

Ellore Heritage Museum & Cultural Center, Inc.



MUSEUM NEWSLETTER

Volume XI: Number 3

May—June 2019

CHILDREN'S SUMMER CAMPS – See insert.

Spring Follies



Beautiful decorations
&
delicious food!



“Dancing”

Dining In!



Dining Out!

On April 27, 2019, the museum hosted a new event, *Spring Follies*. It was a wonderful evening spent with supporters and friends enjoying music, food, and fun in the special atmosphere of the museum. We are very grateful to all who supported us through their attendance, their financial contribution, and their sponsorships.

Silver Sponsors

\$1,000

*James Hunt Bookhart * Brenda & Jim Dantzler * Patricia & David Felkel*



Bronze Sponsors

\$500

- ◆ Rooster Xpress, Inc.
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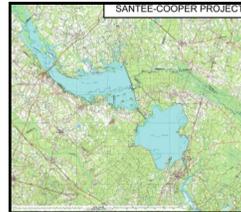
- ◆ Bill & Laura Spiers
- ◆ Jameson Farms Inc.
- ◆ William & Joan Jameson

History of Santee Cooper and the Lake System

Nearly a hundred people attended the program on the **History of Santee Cooper and the Lake System** at the museum on Thursday, April 11. The lecture was given by Mr. Willard Strong from the Corporate Communications Department of Santee Cooper. Mr. Strong is the editor and senior writer of *PowerSource* magazine, a quarterly publication of Santee Cooper. A DVD on the construction and history of the lake was shown. It was explained how Santee Cooper (officially known as the South Carolina Public Service Authority) provided electricity to the rural areas in the beginning. He opened the floor up for questions and much discussion followed.



The Locks



Mr. Snider has been talking about the funding available to Ellore Heritage Museum through grants that cover admissions for school tour groups. This helps to make school tours a much easier process for the teachers. He hopes everyone will spread the word to area teachers and administrators. He loves for the children to come and learn about the history of his town. They can call the museum at 803-897-2225 to get more information and to book a tour.



Tour Group from Holly Hill Academy, Holly Hill, SC

Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon



Gift Shop volunteers were honored at the museum on April 9 with a catered luncheon by Cleveland Street Café. Entertainment was provided by the "Ukaloונים" - playing various ukuleles and singing along. It was a fun time as the volunteers relaxed, visited with one another, sang along with the group, and enjoyed a delicious lunch.



President John McLaurin and Volunteer Coordinator Sylvia Barnes expressed their appreciation and thanked them for their commitment to the museum. These volunteers give time and heart to serve in the gift shop. Their special care of all the visi-

tors and shoppers creates very positive feedback. The museum could not operate without them. Thank you for all you do.



Shop Snider's Store!



The Jewish Merchants of Elloreë—Part II—Isaac Louis Berger by Tom Livingston

Isaac was born in Lithuania on Nov. 4, 1887. It is still somewhat of a mystery to me exactly when he and Wolf Rubenstein came to Elloreë. According to the 1920 census he immigrated to America in 1911 when he was 24 years old. His parents and sister lived in Baltimore but in 1912 he married Ida Zlata Kessel in Savannah. His first child, Dora, was born in 1913 and his first son, Mordecai Ben, was born in 1915; both born in Savannah. He could have been living in Elloreë and Ida went to her home for the births. The included photograph with these two young children was probably taken in 1916 or early 1917 because his third child, Aaron, was born on May 30, 1917 in Milledgeville, Ga.

It is certain that the Bergers were living in Elloreë at least by the fall of 1917. This is suggested by the Rubenstein family's oral history which states that their family moved from Cameron to Elloreë so that Mrs. Rubenstein could live near her brother, Isaac Berger. Both she and Isaac were said to strictly observe Jewish traditions. The Rubensteins bought a house on Hampton Street in December 1917 and the Bergers were thought to precede them in Elloreë. Isaac registered for the WWI draft in Elloreë on Sept. 12, 1918.

The Bergers stayed in Elloreë until 1927 when they moved back to Milledgeville after a short stay in Sarasota, Fl. While in Elloreë Isaac owned several businesses as well as a farm and other investment properties in the area. For some of their time in Elloreë the Bergers lived in a house Isaac built on Barkley Street. One example of his ventures was when he bought his Brother-in-Law's (Wolfe Rubenstein) house on Hampton Street when the Rubensteins moved to Main Street in 1921. Isaac flipped that house in less than a year at a nice profit.

After leaving Elloreë he maintained his ownership of a number of properties and he returned to Elloreë often over the years to oversee his business interests. Maybe his most interesting business deal happened after he moved away and that deal was associated with our beloved Elloreë Museum.

Many of you have visited our wonderful museum exhibits and our gorgeous gift shop. The building we occupy was not always at this location. It was originally built by Walter Bookhardt as an automobile garage and it was located on East Cleveland, just North of Main (where the service station is today). After Walter died his wife, Addie Livingston Bookhardt, sold the building to Isaac Berger in 1924. Many different shops rented space from Isaac including a barber, café, and auto repair shop. In 1937 Isaac decided to move the building to its current location. The moving process had some issues that are still not well understood, but they were major. What we know is that in May of 1937 Isaac contracted with the L.A. Chitwood Company of Columbia to move the building. Stories vary as to whether there was a one or four mule team that was hooked to a circular contraption described as a stump puller. As the mules walked in a circle the building was rolled along over a number of large logs. However when they got to the middle of the intersection of Main and Cleveland the process came to a halt. Despite the expert kibitzing from T. Russell Keller from the sidewalk in front of his hardware store on the southeast corner of the intersection, no progress was made for more than a week.

Interestingly, there are two legal contracts that survive between Chitwood and Berger, so we don't know if it was a contract dispute that led to the stoppage or a mechanical issue. Eventually the move continued and was successfully completed. Isaac ran a general merchandise store downstairs and lived upstairs as he managed his businesses. Later several others ran businesses and lived upstairs in this building. Isaac finally sold the building in 1956 to the Brandenburgs who ran an automobile dealership in it during the 1950's and 1960's. In 1998 the Brandenburgs sold the long abandoned building to the Town of Elloreë who gave it to the museum committee.

While living in Elloreë Isaac and Ida had three more children: son Israel Reuben born Oct. 12, 1919; Son Albert born Dec. 26, 1920; and Daughter Esther Rose born Jan. 23, 1923. They later had their seventh child, son Leonard Hyman born Nov. 24, 1927 in Sarasota. The Bergers were a vital part of the Elloreë business and society in the 1920's. One witness said that Isaac received rabbinic training so that he could make their Elloreë meals kosher. Dora was described as a special child often found riding up and down the wooden sidewalks and singing a special song. Isaac died on Jul. 2, 1967 in Savannah. His memory will last as long as there is an Elloreë Heritage Museum.



March and April 2019 Contributions

Memberships

Individual

Petey Browder
Harriet L. Hutto
Fairey Belle D. Logan
Willard Strong

Family

John & Gail Burchfield
Richard & Tina Carson
Mike & Alice French
Lindsey & Patsie Funchess
Bill & Ann Thrash

Collector's Club

Richard Watkins
Emory & Janice Weisiger-McCann

Director's Guild

Patricia & Bill Clark

Memorials

Betty Brandenburg

Jane Carson
Kathy Conley
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John & Meg McLaurin
Paul & Sug Williamson

Everett Gasque

Jean Gasque

James "Jimmy" Heape

Hattie Mae Dantzler

Michael L. Jeffcoat

Kay & Glenn Lancaster

Robert Burchell "Bobby" Shuler

Laura & Bill Spiers

Frances T. Smith

Jane Carson
Kay & Glenn Lancaster

Endowment Fund Memorials

Frances Smith

Adair Fogle
Walter Fogle

Johnny Weeks

Adair Fogle

Donations

General Fund

Town of Ellorece
Michael & Roberta Motter
Steve & Bette Noble
Orangeburg County
Chris & Rachel Worley

Grants

State Farm & Jan Miller

Photos below are of the building being moved in 1937 which is today the Ellorece Heritage Museum.





Elloree Heritage Museum & Cultural Center

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Howard Shirer

Administrative Manager

Kay Shirer

Upcoming Events:

Children's Summer Camps—See insert.

Volunteer Needed . . .

to help keep grass cut at the museum and
the annex. Please call the museum for details.

803-897-2225.



Museum Hours of Operation:

Wednesday – Saturday

10:00 am — 5:00 pm