President’s Letter

As you know, TBHC is located at the epicenter of the Water Street development, a 50-acre, $3 billion project that includes hotels, restaurants, retail, office, residential and other spaces. Once complete, the neighborhood around our building will be a vibrant, exciting, and vehicle- and pedestrian-friendly place for residents and visitors alike. We’re excited about these changes, and we look forward to meeting our new neighbors. However, given the construction, we recommend that you check our and the City of Tampa’s websites in advance for road closures, best routes and parking options around our building when planning your next visit.

In addition to all the construction taking place in the surrounding area, we have a few projects of our own. Work is currently underway on our outdoor dining space. With terrific views of the Garrison Channel, the Tampa Riverwalk and Cotanchobee Park, the outdoor patio is a popular spot for enjoying a Cuban sandwich or 1905 Salad. It’s about to get even better as, thanks to funding from the City of Tampa, we’re installing a new insulated roof that will enable us to both efficiently condition and filter the air, making this a safer and more enjoyable location year-round. Construction on this project should be complete by late summer.

Our third-floor permanent gallery is also getting a makeover. Thanks to a generous grant from Tampa Electric and TECO Peoples Gas, as well as support from Hillsborough County and the Tampa Bay Lightning Foundation, guests will soon see an exciting and engaging new exhibit focusing on our community’s Black heritage. The stories that will be told are powerful. The Tampa Bay area has a long and rich African-American history, and these changes will enable us to explore this heritage in greater and more in-depth detail. We’re hoping to open this new gallery in February 2022.

Plans are also underway for a robust lineup of programs for this fall and next spring. We’ve continued to hone our virtual presentation skills, and we will be offering many of our programs in “hybrid” format, with both in-person and virtual attendance opportunities available. So, even if you don’t feel like venturing out to attend one of our programs, you’ll continue to be able to watch from the comfort of your home.

These are just some of the many exciting happenings going on at your Tampa Bay History Center. In the coming months, look for announcements about other exciting news, both at TBHC and our partnership location, Chinsegut Hill. Until then, enjoy the rest of your summer.

We look forward to seeing you on your next visit.
One resource History Center staff will tap for the newly designed gallery is “Tampa Bay Stories,” an initiative launched by the History Center in 2020 as Black Lives Matter protests gathered on the streets of Tampa. “It was a historic year by any measure, and we wanted to collect stories and artifacts that could help future historians illustrate what was happening in the city,” said Kite-Powell.

Funding from TECO will be supplemented by the Lightning Foundation and a Hillsborough County Historic Preservation Grant, bringing the total investment to more than $350,000.

“This is a major overhaul of one of our permanent gallery spaces,” said History Center President and CEO C.J. Roberts. “We opened in 2009, so after 12 years, it was time to revisit how we tell this story and see what we could improve upon.”

Work on the new permanent gallery space is currently in the planning stages; History Center staff believe the project will take about one year to complete.

When the Tampa Bay History Center entered its partnership with Hernando County to operate and maintain Chinsegut Hill Historic Site last year, it quickly became the stewards of an important historic legacy involving Florida pioneers, progressive political thought, women’s rights and African-American history. What was not immediately known was that from 1936-1937, Chinsegut Hill had its own unit of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). As researchers uncovered more details about this time, they knew there was potential for an excellent public program.

The program was developed with a premise to provide a living history element combined with a community volunteer component. Thus, the Spirit of Conservation Day program was born. Arrangements were made with local living historians to portray men of Company 5468 of the Civilian Conservation Corps. Our partners at Mid Florida Community Services came up with volunteer opportunities to work on landscaping and other conservation projects on the grounds. An impressive collection of period tools, CCC clothing and equipment was assembled, and before long, there was enough for eight men to create a living history encampment that replicated the initial formation of the unit at Chinsegut.

On July 10, 2021, the community was invited to the Spirit of Conservation Day at Chinsegut Hill to learn about its conservation history. There were tool and equipment displays, hands-on work stations showing a variety of CCC skills, PowerPoint programs and enhanced tours of the manor that included CCC artifacts. Among the attendees were several CCC member descendants, with two having family in the unit at Chinsegut. Our guests learned that more than 120 men from central Florida came together to learn new skills, provide labor and farm infrastructure at the urging of Raymond and Margaret Robins, the last owners of the historic home.

All in all, it was an eventful day during which guests were able to learn about an important time in American history. The History Center looks forward to offering more programs like this as it continues to bring history to life for its members, Hernando County citizens and many visitors.
Tampa Bay History Center, Inc.

BALANCE SHEET

ASSETS
Cash and Equivalents $2,017,079
A/R Government, Other and Prepaid Expenses $163,995
Inventory, Gifted Facility, Property & Equipment $20,224,689
Pledges Receivable, Net $1,438,005
Other Pledges Receivable $18,000
Cultural Endowment Program Fund $1,142,823

TOTAL ASSETS $25,001,585

LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS
Liabilities:
Accounts Payable & Other Accrued Expenses $187,240
Line of Credit $0
Total Liabilities $187,240

NET ASSETS:
Without Donor Restrictions: $2,048,031
Designated for long-term purposes:
Endowment Distributions from Foundations $12,271
Contributions In-Kind $10,431
Investment Return, Other Income and Net Assets Released From Restriction $1,034,458

Total Net Assets $24,814,345

TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS $25,001,585

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES - UNRESTRICTED
Unrestricted Operating Support and Revenue
Government Support and PPP Loan $873,281
Earned Income, Contributions and Donations $1,243,265
Endowment Distributions from Foundations $112,271
Contributions In-Kind $10,431
Net Assets Released From Restriction $1,034,458

TOTAL OPERATING SUPPORT & REVENUE $2,688,917

Operating Expenses
Program Services $1,877,115
Management $480,585
Fundraising $899,294

TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES $3,207,004

(1) Excludes approximately $5,083,000 held at the USF Foundation in the Tampa Bay History Center Endowment Fund.

Tampa Bay History Center Foundation, Inc.

BALANCE SHEET

ASSETS
Cash and Equivalents $28,648
Operating Endowment Pledges Receivable, Net $0
Operating Endowment Fund $13,414,354
Board Designated Endowment Fund $22,421,738

TOTAL ASSETS $35,864,738

LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS
Liabilities:
Operating Support and Revenue $0
Total Liabilities $0

NET ASSETS:
Without Donor Restrictions: $22,421,738
Designated for long-term purposes:
Endowment Distributions from Foundations $13,414,354
Total Net Assets $35,864,738

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES - UNRESTRICTED
Operating Support and Revenue
Investment Return, Contributions and Donations $2,105,168
Net Assets Released From Restriction $583,748

TOTAL OPERATING SUPPORT & REVENUE $2,688,917

Operating Expenses
Management $50,039
Fundraising $9,998
Donations Made to the Tampa Bay History Center $582,570

TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES $642,607

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The Florida territorial period—the time when Florida had been acquired by the United States from Spain but had not yet achieved statehood—was a pivotal and important era in the state’s history. Outpost to Statehood: The Florida Territory, the newest exhibition in the History Center’s Touchton Map Library, covers this era’s history through maps from that period. The groundwork for so much of the state’s more modern history, from government relationships with the Seminoles and Miccosukees to slavery to state politics, all have their roots in the territorial era. This exhibit explores those themes and more.

Florida became a territory of the United States as a result of the Adams-Onis Treaty, signed between the U.S. and Spain in 1821. Florida’s path to becoming a U.S. territory was longer, of course, than the activities of 1821. The treaty between the United States and Spain took two years to negotiate and ratify, and that process was preceded by 286 years of Spanish control.

The new American possession immediately created both complications and opportunities. The frontier outpost’s population officially stood at around 10,000 in 1821, including Whites and enslaved Blacks. Twenty-four years later, when Florida became the 27th state, the total population stood at around 67,000 people, including Whites and both enslaved and free Blacks. Neither population count included the Seminole and Miccosukee Indians who had called Florida home since the early 1700s.

As Florida’s first territorial governor, Andrew Jackson took possession of Pensacola and all of West Florida through an agreement dated July 17, 1821, with the Spanish governor of West Florida. One week earlier, a similar ceremony had taken place in St. Augustine between José Coppinger, Spanish governor of East Florida, and Robert Butler, the United States commissioner appointed by Jackson to serve on his behalf. That there were two ceremonies, two Spanish governors and two commissioners representing the United States foreshadowed some of the logistical problems to come. There were also the problem of outstanding Spanish land grants—some official and some promised, but not technically fulfilled.

It took years, and several lawsuits, to sort out the questions of land ownership. Those questions were important, though, as the federal and territorial governments were eager to survey the new territory and open it to homesteading.

If the first 14 years of the Florida Territory were marked by relative peace and prosperity, the following seven were marred by warfare and stained with blood. Isolated raids, including White Georgians attacking Indian villages in north Florida and counterattacks by Indians against White settlers in Florida, were becoming more common.

A group of Seminoles led by the Creek-born military leader Osceola attacked and killed Wiley Thompson, the federal Indian agent, at Fort King near present-day Ocala. Around the same time, on December 28, 1835, a group of Seminoles attacked a column of soldiers traveling from Fort Brooke to Fort King, killing all but three in the day-long battle. The Second Seminole War had begun.

Florida officially attained statehood with the stroke of President John Tyler’s pen on March 3, 1845. Federal census takers counted 66,243 people that year, but that is most certainly an undercount. In addition to not conducting a census in St. Lucie and Dade counties, the census rolls do not include many, if any, Seminoles or Miccosukees, who had been pushed to the southern end of the Florida peninsula; the Everglades offered some level of protection from encroachment by homesteaders and farmers.

Interestingly, Florida’s growth would be somewhat stunted through the middle and late 19th century, with midwestern and western states, especially California, outpacing Florida. Indeed, the railroad would link the continent from east to west (1869) before it would arrive in Tampa (1883).

Even though it attained statehood, Florida was still in some ways an outpost on the southern frontier. Events throughout the United States, from the annexation of Texas to the discovery of gold in California and on to the Civil War, would all have detrimental effects on Florida’s growth. Though it became a state in 1845, it really wasn’t until 1945 that true population growth began to push Florida into the ranks of the country’s largest states.
We are grateful to the following donors who made gifts between February 1, 2021 and July 31, 2021.

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FRIDAY, NOV. 12 • 7 P.M.

The Annual Gala is the History Center’s signature (and only!) fundraiser and supports the preservation of our region’s rich cultural heritage and the History Center’s education programs.

Special thanks to 2021 Gala Chairs, Joe and Suzanne Taggart.

For event details, to attend or make a donation, visit tampabayhistorycenter.org/gala

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