024), beginning at 50:38 and ending at 52:19. Below is a summary of the discussion and vote.

Chairman Gerard Casale opened the floor to discuss the selection of the HPB Officers for 2024/2025. Nominations were made at the previous meeting.

There were questions and discussions regarding new nominations.

Following no new nominations and all discussions, Randy Harris made a motion for approval of Billy Gould as Chairman and Deirdre Murphy as Vice-Chairman for the HPB, seconded by Bella Franco, which carried 6-0.

New Business

1. Clay County's History Passport

The County's Tourism Division will present the new History Passport which includes 25 historic sites throughout the County.

Passport discussion can be seen at [www.claycountygov.com/government/clay-county-tv-and-video-archive/committees/Historic-Preservation-Board/June 6, 2024](http://www.claycountygov.com/government/clay-county-tv-and-video-archive/committees/Historic-Preservation-Board/June%206,%202024), beginning at 52:54 and ending at 1:19:12. Below is a summary of the discussion.

Kimberly Morgan, Director of Tourism and Film Development, addressed the Board to provide information and details regarding an update on the Tourism Department and Clay County History Passport. See Attachment C. More information can be found at exploreclay.com.

There were questions and discussions regarding adding a QR code to markers, tours and experiences available in the county, clarification for adding information of "your story" and history on the website, Facebook page for Keystone Heights, explore clay app features, the milestone meeting date, clarification for the information about the American Cruise Line, and the motorcoach tour, walking tour, and accessibility.

Certificates of Approval

There were no Certificates of Approval.

Public Comment

Chairman Gerard Casale opened the floor for public comment at 6:50 pm.

Hearing no comments, Chairman Gerard Casale closed public comment at 6:50 pm.

Staff Comments

Staff Member comments can be seen at [www.claycountygov.com/government/clay-county-tv-and-video-archive/committees/Historic-Preservation-Board/June 6, 2024](http://www.claycountygov.com/government/clay-county-tv-and-video-archive/committees/Historic-Preservation-Board/June%206,%202024), beginning at 1:19:36 and ending at 1:22:04. Below is a summary of the discussion.

Beth Carson, Interim Director of Planning and Zoning, reiterated that there would be no meeting in

July; the next HPB meeting would be held on August 1, 2024, at 5:30 pm.

Ms. Carson pointed out the openings for members on the HPB and where to apply if there is an interest. claycountygov.com.

- District Two - Blanding Area - Towards Oakleaf
- District Three - Greater Orange Park Area
- At-Large Openings - Two - Any Area except District Five/Lake Asbury to the Putnam Line

Ms. Carson hoped to have the Branan Field application submitted in the upcoming weeks.

Board Member's Comments

Board Member comments can be seen at www.claycountygov.com/government/clay-county-tv-and-video-archive/committees/Historic-Preservation-Board/June 6, 2024, beginning at 1:22:05 and ending at 1:33:34. Below is a summary of the discussion.

Randy Harris spoke about approaching the Commanding Officer at Camp Blanding regarding the German prisoner-war camp information.

There was a conversation regarding other ways to get information about POW camps in the area.

Vice-Chairman Deirdre Murphy spoke about the 2025 Centennial in Keystone Heights and the active Facebook page. An interior tour of homes is also scheduled in December to kick off the Centennial. Vice-Chairman Murphy mentioned the proposed Museum for Keystone Heights that was not approved mostly because of budget constraints. However, there was a new proposal for a pop-up museum to be held in the Pavilion for a weekend. It would be in conjunction with a Chautauqua event. Vice-Chairman Murphy spoke about the plans for that event in 2025. Vice-Chairman Murphy spoke about the spectacular Oak Tree next to the library in Keystone Heights and the possibilities of having it preserved and a marker placed.

Bella Franco noted that this was her last meeting due to relocating to St. Johns County.

The Board wished her well in her move and thanked Ms. Franco for her service.

Adjournment

Hearing no further business, Chairman Gerard Casale adjourned the meeting at 7:05 pm.

Attest:

Committee Chairman

Recording Deputy Clerk

Attachment

“A”

Keystone Heights Marker Update

Historic Marker

for The City of Keystone Heights

Keystone Heights, Florida was established in 1925 and evolved from a vision of creating a resort destination. The boom of the 1920s attracted John J. Lawrence of Pennsylvania to establish the Lawrence Development Company. The company purchased thousands of acres of land and named the new town, Keystone Heights in reference of Pennsylvania, "The Keystone State ". Many of the early buildings had signs or symbols in the shape of a keystone, still seen on several of the historic buildings. After platting the streets in 1922, civil engineer, C. Ray Lawrence organized in an extensive promotional campaign for the company and the first settlers set about building modest homes. Lawrence also wanted a suitable place for perspective land purchasers to stay. The company built the three-story Keystone Inn on a site overlooking Lake Geneva. The Keystone Inn opened on January 1, 1924 and became the hub of social activities. The Pavilion at Keystone Beach was erected shortly after and was used for dances, boat rides, for the use of locals and guests of the hotel.

Dr. George Meade, was selected as the President of the Winter Chautauqua in 1926–1927 and chose the young town as its location. The National Chautauqua Institute event featured various programs including banquets, lectures, classes and musical programs held at the Keystone Inn and at an outdoor site is still called Chautauqua Circle.

Keystone Heights was incorporated in 1925. Originally intended as a winter resort, Keystone Heights became a retirement community by the 1930s and a summer playground in the 1940s and 1950s. In 1939 in anticipation of military involvement in World War II, two military installations were established in the county. A large training base for the US Army, Camp Blanding was built. The Keystone Inn was popular with the wives of servicemen and airman training near town. In 1954 the Keystone Inn caught fire and was badly damaged. It was demolished and the site turned into the Keystone Heights Nature Park.

Keystone Heights a thriving community has kept its intrinsic charm and will celebrate its Centennial in 2025.

Characters with spaces – 2163

Max is - 2164

Attachment

“B”

St. Mary’s Episcopal Church Update

ST MARY'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH AND PARISH HALL

The revival of the national economy and the arrival of prosperous northern winter visitors seeking the 'healing waters' of Green Cove Springs enabled Episcopal Bishop John Freeman Young to commission the erection of St Mary's Episcopal Church in 1878. The Thaddeus Davids family donated its riverfront location, close to the town's leading hotels. Among its features were New York manufactured stained-glass windows, designed to allow ventilation in warm weather. The church's 'Carpenter Gothic' style – a wooden version of medieval English stone churches – is typical of the Episcopal missions prescribed by Bishop Young and his superiors for Florida and the American Southeast. The sanctuary held its first service in March 1879.

The adjoining Parish Hall, formerly an Army chapel at Camp Blanding, was purchased from the military base and moved here in 1948 by the subscription of 200 local residents and businesses. Its interior arches of glued laminated timbers spared the metal hardware needed for the production of weaponry during the Second World War. The central structure remains unchanged and serves as a vital part of the church and community. In 2002 it was added to the church's 1978 National Register designation.

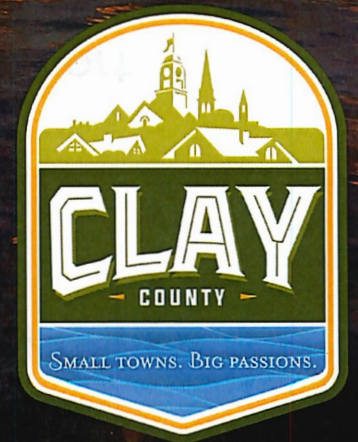
Attachment

“C”

Clay County Tourism and History Passport Update

JUNE 2024

**TOURISM
DEPT
UPDATE**

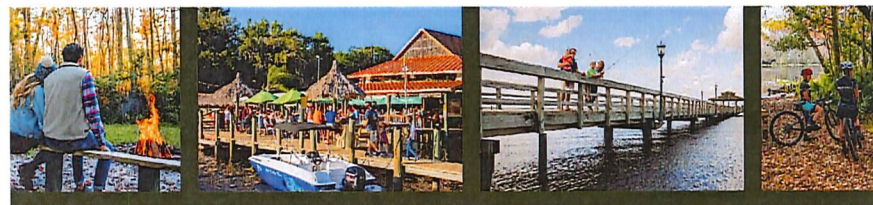


Explore Clay App

The new web and mobile application that lets visitors plan their trip on the device of their choice, and have it at their fingertips while they're on the go.

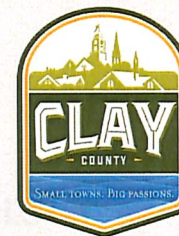
Interactive trip planning allows visitors to customize their own itinerary with events, attractions, food & drink, and tours.

A local guide in your pocket!



WELCOME TO CLAY COUNTY!

Let us be your guide. Download the **Explore Clay app** to build your own tour of shopping, dining, and more!



FEATURES



PLAN YOUR STAY

Discover ideas to make your stay even more exciting. Save your ideas and map out your itinerary.



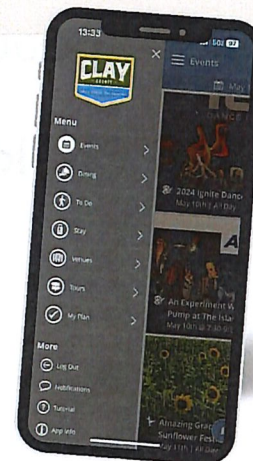
THINGS TO DO

Whether you're looking for scenic views or outdoor adventure, the possibilities are endless.



DINING

You'll find a diverse range of culinary delights to satisfy your cravings.



Scan the QR code to download the Explore Clay app on your Android or iPhone. You could also search 'Explore Clay' in the Google Play or App Store.

THE WONDER FILTER

Ask yourself:

- ✓ Is there a strong sense of place?
- ✓ Does it provide special access?
- ✓ Does it have an unexpected or intellectually engaging theme?
- ✓ Does it bring greater meaning or sense of awe to the everyday?
- ✓ Does it have the “wow” factor?
- ✓ Does it give you a sense of childlike wonder or fascination? Does it make you look at the world with fresh eyes?
- ✓ Will you be telling your friends and family about it?



Q & A

Thank You!

A Brief History of the Town of Penney Farms

Long before Penney Farms there was a settlement called Long Branch, Florida. Dowling Lumber and Florida Farms and Industries provided employment to the sparsely populated community. Then the Florida Land Boom directed the nation's attention to Florida and in 1925, the department store pioneer J. C. Penney arrived. He purchased 120,000 acres in Long Branch as well as property including a saw mill and a hotel in Green Cove Springs hoping to develop a self sustaining farming community with offices in the nearby town. Bad weather, the real estate decline and the stock market crash pressed Penney to slow, but not squelch his idea for this farming community. As things turned out, a sixty acre site for his Memorial Home Community, now Penney Retirement Community, survived and is part of the Town of Penney Farms. As the population grew it sported a school, church, hotel, gas station, store, jail, fire station, golf course, air field and swimming pool. Today, there is Penney Retirement Community, New Hope Community, an auto repair business, private homes, Town Hall, a Historical Museum, a beautiful passive park and lovely section of the Florida Scenic Highway.



Historical Society of Penney Farms Town of Penney Farms Historical Museum

The Historical Society of Penney Farms was established in 2004 and, thanks to support from local and county governments, the organization moved into the renovated space of the former Penney Farms Fire Station in 2022. This move created a venue to hold meetings and events as well as display material of historical value that had been collected and preserved. The mission of the Historical Society is to *educate the community about its rich and dynamic history, and maintain the museum as a repository for archival materials.*

For more information about hours, monthly meetings and guest speakers please visit online at:

HistoricalSocietyofPenneyFarms.org

Centennial years are approaching for The Penney Memorial Church and Memorial Home Community developed by JC Penney in 1926 as well as the Town of Penney Farms, incorporated by the State of Florida in 1927.

Get Involved

Your support helps us continue to preserve the rich history of Penney Farms for future generations and provide fun and educational programs to the community. As a member you receive the benefits of museum exhibits and activities, historical photographs and archives, and more importantly, you will be proud to know you support our mission to keep our history alive, preserved, and treasured by all.

Historical Society of Penney Farms

4100 Clark Avenue
P.O. Box 1041
Penney Farms, FL 32079

Membership Donation: \$10
(Optional) Additional: _____
Total: _____

Name

Address

Phone

Email Address

I am interested in:

- Historic Sites Museum
 Membership Publicity
 Events Fund Raising



www.HistoricalSocietyofPenneyFarms.org

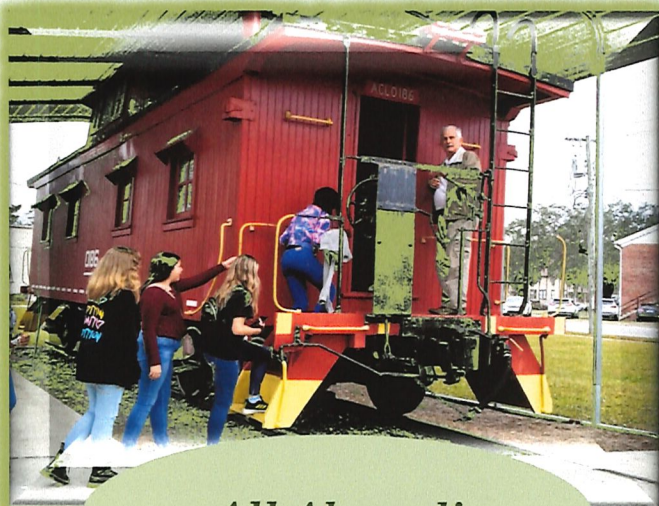
Phone: (904) 742-1344

Email: info@historicalsocietyofpenneyfarms.org

Historic Triangle

The property in Green Cove Springs, FL with the Clay County History Museum, Veterans Memorial, 1894 Jail/Archives and the 1890 Historic Courthouse has become known as the Historic Triangle. In 1992, the Bud Hess Railroad Collection with an authentic station house and a fully equipped red wooden caboose was added.

Our Mission: Committed to promoting awareness of local history and safeguarding as much as possible to share with future generations



All Aboard!

www.claycountyhistoricalsociety.org

Clay County Historical Society
915 Walnut Street
Green Cove Springs, FL 32043



CLAY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

History
&
Railroad Museum
www.claycountyhistoricalsociety.org



915 Walnut Street
Green Cove Springs, FL 32043
(904) 284-9644

HOURS

Sunday 2 p.m. until 5 p.m.
(except some holiday periods)

Donations accepted

SPECIAL TOURS

By prior arrangement

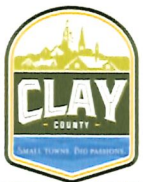
*New Members & Volunteers are
Always Welcome*

Clay County

Clay County, Florida was named for Henry Clay and carved out of Duval County south of McGirt's Creek to Bellamy Road in 1858.

Henry Clay, Sr. of Kentucky, "the Great Compromiser", was a leading figure in the U.S. Congress of the early 19th Century. As head of the rising Whig Party he was much admired for his American System that advocated for improved transportation routes, a national bank and a protective tariff to develop domestic industry and agriculture.

Green Cove Springs is the County Seat of Clay County and home of the Clay County History Museum located in the Courthouse Annex.



For visitor information, go to www.ExploreClay.com

Clay County

Historical Society

The Clay County Historical Society was organized in 1966 to perpetuate and share the history of Clay County.

Our vision is to become the Clay County hub for historical preservation.

Since opening in 1975, the Historical Museum has been managed by an all volunteer staff. The Museum features a Country Store, Early Kitchen, Doll Room, Vault Room and Music Room.

In addition to the Museum, visitors may enjoy the railroad collection and other venues in the Historic Triangle.

Meetings of the Historical Society are held bi-monthly on the 4th Monday at 6:30 p.m. in the 1890 Historic Courthouse.
For information about meetings, speakers, and other events visit www.claycountyhistoricalsociety.org

Clay County Historical Society
915 Walnut Street
Green Cove Springs, FL 32043

Membership Donation : \$15.00
(Additional Optional Donation) _____
Total: _____

Name _____
Address _____
E mail _____
Phone _____

I am interested in:
 Historic Sites Museum
 Membership Publicity
 Events Fund Raising

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Phone: (904) 284-9644
info@claycountyhistoricalsociety.org

