



South Brevard Historical Society, Inc.

Founded 1966

E Newsletter JANUARY 2021

DEAR MEMBERS AND FRIENDS,

Do folks still make New Year Resolutions? With all the uncertainty we faced as we approached 2021, it completely slipped my mind to even think about it. Rather, I thought in terms of New Year Hopes..... that the pandemic will be under control or gone, an improved economy emerges, less political wrangling takes center stage and respect for all our citizens is demonstrated. I have even envisioned, since we faced a world wide threat, that we might find a start to world wide cooperation toward shared problems. With those hopes in mind, I am trying to figure out “What should my New Year’s Resolution be?”

The SBHS Board of Directors held a meeting on December 19th at the West Melbourne Public Library. Board members reviewed our financial position, potential programs and projects for 2021 and discussed how we can continue to move forward in spite of the difficulties imposed by the Corona Virus Pandemic.

As 2020 was a difficult year to plan or carry out a fund raiser, Treasurer Annita Full submitted an application for funding from the Brevard CARES Act Grant monies. Thanks to Annita, we’ve been approved for \$4,060. This will help meet our general expenses as well as the cost of storing our Collection of artifacts, paper archives and organization records.

The Board also discussed reorganizing the Collection, setting up a committee to conduct oral history interviews and presenting topics such as “Cities and Towns of South Brevard” and “Founding Families” as series themes for programs and newsletter articles. We begin this month with a special *mini publication* on Malabar. Also, we will add a donate button to our website (with a paypal option). We hope to continue to meet and work on ideas that will continue to build a strong organization with opportunities for greater member participation.

Hoping to see you all in the New Year,
Carol

THINGS TO DO

GREEN GABLES

Saturday’s from 10 - 2 Open House

Visit the Website for information on upcoming SPECIAL EVENTS

<https://greengables.org/>

LIBERTY BELL MUSEUM

The museum is now open TUESDAYS from 10 – 2

or by appointment/phone 321.431.9119

<http://honoramerica.org/liberty-bell-memorial-museum-2/>

FOR THE READER

Reading on line!

The January issue of Senior Scene Magazine features “HOME ON THE RANGE BREVARD” written by SBHS Vice President Diane Barile. It has been reported that paper copies of the magazine can be found at the Sun Shoppe Café. Contact us at southbrevardhistory.org if you find a source we can report.

FOR NOW, YOU CAN GO TO

<https://seniorscenemag.com/jan-2021-senior-scene-magazine/>

YOUTUBE/VIDEO PRESENTATION OF THE MONTH

To accompany Diane Barile’s article in Senior Scene Magazine watch this 1992 interview of Judge Platt, an acquaintance of Diane.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YkhNZgn-WiE>

JANUARY SPECIAL FEATURE:

This month’s feature article is from the introduction to “The Promised Land - The Malabar Years” the second book in the series about the settlement of the Indian River Colony and South Brevard County. This book and the first, “The Promised Land – A Slovak Immigrant’s Tales of Homesteading the Florida Flatwoods” were written by Carolyn Durak and illustrated by Michael Durak. These chronocles are the stories of Michael’s father’s youth, his adventures and the personalities who formed that community.

THANK YOU CAROLYN DURAK FOR THIS MONTH’S FEATURE!

The books are a great read and are still available.

To order one or both of the books, contact Carolyn Durak at 731.925.1903 or email her: mandcdurak@gmail.com.....

SBHS Officers and Directors: Carol Andren, President; Diane Barile, Vice President; Barbara Arthur, Secretary; Annita Full, Treasurer. **Directors:** Denise Bozeman, James Cox, Wiley Elliott, Bob Gross, Nancy Grout, Kathi Harbaugh, Diane Newman, Jim Poulos.

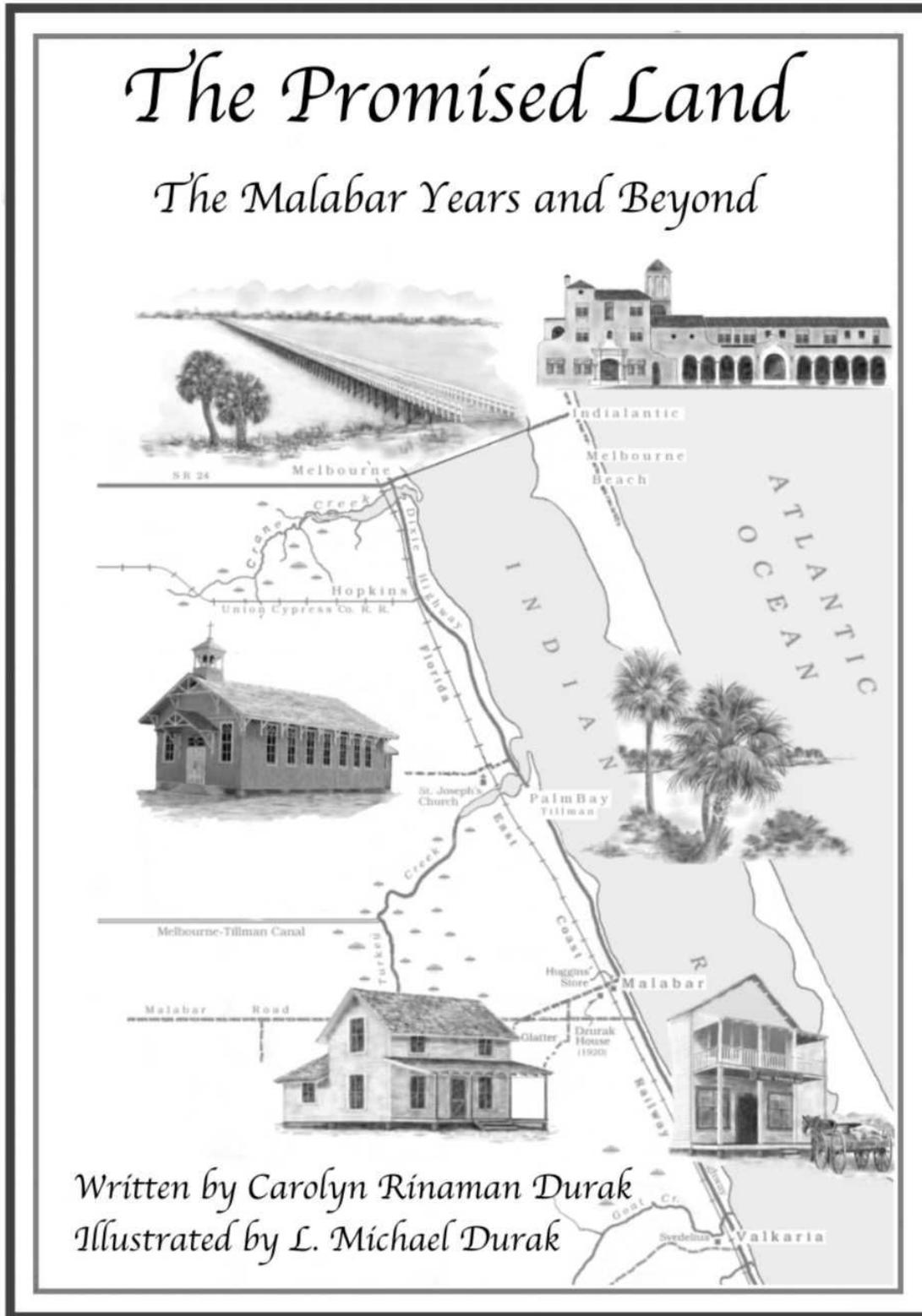
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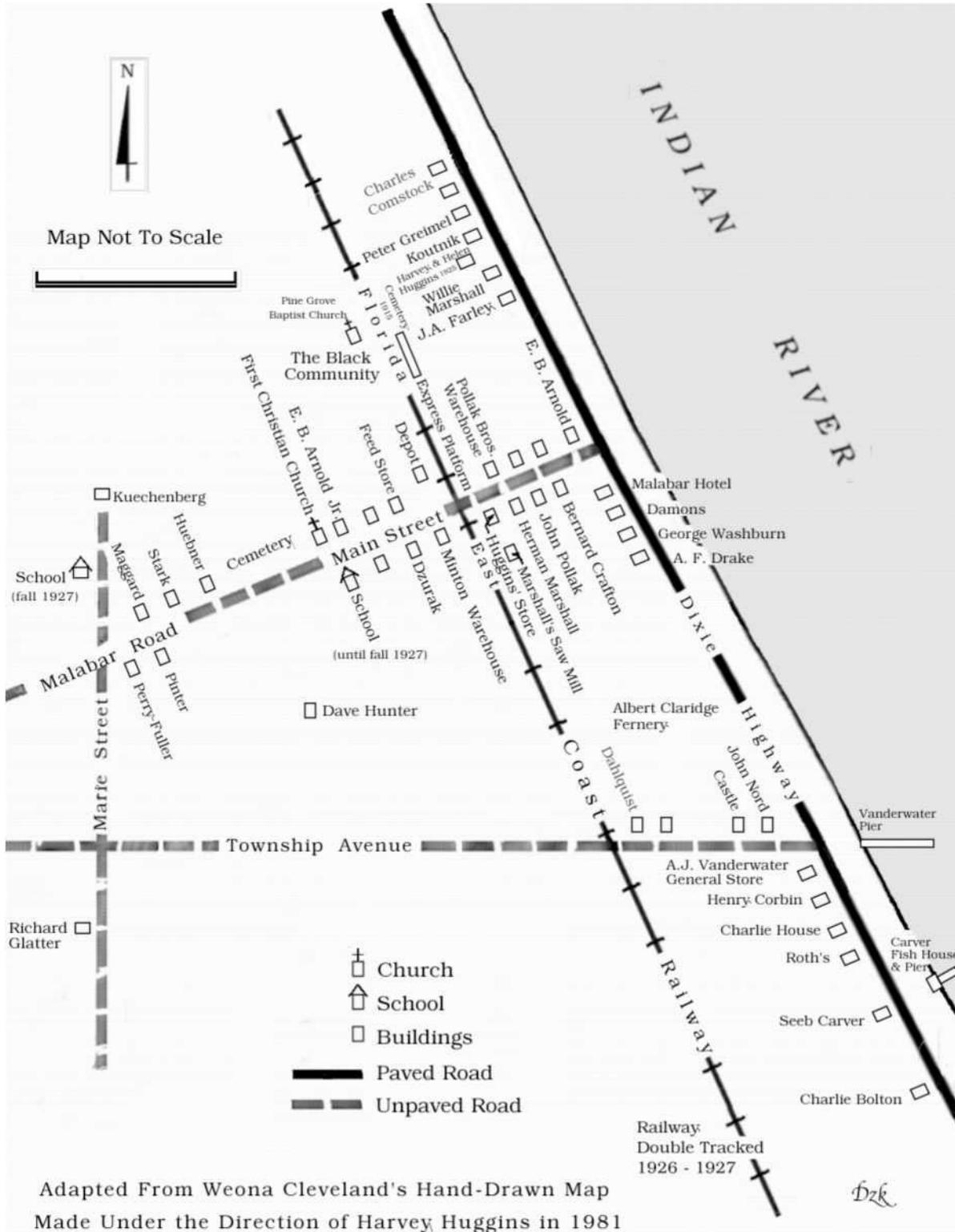
www.southbrevardhistory.org

youtube: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC8HAaqqBGAbz_GHMC3TZe-Q

Here is the cover of our second book of *The Promised Land* with Mike's map of the Malabar of the 1920's and our introductory details about the people and places.



Malabar in the Twenties



Adapted From Weona Cleveland's Hand-Drawn Map
 Made Under the Direction of Harvey Huggins in 1981
 to Represent the Malabar He Remembered of 1913-1915.

The *Setting*

The Fourteenth Census of the United States for the Seventh Precinct of Brevard County was enumerated January 2, 1920, by John Vandewater in Malabar, Florida. Nearly 300 individuals were counted; however, several qualifications need to be stated. First, this represents a total of 85 heads of household—or families. Second, the Malabar precinct includes families such as that of Ernest Svedelius who lived as far south as Valkaria, and Mary Olivik and the Weber family as far west as Weber Road.

Furthermore, perhaps because of land ownership, many families known to have left their homesteads by that time to move into Malabar or Tillman are counted as still living on West Valkaria Road, such as Hazlinger, Laibl, Dzurak, Bohaty, Koutnik, and Pospisil. Of these families, only the Bohatys and the Dzuraks still lived on their original homesteads. Suzana and the children moved into Malabar early that summer, but Frank and Aloise Bohaty stayed on their forty acres throughout their lives.

A close look shows three families on Township Avenue in 1920; eight families on North Beach or River Street, (from Center Street north toward Tillman—this is the Dixie Highway;) nineteen on Center Street (which includes the Hugginses, Craftons, and Pollaks—this is Main Street;) sixteen on South River Road (from Center Street south to Valkaria—also the Dixie Highway;) and ten on West Malabar Road, which was Center Street (Main Street) west of town.

Harvey Huggins, on the hand-drawn map Weona Cleveland made under his direction in 1981 to represent the Malabar he remembered in 1913-1915, used the terms Main Street, Dixie Highway, and Township Avenue. Harvey located the handsome two-story wood frame river house of E. B. Arnold at the northwest corner of Main Street and the Dixie Highway. Arnold, who arrived in 1869, was a founding father of Malabar and had much to do with promotion and development of the town. Cap Arnold, as he was known, was still a leader of the community when in 1927—in his late seventies—he served as mayor.

Across the street from Arnold's river house Harvey located the remains of Arnold's horse barn and buggy shelter—soon to go the way of the concrete horse trough and fountain that for many years had dominated the intersection of Main Street and what was becoming the Dixie Highway. The old Railway Depot building was moved to this corner in the early twenties and operated as a restaurant by Charles Benson's wife, Zadell.

Harvey noted that the Malabar Hotel, built by George Damon in 1886, faced the riverfront just south of Arnold's horse barn and buggy shelter. South of the hotel was the Damon home, followed by the homes of George Washburn and Frank Drake—all among Malabar's earliest settlers.

Some distance to the south was Albert Claridge and his fernery—not really visible from the road, but offset to the west behind a large Indian mound. The area of the Indian mound was planted in citrus.

The next group of homes was where Township Avenue meets the Dixie Highway. This was the site of the Vandewater pier that reached 1,000 feet into the Indian River to provide steamship-depth water. It was outfitted with rails and a handcar to deliver the wooden barrels the Vandewaters produced that steamships delivered to fish houses along the river. The fish houses used the barrels to ice down their fish for shipping. Arthur and Harriet Vandewater arrived in 1913 and, in addition to their barrel-making industry, by 1920 had built a new general store on the south side of Township Avenue facing the river. Harriet took in boarders. The group of homes around the Vandewater store was almost a community in itself.

On the corner north of Township Avenue and facing the river was the home of John and Elis Nord, who came to Malabar in 1912. By 1920, their daughter Annie Nord had married young Albert Drake, Esther Nord had married young Jim Farley, and it was evident that Helen Nord had set her cap for young John Vandewater.

South of the Vandewater general store were the homes of Henry Corbin, Charlie House—a nurseryman, and the Roths. West of Nord's house on the north side of Township were the Castle home, the Vandewater barrel business, a house not identified by Harvey, and—just east of the railroad tracks—the Dahlquist home.

Along the river south of the Township Avenue community was the home of Seeb Carver, a fisherman whose fish house and pier were across the road from his home. Still farther south was the home of Charlie Bolton, who had been the first passenger to arrive in Malabar by train when the Florida East Coast Railway completed its tracks south of Malabar in 1893.

North of E. B. Arnold's and west of the Dixie Highway was the home of James A. Farley, whose property ran all the way from the river to the railroad tracks and included citrus groves and a packinghouse. Farley, who had been Malabar's postmaster for eight years starting in 1888, was again postmaster through the mid-1920's, having been reappointed in 1900. The Malabar Post Office was in the Farley home.

Continuing north of the Farley place, Harvey lists the Koerner and Stovall homes, but by the late twenties those sites were the homes of Willy Marshall and Frank Koutnik. Set back a bit between those two homes was a small bungalow occupied by Harvey and Helen Huggins for a time after they were married.

North of Koutnik's place was Peter Greimel, whose family ran their laundry business at their home on the riverfront. North of Greimel was Charles Comstock's home, citrus groves, and packinghouse—the site of Saturday night dances as early as 1912.

On the south side of Main Street, at the Dixie Highway and west of Arnold's horse barn, was the home of Bernard and Helga Crafton and their son Henry. Bernard was a farmer who owned large fields of sugar cane and peppers west of town.

Next was the home of John and Mary Pollak. John J. Pollak was the land agent who had first welcomed Martin Dzurak and the Jacob Hazlinger family when they arrived to be part of the Indian River Catholic Colony in 1911. He was also the man who delivered the Laibl family to their home site a few weeks later. However, John J. no longer lived with his family. His son, Fred Pollak, found the responsibility of his mother and brothers on his shoulders most of the time and drove his father off in exasperation at the birth of a

sixth son, Charles, in 1918. Fred and his younger brother George ran a machine shop in Malabar and took care of the family.

West of the Pollak house was the home that Herman Marshall built for his family after accompanying his father in 1924 to set up their sawmill operation in Malabar.

Next came Huggins' Store, built by E. B. Arnold and operated by the Conant brothers until Blair and Bertha Huggins purchased it in 1919. The two-story frame structure faced Main Street just east of the tracks. Behind the Huggins Store was the Marshall Mill, built by Will J. Marshall in 1924, along with several small houses for a few black families who kept an eye on the mill.

West of the railroad on the south side of Main Street was Minton's Warehouse. There bell peppers and other vegetables were made ready for shipment by train to restaurants in New York, Chicago, and Cleveland. Just west of the warehouse was the house the English family had occupied for a time and that Martin Dzurak bought for his family in spring of 1920. West of that was a smaller house that Harvey says was once the home of Grover Herring where he operated a meat market; it was later used as an auto shop. Next came the Malabar Schoolhouse, which was also used as a church. Southwest of the school and some distance south of the road was Dave Hunter's place. He owned lots of the cattle that roamed the Malabar area.

West on Malabar Road and almost to Marie Street were the J. W. Pinder and the Perry Fuller houses. At the southwest corner of Marie Street and Township Avenue was the farm of Richard Glatter. Richard and Lenore arrived in 1916 and made their living through the mid-twenties growing vegetables to supply grocers, hotels, and individuals as far north as the town of Melbourne.

Northwest of the intersection of Marie Street and Malabar Road was the site of the new Malabar School that opened in the fall of 1927. By the end of the decade, the dirt road that was Marie Street dead-ended a bit north of the school at the home of the John Kuechenberg family.

On the north side of Malabar Road and east of Marie Street were the old Maggard House, the Stark house, and the Huebner house. Then came the First Christian Church cemetery and the church itself. Next, right across from the original schoolhouse, was Ed Arnold, Jr.'s house and a house not occupied for a time. Then, Harvey lists Dick Moore's barbershop—a black businessman known to have been successful there for many years—a site that by the middle of the decade became an imposing two-story stucco building used as a feed store.

East of the feed store was the new Florida East Coast Railway Depot, finished in 1919—set back a bit from Main Street just west of the tracks.



A narrow dirt road led between the depot and the feed store still farther north to the black community of Malabar, which grew quickly when Marshall arrived in 1924, bringing his black mill workers with him. Even a church was built—Piney Grove Baptist Church. Some distance north of Main Street and just east of the tracks was the new railroad express freight platform where produce was loaded onto train cars for the trip to northern markets. North of that was a small cemetery deeded to the town in 1915 by John Pollak—just in time for interment of early settler Frank Drake. East of the freight platform, but fronting on Main Street, was the Pollak brothers' warehouse and machine shop. Next was the building that housed the little store run by Bertha Huggins when she and Blair first came to Malabar in 1913. Beside it was a house the Huggins family may have lived in when they first arrived. Finally, the home of E. B. Arnold sat facing the river.