

## Museum Activities: Always Varied and Interesting



*Left:* Ruby Lee Whittle Wetherington when donating her Oberman employees photograph to the museum. During the summer we received a call from Mrs. Wetherington asking us to come to her home in order that she donate a framed photograph to the museum. She went to work at Oberman Manufacturing when it opened circa 1957. She had formerly worked at Kress in downtown Valdosta. She stopped working at Oberman for a period to care for her mother then resumed employment in 1968 continuous to 1987 when she retired.

Her husband Hamp Wetherington had worked for Georgia Plate Glass Company and made the picture frame. The photo is dated 1962. Oberman was purchased by Levi Strauss Company.

Mrs. Wetherington identified herself in the photograph and friend Althea Hightower who is standing beside her. She said that the seven ladies front left were the supervisors. Those front center include Edith Hart, Alex Baldwin and Fred Buescher. She told that Oberman had one shift but Levi Strauss also ran a night shift. The Metal Products Company building is in the background top left in the photo. We at the museum would like to hear from people that can identify others in the photo.



*Above:* Rozzie Bird of Smyrna , Georgia, and Drew Johnson.

Perhaps a saga began in 2012 when studying the first known Valdosta group to take the Grand Tour. It coincided with the sinking of the Titanic, the Valdostans being on the Atlantic Ocean on the sister ship Olympic. The big trip is reflective of the prosperity in Valdosta at this time as stated in this newsletter. The museum had a photo and a dozen known postcards of the trip. When I decided to take a chance and see if Rozzie Bird's grandmother, who had died a decade before Rozzie was born, might have postcards from this tour, Rozzie was unaware of the trip. When Rozzie searched she found almost 250 of these cards collected in 1912.

Late this Spring we received a call at the museum from VSU concerning early images of the J. D. McKey house, 1208 N. Patterson Street as it is to undergo some restoration and is college property. An early photograph was supplied from our archives. Internally, since this subject had come into question, we learned more about the J. D. McKey family. These occasions always serves as good "connect-a-dots" for the future. In looking in archive boxes of the "J.D. McKey/Stump" collection page after page of post-cards appear. Now uncovered are another 250 post cards of this trip. These were preserved by Marion Wilkinson who married Harry Stump. Drew Johnson had majored in Spanish, minored in German, and could read most every card. We contacted Rozzie and she hurried here with her cards as Drew had graduated and was moving. Rozzie is fascinated as she took her step-grandmother to several of the same places and plans to write a book on perhaps "Grandmother's Grand Tour." It covered from Gibraltar to a Budapest/Vienna Danube cruise, to St. Petersburg, Algiers, Egypt, the Holy Land, Lapland, everywhere in between, getting to Stockholm for the 1912 Olympics, Italy twice, England and more. We await Rozzie's book to include highlight postcards and later, with today's technology, the over 500 electronic postcards images can be available as a resource and for study.



*Above:* Kathryn Burgsteiner Stevens holds a family Civil War era bonnet she donated to the museum before moving to Fernandina Beach, FL near family. Early in 2014 the museum will have Civil War Commemorative exhibits that will include all the interesting details of the bonnet.