

# Florida Chautauqua

# Camp and Fireside

March 2017 Volume 1 Edition 3

## Association Notes



In 2013 the Florida Chautauqua began took a step to solidifying its place in DeFuniak Springs. With the aquisition of the old Lakeside Hospital building to use as our headquarters. This historic building was the perfect choice for the association because of its location, space, and functional possibilities. The Association has worked to preserve and repair the ravages of time on the building. Opened



Florida Chautauqua Lakeside building as it appeared when it was Lakeside Hospital.

in 1939 as a single story clinic by Dr. Ralph Spires, the second floor was added in 1947. The building served as Walton Counties first certified hospital, and would remain open as such until 1972. After closing as a hosptial, the building continued to serve the community as Doctors offices. Today the building is being reevinsioned as location not only for the Florida Chautauqua Associations operations, history research library and museum, but also as a building the community can once again use. Board member Denise Mack has taken the lead on seeking grants to help revive the building. The most serious issue with the building is the roof. After meetings state officals, Denise  
**(continued on page 2)**

The 2018 Florida Chautauqua Assembly's theme is "Into the Pillars of Chautauqua" from January 25th through the 28th, 2018. Stay up to date on all the latest developments by going to our website (stated ) below and update your contact information.

[www.floridachautauquaassembly.org](http://www.floridachautauquaassembly.org)

## 2018 Assembly planning well underway.

The Board of Directors for the Florida Chautauqua Association have jumped off with both feet into the planning for the 2018 assembly. Themed "Into the Pillars of Chautauqua", the program promises to be as diverse and fun as the 2017 assembly. We already have topics coming in from our faculty, and new presenters who will be joining our faculty. With the feedback from those who attended the assembly this year, we will continue to evolve and improve the program. As the planning moves forward, we are more excited at the possibilities that the future holds for the Florida Chautauqua. We hope you are already making plans to join us and dive into The Pillars of Chautauqua.

## Historic items coming home.

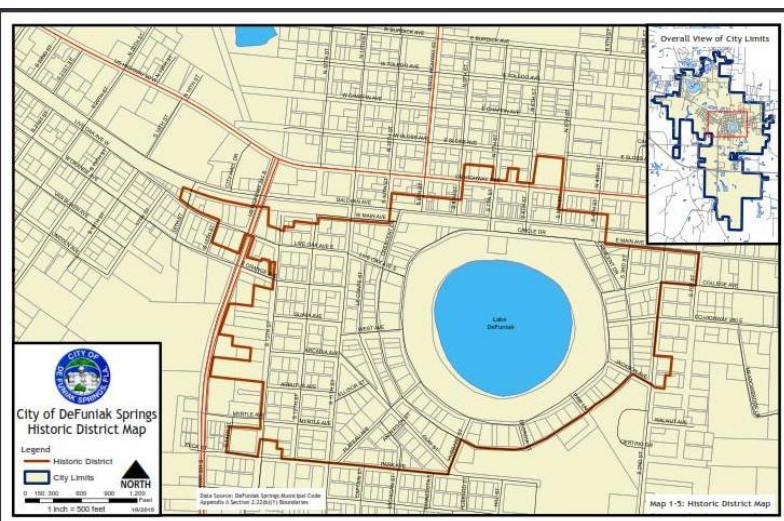
You may not be aware, but at the Florida Chautauqua Lakeside Building, we maintain a history research library and archives. In recent years, Wallace Bruce's family has begun donating items to our library and archives from his estate. Most recently we received a large lot from his estate donated by his Great Granddaughter Madeleine and her husband John Oliver. Included in this lot were scrap books with photos of DeFuniak we have never seen, and Annie Bruce's, (Wallace Bruce's wife) scrap book with condolence letters she received after his death, as well as one of Wallace's personal scrap books. Also, Cindy Holt, Rusty Bowman, and Alfred Carlson, more of his Great Grandchildren, have donated items very important to our research and history of DeFuniak Springs and his time here. Wallace Bruce was our longest sitting President of the Florida Chautauqua and a loved citizen of DeFuniak Springs. These items can be viewed at the Florida Chautauqua Association museum and archives, and some are on loan to the Octagon House.

## Lakeside Building Continued from page 1

Has been able to identify the best options for grants to pursue. It is vital that we return this building to being one the community sees as a productive and important part of the community. We are still in the process of raising funds for the project, as for the larger grant we are pursuing, there is a match that we must provide. The sum is small compared to the amount of the grant, but is still a hill we must climb. Lakeside, like the Florida Chautauqua, has a strong history in the community. People have a strong emotional tie to this building, as many in the community were born here. We hope our efforts to preserve and revitalize Lakeside will preserve its place in DeFuniak Springs for the future.



Dr. Ralph Spires, MD  
founder of the  
Lakeside Hospital.



The city of DeFuniak Springs has recently received a grant to update its survey of the Historic District. The Historic District is comprised largely of the old Florida Chautauqua Association grounds, where from 1885-1928, the Historic Florida Chautauqua operated. Many of the homes on the historic register have ties to the original Florida Chautauqua. We can't wait to see what new information is uncovered during this resurvey, and hope to see more history uncovered on areas outside the current historic district. The Florida Chautauqua Association has been asked to participate and strongly support this project.