



THE DISPATCH

Newsletter of the Matheson History Museum

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The Hard Work of Historic Preservation Never Ends

The Matheson family was caretakers of their historic home for 110 years until Sarah Matheson deeded it to the Alachua County Historical Society in 1977. She lived there until her death in 1996. For the past 45 years the historical society and now the Matheson History Museum have been working hard to ensure the Matheson house, one of the three oldest homes in Gainesville, is preserved for many generations to come.

This year, in great part to your financial support, we have been able to make major improvements to the house and grounds.

- Cleaned and repainted the entire exterior of the house
- Made improvements to the HVAC system
- Completed a major overhaul and cleanup of the grounds surrounding the house
- Installed a wireless environmental monitoring system, which allows us to remotely monitor the temperature, humidity, and light levels in the house

Thank you to our members and donors for making these important projects possible! Turn to page 2 to view before and after pictures.



(L) Cleaning and prepping the exterior
(R) The Matheson House looking as fresh as a daisy!



The Matheson House side yard
BEFORE



The Matheson House side yard
AFTER

Collections Spotlight

Online Catalog is open!

You can now explore our collections online!

We are grateful for the years of work that staff and volunteers have put into the ongoing data entry of the 12,000+ objects, photographs, and more that we care for.

A special shoutout to Barrett Uhler who helped with the guidelines and logistics of getting the Public Access site up and running during her internship over this past summer.

What is currently available on the Public Access site is only a small part of our collection, so check back regularly for new additions!

<https://mathesonmuseum.catalogaccess.com/>



Current Exhibitions

We're Tired of Asking:

Black Thursday and Civil Rights at the University of Florida

Researched and curated by University of Florida graduate Alana Gomez, "We're Tired of Asking: Black Thursday and Civil Rights at the University of Florida" follows one slice of African American history in Gainesville, but certainly not all of Gainesville's Black history. Our goal in this particular exhibition is to show the Civil Rights movement in Gainesville, Florida, from the 1960s until the early 70s and how that affected the University of Florida's racial atmosphere.

It wasn't until the desegregation of the University of Florida in 1957 that Black people began gaining access to public spaces with White people. The issue of civil rights was pushed even further with the partial integration of Alachua County's public schools in 1964. Even with these seemingly large strides toward equality, however, social status and lifestyle remained largely unchanged for Black people in Gainesville.

In a great show of strength on April 15, 1971, Black students decided to take a stand in a protest at Tigert Hall on the UF campus. Their interaction with President Stephen O'Connell would change the course of the University of Florida forever.



The Black Thursday protest, courtesy of UF Smathers Libraries



Dr. Betty Stewart-Fullwood - retired lecturer, triple Gator, and participant in Black Thursday - joined us for the 51st anniversary of the protest in 2022, courtesy of Cool Blue Photography

Current Exhibitions

Return to Forever: Gainesville's Great Southern Music Hall

Between 1974 and 1978, the top concert venue in Gainesville was the Great Southern Music Hall, located inside the historic Florida Theatre at 233 West University Avenue. Jeffrey Meldon and Jim Forsman purchased the venue and transformed it into a state-of-the-art concert hall spotlighting national artists of legendary status, those who had cult followings – and others they just plain liked.

The Great Southern played host to a who's who of prestigious performers including Jimmy Buffett, Ray Charles, Muddy Waters, Bob Seger, Steve Martin, Ike and Tina Turner, John Prine, the Count Basie Orchestra, Weather Report, Randy Newman, Rush, Cheech & Chong and dozens more.

This impactful exhibit showcases dozens of John Moran's performance photos from his two years as the Great Southern Music Hall house photographer. Also featured is a display of Bo Diddley artifacts, including one of Bo's signature square box guitars. Written by music journalist Bill DeYoung and designed by historian Rick Kilby, this unique exhibit celebrates a golden age in the University City's musical history, the likes of which may never be seen again.

Thank you to Jeffrey Meldon and Meldon Law for sponsoring this exhibition!



Bo Diddley photographed by John Moran at the Great Southern Music Hall on June 21, 1974



**The exhibit opened to great fanfare in October 2022.
(L) Evelyn T. Cooper - Bo Diddley's oldest daughter
(R) Jeffrey Meldon, John Moran, Jim Forsman, and Albert Teabagy,
*courtesy of Cool Blue Photography***

Upcoming Events

Florida: A History in Pictures

with Jeff Davies and Mike McGinness - [January 14, 4pm](#)

Writing a Florida Novel (rescheduled from the fall)

with Rebecca Johnston - [January 21, 4pm](#)

Annual Meeting

[January 24, 7pm](#)

All members are encouraged to attend for the State of the Museum address and to vote on new officers and members for our Board of Directors.

Sarah's Sweetwater Greenway Loop Festival

with the Thriving Cities Lab, Spatially Fed, and the Community Foundation of North Central Florida

[February 16-20 \(the Matheson will be participating on the 19th\)](#)

Named in honor of the late Sarah McKnight, the festival is a community-wide endeavor to bring Gainesville residents together through a collaboration that celebrates our unique heritage and also acknowledges the need for integration throughout our historic neighborhoods. This collaborative project will take place along the proposed route of a greenway loop already approved by The City of Gainesville's Strategic Plan.

The Gainesville Music Scene in the 1970s: Featuring the Great Southern Music Hall and the Photography of John Moran

with Jeffrey Meldon - [February 24, 7pm](#)

The Kitchen and the Studio: A Memoir of Food and Art

with Mallory O'Connor - [March 18, 4pm](#)

Good Day Sunshine State: The Beatles in 1964 Florida

with Bob Kealing - [March 25, 4pm](#)

The Florida Naturalist Project: Documenting the State of Florida's Interconnected Waterways

with Vasilios Kosmakos - [May 6, 4pm](#)

*All programs are free (unless otherwise stated) but require pre-registration.

Renew Today!

All annual memberships are due as of January 1st, unless you joined/renewed since October 1, 2022. You can easily renew online via our website:
mathesonmuseum.org/membership.

Now is also a great time to switch to a sustainer membership. Instead of an annual payment you can divide your membership dues up into monthly automatic payments (\$5 minimum). Instructions on how to become a sustainer member are in the blue box to the right.

What does your membership support?

- Continued care of our four historic buildings
- Permanent and temporary exhibits
- Collections care
- Expanded programs

All members enjoy:

- Members-only events
- Early registration to all museum events
- 20% discount in the museum gift shop
- "The Telegram" e-newsletter
- Newsletter twice a year

2023 Membership Gift

All members will receive one of three unique stickers, pictured below, that feature historic postcards from the Matheson collection.



BECOME A MEMBER!

Sustainer Payment Plan

- Give monthly at any amount (\$5 minimum)
- You can register for an automatic monthly donation through PayPal. You do not need a PayPal account in order to participate.
- Go to www.mathesonmuseum.org/membership. Click either the blue or yellow button at the bottom.
- When you reach the PayPal donation page enter the amount you would like to donate monthly and click the button next to "Make this a monthly donation."

Annual Payment Plan

- Student - \$20
- Senior Individual - \$25
- Individual - \$35
- Family - \$40
- Historian - \$100
- Heritage Circle - \$250
- 1867 Society - \$500
- Lifetime - \$1,000

Visit our website at mathesonmuseum.org/membership to join today!



COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
of North Central Florida

Jumpstart
Powered by Network  for Good.

A note from our Executive Director:

Dear Matheson members, supporters, and friends,

Over the past several years the Matheson staff and Board of Directors have been focused on strengthening our fundraising infrastructure to help us build long-term financial sustainability for the museum. We have worked extensively with our partners at the Community Foundation of North Central Florida and are excited to share that we have been selected for a grant-funded opportunity to participate in the Jumpstart program managed by Network for Good!

“Jumpstart is a year-long program that blends together dedicated virtual coaching and integrated technology needed to help you create a right-sized donor development strategy, rapidly scale community engagement, enable stakeholder alignment, and build sustainable fundraising outcomes.”

What this means in simpler terms is that we are going to have one on one coaching throughout the year to help us communicate more effectively with our members and donors, build new relationships, and make our processes more efficient to maximize our limited staff time.

We are grateful to Lesley Banis and Barzella Papa from the Community Foundation for their ongoing support and for making this program possible for the Matheson.

We have made great strides together and I look forward to sharing details of our progress throughout 2023!

Sincerely,

Kaitlyn Hof-Mahoney
Executive Director
director@mathesonmuseum.org



Follow us on social media!



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Matheson History Museum

Website: www.mathesonmuseum.org

Our exhibitions and programs are sponsored in part by: Visit Gainesville - Alachua County, FL; The City of Gainesville; and the Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs, the Florida Council of the Arts and Culture, and the State of Florida.



Gainesville.
Citizen centered
People empowered

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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MATHESON HISTORY MUSEUM
513 E. UNIVERSITY AVENUE
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