



FAIRHOPERS

October, 2019

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- Archives Committee member Catherine King shares stories from the Courier from 1894
- A Message from FSTC President Lee Turner
- Meet Margaret Neely, one of our newest members
- What's Going Down at the Colony Cemetery?

Where'd my Rent Go? News you can Use: Interesting Actions by FSTC from earlier this year.

New Sidewalks were approved linking Falls Creek and Gayfer Estates \$50,000

Baldwin Pops Founders Day Concert on the Bluff. \$2,000



Bell Building, new walkway, decks, window replacement, paint. \$33,000

Dedicated Honest Passionate Motivated
Trustworthy Straight-forward Energetic Hard-working

Words people say to describe Cliff Pitman

Cliff has had three passions that drive him: his family, his construction business, and the Fairhope Single Tax Colony. As a third grader, Cliff remembers weekends helping his family build a small vacation home on Lake Martin.

This must have sparked his lifelong interest in construction. Years later, he enrolled in Auburn University and graduated in 1978 with a degree in Building Science. After hurricane Frederick struck the Eastern Shore in 1979, Cliff saw an opportunity to start his life in construction and moved to Fairhope. The first two years he was busy rebuilding and repairing damaged buildings from the hurricane.

The company he started, H.C. Pitman Building Co., and his reputation were beginning to take root. As his family grew to four children, he found ways to use his construction acumen to show leadership in projects that benefited his family, students, coaches, and athletes at Fairhope High.

He oversaw the construction of the Fairhope High School multi-purpose facility and the new dugouts and locker rooms at high school baseball fields. He also worked evenings and weekends remodeling and adding the balcony to the Fairhope Single Tax Colony offices on Fairhope Avenue.

Some of his proudest accomplishments as a Board Member of FSTC include their foresight to use money from condemnation of property on Greeno Road to put in utilities and roads that developed the 100-lot subdivision of Colony Place.

Cliff proudly stated, "This gave many families an opportunity to purchase their own home at a small price compared to most subdivisions on the Eastern Shore."

Cliff has dedicated over twenty years as one of the Directors of Fairhope Single Tax Colony to improve the city and the lives of its citizens.

We can add Generous to that list of words to describe Cliff Pitman.

Our Newest Member: Margaret Neely

My husband, Mike, and I are originally from Mobile but lived in the Atlanta area for twenty-five years before moving to our beautiful city of Fairhope. We have one daughter, Kristin, who teaches 2nd grade at Bayside Academy. Since we are lessees, I wanted to find out exactly what the FSTC is and what I could do to support it and the city of Fairhope. I took the FSTC class with a neighbor in 2018 and became a member in 2019. I am currently serving on the Education Committee.



Fairhope's Quasiquicentennial: Celebrating 125 Years

The story of Fairhope's founding is one of vision and hard work by a corps of individuals in Des Moines, Iowa, who were determined to find a solution to the economic problems of late nineteenth-century America. The



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Carol Saltz
Geoffrey F. Kennedy
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Reuben "Ed" Davidson, III,
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Pat King
Teresa Watkins
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Fairhoppers is brought to you by the FSTC Education Committee. Tamara Dean, Faye Earnest, Wayne Miller, Margaret Neely, Alan Samyr, and Pam Turner.

Have a story idea for an upcoming newsletter?

Email Wayne Miller
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Single Tax Club there studied Henry George's economic theories from his book *Progress and Poverty* and voted to start a colony based on those ideas. The date was January 4, 1894.

In the ensuing months, the leaders of the newly formed Fairhope Industrial Association pushed forward. The constitution was passed, news of the single-tax colony was made public, members were recruited, the site was selected, the *Fairhope Courier* newspaper began, and on November 15, 1894, twenty-eight new Fairhoppers arrived on the eastern shore of Mobile Bay to start the colony. They were followed in the next weeks by others, and at Christmastime, enjoyed a feast to celebrate the accomplishments of 1894 and anticipate the hard work ahead.

On the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the founding, E. B. Gaston, co-founder of Fairhope, Fairhope Single Tax Corporation secretary, and editor and publisher of the *Fairhope Courier* wrote:

"We view the past with gratification. We face the future with courage and hope."
We salute the founders and celebrate the Quasquicentennial.

Colony Cemetery-Part I: The Past

Upon arrival to the area, the Fairhope Industrial Association quickly began purchasing as much land as they could afford, some of which had no particular plan of use at the time of purchase.

A member of this group, originally from Waynesburg, Pennsylvania, was a 74-year-old married man, father of eight, who moved to Fairhope in hopes of regaining his health. Sadly, this was not to be. A fisherman found the body of this man, John Hunnel, on the beach on July 4, 1895.

Because Mr. Hunnel was the first member of the Association to die, this left the other members scrambling to take care of the body for burial and to find a place to bury him. They disassembled a wooden picnic table to make a coffin and chose the plot of land that is now at the corner of Section and Oak Street to be the cemetery. Mr. Hunnel was buried that day and has the honor of being the first resident of the Colony Cemetery. His obituary published in the July 11, 1895 edition of the Waynesburg, PA, newspaper, declared he "died of paralysis."

In 2008, William Hunnel, the great-great-grandson of John, went in search of the grave. It had gone unnoticed for many years, the only marking being a faint etching of the name Hunnel on the concrete surrounding the grave site. William and his wife, Mary, had a gravestone and marker placed on his grave in April 2008.

From the President: Lee Turner

In October I am going to see Fairhope's own Chauncey Packer perform in the Metropolitan Opera's *Porgy and Bess*. Mark that off my bucket list. I will not reveal how much the ticket price set me back, but most are aware of the Big Apple's big price tags.

I think of our community and how much there is to do here: plays at **Theatre 98**; swimming, sunning and surfing along the **public beach**; concerts at the **amphitheater**; studying the wild at the **Nature Park**; softball at **Founders**; soccer at the **soccer complex**; the Baldwin Pops on the **bluff**; fishing and strolling on the **big pier**; renown artists' exhibits at the **Eastern Shore Art Center**; activities at **Rotary Youth Club**; meetings and lectures at the **Fairhope Public Library**; history programs at the **Fairhope Museum of History**.

Everything in **bold** above has been donated to our city or supported by our Fairhope Single Tax Corporation to make Fairhope a Utopian Society. I am proud to serve with a dedicated board of directors, office staff, and generous volunteers to keep this great work going forward.