

Charleston Fair History

1872-1956

The Floral Fairs

Charleston Gala Week

The Charleston Agricultural
and Industrial Fair

compiled by Francis G. Shorter, Jr.

The Exchange Club of Charleston
August 2020

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In the middle 1800's, if Charleston residents wanted to attend a Fair, they would have to take a South Carolina Railroad train, probably boarding on the north side of John Street between King and Meeting Streets (the current location of the Charleston Visitors Center) and travel to Columbia, South Carolina, for a day long excursion at the South Carolina State Fair. The State Agricultural Society of South Carolina operated from 1839 through 1849 and again from 1855 through 1861. This organization's mission was to promote the material, educational, agricultural, and industrial interests of the State and early fairs were held, in Columbia, to accomplish this mission. In February, 1865, the fairground buildings on Elmwood Avenue, just north of the city, were totally destroyed by fire, as Union troops attacked Columbia. The fairgrounds would be rebuilt thereafter. The Society reorganized in April 1869 and held the first post war fair in November 1869 at the Elmwood Avenue location. By 1903, the fair had outgrown this site and the society purchased a one hundred acre site, just south of the city for \$15,000. The first fair on these modern fairgrounds opened on October 25, 1904 and has remained there since and is the South Carolina State Fair that we know today.



1785

In Charlestown on Wednesday, August 24, 1785, several gentlemen met at the City Hall for the purpose of forming a Society to encourage agriculture within the state. They formed the South Carolina Society for Promoting and Improving Agriculture and Other Rural Concerns. The first officers were Thomas Heyward Jr., President, Thomas Pinckney, Vice President, and Peter Bonnetheau, Secretary. President Heyward gave an inspiring address to the Society and challenged the group to work together to make whatever improvements necessary to enhance the agricultural efforts across the State. He also recommended that the members of the Society select a small portion of their grounds in order to make experiments on it by various methods and record the results for the benefit of the other members. The Society also elected a Committee composed of William Drayton, John Matthews, John Rutledge, Charles Coatesworth Pinckney, Ralph Izard, Edward Rutledge, Thomas Bee, Aaron Loockock and Isaac Harleston. Each Society member would pay one guinea (one guinea equalled twenty shillings) on admission and two guineas at the first meeting of the calendar year for the general purpose of the Society. The name of the Society was changed by the Act of Incorporation, which was passed by the Legislature, on December 19, 1795, to it's present name, The Agricultural Society of South Carolina. From 1785 to 1811, similar societies were also formed in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, Massachusetts and Virginia to promote agricultural experimentation including new plowing techniques, use of fertilizers, crop cultivation, and livestock breeding. In 1811, the Berkshire Agricultural Society of Massachusetts held what is thought to be the first county fair in the country. The South Carolina Society would meet quarterly and hold an Annual Meeting on the

third Monday in February and the cost of this annual meeting was five shillings per member. During the early years the Society, like many other groups of the day, held lotteries to raise working funds for a number of its projects. One such project was purchasing forty-two acres of land located in the Charleston neck area where agricultural experiments were made to find out what worked and what did not. By 1919 the size of the farm was eighteen and one half acres and experimental sites were being reduced, including the one located at Hampton Park. In the early years of the group, many orations and addresses were delivered to the Society by its members on various topics regarding agricultural improvements and results. Many members often wrote lengthy papers pertaining to crop yields and they often corresponded with each other on various topics as well. Starting in 1807, premium awards in the form of medals were awarded for different crop yields and in 1824, Charles Elliott Rowand of the Rantowles area won the medal for the most production of green seed cotton at 308 pounds per acre.

The Society also sponsored and continued cattle and horse shows in the middle 1800's. The first recorded local cattle show was held February 11, 1822, at the Washington Race Course (Hampton Park). The first sanctioned horse race in Charleston was in 1735 at "The York Course." After this location horse races were held at the New Market Course that was a large area located between the Broad Path (King) and Meeting Streets, bounded on the north by Huger Street and on the south by Line Street. Horse racing events for prizes of silver and gold, took place here between 1756 and 1792, when the course was abandoned and the activities were moved to the Washington Course under the direction of the South Carolina Jockey Club. Current day I-26 passes directly over the middle of this section of the city where the New Market Course was located. Only two horses were exhibited and the judges thought that both animals were deserving of the first place award, so they awarded a first place to both of the owners. The show in 1823 offered show premiums for stallions, mares, bulls, boars and rams. During the 1824 show awards were offered for cattle, horses and agricultural products. In 1827 and 1828 the Society's annual exhibition of cattle, horses and other animals included a competition of rice, cotton, corn and other crops. The addition of showing the crops were meant to increase the interest and attendance to the shows. The show of 1843 appears to have been the last one held as the enthusiasm for these shows gently declined.

THE FLORAL FAIRS 1872-1896

1872

It appears that the idea of having a local fair in the greater Charleston area goes back in time as far as 1872. On Monday, April 8, 1872, the Executive Committee of the Agricultural Society of South Carolina held a special meeting for a discussion regarding a proposal to hold a Floral Exhibition during the month of May. A committee was appointed in order to consider the feasibility of this event and report back to the society, at their regular meeting, which was held the following week. Dr. Arthur B. Rose was the chairman of the event committee and he also later served as the Society's president from 1874-1892. The exhibition was approved and the Society began advertising the

coming event in the local newspapers. The Floral Exhibition of the Agricultural Society of South Carolina would open on Wednesday, May 1, 1872, at 4:00 PM, at the Ryan Villa, located at the southwest corner of Calhoun Street and Rutledge Avenue, and would close on Friday, May 3, at 10:00 PM.

This Exhibition is considered to be the first Fair event ever held in the city of Charleston. The Charleston Daily News on May 1, 1872 printed an article entitled, "The Floral Fair", and told of some of the many details of the event. There was a large flower tent measuring forty by sixty feet that afforded a covering to the abundant flowers and rare plants that were on display. After dark, the lighting of the tent was provided by five large gas chandeliers. Flowers and plants of all various types, too numerous to mention, were on display throughout the grounds. Fruits and vegetables were also displayed and were judged as well. On Friday evening at 9:00 PM, after a signal from the band, Colonel William E. Trenholm advanced to the steps on the piazza and briefly addressed the visitors. He congratulated the society and the committee upon the successful completion of the event. He then announced the awards of premiums. There were no cash awards, for the winners of the nineteen categories, but valuable keepsake items, that included a silver napkin ring, a silver knife, a gold pen, vases, a glass fruit bowl and a jewel case.

Inside the Ryan Villa, a large art exhibit was held, with many of the fine art pieces that were on loan from the local owners across the city. Also, on display was a handwritten note dated July 25, 1783, which was signed by Francis Marion. The inside on the Ryan Villa was also illuminated by gas lighting. The Post band, which was set up in the center of the grounds, provided the music during the event and they played about fifteen different selections during the day. The Post band would appear to be Federal troops who were garrisoned at The Citadel during this time period. Federal troops were housed at The Citadel from the fall of city of Charleston in February of 1865 until 1879 and on October 2, 1882 one hundred and eighty-nine cadets reported to the reopened Citadel. In a building next to the band there was an ice cream stand that sold ices, sherbets, sodas and many other refreshments. Daily tickets for admission were sold for 25 cents and a season ticket, for three days, for 50 cents and they were sold by several of the local businesses. Horse-drawn trolley cars were lined up at the end of the day to help transport the visitors home. These horse-drawn cars began service on Charleston streets in December of 1866 with some thirty-odd cars. This benefit was arranged by John S. Riggs, who was the President of the Charleston City Railway Company, whose office was located at 4 Broad Street.



Ryan Villa

The Ryan Villa was built around 1857 by the Adger family. In addition to the main house, the property was described to have included several outbuildings, as well as a spacious lawn and garden. The Villa was surrounded by water on three sides as shown on the 1872 Bird's Eye View of the City of Charleston. A later occupant of the property was C. D. Franke, a Prussian immigrant, who was a



very successful local business man. Mr. Franke founded C. D. Franke & Company, Inc. in 1859, a special carriage and wagon maker company that operated from a large three story brick factory building located at 171 Church Street, just south of Market Street. The business handled general hardware, carriage and wagon material, iron, steel, tin plate, roofing, mechanics tools, and eventually auto parts. The general offices and showroom were located in an adjoining three story brick building located at 172 Meeting Street. In honor of his late adopted son, Mr. Franke's will left a fund providing for the Jacob Washington Franke Lutheran Hospital and Home in 1892. The Franke Home operated at this location for many decades and in 1971, demolition began on the grand antebellum residence to be replaced by a single level complex on the site. In 1996, the Franke Home moved to a new location in Mount Pleasant and the property at 261 Calhoun Street later became commercial and retail space.

1873



The following year, 1873, the Floral Fair would be involved with a change of venue. The event would take place on the extensive grounds at the College of Charleston in the Cistern Yard located in front of Randolph Hall. The exhibition was opened on Tuesday, April 29, at 4:00 PM and was closed on Thursday, May 1, at 10:00 PM. The Floral Fair dates were usually only for a short amount of time because the dates had to be arranged according to the development of the season which could easily vary from year to year. The dates being fixed to capture the time when flowers and plants were in full bloom. Fair admission tickets for adults were 25 cents and tickets for children were 15 cents and the railroads and steamboat lines had agreed to transport all visitors to Charleston and return home for half fare during that week. Admission tickets were sold at several local businesses and hotels. A band that provided the music was in attendance during the hours of operation, and the grounds were well illuminated after dark.

All of the exhibits were kept under canvas tents and premiums were offered for greenhouse plants, house plants, cut flowers, wild flowers, vegetables, berries and fruits. The most ample arrangements were made at the grounds for the care of the plants during the exhibition and for their safe return to their respective owners. Also taking place that week, was the spring meeting of the State Mechanical and Agricultural Society, which was held at the Hibernian Hall on Meeting Street. In addition to the attraction of the Floral Fair, the Society arranged for a pleasure trip around the harbor and up the Ashley River, in honor of its' members and families in attendance. Music on board the steamer was provided by a fine band and an elegant collation was served to all. During the Floral fair there were arrangements made for an excursion to one of the principle phosphate works, showing the entire process of manufacturing commercial fertilizers. The visitors were shown the crude rock and saw the operation of crushing, grinding, mixing, pulverizing and packaging of the final product. Within the Society, there was some discussion regarding the location of the annual State Fair, which was held in the fall. Some members voiced the idea, sometimes forcibly, that the State Fair should be held alternately in Charleston and Columbia. Charleston offered superior attractions

for the fair, while Columbia offered a more central location for the public to attend. After much discussion, there was no change in the State Fair's location.

1874-1876

The 1874 Exhibition was once again held on the grounds of the College of Charleston, from April 27 through April 30. Inclement weather postponed the opening by one day, this also occurred in 1873. Tickets were available at the entry gate or could be bought at Holmes Book House or Thomas & Lanneau's at 293 King Street. Each day the grounds opened at 4:00 PM and closed at 10:00 PM. Admission was 25 cents for adults and 15



Caspar Chisolm

cents for children. Premiums were awarded to the winners in the twenty two different categories that were established by the committee. Two of the classes were best strawberries, with a two quart entry, and any other fruits that was grown in the downtown area. In addition to the large display of greenhouse plants and cut flowers, an exhibit of choice oil paintings, said to be quite superior in quantity and quality, engravings and various other objects of art were available for viewing in the Chapel of the College. These items were arranged in place by the faculty of the school. The 1875 annual Floral Fair of the Agricultural Society of South Carolina was held at the campus of the Charleston college, opening on Monday, April 19 and continued until Friday, April 24. Multiple plant varieties, cut flowers, vegetables and fruits were featured during the fair and all of the flowers were grouped under one large tent. In the hot house plant class, Mrs. George W. Williams displayed over two hundred house plants, Mrs. C. A. Chisolm, one hundred one, Mrs. Guy, forty, Mrs. D. J. Flemming, thirty-five, Mrs. S. C. Boylston, sixty, Mrs. James Ross, seventy-eight and many others displaying smaller quantities. A floral cross displayed by Miss Ella Barkley was as beautiful as it was novel. A basket of wild flowers was exhibited by Miss Kate Mayrant Simons of Summerville, South Carolina. Caspar A. Chisolm, the committee chairman of the Floral Fair, announced that the usual premiums would be awarded, and for the first time cash awards would be given to three of the first four places in the cut flowers category. First place won twenty dollars, second place won ten dollars, third place won five dollars and fourth place won a nice floral arrangement. The Society noted that the plants and flowers on display were almost totally grown by amateurs and showed the talent and efforts of those who participated. The 1876 Floral Fair opened on May 3, 1876, on the grounds of the College of Charleston. As in the previous year, bad weather delayed the opening by one day and the official opening was even deferred until 5:00 in the afternoon. In the middle of the campus there was a large well lit marquee with the inscription "Floral Fair" that welcomed the visitors. The main flower stands ran north and south and were completely covered with a very wide ranging assortment of vegetation that included geraniums, roses, asters, azaleas, pansies and native wild flowers. Vegetables were also shown and premiums were not awarded unless there was sufficient competition. Mrs. C. A. Chisolm entered a display of one hundred different plants and nearby were lily and ivy plants shown by Mrs. John G. Thurston. Next there were forty-eight geraniums, fine ferns and leaf plants exhibited by Miss Jane A. Adger,

and Mrs. Firth showed forty plus fine plants in her area display area. Best hanging basket of growing plants was won by Miss Miller, best strawberries was won by J. and P. Noisette and there were no entries for the best collection of vegetables. It was determined to dispense with the usual exhibition of art work, and instead there would be dancing in the College library building under the management of a five person committee. A string and brass band were engaged for the dancers to enjoy. Admission tickets were sold in advance, but walk up tickets were available only at the St. Philip Street gate. The fair closed each night at 10:00 PM and also in the spring of 1876, Orangeburg would hold a Floral Fair as well.

1877-1878

The 1877 Floral Fair of the Agricultural Society of South Carolina was held on Thursday, April 26, and Friday, April 27. The exhibition was held at the Freundschaftsbund (Friendship) Hall, located on the southwest corner on Meeting and George Streets. This Gothic Revival Hall was built in 1870 and has served as the headquarters for the Washington Light Infantry, a local military unit that was founded in 1807, since 1984. The front of the hall was beautifully illuminated with Chinese lanterns for the fair. Anyone



desiring to enter exhibits in the fair could notify any of the five committee members, C. A. Chisolm, E. L. Roche, H. P. Ravenel, James G. Holmes or Dr. T. G. Simons. In the center of the hall, running east and west, was a long table covered with flowers of every kind. Hundreds of plants, some of them in full bloom were displayed and premiums were awarded as usual. At the east end of the table was a magnificent pyramid of flowers, about four feet high mounted on a large mound of moss that was the handiwork of Miss Ada Easterby. In the center of the table was an impressive cedar cross three feet high with a nice garland of flowers made by Miss Ida Shingler. At the west end of the table was another beautiful pyramid that was contributed by the botany class of the Ladies' Seminary. Some of the other exhibitors were Mrs. J. Baker with fifty-five plants, Mrs. E. A. Bolger with thirty-one plants in full bloom, Mrs. D. F. Fleming with one hundred plants and one hundred and twenty-three plants contributed by Mrs. C. A. Chisolm. Dancing was also held in the lower hall of the building. In spite of some bad weather prior to the event the fair was still a financial success. The 1878 annual Floral Exhibition of the Agricultural Society was held on Tuesday, April 23, Wednesday, April 24, and Thursday, April 25 at the Freundschaftsbund Hall on Meeting Street. Premiums were awarded for the best display of pot plants, cut flowers, hanging baskets with growing plants, flower arrangements, fruit and vegetables. All articles had to be marked with the name of the owner. The native wild flowers were on display with over one hundred varieties from Mrs. E. H. Barnwell and fifty-three varieties from Mrs. W. G. Mazyck. Miss Mary H. Peake submitted an exquisite large rose bell measuring ten feet in diameter that was suspended from a frame over a bed of roses. Members of the Society could procure their badges for the fair from the treasurer, Mr. A. Baron Holmes. Admission tickets were twenty-five cents for adults and ten cents for children during the afternoon. The Eutaw band furnished the music for the event and there was dancing in

the lower hall from ten to twelve o'clock each evening. The Fair was also a complete financial success. The Eutaw band would appear to be a small musical group composed of members of the Washington Light Infantry and possibly other members who used the Eutaw name taken from the Eutaw flag. The band is mentioned several times in the book, "Virtue and Valor" by Richard L Schreadley and is the official history of the Infantry unit. This small crimson flag was presented to the organization by Jane Elliott Washington in April 1827, which she had cut from a curtain in 1780 and gave to her future husband, Colonel William Washington, as he was departing to Eutawville. He used this standard as his battle flag in many engagements and for the duration of the American Revolution. The flag is only one of a few of it's kind that survive today and is in possession of the Washington Light Infantry.

At the Society's meeting on October 10, 1878, discussion was had regarding the holding of an Industrial Exhibition to be held in December. This Exhibition was opened on December 10, 1878, closed on December 15, and was held at the Military Hall and an old carriage emporium next door to house the heavier machinery exhibits. A gallery of fine art with paintings and antiques was added as well as a poultry show and a fancy needlework department. Awarded premiums were offered during the Exhibition. The total number of exhibits exceeded two thousand and the paid attendance was over one thousand patrons per day. These successful Industrial Exhibitions were continued for many years to come at different locations in the city.

1879-1881

The 1879 Floral Exhibition of the Agricultural Society of South Carolina was held on April, 22, 23, and 24 at Military Hall on Wentworth Street. Premiums were awarded for the best display of potted plants, cut flowers, hanging baskets with growing plants, arrangements of flowers, fruits, vegetables, and other items. The Secretary of the Society, Mr. E. L. Roche was present at the hall on Tuesday, April 22, from 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM, to receive the articles for exhibition. All displays had to be plainly marked with the name of the exhibitor in order to be entered and premium lists could be obtained by contacting the Secretary. Among the displays that filled the north stage was that of Mrs. George W. Williams with three hundred and forty eight potted plants, which included an India rubber tree in full bloom. Admission was 25 cents for adults and 10 cents for children. Miss Mamie L. Tupper displayed a miniature ship made of flowers and Mrs. L. B. Doolittle brought a lyre (small harp) made of pansies. There were a total of forty-eight premiums that were awarded in 1879. The 1880 event was again held at Military Hall and the dates were April 21, 22, and 23. Premium lists could be obtained by addressing the Secretary of the Society, E. L. Roche. The exhibits were made quite attractive by the skillful arrangement of Mr. E. T. Vielt. In the middle of the hall a sparkling fountain was set up and grouped around it were ferns and lilies. On the front stage was a large display, over two hundred in number, of flowers and plants belonging to Mrs John Baker. The Noisette family exhibited a very fine collection of table vegetables. The premium list was the most extensive yet awarded with fifty prizes being given. Dancing would begin in the lower hall starting at 10:00 PM. The 1881 Floral Exhibition was held at the brand new Agricultural Hall on Meeting Street on May 4, 5, and 6. Premiums were again awarded for the best display of potted plants, cut flowers, hanging baskets with growing

plants, arrangements of flowers, fruits, vegetables, and other items. The largest single display belonged to Mrs. F. J. Pelzer with two hundred seventeen pots of plants and flowers. The beauty of the successful fair was attested to by the very large attendance and the enthusiasm of the visitors.

1882

In 1882, the Exhibition would again be held at the new Agricultural Hall on Meeting Street and was held on April 18, 19, 20 and 21. In May of 1879, the Society approved the plans for the construction of a hall by a vote of 18 to 10 and stated "That it is desirable that the Society shall erect a hall suitable for it's fairs". The Agricultural Society owned the hall and the 80-foot-by-180 foot main hall would serve well to handle the displays during the annual fair. The hall had brick walls twenty five feet high with large windows and sky lights on the roof. Electric lighting was used in the main hall instead of gas, providing for a brighter environment. A promenade concert by Metz's band and ice cream and refreshments were provided. Two new awards were announced, a handsome Silk Dress Pattern, won by Mrs. A. V. Eaves of Bamberg, and a unique and elegant Chinese vase. This year there was a fine display of garden vegetables and C. A. Chisolm exhibited eighty one of his plants. All of the exhibits and owner's names were published in the newspaper on April 20. After 1882 the Society found that the hall was not large enough and a machinery annex measuring forty by one hundred feet was built on the northern side of the lot at a cost of four thousand dollars. The main hall would later be used as a hospital to care for patients after the earthquake of 1886. Dr. Arthur B. Rose, who was the chairman of the society at the time, gave permission to convert the hall into hospital wards, and patients from the City Hospital and Roper Hospital were housed there. Clara Barton, who founded the American Red Cross in 1881, visited the Hall while it was being used as a hospital. On September 17, 1888 the Hall was rented out for a number of years by F. Q. O'Neill, who used it as an Opera House. The Grand Opera House was previously located at the northwest corner of King and Market Streets. Mr. O'Neill used the Agricultural Hall until January 1, 1894, when the building caught on fire in the early afternoon and despite a good effort by the fire department, was completely destroyed. The Industrial Exhibitions had ceased to draw large crowds, so there was no reason for the Society to have a hall and it was not rebuilt.



Dr. Arthur B. Rose

1883-1886

The Floral Exhibitions for 1883, 1884, 1885, and 1886 were all held at Agricultural Hall on Meeting Street, which was the meeting place for the Agricultural Society of South Carolina. The admission cost remained the same, adults 25 cents and children 10 cents. All of the railroads agreed to sell cheap excursion tickets to Charleston during the Floral Exhibition. The three to four day affairs followed the same rules that were established in previous years. The 1883 Fair opened on the evening of April 17, with the floral displays being in the main building and a refreshment saloon in the machinery annex. Surrounding a water fountain on a circular table was the hot house collection of

Mr. George W. Williams of about one thousand plants, the largest exhibit ever made by a single exhibitor. During the fair special premiums were offered for the best artistic designs in flowers, the first place winner, Mrs. M. L. Parker won thirty dollars and the second place winner Miss E. E. Gregg won twenty dollars. The attendance every night was the largest ever at any Floral Fair held to date. In 1884, the fair was held on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, April 15, 16, 17 and 18 and the Society offered two special premiums for artistic design in flowers. The first place award was thirty dollars, and second place was awarded twenty dollars on the closing night of the exhibition. The artistic designs that won these special premiums were not eligible to receive any other award. Premium lists could be obtained by contacting the secretary of the Society, Mr. E. L. Roche. Premiums were awarded for the best display of potted plants, cut flowers, hanging baskets with growing plants, flower arrangements and for fruits and vegetables. All items entered for competition had to be delivered to the Hall before 7:00 PM on the opening day and had to be plainly marked with the name of the owner. The total number of exhibits in 1884 were 1,274, with Mrs. F. J. Pelzer having 452 plants and Mrs. George W. Williams having 433. The 1884 Floral Fair was also very well attended. The 1885 Floral Fair accepted entries over 3,000 plants, flowers and other items. There were azalea bushes in full bloom that were brought in from Dr. Rose's farm fifteen miles away. Attendance was down this year. The 1886 Floral Fair opened on Wednesday, April 28, at 1:00 PM and new attractions were added including a magnificent display of roses that were featured and were made the specialty of the fair for that year. This was the first year that premiums were offered to professional florists. The dancing hall was open every evening and a refreshment saloon was available in the machinery annex next door. Trolley cars from the City Railway Company ran from the Fair's location every night until 11:00 PM with the regular five cents fare.

1887-1888



On Tuesday, April 26, 1887, at 7:00 PM, the annual Floral Fair of the Agricultural Society of South Carolina was opened. The event took place at the German Artillery Hall, which was located on the north side of Wentworth Street between King and Meeting Streets. This Hall was used because the Society's Hall on Meeting Street was still being used as a hospital to treat people injured from the August earthquake. The fair operating hours were from 10:00 AM until 6:00 PM, but on the last day closing was at 11:00 PM. The railroads leading into Charleston, and their connections, made a uniform reduced rate of three and one half cents per mile for the round trip. This Fair resulted in a profit of \$225.00. Premium lists requests or any questions regarding the fair were directed to Mr. E. L. Roche, Secretary of the Society. The 1888 Floral Fair began to evolve into a rather different looking exposition, beginning on April 16, and ending on April 21. The main event was again held at the German Artillery Hall, but other activities were added for the enjoyment of the public. The usual variety of assorted plants, flowers, and floral designs were to be expected and dancing was again available every night. The 1888 admission charge was adults 25 cents and children 15 cents. Bicycle racing and tournaments were held during the week and professional baseball

games were held. The Schutzenfest at the Schutzenplatz was held for three days during the week. This was a rifle target shooting competition that took place at the west end of Heriot Street which is now the location of the Charleston Rifle Club. There were acrobatic and trapeze performances on the schedule. Music was played on the Battery and the local public parks daily by the Young America Cornet Band of Anderson, South Carolina. During 1888 the Society had two fairs, the Floral Fair in the Spring and a Chrysanthemum Show in the Fall, the first of it's kind ever held in the state. This show was held at the German Artillery Hall on November 20-22. It was not very successful and the Society decided to discontinue this Fall event.

1889-1893

The annual Floral Exhibitions of the Agricultural Society of South Carolina for 1889 through 1893 were all held at the German Artillery Hall on Wentworth Street. Flowers, music and dancing were featured at these fairs and they offered visitors a chance to get out and enjoy the numerous attractions that were offered. Display tables were completely full as hundreds of people streamed through the Hall while they listened to the music of the day, played by the German Artillery Band stationed on the stage. At 9:30 PM the band would move to the lower hall and played music for those who wished to dance until closing. The Society wanted to continue the Floral Fairs for the benefit of all concerned, so in early 1891 it urged local citizens to become members and to subscribe to help meet the fair expenses. A special feature of the 1892 Fair was an exhibition on prize roses. Dr. R. J. Berckmans came from Augusta for the purpose of acting as judge for the exhibits. Mr. H. A. Towles, of Exchange (Jackson), South Carolina, presented his prize cabbages which were said to never had been surpassed in size and quality. The 1893 Floral Exhibition opened on Tuesday, May 2, at 8:00 PM and closed Wednesday night, so it only lasted two nights and one day. Wagon loads of palms, evergreens and palmettos were brought to the hall on Tuesday morning and were used to decorate the building. Admission was 25 cents for adults and 15 cents for children. Dancing was held each night commencing at 10:00 PM. Music for the fair was provided by a young orchestra of seven members under the leadership of Mr. Steve Baldwin. The 1893 Fair reported a loss of two hundred dollars. At a meeting of the executive committee of the Agricultural Society, held April 5, 1894, it was decided that the Society would not have a Floral Fair that spring.

1895-1896

The Agricultural Society of South Carolina would have a Floral Fair in 1895 and the last one was in 1896 at the German Artillery Hall. Even though the arrangements and number of exhibits were fine, the 1896 Fair resulted in a net loss of \$332.68 and the Society was not able to sustain such an annual loss. The decline in interest of the Floral Fairs was because the floriculture habits of the public had changed. In previous years gardens were a necessity, but when flowers could be bought all was changed. Flowers for weddings and funerals were routinely furnished by an individual's personal or a friend's garden, but now were supplied by a florist. For twenty-five years the Society had stimulated the interest in floriculture and it's efforts were very successful. Other places in the state were also having floral fairs at this time, namely Columbia and Summerville.

1886-1887



The Charleston News & Courier newspaper dated July 28, 1887 suggested that there be a grand gala week sometime in October for the reception and entertainment of the people of South Carolina and those portions of Georgia and North Carolina which had traded with Charleston. The purpose of gala week was to celebrate the work that had been done to help the city recover from the earthquake that occurred on August 31, 1886 around 9:50 pm local time. The Charleston earthquake caught the entire area off-guard. Many citizens had already gone to bed and were awakened by the quake which caused sixty deaths and 5 to 6 million dollars (\$156 million in

2019 dollars) in damage to 2000 buildings in the Southeastern United States. Within the city almost all of the buildings sustained damage and many had to be torn down and rebuilt. The 7.3 magnitude quake sent hundreds of people into the streets seeking aid and shelter. Many people were injured by falling debris as they exited their homes. In the days to follow, tent cities sprang up in every public area. Marion Square and Battery Park were full, as was Washington Park behind City Hall that had about 600 people



confined to a one-acre space. There were roughly 30 tented areas throughout the city and all had extremely modest accommodations. The incoming relief aid and shelter to aid in the recovery after the earthquake was amazing, so it seemed appropriate to celebrate the recovery efforts in some fashion. The suggestion that there be a gala week, with abundant festivities in October was met with favor wherever mentioned. Gala week was seen as a good way to help the local businesses recover financially and demonstrate that Charleston was in full recovery mode. The earthquake was the second disaster to strike within a year. In late August of 1885, a major hurricane (a category 2 today) struck the Charleston area,

causing severe damage and unfortunately resulting in about one hundred deaths mostly from drowning in swollen rivers and along the coastline. The city was almost back to normal when the earthquake struck. Gala Week typically started on the last week of October and usually extended into November, and it was just that – a gala week.

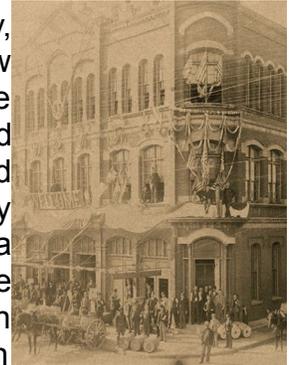
Thousands of people came into town, filling the hotels, boarding houses and restaurants, and staying with local relatives and friends if possible. Downtown businesses were highly decorated with flags and bunting, offering special Gala Week pricing to boost their sales. King Street was well illuminated to attract night time sales. The local newspapers printed the program in advance so that families could plan which events they wanted to attend. Different colored advertising broadsides of the day advertised splendid attractions, reduced railroad rates, amazing fireworks at night, hot air balloon ascensions, tight rope walkers, steamboat excursions around the harbor, a ladies brass band, and numerous other attractions. Local newspaper advertisements that offered very suitable accommodations at reasonable prices were also promoted by many businesses and local individuals.



CHARLESTON GALA WEEK 1887-1910

1887

The 1887 first annual Gala Week celebration began on Monday, October 31 and concluded on Saturday, November 5. J. A. Enslow was the Committee Chairman and E. Willis served as Secretary. The streets, businesses and residences along the parade routes and throughout the city were handsomely decorated and illuminated during the week. Horse racing at Wagener's Park was featured every day and the Academy of Music advertised the Mac Collins Opera Company every night. The Academy of Music was located at the northwest corner of King and Market Streets. Daily hot air balloon ascensions also took place during the week. Governor John Richardson and former Governor Wade Hampton were in attendance. On Monday afternoon there were boat races, tub races and donkey races.



East Bay at Queen St



At night on the Rutledge Street Lake (current day Colonial Lake that was previously known as West End Lake) there was an illuminated boat procession, aquatic sports, a concert and fireworks. At 9:30 AM on Tuesday there was a downtown parade of The Citadel Cadets and a salute was fired in honor of all of the visitors to the city. After dark there were trade displays, processions and another parade through the city. Wednesday morning saw harbor excursions that began at

11:00 AM as well as boat racing off the Battery. After dark fireworks were lite at the Rutledge Street Lake. On Thursday morning there was a glass ball shooting contest, pilot boat racing and a regatta in the harbor, and a professional band contest with prizes held at the Battery. At 7:30 PM a fireman's tournament was held and there was another parade followed by fireworks. The band competition continued Friday morning and later that day there was a professional baseball game between St. Louis and Chicago. There was a team shotgun shooting competition at the Schutzenplatz. Boat races were held off the Battery on Saturday morning and later the St. Louis and Chicago teams would play again. Music on the Battery would close out the celebration of the first Gala Week and it was estimated that sixty thousand people attended the activities.

1888

The second annual Gala Week of 1888 was opened on Monday, November 19, and ended on Saturday, November 24. Much of the 1887 program was kept in tact and other events were added to entertain the public. Fireworks started the festivities on Monday followed by boat races and music at the Rutledge Street lake. The lake was the primary site on Monday night and offered a brass band concert, aquatic sports, simulated naval battles, a decorated boat parade and fireworks. Horse racing was available every day. Tuesday morning Citadel cadets were on parade and again fired a salute in honor of all visitors. In the afternoon an infantry drill competition was held at Marion Square and a five hundred dollar prize was awarded to the best drilled company. After dark there were processions, trade displays, bands playing the music of the day and a fireworks demonstration. Wednesday offered steamboat rides around the harbor, a manned hot

air balloon ascension, and an artillery drill event with a cash prize. At 7:00 PM there was a grand military parade, aquatic displays and fireworks. There were boat races in the harbor on Thursday as well as a Cavalry Prize Drill. This event required not less than six companies and squads of not less than five men in each squad. The companies that participated were the Palmetto Guard, Washington Light Infantry, Sumter Guards, Carolina Rifles, German Fusiliers and the Butler Guards. First prize was two-hundred dollars and second place was one-hundred dollars. After dark there were processions, parades and fireworks. The Agricultural Society of South Carolina arranged for a Floral Exhibition that ran on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. Friday offered prize shooting by rifle teams, boat excursions to Fort Sumter and the jetties, a lawn tennis tournament and baseball. The shooting competition consisted of ten, seven and five men teams using military rifles with open sights and a range of two hundred yards. That night there was a large fireworks show. During Saturday morning harbor excursions were available and later in the day the Charleston Fire Department entertained everyone with a fire display and tournament.

1889

Gala Week for 1889 commenced on Monday, November 4, and ended on Saturday, November 9. The noise of incoming trains could be heard for days before the opening as thousands of visitors came into Charleston for the week and the hotels and restaurants were full. Many visitors stayed with family members if possible and there were numerous newspaper ads that advertised rooms to rent. Saint Michael's Church celebrated with musical chimes all week. Each day all Gala week activities ended early enough to allow visitors to attend any other affair of their choosing. J. F. O'Neill, manager of the Grand Opera House, announced that the May Blossom Company would be performing beginning November 4. The boat races, music and great fireworks were available on Monday at the lake. Street cars ran to that location. At 8:00 PM there was a concert, many novel attractions and fireworks to end the night. On Tuesday morning The Citadel cadets rendered their usual salute and at noon the prized infantry drill competition took place at Marion Square. This was considered to be one of the most interesting events on the program. That night at 8:00 PM the trade shows opened, a procession took place and the Chrysanthemum and Fall Floral Show began at the German Artillery Hall for four days. Admission for this show was 25 cents for adults and 10 cents for children. Wednesday had steamboat rides in the harbor, a manned grand hot air balloon ascension and fireworks after dark. Boat races could be viewed off of the Battery on Thursday and free excursions to Mount Pleasant and Sullivan's Island were offered. A baseball game was played at 4:00 and a large parade would follow that game. Friday had a street parade of all the schools in the city that was followed by another baseball game. Saturday ended the week with harbor rides to all of the points of interest.

1890

The Gala Week of 1890 ran from Monday, October 27 through Saturday, November 1. The Atlantic Coast Line Railroad announced that it would run a special train between Columbia and Charleston on the 27th, 28th and 29th in order to accommodate the Gala Week travelers. The special train would leave Columbia at 7:00 AM and would leave

Charleston at 6:35 PM for the return trip. Monday afternoon offered a music concert at White Point Gardens and boat racing to be observed off of East Battery that began at 4:00 PM. The featured boat races were over a marked one mile harbor course and always attracted a very large crowd. White Point Gardens was highly decorated with flags of multiple countries and was illuminated at night by using Japanese lanterns. On Monday night Paine's Grand World-famed Fireworks simulated the destruction of Pompeii. At 9:00 AM on Tuesday at the Schutzenplatz there were rifle contests, parlor rifle targets, bowling alley contests and dancing. Later in the day, The Citadel cadets would parade and drill at Marion Square, and that night trade displays could be viewed before watching a grand parade featuring many commercial, civic and military units. On Wednesday morning at 10:00 the individual rifle contest, parlor rifle targets, bowling and dancing resumed. At noon there was a grand hot air balloon ascension and parachute descent held on Marion Square. After dark Paine's Fireworks repeated their destruction of Pompeii demonstration. A grand costume parade was held at 11:00 AM on Thursday followed by Grand Tournament horse racing at Wagener's Park at noon and Paine's fireworks did their show again Thursday night. Horse racing continued at Wagener's Park on Friday, as did the steamboat excursions around the Charleston harbor. The steamboat rides continued on Saturday and Paine's Fireworks gave their last performance on Saturday night. King Street, Meeting Street, Broad Street and East Bay Street were always highly decorated because they were the primary streets that formed the parade route during Gala Week.

1891

The 1891 Gala Week activities began on Monday, October 26 and appearing all week was Paine's gorgeous spectacle, Paris from Empire to Commune. This performance featured a cast of three hundred and fifty people and it concluded with a very large fireworks display. Also present all week were Morton, Arthur and Mack, who were three comic showmen, in addition to Prof. Jean Witzman, a champion high wire walker. The Fenton Ladies Military Band would be playing music at various locations all week. Rifle shooting contests were held for at least four entered teams that were made up of five or ten members each. All of the railroads offered special tickets into Charleston at the rate of one cent per mile. Some of the events during Gala Week required tickets but most were free and open to the public. Special invitations were sent to Governor Tillman and the State officers to visit the city during the week. On Tuesday at noon a hot air balloon ascension took place and at 4:30 The Citadel cadets presented a dress parade at Marion Square. There was a large parade that was held after dark. On Wednesday afternoon the Ladies Military Band gave a concert and there were free harbor excursions available and boat races off of the Battery. Thursday saw another balloon ascension and a convention at Freundschaftsbund Hall of all the Colleges and Universities of the South to consider a plan forming an association of college students. At 8:30 PM the Grand Southern State Oratorical Contest for the championship of the South took place. The judges were General Wade Hampton, General J. B. Gordon and Major J. W. Hotchkiss and admission was free to this event. Friday morning featured free harbor rides and in the afternoon the Ladies Military Band played at Marion Square. On Saturday morning there was a free concert on the Battery and later that day another

concert and performance at Marion Square. The final Paris show was held and that brought another successful Gala Week to an end.

1892

The 1892 Gala Week broadside listed highlights of many free events, including a reenactment of the bombardment of Fort Sumter, a historical pageant, a gala visit in Venice, a pyrotechnic display, a “tribe of Cherokee Indians,” and a bicycle parade and tournament. Thousands of visitors came into Charleston for Gala Week from all across the state. The Spartanburg and Asheville Railroad offered special pricing during the week such as a ticket from Asheville to Charleston was \$5.85. The festivities opened on Monday morning October 31, and ran through the entire week. The main feature on Monday was the Venetian Carnival on West End Lake (Colonial Lake) on Rutledge Avenue at 8:00 PM. A fleet of lake yachts had a grand review and prizes were awarded for the best decorated and best illuminated yacht. Two bands were on hand to entertain those in attendance with the popular music of the day. On Tuesday afternoon The Citadel cadets held a dress parade on Marion Square at 5:00. The street trolley cars were marked with different colors and each car would make stops at some of the various points of interest for the visitors. The numerous firework's displays during the week were handled by Mr. W. S. Wiley who represented Pam and Sons of New York. These displays included the Venetian show at Colonial Lake and the bombardment of



Vesuvius in 1891

Fort Sumter. The United States Navy allowed two ships to be viewed in the harbor during the week and they were the USS Dolphin, PG-24, a gunboat and dispatch vessel and the USS Vesuvius. Both vessels had white hulls and a single stack midship. The Vesuvius was classed as a dynamite gun cruiser that fired a dynamite charge from one of three forward fixed cast iron muzzles using compressed air. These air guns were normally fired with a pressure of seven hundred fifty pounds per square inch.

1893

During 1893 the Charleston area was threatened by three Atlantic hurricanes. The first and third passed to the east of the city, however the storm of August 27-28 struck the lowcountry with a direct hit. Unfortunately the damage was extensive and included the loss of human life. This storm was known as the Sea Islands Hurricane because of the enormous loss of life and near-starvation to thousands suffered between Charleston and Savannah. The local waterfront destruction was considerable and after viewing the devastation Charlestonians naturally began to worry about the recovery efforts and the future economic impact to come. On October 9, the Executive Committee of the Gala Week Association met at the German Artillery Hall to discuss the upcoming festival. As a result of this meeting it was resolved that the scheduled Gala Week should be postponed until the first week in May of 1894. Multiple factors were considered including the time allowed for it's organization was too short and that the celebration in November would conflict with similar events in other cities. Also it was not good a good time to ask

the public for supporting contributions and postponement until May would allow for a more elaborate and successful week.



Another major feature held during Gala Week was horse racing. Every day there was horse running and trotting races that were held at Wagener's Park. A previous owner of this property in the 1700's was John Gibbes and he called his farm Orange Grove but it seems later to have been known as the "Grove." In late 1881, William Lowndes sold 34 acres of property just north of what is now the location of The Citadel to Frederick William Wagener. Under his ownership the property was known as Lowndes Grove and Roses Farm. Present day Hampton Park was



F. W. Wagener

a part of the original two hundred thirty acre Lowndes Grove tract. Wagener was a German immigrant, who started work as a clerk and worked his way up to owning his own grocery business. After the Civil War, he established the F. W. Wagener & Company. By 1880, Wagener & Company was the leading wholesale grocery business in Charleston which made it possible for him to purchase land and several homes. Such notable properties were the Wagener Building located on the southwest corner of East Bay Street and Queen Street as well as the Edward Rutledge House at 117 Broad Street. In addition to his varied business interest, Frederick Wagener also had a passion for fine carriage horses. He laid out a half-mile racetrack on the grounds of his property purchased in 1881. This property was sold to James Sottile in 1917 and 20 acres of the property was destined to become a residential development. Housing lots were sold for \$300, and Sottile would honor Wagener by calling the future neighborhood "Wagener Terrace." Prior to 1917 James Sottile also constructed a spacious beach pavilion and an amusement park complete with a ferris wheel on the north end of the Isle of Palms. Gala Week visitors could use the ferry service that boarded behind the Customs House for the short trip to Mount Pleasant. Once there, they would take the trolley car to the attractions on Sullivans Island and the Isle of Palms. The amusement park was surely enjoyed by many people over the years.

1894

In the Spring of 1894 much discussion was given to the possibility of putting on a Spring Festival that would be known as the Deep Water Festival. The executive committee of the Gala Week Association, a committee appointed by the City Council, the Chamber of Commerce, the Cotton Exchange and the Merchants Exchange met numerous times in May to arrange and carry out the celebration of the advent of deep water on the Bar of Charleston. These efforts would continue however, the primary focus of the Gala Week Association was upcoming Gala Week in the Fall of 1894. Much of the Program resembled previous years to include harbor excursions, tight rope walking, an animal show, an amazing floral parade, general illumination, street side shows, nightly fireworks and a stereopticon exhibition at Marion Square. A stereopticon was a slide projector that had two lenses, usually one above the other and was mainly used to project photographic images. These devices date back to the mid 1800's and were a

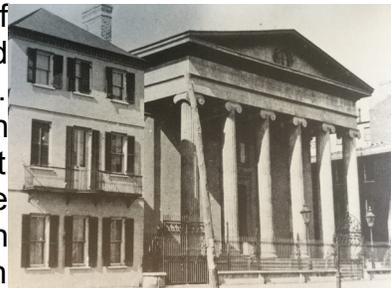
popular form of entertainment before the invention of moving pictures. During the week several bands were located at some of the main intersections in the city and played music for a strolling public. Thousands of people lined the streets to view the floral parade and applauded at will as handsomely decorated carriage after carriage passed by. Prizes were awarded and the first place lady's decorated carriage displayed over three hundred chrysanthemums. The Armory of the Washington Light Infantry was brilliantly illuminated with scores of Japanese lanterns and lights that highlighted a very large flag display. Another popular feature during Gala Week was the hot air balloon ascension by Professor Thompson. The balloon capacity was ninety thousand cubic feet and could lift seven hundred and eighty pounds. The balloon stood eighty two feet high by fifty two feet in diameter and it took thirty minutes to be inflated. Many visitors went to Washington Park behind City Hall to view the decorations on the fire watch tower of the Charleston Fire Department. The tower had multi-colored lanterns around the top and a large six-pointed star on the south side facing the park. These decorations were arranged by Mr. J. Fitzgerald.

1895



In February 1895, the Young Men's Business League of Charleston wrote to the executive committee of the Agricultural & Mechanical Society regarding the possible movement of the State Fair from Columbia to Charleston. It appears the State Fair held in 1894 had some financial difficulties and that support from the State Legislature was in question. The letter stated that the entire Charleston area would gladly support moving the State Fair to Charleston. An editorial in the Charleston Evening Post on April 25, 1895 fully supported the moving of the State Fair to Charleston. It further urged the local business men and merchants to unite in the effort. The thinking was that if Charleston had the fair and each Autumn added the money that was usually spent on Gala Week attractions to fair week, it would easily prove to be the greatest festival ever known within the state. However, the executive committee decided to leave the fair at its location on Elmwood Avenue in Columbia.

The 1895 Charleston Gala Week would prove to be a successful event and tens of thousands of visitors were in town to enjoy all of the attractions. The festival opened on Monday, December 9 and lasted all week and the railroads sold tickets to Charleston at the rate of one cent per mile. It was billed as a week of enjoyment that featured a prized bicycle tournament and races on the Battery, hot air balloon ascensions, football games and a skating contest. The balloon ascensions and football games took place at the baseball park that was located on the northwest corner of Meeting and Sheppard Streets. This baseball park was used for various events during many of the Gala Week festivals. Also featured were daily concerts in the parks and on Marion Square featuring the Fourth Brigade band, tour boat excursions around the harbor and amusements that were located throughout the city. Every night there was an attraction at the Academy of Music featuring the well known



and popular Baldwin and Melville combination. On Wednesday, December 11, the floral parade took place and it was called the greatest feature of the fall festival. There was a larger number of carriages entered than ever before and the decorations were said to be exquisite. Later in the day the visitors could either attend the theatre or the concert at the German Artillery Hall on Wentworth Street at 8:00 PM. The Sailing Club also held its' annual ball at the Hibernian Hall on Meeting Street, for which tickets could be bought for one dollar each. On Thursday at 1:00 PM, the fireman's parade was held. It started at King and Calhoun Streets and went down to the Battery and back to Marion Square. The ladder raising contest between two squads of hook and ladder companies took place immediately after the parade on the Square.

1896

The advertised Fall Festival, aka Gala Week, of 1896 began on Monday, October 26 and promised a week of enjoyment for all in attendance. The first event in the afternoon was horse racing at Wagener's Park that offered both trotting and running races with entries from all over the state and generous purses. The Charleston City Railway Company ran horse drawn street cars to Lowndes Avenue for the races, charging only one fare for the round trip. At 5:00 a dress parade was held on Marion Square the featured the cadets of the South Carolina Military Academy. The afternoon also featured a matinee performance at Owen's Academy of Music by the popular Punch Robertson Company. The Storming of Morro Castle was the big attraction that night and it was preformed every night. This was one of Pain's grandest pyrotechnic successes and well worth making the effort to see. The Academy of Music offered a performance and there was a dog and pony show at the corner of King and Shepard Streets. On Wednesday there was horse racing and a large fireman's parade and hose reel contest. On Thursday a life saving exhibition was given at 11:00 AM and a Pain's acrobatic performance at 3:00 PM. At 9:00 PM the large fantastic parade was held starting at King and Line Streets, down King to Broad, over to Meeting, then up Meeting to Calhoun Street. Two thousand people participated and they carried firecrackers, roman candles, red, blue and green lanterns. Many organizations entered the parade including a detail of police, Spalding Cycle Club, Fourth Brigade Band, German Artillery, Irish Volunteers, Sumter Guards, Palmetto Guard, B. P. O. Elks, Y. M. C. A. and the Charleston College. All during the week Mr. Henry Siegling of Siegling Music House, at the corner of King and Beaufain Streets presented daily demonstrations of the gramophone, the musical wonder of the day. The gramophone was a latter version of the phonograph, that was invented by Thomas Edison in 1877 and was a device for the mechanical recording and reproduction of sound. These machines would eventually evolve into the record player.

1897

Large incoming crowds were expected to arrive in the city on December 13 and 14 for the opening of Gala Week for 1897. The typical Gala Week program was in place and all of the railroads again offered low ticket prices on travel into Charleston. Also helping to boost the attendance numbers were reasonable hotel and boarding house rates. In addition an annual Masonic convention of about four hundred members plus their families and a large druggists convention was scheduled for Gala Week. The druggists would meet at Freundschaftsbund Hall and elect their new officers and hear the reading

of the annual reports. They adjourned at 3:00 PM and took streetcars to Chicora Park for target shooting for men and women, bowling, jumping and nail driving contests. Four lodges of the Knights of Pythias also attended during the week to have their business meetings. The many attractions of the festival appeared to have offered many incentives for these groups to attend Gala Week and enjoy themselves. A large fireworks display was done on Tuesday and Wednesday night under the direction of Mr. George Beal, who represented the Pain Fireworks Company. The trade displays were in place to be seen and the large fantastic parade took place on Thursday night. The leading businesses, clubs and military companies had floats entered in the parade. At Marion Square attractive stereoptican views were displayed on a canvas screen eighteen feet wide from 7:00 PM until 8:30 PM on Wednesday and Thursday. Prized horse racing was on the program every day at Wagener's Park and attracted animals from across the Southeast. The track was in first class condition and was considered to be one of the fastest tracks in the country. A clever window display that was ever seen in the city was the one in the window of J. L. David and Brothers. It was an electric dancing girl standing about three feet high and moving about with grace. She was dressed in red gauze with gold thread and gave a kick with her foot, all powered by a small electric motor.

1898

On October 19, 1898, the Charleston Evening Post reported that the attractions to be offered at the coming Gala Week are said to be greater and more pleasing than have ever been given in the history of Gala Week in Charleston. Great displays of fireworks were produced every night by the Pain Fireworks Company. The first pyrotechnic demonstration displayed the very realistic destruction of the Spanish fleet at Manila, the fall of Manila was reproduced on the second night and on the last night the annexation of the Philippines was portrayed. The popular Fourth Brigade Band performed during the production. Also on the program were the Marwood Brothers, better known to the public as the "living trapeze" and Señor Laurie, on his dancing rope followed by the McDonough trio, probably the greatest acrobats in the country at the time. Preforming on the high wire was the great and only Weitzman, who was said to be the highest paid artist in his profession. Bicycle races were held for the professional and amateur riders alike. The professional class had entries from Chicago, Atlanta and Philadelphia. The first bicycles appeared on the streets of Charleston in the spring of 1869 so by the time of



Gala Week they quite popular and numbered in the thousands. These races were the product of the Baird brothers, William John Baird and Isaac Baird, who were professional bicycle riders and operated a full service bicycle shop at 422 and 424 King Street. The Baird Brother's Bicycle Park opened on October 26, 1898 and offered the ideal location for racing. It was located on the east side of Meeting Street, bordered on the south by Brigade Street and

Baird Bros., Charleston, S. C.
432 KING ST.
Agents for
Humbers, Raleighs, Swifts, Ormondes, Waverleys, Gales,
ETC.
We have been successful because we sell Meritorious Wheels.
CYCLE SUNDRIES OF EVERY KIND.
First Class Repair Shop in charge of an English Mechanic.
Free Reading Room for Cyclists. Call on us at any time; you will
be made welcome.
BAIRD BROTHERS.

extended to the railroad tracks to the east, crossing current day Morrison Drive. There was a large wooden and brick grandstand, measuring 150 feet long and forty feet high, for viewing the races and the park was surrounded by a nine foot high wooden fence. Four United States Navy ships were on display in the harbor and they were the Wilmington, the Nashville, the Princeton and the Montgomery. At 9:30 PM on Thursday night, October 27, a large patriotic parade was held and it was led by the electric streetcar the "Chicora" that carried members of the executive committee. The parade included a special "Rough Riders" reenactment group, dressed in the correct uniforms, and other important historical figures were also portrayed. Numerous bands and horse drawn floats were entered including those of the Army and the Navy, whose manned float represented a Navy ship complete with guns and an electric searchlight. The News and Courier featured sales ads of many local merchants that offered special Gala Week prices. Buell & Roberts, a cash dry goods store, located at 573 and 575 King Street, offered plaid dress goods at four cents, plaid towels at three cents, other towels forty two inches long and sixteen inches wide for five cents and black and white flannel, fifty four inches wide for thirty five cents each. Opera glasses were for sale at S. Thomas & Brothers, at 257 King Street and you could buy a headlight for your buggy, which made driving at night a pleasure, at the Brown Crockery Company located on Meeting Street near Hasell Street.

1899

The annual Charleston Gala Week for 1899 was held during the week of November 20 and the usual decorations were abundant throughout the city. The railroads continued their practice of reduced pricing on tickets to Charleston and the local businesses stocked up in anticipation of making brisk sales during the week. Horse racing was again billed as a large attraction and the opening card took place at 2:30 PM on Wednesday at Wagener's Park. Another afternoon event was the grand floral parade at 2:00 PM by the Charleston Fire Department and on the Isle of Palms, the First Artillery Band held a concert and a free fish fry was made available on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. At Chicora Park there was a free oyster roast from 10:00 AM until 2:00 PM and these events were well attended by large crowds. Later that night the Duchemin's grand vaudeville troupe gave an entertaining performance at an auditorium on Rutledge Avenue. On Thursday afternoon at Hibernian Hall the chrysanthemum show began and a children's Tableaux was presented. The Tableaux was a showing of Mother Goose characters with fifty children dressed in full colorful costume. A string band provided the music and refreshments were later served, there was a twenty five cents admission charged for this event which included dancing later. Wednesday also saw a full dress parade on Marion Square by the South Carolina Military cadets at 4:00 PM. The fireman's exhibitions and contests were held on Meeting Street, between Wentworth and Henrietta Streets and proved to be one of the most interesting features of the festival. These contests were highly competitive and involved a timed response to an alarm covering a six hundred yard course for horse drawn chemical engines and steam units.

1900-1901

An article in the Charleston Evening Post on September 26, 1900, indicated that several of the local merchants were discussing the possibilities of the proposed Gala Week that was normally held in the Fall. Timing was critical in order to properly plan for the event and establish a suitable program. With the West Indian Exposition scheduled to open the following year, some thought that the laying of the cornerstones for those buildings could serve as an added feature for the festival if it was held a little bit later possibly in December. The details were not completed and it appears that Gala Week was not held in 1900. The Fall Festival Gala Week directors attended the Exposition grounds, the future Hampton Park, for the dedication of the Cincinnati building.



Sunken Garden



It also appears that Gala Week of 1901 did not take place as we would know it. The City was consumed with the start of the South Carolina Inter-State and West Indian Exposition that opened on December 1, 1901 and concluded on June 20, 1902. This would amount to a World's Fair that would be held in Charleston. In 1900, the Charleston Exposition Company was formed and began to solicit working funds. The local business community and the South Carolina General Assembly financially supported this effort. Frederick Wagener was an early supporter of the exhibition and offered the use of his two hundred and fifty acre property on the Ashley River as a venue. Mr. Wagener served as the president of the Exposition along with an eight member distinguished board of directors. A New York architect, Bradford L. Gilbert, was chosen to develop the project and he would propose buildings to be built in Spanish Renaissance style and painted a creamy off white. This led to the naming of the complex being called the "Ivory City". The land needed for this was massive, for in addition to Wagener's property, the adjoining parcel was bordered on the south by Moultrie Street and on the north by Grove Street. The east boundary was Rutledge Avenue and the west boundary was the marsh of the Ashley River. There was a popular miniature railroad that took visitors completely around the property to view all the points of interest. The principal buildings were Administration, Agriculture, Art, Auditorium, Commerce, Cotton Palace, Fisheries, Machinery and Mines. The focal Cotton Palace building was 320 feet long with a 75-foot dome, its appearance was greatly enhanced by the Sunken Garden that was located directly in front of it. President Theodore Roosevelt would visit the exposition in April and review the troops as they marched by. There is a three minute Library of Congress video that shows this review and it can be found online. Twenty different states participated and several erected their own buildings. The Pennsylvania building featured the Liberty Bell in its exhibit and the midway area had a carnival with thrill rides. Unfortunately, the attendance was



President Roosevelt

disappointing and the exposition operated at a loss. When the exposition was over, the City built Hampton Park on the eastern portion of the grounds that included the exposition's formal court. The bandstand in Hampton Park, which was moved from the western side of the race track on the Wagener property, and Lowndes Grove, which was used as the Women's Building, are the only structures from the Exposition left standing today.

1902

After the West Indian Exposition was completed, Charleston was ready to resume Gala Week for 1902 and advertised it as Charleston's Fall Festival to be held from Monday, December 1, through December 6. Included in the program was the Interstate Fireman's Tournament that began Tuesday with a large fireman's parade through the main downtown streets. The procession included carriages with city officials, Chief of Police Boyle and a police squad, multiple engine companies, an aerial truck, a hose wagon team and three bands that played music. Teams in the competitions were Charleston, two teams from Columbia and Sumter and one from Darlington. The timed engine company contests involved running three hundred yards with equipment and connecting to a hydrant and spraying water. Charleston engine company number six won this event and the fifty dollar first prize. There was a Fireman's Ball on Wednesday night at the German Artillery Hall with an excellent orchestra engaged. The admission tickets were sold for fifty cents each. The Christmas Bazaar was also held all day on Wednesday at the Hibernian Hall on Meeting Street. Horse racing was held at Wagener's Park with cash prizes. Large daily open air brass band concerts were given all week. The Layton Carnival Company furnished the midway that was set up on King Street, it extended from Hasell to Line Street. Exhibits included Professor Lotto the world's highest diver, trained elephants, performing donkeys, six different shows at King and Calhoun Streets and the Adams flying trapeze act. A grand pyrotechnic display depicting the eruption of Mount Pelee was given at the Bairds Brothers Bicycle Park on upper Meeting Street at 8:30 PM on December 3rd and 4th.

1903

On Monday night, September 21, 1903, a meeting of many Charleston merchants was held at the Chamber of Commerce to discuss the details for the upcoming Gala Week. The primary item up for discussion was the exact dates of the Fall Festival. The merchants on East Bay and Meeting Streets did not have a preference, the upper King Street favored the latter part of November or the first part of December. Merchants on lower King Street wanted the festival in the latter part of October. After much discussion the matter was put to a vote and it was decided not to put on a festival during 1903. Frederick W. Wagener addressed the group and reminded the group of the many successful Gala Weeks that were held in the past. He said the event needed to grow bigger and better each year, but he felt that the past few years were in decline. Charleston, he said, should hold a big county fair every year and the citizens should commence to arrange for holding the fair next year right away. Captain Wagener spoke of the beautiful park at the old exposition grounds, which afforded ample room for a fair grounds. After Wagener's comments, there being no other business, the meeting was adjourned and the Charleston Gala Week Fall Festival was not held in 1903.

1904

On November 10, 1904, the Charleston Evening Post proclaimed that the greatest Gala Week ever held in the City of Charleston would soon be a reality. The upcoming festival was scheduled during the week of November 21-26. The finance committee provided liberal allowances for each department so that only quality features would be brought in. All railroads and steamship lines entering Charleston offered special low rates for the occasion, of one fare for the round trip from all points in South Carolina, Augusta and Savannah, Georgia. On Monday, the large Poultry and Pet Stock Show opened at 6:00 PM at the Auditorium and at 8:00 PM, Luna Park was opened with its multiple shows, a concert by the First Artillery Band and over five thousand incandescent lights in place to enhance the park after dark. The real Luna Park was a three acre amusement park at Coney Island that was opened in 1903, and closed in 1944, and Charleston's Luna Park was actually Hampton Park, the old exposition grounds, that was transformed to resemble the real Luna Park. The Gaskill Carnival Company brought in one hundred performers, twenty featured shows, fifty performing wild animals and three military bands. M. Oscar Babcock performed his death defying act of looping the loop and flying the flume for which he was paid eighteen hundred dollars per week. The free street attractions opened on Tuesday and at 4:00 PM there was a football game between the College of Charleston and Porter Military Academy. On Wednesday, at 3:30 PM there was a large military parade, that was reviewed by Governor Duncan C. Heyward. Thursday was Thanksgiving day and there was the fireman's parade followed by the fireman's drill and contests held at Meeting and Wentworth Streets. At 4:00 PM there was a football game between Charleston and Furman which was won by the Charleston team by a score of 39-0. The free concerts and exhibitions all along King Street continued. Most of the activity on Friday was at Luna Park, with continuous performances from 1:00 PM until 11:00 PM, a band concert, a special parade, contests and exhibitions. On Saturday, the festival ended with more free events at Luna Park that featured special events for the entertainment all of the children, including many children from the local orphanages.

1905

In August 1905, it was announced that the Carolina Coast Fair would be held during Gala Week from November 6th to 11th, inclusive. The Fair was held under the general auspices of the Tri-State Fair Association, which included members from South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida. The object, of the combining of forces, was to secure lists of attractions, which would not be possible for separate cities to secure except at almost prohibitory prices and the chairman of the executive committee was Mr. T. W. Passailaigue. Charleston became part of a six-city circuit whose primary purpose was to present excellent carnival features and request reduced railroad rates for all patrons who would attend the fair via the rail lines. The city was excited to repeat the success of 1904 and 1905 was to be no exception as the event was advertised as the homecoming of all Carolinians. Charleston had ample accommodations for the thousands of visitors who attended Gala Week and the Fair, as there were three large first class hotels, several smaller hotels and any number of large boarding houses. Hundreds of visitors would spend time with relatives and friends during the week. The 1905 Gala Week and Coast Fair Association advertised itself as the "Greatest Event of 1905". The initial

attractions list included the Palace of Mystery and Electric Theatre, the eruption of Pelee, an illusion show, a mermaid, a merry-go-round, wild animals, Siberia and many others. The event boasted fireworks every night by Layton's Firework's, fifty great shows and fifty great performers, daily high wire acts, daily high diving acts, wild west shows, daily demonstrations by the Californian airship, and many other attractions. Airships of the day were normally around forty feet long, tethered to the ground, and were filled with about three thousand cubic feet of hydrogen. The pilot sat in a small gondola and would move the ship through the air, at four miles an hour on a calm day, by using two large canvas oars that he would operate. Later airship models used multiple internal combustion engines with propellers to navigate once aloft. Another attraction was the offering of prizes for agricultural exhibits, with a special committee in charge of this area. In addition to this, there was the agricultural experimental station at Hampton Park under the auspices of Clemson College, where growing crops could be seen by the visitors.

1906

The Gala Week of 1906 took place from November 5, through November 10. The city was well decorated and the Charleston Decorating Company, located at 119 and 157 King Street advertised flags and burgees (pennants) and all kinds of decorating material for sale. They were prepared to decorate stores and buildings of all kinds and their work was guaranteed at reasonable prices. On Monday the "Banner Poultry Show of the South" opened for public viewing in a three story building located at 286-288 King Street. It was a massive poultry show that brought in entries from across the southeast and was open every day from 10:00 AM until 10:00 PM. Twice a day there was a free high trapeze act on Calhoun Street and there were moving picture shows at several points on King Street. The roller skating rink in the Academy of Music building was open and they also showed moving pictures and played music. On Tuesday, the Barnum and Bailey Circus was in town for a 2 o'clock afternoon and 8:00 PM night time performance at Hampton Park. This was a full size three ring circus featuring hundreds of riders and acrobats, thirty elephants, twenty camels and other animals. On Wednesday morning there were band concerts and at 3:00 PM the floral parade was held, leaving from Marion Square. The entries of carriages and floats had to assemble at 2:00 PM and the judging would take place using two out of town judges for obvious reasons. That night Pain's Fireworks and the illumination of the harbor could be viewed off of the Battery. On Thursday there was the Fireman's parade in the afternoon and the Fantastic parade that started at 9:00 PM. The throwing of confetti and the use of cowbells were prohibited during the week. Band concerts were available on Friday morning and a military band played at Marion Square in the afternoon. Saturday at 4:00 PM, a football game between the South Carolina Military Academy and Mercer University was played at Hampton Park. The Citadel won that game over Mercer by a score of 10-0 and another successful Gala Week came to a close.

1907

The Gala Week of 1907 continued with many of the fine attractions that returned. It also included a nighttime floral float parade down a well-illuminated King Street from Spring Street to Broad Street. Colleges, institutions and business firms were highly encouraged

to enter the parade in good numbers, and contracts were closed with several bands to perform during the week. Chief of Police Boyle would forbid the selling and using of feather dusters on the street, he also forbade the throwing of flour, talcum powder and other items which may cover one's clothing or injure one's eyes. Other events included a water carnival of local crafts, motorboat races, a military and a firemen's parade and concerts at White Point Gardens that drew large crowds. College football was also included in many early Gala Weeks and fairs, and Charleston was to be no exception. At 2:00 PM on Tuesday, the Fireman's parade was held and at 3:00 PM the hose laying contest was started on Meeting Street next to Marion Square. Also that afternoon, The Citadel football team played a strong Welch Neck High School team and they lost that game to Welch Neck by a score of 6-5. The Poultry Show began at the Washington Light Infantry Hall and admission was free. There was a high diving performance by Meier at 3:30 and 7:00 PM on Marion Square. Wednesday was Military Day and started with a prize squad drill that was followed by a grand Military parade. Street shows continued throughout the city and the floral parade was held on Thursday at 8:00 PM. Friday had an aquatic pageant and shows off of the Battery, all while the crowds listened to music played at White Point Gardens. The 1907 closing day activities offered a football game at Hampton Park between the College of Charleston and The Citadel. The College of Charleston won that game by a score of 7 – 5 over The Citadel before a large crowd.

1908

Once again Charleston was beaming with enthusiasm as the city would welcome Gala Week for 1908 that started on Monday, November 10. Local merchants showed their excitement for the festival by using Gala Week within their newspaper advertisements during the week. A large number of inquiries regarding the accommodations from across the state and beyond would guarantee a large attendance. The railroads continued to offer reductions on tickets into the city and the children's ticket was half price. On Monday the carnival shows opened and band concerts were held at various locations. The Strobel airship made it's first ascension at 5:00 PM and another one at 7:00 PM at Marion Square. This attraction would continue all week performing twice a day weather permitting. Tuesday afternoon saw the Fireman's parade and hose reel contest between the seven companies of the fire department. At Hampton Park, the football game between The Citadel and Mercer University was played at 3:30 PM. Tickets to the game were fifty cents and could be bought in advance at several local businesses. The Citadel won that game by a score of 10-0. Wednesday was "Shriner's Day", band concerts and free acts continued on Marion Square and another football game was held between the College of Charleston and Savannah at Hampton Park starting at 3:30. The Charleston team won the game that day by a score of 6 to 4. There was a decorated automobile parade complete with prizes and later in the day the grand military and naval parade was held that included contingents from the organizations in and around Charleston. On Friday, November 20, there were boat races of all kinds off the Battery, an inspection of the torpedo boat flotilla and an exhibition of the submarine boats. After dark the city was fully illuminated and the street carnival continued. The principal feature on Saturday was the football game between The Citadel and the Porter Military Academy at Hampton Park, which The Citadel won with the score being 10 to 5.

Gala Week would conclude with the airship making the last ascent over the city at 7:00 PM.

1909

On October 17, 1909, the News and Courier proclaimed that the upcoming Festival Week was to be the greatest in years. The week that was full of activities began on October 25 and ended on October 30. All of the railroads again granted special rates on tickets for travel to and from Charleston during the week. An added nightly event this year was the appearance of the Russian Symphony Orchestra and featured a chorus of two hundred and fifty members that preformed all week. The Committee decided to sell a ticket that was only five dollars for a reserved seat for all of the five concerts during the Festival. After dark King Street was well illuminated to encourage the thousands of people to come out and enjoy all that the midway had to offer. Among the attractions was Captain Louis Sorcho and his Deep Sea Divers, said to be one of the best of it's kind in the business. Captain Sorcho was the primary diver who was involved in the recovery efforts of 132 bodies of the sailors who were killed in the explosion of the USS Maine, in Havana harbor on February 15, 1898. Midway attractions included Ferreri's Animal Show, the Monitor and the Merrimac, a mechanical production of the great iron-clad battle, the London Ghost Show in which living people appear and disappear in midair, the Dixie Minstrels, Little Count Teddy, the Aztec Twins and the Infant Incubator Show which carried a complete portable display of baby incubators. One of the most interesting features was a daily flight of an airship around the city and in addition to this, there was a hot air balloon ascent complete with a parachute descent. One of the balloonist would leap from the basket with three parachutes in his hands. After deploying and then releasing the first chute, he would free fall for a few seconds and open the second chute. He would release the second chute and free fall again before opening the third chute that would take him safely to the ground. Thousands saw this daring feat during the week. On Friday evening a grand fireworks display took place as seventy two different pieces were fired into the short timeframe of about sixty minutes. Of course after the festival was over, the cleanup of the city began on Sunday and twenty-five cart loads of dirt and trash was hauled off of Marion Square and the surrounding area.

1910

No evidence of Charleston's Gala Week for 1910 taking place can be found.

1911



Gala Week did not occur in the Fall of 1910, but in March of 1911, the question of having an affair for the Charleston area came up for discussion. It was the general consensus of opinion that a Gala Week would not be practical in 1911, as everybody wanted something new. The idea was to get all of the farmers and those interested in agriculture, within the county, together to make the occasion one of general interest to the public. On August 27, 1911, a strong hurricane came ashore at Charleston. Unlike most Atlantic hurricanes, the storm tracked directly east to west coming ashore

without any warning. Downed electric lines shut down the trolley car lines, telegraph lines, and the local businesses. The damage was extensive and unfortunately, seventeen lives were lost in the city. The locals lost all interest in holding a Gala Week celebration and were focused on recovery after this major weather event. Gala Week of 1911 was not held, however, on November 13, 1911, a midway consisting of more than 20 tent shows was set up on Calhoun Street east of Meeting Street. The midway opened at 3:00 pm and closed at 11:00 pm and was operated by Manager Frank Petit of the Charleston Amusement Company, for one week. The midway featured a merry-go-round, a Ferris wheel, four diving girls and Little Lulu, who was advertised as the smallest horse in the world standing only twenty-one inches high and weighing forty-five pounds, at five years old. Another show that attracted the crowds was the flea circus. There to be seen, were over 500 trained fleas, which answered to their names, rode on a merry-go-round, pulled a miniature chariot and performed various other unbelievable feats.

THE CHARLESTON COUNTY FAIR 1912-1956

1912

HAPPY BEGINNING FOR GREAT FAIR

Splendid Attendance is Scored
on the Opening Day of the
Palmetto Park Show

WEALTH OF ATTRACTIONS
APPEALS TO ALL TASTES

People From All Portions of South Caro-
lina on the Grounds While They Go
About Seeing the Exhibits

In early 1912, the Charleston Fair and Racing Association was formed with the idea of creating a quality county fair for the benefit of the citizens of the Charleston area. The hard work and dedication became a reality, as what was billed as Charleston's first fair opened on November 18, 1912. The fair was held at Palmetto Park, which was located on the east side of the current-day Meeting Street Road and bounded on the north side by Jacksonville Road. Part of this location today is the site of the Limehouse Produce Company and where the old Government Employees Exchange (GEX) was once located. The Association owned the 108 acres of Palmetto Park and billed it as one of the largest race tracks in the South, hoping to accommodate eight hundred to one thousand horses before January of 1912. The fairgrounds' main entrance was on the Meeting

Street side of the property, and the public could travel there via marked double electric trolley cars. The service was rapid with the trolley ride being about 20 minutes from Broad Street. The entrance was on the north side of the grounds and the admission was fifty cents and



included all of the attractions. Fair manager Frank M. Petit boasted more than twenty free shows plus many other attractions. William McLeod Frampton served well as the superintendent of the agricultural and livestock department during the fair. The original plan of the Fair Association was to close the grounds at dark and to have fireworks displayed at Hampton Park at night. This plan was

changed, and it was decided to spend the fireworks appropriation for additional free attractions during the fair and to have Palmetto Park wired throughout in order to provide lighting for night time use.

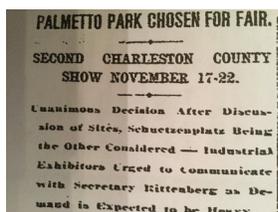


The official 1912 program of the fair was loaded with a very busy schedule every day. The grounds included an oval horse racing track and there were race events every day. As part of Charleston's Fair and Battleship Week, eleven United States Navy battleships arrived on Sunday, November 17, and were at anchor in the harbor from Columbus Street down to the Battery. There was a large military parade down Meeting Street that also included The Citadel Corps of Cadets. The amount of personnel on board the battleships amounted to over ten thousand enlisted men and officers. The battleships on display included the Virginia, the Ohio, the Georgia, the Florida, the Rhode Island, the Idaho, the North Dakota and the Illinois. One of the other battleships on display was the USS Utah, BB-31, which was launched in December 1909 and was later sunk during the Pearl Harbor attack on December 7, 1941. The ships were open to the public for tours during this time, and the public could ferry out to them from several waterfront locations for a small fee.

During the 1912 fair, ruby flash stained souvenir glasswares were available for sale at the fairgrounds. About ten companies produced these keepsake items from the 1880s through the late 1920s. Flashing was the application or fusing of a very thin coating of ruby colored glass over a different color of glass. This glassware was sold in large numbers at fairs, train depots, monuments, festivals, special events and resorts. A variety of cups, tumblers, pitchers, creamers, vases, goblets, sugar bowls, candy dishes, toothpick holders, sherry glasses and salt and pepper shakers were all available for sale. Each piece was engraved with the name of the event and the name or initials of the buyer. This process was actually more of a scratching that was initially accomplished by a pedal driven copper wheel coated with an abrasive paste that scratched off the colored stain to display the lettering.



1913-1915



The 1913 Charleston County Fair was held from November 17-22 at the Palmetto Park location. On September 24, the board of directors of the Charleston Fair Association met at the Charleston Hotel on Meeting Street to discuss the location of the 1913 fair. The fully attended meeting considered the 1912 fair site, Palmetto Park and the Schutzenplatz (the Charleston Rifle Club) and Palmetto Park was chosen because it's size offered more operating room for the fairgrounds. Midway attractions were booked through the Brady Booking Agency, of New York, one of the oldest and most reliable firms in the business. This booking agency was the same one that booked the shows for the West Indian Exposition that was held in Charleston

from December 1, 1901 – June 20, 1902. Charleston Mayor John P. Grace officially opened the fair at noon, and delivered an address to the crowds. There were lady acrobats, diving horses off of a springboard, a Russian acrobat who was the only man to complete a perfect somersault on a high wire and trampoline acts. To encourage opening day attendance, public schools did not hold classes, and track and field events with prizes were held. There were 20 different running events for the young people. The events had a variety of distances for various age groups. In addition, the Palmetto Goat Derby was held and was a quarter-mile goat cart race for boys under thirteen years of age. The winner received a new harness and wagon. Boys who entered the derby could board a trolley, with their goats and carts, at the corner of Meeting and Columbus Streets for a free ride to Palmetto Park. The fair also advertised eight thousand square feet of free shows, dazzling illumination of the midway at night, livestock shows and automobile races that featured five, ten and fifty mile events with cash prizes for the winners. The automobile racing was very popular, and as a result, the Isle of Palms considered holding races on the beach for Thanksgiving.



It appears that after the 1913 fair, interest was lost in continuing the fair part of the fall event. There were two different groups that were involved in putting these events together. The Charleston Fair Association and the Charleston Fair and Racing Association came together for the 1912 and 1913 fairs. While the fair was not held in 1914, the Charleston Fair and Racing Association continued to use Palmetto Park as a horse-racing venue and the



daily racing results were printed in the local newspaper. Starting in December of 1914, horse races were held almost daily, weather permitting. Cash prizes were awarded to the winners, and the admission to enter the grandstand was \$1.50 for gentlemen and \$1.00 for ladies. In the early morning hours of September 21, 1915, a raging fire destroyed the grandstand, the paddock, the judges' stand and about 200 stalls. Several nearby buildings were spared from any major fire damage. When the grandstands were built in 1911 they were considered to be the largest in this part of the country. By May of 1916, the property was being used by 300-plus race horses for winter training. Additionally, World War I commenced in Europe in July 28, 1914 and extended until November of 1918.

1914

As early as 1914 and for many years thereafter, Charleston County would send a display to the South Carolina State Fair in Columbia. These award winning displays were assembled, transported and manned by William McLeod Frampton. Mr. Frampton was born on December 16, 1876 on James Island and attended local Charleston schools as well as taking special courses in agriculture and animal husbandry at Clemson College. He was very involved in the 1912 and the 1913 fairs and he won multiple awards in the swine



W. McLeod Frampton

department in the 1913 swine show. Because of his thorough knowledge of farming and stock breeding, he was appointed as the first county agricultural agent for Charleston in 1913. He served in this position for five years. In 1918, he joined the staff of Citizen's Bank as Agricultural secretary. In 1924, he helped to establish the Charleston Agricultural and Industrial Fair, which maintained an office located in the People's building on Broad Street. He was the first and only manager until 1957, when the fair was incorporated into the Coastal Carolina Fair by the Exchange Club of Charleston, of which he would become an honorary club member on January 10, 1957. Mr. Frampton was no stranger to the Exchange Club of Charleston, as he was a Past President of the Exchange Club of James Island and knew many of its' members, because many of them were involved with the Fair before 1957. Mr Frampton served as secretary and treasurer, from 1917 until 1938, and later president, from 1938 until 1959, of the South Carolina Agricultural Society, and he was very involved in numerous other community organizations. In 1932, he established the Clemson Truck Experiment Station on Savannah Highway, in cooperation with the Agricultural Society, and in 1939 he organized the Charleston County Wholesale Vegetable Market. He was a man whose name was widely known for sixty years among the local farmers of the Lowcountry, and he was a man with a likable personality and a generous heart.

On October 13,1940, the News and Courier printed an article regarding the history of fairs. Ernest H. Pringle, in an address that aired on radio station WTMA, stated that the Charleston Agricultural and Industrial fair was a non-profit, benevolent corporation, owned wholly by the Agricultural Society of South Carolina, the oldest agricultural society in the United States. Mr. Pringle mentioned the 1872 floral fair that was held at the Ryan villa on Calhoun Street. Information about these floral fairs has been previously noted. The last of these floral fairs was in 1896, and for some years the society held no fairs. Mr. Pringle said, "Mr. Frampton was the pioneer county agricultural agent for Charleston county and through this work he became intimate with the elder citizens of all of the communities in Charleston county, going by boat, buggy and train from community to community and, in the process coming to know Charleston county and its people as few men know it." Mr. Pringle explained that it was during this period that Mr. Frampton conceived the idea of establishing a fair. He took the idea up with Captain Samuel Gaillard Stoney, then president of the agricultural society, and secured his consent to allow the Charleston Agricultural and Industrial fair to be organized and held under the auspices of the society. Mr. Frampton agreed to underwrite the expenses, if allowed the society's sponsorship and prestige. A few years later the fair was incorporated as a non-profit organization, and later in cooperation with the city, three buildings were built near Johnson Hagood stadium to be used for many purposes.

1922



In June 1922, it was announced that several prominent business men of the city were making arrangements for the formation of the Charleston County Fair Association. The fair would last a week or 10 days and would be held somewhere in the city if possible. In early October 1922, it was announced that the fair of the association will be held at College Park on

Rutledge Avenue from Monday, November 20 to Saturday, December 2, a two-week event. The officers of the Charleston County Fair Association were experienced in conducting fairs, as was Mr. T. W. Passailaigue, the Association president was also involved in the Fair portion of the 1905 Gala Week celebration, serving as the chairman of the executive committee.

Along the Rutledge Avenue side of College Park, four large waterproof tents were erected to house the agricultural, poultry, livestock and swine departments, merchants and manufacturers exhibit, and the automobile display. The amusement and entertainment features of the Fair, about 30 in number, were provided by the Johnny J. Jones Exposition. Mr. Frank M. Petit was named general manager of the Fair by the Association and was responsible for making many of the fair's details into reality. He issued the fair catalogue which listed the prizes for each department, which was most inclusive. Mr. Petit was present at the opening and made a most interesting address. He explained at length and in detail the purpose of the County Fair and of the automobile show which he said, would be a distinct attraction. A number of special days were arranged including a day when children from the Charleston Orphan House were the guests of the Fair management and the Johnny J. Jones shows. The 1922 Fair was a success.



1923

COUNTY FAIR
MADE READY

Many Fine Exhibits Are
 Placed on Display
 At College Park

**FORMAL OPENING TO
 BE AT 7 O'CLOCK**

Everything Lined Up for
 First Night of An-
 nual Program

The 1923 Charleston County Fair was opened on Monday, November 5, 1923 for the week and was held again, at the College Park location, at Rutledge Avenue and Cleveland Street. King Street and Ashley Park trolley cars ran past this site for easy access from the downtown area. Three large tents along the Rutledge Avenue side of the property were in the same area as in 1922 and in place for the opening. The main entrance was through the business exhibit area which was completely

All Next Week

Return of the Favorite — Every Afternoon and Night

THE CHARLESTON COUNTY FAIR
 HAS THE HONOR OF PRESENTING

**Johnny J. Jones
 Exposition**

30 Attractions—12 Riding Devices

sold out. After the main tent visitors entered the agricultural section that included displays from the Charleston County Health Department, which featured a dental clinic, and the booth of the South Carolina Produce Association. Also within this tent was the Homeland Farm exhibition by G. B. Wingard and Son of Lexington County. They brought this entire exhibit from the State Fair, where it won a coveted first place award. The display occupied seventy four feet frontage and showcased over seven hundred different specimens of farm products. H. D. Dodd and Brothers of Meggett, installed a wagon and land roller that they built. A number of local exhibitors also participated including W. P. Scaffa, who brought in a bunch of green bananas that were grown on a tree in his yard at 75

**1924 FAIR TO
 RUN 10 DAYS**

Plans Being Made for
 Next Season by
 Association

**PREMIUMS ARE
 BEING AWARDED**

Judges Will Put in Busy
 Time—Newsies En-
 tertained

Drake Street. Also displayed was an exhibit of thirty five different varieties of vegetables grown on the Edward F. Bellinger farm in Saint Andrews Parish. Mr. Frank Petit, whose office was at 141 Meeting Street, was the manager for the fair association, of which Mr. Theodore W. Passailaigue was president. The successful county fair that was held in 1922 showed the farmers and merchants the importance of displaying their wares publicly in 1923. Mr. Francis S. Hanckel, Jr., the head of the livestock and swine departments announced that some of the finest cattle and swine in the county would be on exhibition. On November 4, the Johnnie J. Jones Shows arrived from Spartanburg by its' own train and would offer thirty attractions, twelve riding devices and four new funhouses. The Orlando, Florida-based Jones show claimed to be the biggest and greatest of all outdoor amusements at that time, except for the Ringling-Barnum Circus. After the fair was over the Charleston Evening Post of November 7, announced that the 1924 Fair would run for ten days, but those dates were later announced to be November 17-22, 1924.

1924



In 1924 the Charleston County Fair would move to Ashley Park, located at the north end of Rutledge Avenue, the current location of the 14-acre Charleston Rifle Club. The 1924 officers of the Charleston County Fair were Walter F. Livingston,



president, Montague Triest, vice president, W. B. Livingston, treasurer, Frank M. Petit, secretary and manager and Major Triest, assistant secretary. The fair dates were from Monday, November 17, thru Saturday, November 22. Charleston Mayor Thomas P. Stoney, participated in the opening ceremonies when the fair gates opened at 7:00 PM and the general admission to the fair was 10 cents. The Rifle Club had built a new meeting building in 1922, and it was used to house many of the inside exhibits. That building would burn down on March 3, 1986, and the current building would replace it. A midway featuring the Zeidman and Polite shows provided amusements for the young and the young-at-heart. The show featured unusual animals, acrobats, various riding devices, diving girls, and numerous other amusements typical of a fair. There were six rides and twenty shows featured during the fair. On the Monday after the fair was over, Mr. Petit, from his office that was located in the Francis Marion Hotel, declared that the fair was a success, and that the 1925 fair would be bigger and better. The fair would be held at Ashley Park for only one year, before the next move to a different location.

1925



In 1925 the Charleston County Fair would move to Marion Square and the Old Citadel location. The 1925 Fair officers were William McLeod Frampton, president, J. T. Wilbur, treasurer and Edward R. North, secretary. The Fair admission was adults, 25 cents, a season ticket could be purchased for \$1.00 and children under twelve years of age were 10 cents each. Various rides and side shows were set up in Marion Square. Large



tents also housed the livestock display areas. The Citadel had moved to its current location on the Ashley River in 1922, so the vacant building was used for the county fair's commercial, industrial and agricultural exhibits. Al Nuttle, the comical musical clown who played twelve instruments, gave performances in front of the main building and the Boy Scout Band performed at 7:30 PM. "Aerial York", the best trapeze performer in the South, gave his daily performance at 7:45 PM. The exhibit building closed at 11:00 PM and the midway closed thirty minutes later. The carnival attractions were again provided by Johnny J. Jones Shows during the 5-year period that the fair was held at Marion Square. The attendance in 1926 was around 30,000, and the goal for the 1927 fair was to be 50,000 to attend. The large open quadrangle within the Old Citadel building was devoted to an automobile show, and new cars were on display in large numbers by many of the local, well-known dealerships. This area was also covered to protect the cars and patrons in case of inclement weather. Singing and dancing contests were held, including dancing in which various participants gave their own style of The "Charleston".

1926



The 1926 annual Agricultural and Industrial Fair, the most ambitious event of its' kind ever staged in Charleston County, was formally open on Monday, October 11, at 5:00 PM. Almost the entire old Citadel building and a large portion of Marion Square, were devoted to the fair which was of a scope never before undertaken in Charleston. In addition to the standard exhibits of agriculture, poultry, commerce and household enterprise, many special displays and features were on the program. There were exhibits from local communities as well as individual farm exhibits and individual crop exhibits. Single admission for adults was 25 cents, children under 12 years of age were 10 cents and a season ticket was sold for one dollar. The automobile show returned and proved to be one of the chief centers of attraction. The commercial exhibit area, which included some local churches, was full, as was the school exhibit area. The private exhibitors list was lengthy and represented most of the leading businesses from across the city. A large display of needle and fancy work was shown with many fine local examples. The poultry show boasted over one thousand birds of all types and there was a swan pond and a duck pond that were located near the entrance of the show. The Johnny Jones Exposition provided the rides and shows that featured several new attractions. There was dancing every night, at 9:00 PM, in the east wing of the Old Citadel, and on Tuesday and Thursday nights there was a "Charleston" dance contest. The winners were awarded a silver cup. On Thursday night, there was local high school boxing and on Friday afternoon, at 2:00 PM, there was a Baby Show for infants under the age of two. The Baby Show winners were awarded a silver cup and other merchandise. Mr. Edward R. North, was again the Secretary of the Fair Association, he served as the President on the Exchange Club of Charleston in 1925.

1927

The 1927 annual Charleston Agricultural and Industrial Fair was held during the week on November 7, 1927, at Marion Square and the Old Citadel building. Mr. Frampton was

the president and general manager, J. Betts Simmons was vice president, Edward R. North, secretary, and T. S. Wilbur, treasurer. In 1926, the attendance was about thirty thousand, the attendance goal for 1927 was fifty thousand attendees. The fair opened at 2:00 PM every day and closed at 11:30 PM. There was open air dancing every night with many special items in the program. The educational exhibits, which were of interest in 1926 included displays by Murray Vocational and Memminger schools. The cooperation of a number of civic and other organizations was secured so that the fair would take on the nature of a community enterprise. An Army and Navy day was scheduled as it was the previous year. There was a kiddie's carnival costume contest, with appropriate prizes for the youngsters. Two new departments were added for this year, one devoted to art exhibits, another to stamp collections and all participants were welcomed to enter. Special attention was directed to the fancy and needlework department, which was set up by Mrs. Edward R. North. No entry fee was required and three hundred dollars worth of cash premiums were awarded. Entries were received in work that included rugs, quilts, knitting, crocheting, cross stitching, infant's embroidery and bead work. Rides and shows were again supplied by Johnny J. Jones. The quadrangle inside the Old Citadel building was again used for the returning car show that displayed a large number of new car models. The Directors of the Charleston Agricultural and Industrial Fair, Inc., were E. H. Poulnot, Jr., C. C. Graves, E. B. Means, Edward R. North, J. Betts, P. M. Clement, A. D. Wall, William M. Frampton, T. S. Wilbur, E. H. Pringle, John P. Thomas, D. Q. Towles and W. T. Smith.

1928



During the 1928 Fair, one of the more elaborate of the fair exhibits was the one devoted to the county's agriculture. The Fair opened on Monday, November 19, and closed on Saturday, November 24 and was located at Marion Square and also used the Old Citadel building. A season ticket could be bought for the entire week admission. Opening night, at 8:00 PM in the quadrangle, the Avery Institute Singers sang spirituals and old southern melodies. Tuesday was 'Kiddies' Day, boys and girls under the age of twelve were admitted free of charge and were given a reduced price on all rides. The advertised ride price was five cents for any ride. Tuesday night at 8:00 PM a baby pageant and parade was held with the winners receiving loving cups. J. W.

Sheesley's Greater Shows and rides provided the midway area that included various rides, a minstrel, novelties and other entertainment, including "Big Jimmie" the gorilla. He hailed from the Congo and was said to be the only adult gorilla in captivity. The Charleston Automobile Dealers Association displayed the newest automobiles that were available from the leading manufacturers in the quadrangle area. Fair exhibits included fine needle work, art and stamps, agricultural, poultry, pigeons, household, industrial, schools, churches and manufacturers. In the fine arts department were art works in oil, water color, drawings, and other classes of art. A large number of businesses had booths set up in which they displayed their products. A pet show was featured under the direction of J. C. Phillips of the poultry and pigeon department. Five elementary schools, the Murray Vocational school, the High School of Charleston and Memminger school all

participated and there were thousands of samples of school work on display. The large county agricultural display was set up in the west wing of the old Citadel building and was said to be one of the most elaborate of the fair exhibits that were ever devoted to the county's agriculture. The 1928 fair concluded on Saturday night with the coronation of "Miss Charleston" amid an elaborate setting. Mr. Frampton served as president and manager and Edward R. North was the secretary of the fair.

1929

COUNTY FAIR OF CHARLESTON OPENS MONDAY

On August 8, 1929, the John P. Grace Memorial Bridge that spanned the Cooper River to Mount Pleasant, was officially opened for public use. A long parade of highly decorated floats preceded the opening of the then cantilever toll bridge. The toll on the bridge would remain in place until June 29, 1946 when then Senator Oliver T.



Wallace "happily" paid the last toll and Governor Ransome Williams declared the bridge "free of toll." The Agricultural Society of South Carolina and the Charleston County Agricultural and Industrial Fair sponsored a float in the parade that day. The 1929 Charleston County Fair would open on Monday November 11, and concluded on Saturday 16, at Old Citadel building and adjacent Marion Square. Elaborate displays featuring the county's agricultural, industrial, commercial, and educational resources were in place and a large opening crowd was expected on opening night. All sorts of entertaining acts were offered by Rubin & Cherry Shows, rides, novelties, wonders and other carnival features. There was music and many other free performances. Hotdog stands and refreshment stands were in full operation. There were several premiums for community and individual farm displays and also individual exhibits. Exhibits by students of agriculture were located in the vocational agricultural department, with entries from Charleston, Colleton, Berkeley and Dorchester counties. These agricultural displays were under the direction of Mr. C. W. Carraway, the county agricultural agent, and Miss Caroline Alston, county home demonstration agent. Among the many products

CHILDREN'S DAY TODAY AT FAIR

Awards Announced in Poultry Show—Crowds Throng

shown were corn, fruits, vegetables, forage crops, nuts, potatoes, canned goods and livestock. The household department featured preserved and canned products. Under the auspices of the Charleston Poultry Association, a large interstate poultry show was displayed and the awards of the show were announced by Mr. J. C. Phillips on Friday, and the results were printed in both of the local newspapers. Mr. Phillips was the then president of the local Poultry Association. Saturday was the final day of the fair and was billed as Children's Day. All school children were admitted free of charge from noon until 6:00 PM and the Rubin & Cherry Shows offered the children reduce pricing during those hours. Among the outstanding features was the automobile show, which was held again in the quadrangle of the old Citadel building. The 1929 Fair was the last one to be held at the Marion

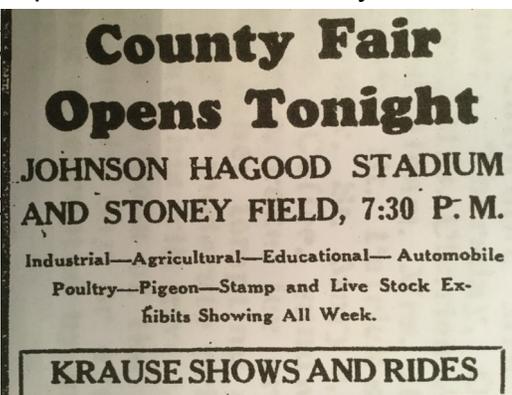
Square and The Citadel location, and the officers and directors of the Charleston Agricultural and Industrial Fair, Inc., would prepared for yet another move. The old Citadel building would later be used by Charleston County for office space for many years. The west wing of The Citadel along King Street was demolished in order to build a new county library in 1960 and that was later demolished to build a new hotel that is currently owned by a local family. The remainder of The Citadel buildings are also hotels owned by the same family. The 1929 officers of the fair were William McLeod Frampton, chairman and manager, Emmons S. Welch, secretary, and T. S. Wilbur, treasurer.

1930



In 1930, the Fair Association secured a lease with the City of Charleston for use of Johnson Hagood Stadium and the surrounding grounds at Congress Street and Parkwood Avenue. This stadium was built by the City of Charleston in 1927, just to the southeast of The Citadel campus. A baseball field adjoined the stadium and in 1946, construction was begun on a new stadium at this location. The playing field direction was changed from running east-west, to running north-south. Construction

costs were six hundred thousand dollars and the opening of the facility was in October 1948, this is the stadium that we know today. The 1930 Charleston County Agricultural Fair was held from Monday, November 10th through Saturday, November 15th. Fair officials felt that the event had outgrown the Marion Square location and wanted to move to a larger venue. The fair was opened at 7:30 pm and Charleston Mayor Thomas P. Stoney delivered a welcoming address to mark the formal opening that was followed by a beauty parade and concert. Attractions at the fair were provided by the Krause "World Wonder" Shows, consisting of ten or more rides and fifteen shows. The agricultural display was billed as the largest display ever presented at the Charleston fair. Admission to the 1930 fair was 35 cents for adults, 10 cents for children, and a season pass that could be bought for \$1.25. A horse show was held on Tuesday afternoon at 3:30 with eight events including bareback riding and high jumping with trophies and ribbons awarded for first, second, and third place. The Bishop England High School PTA operated a lunch room offering sandwiches, coffee, salads, hot dogs, cake, ice cream and other items at good pricing. Exhibits were set up to include industrial, agricultural, educational and automobile and were housed inside of a large circus tent that measured 100 by 210 feet. On Tuesday and Friday nights at 8:00, there was professional boxing with the main event going ten rounds for the crowds to watch. There was a bait casting contest on Wednesday afternoon followed by a style fashion show with thirty local models. Several special days were on the program such as Army day, Navy day, and others. The usual large livestock, show poultry and pigeon show (about five thousand birds), needle and fancy work, fine art, and other shows were available, including a gigantic release of five



hundred homing pigeons on Thursday at 4:00 pm. Friday afternoon there were Boy Scout contests and the troops in the district competed in various tests of skill. A dance contest was held on Thursday. Saturday, which was closing night, was advertised as Mardi Gras night with special prizes awarded for some of those in costume.

1931



The 1931 Charleston County Fair opened on Monday, November 9, at 6:00 PM at Johnson Hagood Stadium and closed on Saturday, November 14. Starting on Tuesday the gates opened at 2:00 PM each day except on Saturday, when it opened earlier. Admission

to the fairgrounds was adults 35 cents, children 10 cents and a season ticket was sold for one dollar. Children were admitted free of charge on Tuesday and Saturday from 2:00 PM until 6:00 PM. A special event that was held on the opening night, at 7:30 PM, was a boxing program that featured a main event between Charlie Brown of Charleston and Rud Spittle of Charlotte. The Johnny J. Jones Exposition Shows provided a wide variety of rides, shows and amusements and the grounds were brilliantly illuminated for night time enjoyment. Fine exhibits of farm products, poultry, pigeons, hogs, cattle, stamps and new automobiles were on display. Exhibits were located in huge tents to protect them from bad weather. The agricultural department housed the popular community and individual farm displays which were judged during the fair. In the main tent was a specially constructed booth was a stamp show held under the auspices of the Charleston Stamp Club. Under the baseball grandstand was an exhibit that demonstrated what could be done on Charleston county farms in the way of raising livestock. Members of the boys 4-H clubs were showing pigs and calves that they were raising and a collection of purebred Poland China and Duroc hogs. Among those having booths at the fair were Shellmore Oyster

Boxing Bouts
 Weeks-Pulaski and Other
 Fast Fighters
 —at—
County Fair
 TUESDAY NIGHT, 8
 A Free Attraction
 SEE THE FARM, PIGEON, POULTRY
 AND AUTO DISPLAYS
STONEY FIELD—STADIUM
 WEDNESDAY—Bait Casting Contest at 4 P. M.
 Elaborate Style Show at Night, Both Free Events

**ONLY 2 DAYS LEFT
 TO VIEW THE FAIR**
 ———
 Another Children's Day to
 Be Held Tomorrow—Big
 Crowds Continue

Products, Gas Engine Electric Company, Carolina Radio Shop, Parker Lumber Company, Colvin Ice Cream Company. South Carolina Power Company, Bishop England High School, Huck's Cafeteria, White Lily Flour, Terminix and Bethel Methodist Episcopal Church. Hot dogs, sandwiches, ice cream, cake, candy, coffee and soft drinks were available for those who felt the need of refreshment.

We Cordially
 Invite Your
SPECIAL ATTENTION
 To Our Exhibit of
Chrysler
 MOTOR CARS
 at the
FAIR
 All This Week at
 STONEY FIELD
 The year's smartest presentation of motor cars—exhibited at the Fair so that you can inspect them conveniently, leisurely.
WIETERS MOTOR CO.

1932

The 1932, the Charleston Agricultural and Industrial Fair opened its gates on Monday, October 31, at Johnson Hagood Stadium and closed on Saturday, November 5. During the 1932 fair, it was announced that all local school children would be admitted to the grounds for free from 2:00 PM to 6:00 PM on Tuesday and from 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM on Saturday. It was also announced that anyone bringing babies or small children to the fair, could leave their children at special places provided for them, where competent nurses would care for them. Mr. Frampton announced that on Tuesday at 3:00 PM, the children of both Charleston orphanages would be brought to the fairgrounds in buses and entertained by the association with free rides and during which time they would be given ice cream and fruit. On Thursday night, the carrier boys of the News and Courier and the Charleston Evening Post would be entertained. The Krause Greater Shows, including nine riding devices and fourteen shows were engaged to furnish the amusements. Mr. C. E. Cole, manager of the poultry and pigeon show, said that the catalogs and premium lists were off the press and could be obtained from him, with entry blanks, at his home at 9 Francis Street or he could be reached by telephone at 3141. All entries for these shows closed on Wednesday, October 26, and all entry blanks had to be in his hands by 6:00 PM on Tuesday, October 25. The show was held under the auspices of the Southeastern Poultry Association.

1933

**COUNTY FAIR
IS UNDER WAY**
Annual Exhibition Opens
in Afternoon for
Whole Week
**DEDICATION OF
NEW BUILDING**
Will Be Evening Feature.
Several Addresses
on Program

On October 14, 1933, Mr. Frampton announced that ten acres on the south side of the fairgrounds would be turned over to free parking. In previous years, the midway had interfered with parking, but a different location was assigned to it. On October 24, Mr. Frampton advertised in the morning newspaper that only five spaces were available in the fair exhibit building and the building was quickly sold out. The Charleston County Fair opened at 6:00 PM on Monday, October 30. In the Charleston Evening Post there was a full page ad advertising the fair with several individual vendors who encouraged the public to visit their booths. Instead of being housed in a tent, as in previous years, a new exhibit building complete with concrete and hardwood floors had been built to house many of the displays. On Monday night the new building was dedicated in an 8:00 PM ceremony before a large crowd with several speakers including Mr. Frampton, Edmund P. Grice representing the city, G. L. Buist Rivers, and Stephen E. Welch on behalf of the Agricultural Society of South Carolina. The building was twenty thousand square feet and was capable of seating three to four thousand people. This building was widely used for many other events, when the fair was not taking place. The fair commercial exhibits included everything from jewelry to gasoline and from candy to concrete. The American Legion had a booth of its own and there was

**FAIR BUILDING
IS DEDICATED**

Opening Attendance
Promises Successful
Week at Stadium

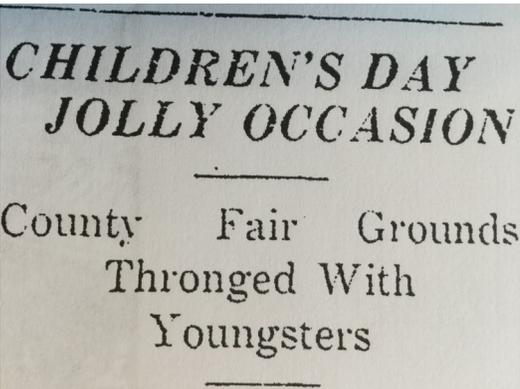
an aquarium exhibit and one in forestry. Those who drove to the fair could enter the grounds at the foot of Sumter Street and park directly behind the bleacher section of the stadium, with the aid of parking attendants, for a short walk to the main entrance gate. The automobile exhibit was located at the front of the building and the agricultural products were in the rear. There were prized agricultural displays from local communities including James Island(first place \$100), Johns Island(second place \$75), Wadmalaw(fourth place \$25), Meggett and Younges Island(third place \$50), Saint Andrews Parish and Midland Park. Also, there were local individual farm exhibits to be viewed. Exhibit booths were in the middle and around the edges of the new hall. Commercial exhibitors advertised in the local newspaper, to stop by and visit them, at their booths at the fair. Children's days were held on Tuesday and Saturday, when the Citadel football team played a homecoming game against Presbyterian College at the stadium. The Citadel lost that game that day by a score of 7-6. A well attended pet parade, with prizes awarded, was also held. Fair admission tickets were adults 25 cents and children 10 cents. Entertainment which included Turk McBee's stage band, was provided by the Max Gruber Famous Shows, which came to the fair with an excellent reputation in its field. The midway would feature ten riding devices and twenty shows to be enjoyed. The fair closed on Saturday, November 4, and was deemed a success with an attendance of about 35,000.

1934



The 1934 annual Charleston Agricultural and Industrial Fair officially opened the gates at 7:00 PM, Monday, October 29, at the fairgrounds at Johnson Hagood Stadium. The fair was closed at midnight on Saturday, November 3. The Johnny J. Jones exposition provided the midway attractions and offered fourteen rides and twenty different shows that included a horse jumping act that performed twice a day. The show arrived on Sunday, at 7:00 PM, at the Grove Street station and also offered

wild animals, a minstrel show and a freak show. Admission to the fair was adults 25 cents and children 10 cents and the grounds were opened every day at 9:00 AM. Most popular of the games was corn bingo and the ham wheel. Many of the fair patrons were later seen leaving the fairgrounds with items they won, such as bacon, lamps, canaries, blankets and other things. The twice daily horse jumping act featured a trio of noted trained horses that were owned by Mrs. John Messervy. Daredevil Frank McFarland put these animals through their spectacular courses. In one event he blindfolded himself and rode "Coney Boy" over an automobile without a saddle or bridle and with both hands up in the air. The local Girl Scouts maintained a nursery in the northwest corner of the main exhibit building where parents could "check" their children while they went about enjoying the fair. Lost children are always a difficult problem for fair officials and the police, but fortunately there



were only a few reports of lost children during the fair. On Thursday at 10:00 PM, a public wedding was held inside the stadium. Johnny Gruber and Letha Murphy, of 71 Anson Street, were married on a platform decorated with flowers. Thirty bridesmaids dressed in attractive costumes escorted Miss Murphy to the well lit altar. Several Charleston merchants co-operated with the fair association in donating a number of presents which the bride and groom received. Among those gifts were a wedding ring, the bride's outfit, a bed, flowers, an electric toaster, a table lamp and some shirts. A small admission fee of 10 cents was charged for those who attended the wedding. The main sold out fair building housed the agricultural, industrial and various other exhibits that also included a large display of tropical and freshwater fish held in fifteen tanks. This was arranged by the Charleston Aquarium Society, that had it's members in attendance during the fair. Friday was Orphans' Day, and at 4:00 PM, there was a pet parade with many interesting entries under the auspices of the Boy Scouts. Every boy with a dog and every girl with a cat were admitted free of charge to the fair. A rainy Saturday was Children's Day when all children were admitted free of charge until 6:00 PM and were charged the one half price of five cents, for all rides and shows. Despite the rain, a fairly large crowd would attend the fair on the last day. Mr. Frampton said that the gate receipts substantially exceeded the previous year. The Jones Show boarded the Southern Railway and departed for it's next stop in Augusta, Georgia.

1935

**COUNTY FAIR
OPENS MONDAY**

Building at Hagood Stadium Ready for Week's Event

**NUMEROUS EXHIBITS
BEING ARRANGED**

Rides, Shows and Special Features Included in Program

On a rainy Monday, October 28, 1935, the annual Charleston County Fair opened the gates at 7:00 PM at Johnson Hagood Stadium fairgrounds. Tuesday and Saturday were the usual Children's Days offering free admission to school children until 6:00 PM. Regular admission was adults 25 cents and children 10 cents. The fair opened every day at 2:00 PM, except on Saturday when it opened at 10:00 AM. The main pedestrian gate was on Sumter Street, and cars could enter

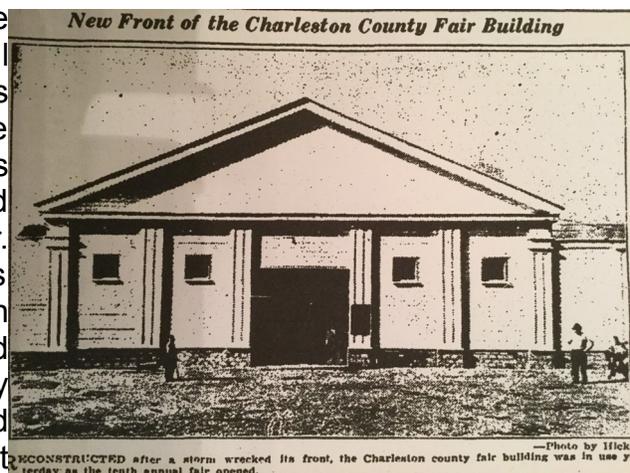
**COUNTY FAIR
OPENS MONDAY**

Johnson Hagood Stadium to Be Scent of Many Features

**LARGE MIDWAY
TO SUPPLY FUN**

Big Array of Exhibits Assure Success of Annual Show

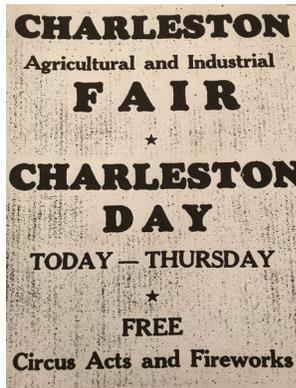
the free parking lot at the Congress Street gate. The usual exhibits were available for viewing in three buildings that included the main exhibit building, which had been repaired after a storm had wrecked the front entrance. The large agricultural building offered sixteen agricultural displays and more than fifty industrial exhibits. The new building for the poultry show was made ready for use and the show was said to be the most extensive display ever. Robert Schirmer of Charleston, was awarded first place with his champion pigeon entry wearing band number 478 and Randolph Hull took first place in the poultry show with his champion Rhode Island red pullet. The Miller Brothers Shows brought



the midway attractions to the fairgrounds that featured ten rides, twelve shows and three free daily acts that preformed at 5:00 and 11:00 PM. A popular loop-the-loop ride was also featured. Also on Tuesday, at 3:00 PM a baby show for children under two years old, and parade took place. There were forty three entries and the judges were Dr. William H. Price, Dr. R. R. Prentiss and two trained nurses. William Enos, Jr, was selected as the healthiest male baby, and Ellen Smoak was chosen as the healthiest girl. Susie Johnson was the youngster in the most attractively decorated carriage in the parade. Each winner received a silver loving cup from the fair association. There were eight entries in the community exhibit competition and the winners were Adams Run, first place, John's Island, second place and Wadmallow Island, third prize. The judges were Mrs. Harriett Johnson, I. Blank and J. F. Jones. On Wednesday night there was a popularity contest to choose one school boy and girl under the age of fourteen. The winners were each awarded a Shetland pony complete with a saddle and bridle. Thursday night at 9:00 PM there was an Amateur Night with prizes awarded to the winners for singing, dancing and acrobatic stunts. On the schedule Friday night at 9:00 was a public wedding held inside the stadium. The admission to the wedding was 10 cents and everybody was invited. As the featured event of the fair, Ruby Lee Blewer, 20, of 264 St. Philip Street and Walter Mack Evans, 25, of 20 Line Street were married by Reverend J. R. Williams, pastor of the King Street Baptist Church. James J. Boyd, publicity director of the fair, estimated that one thousand people were present at the wedding. Immediately after the ceremony the couple went to the Agricultural building, where supper was served and on Saturday morning they left for their honeymoon trip to Miami. Saturday was Mardi Gras Night with prizes given for the best costumes.

1936

The 1936 annual Charleston Agricultural and Industrial Fair was opened on Monday, November 2, at 4:00 PM and closed on Saturday, November 7, at the Johnson Hagood location. On Saturday, October 3, the Charleston Evening Post reported that Mr. Frampton announced that one thousand bumper advertisements, yellow strips of cardboard four feet long with red letters, would be tied to automobile bumpers on Broad Street next week. This is the earliest mention of the use of an automobile bumper to advertise the upcoming fair that can be found. General admission to the fairgrounds was 25 cents for adults and 10 cents for children. Mr. Frampton arranged for the midway that offered fifteen riding devices and ten shows and three free acts that were provided by The World's Exposition Shows. He also said that the agricultural and commercial exhibits would be exceptional and that the poultry, cattle and pigeon shows would be outstanding. Free daily performances, included those of Al (Popeye) Ritchie, strong man and health lecturer. He conducted an amateur hour, a husband calling contest, a ladies slipper throwing contest, a girls kicking contest and a girl's personality contest. On Friday, he was in a tug of



Frampton Says Attendance Substantially Greater

war with fifty people and would break a wooden plank with his head. A small fire occurred on the midway on Wednesday morning but it was quickly extinguished and there were no injuries. Community and individual exhibits were in place for the judging, that would have cash awards made for first, second and third places. Those community entries were James Island, Johns Island, Wadmalaw, St. Paul's Parish, Adams Run, Midland Park, Mount Pleasant and McClellanville. In the poultry building, considerable attention was attracted by Hiram, the bottled chicken. The white chicken, almost frying size, had spent the last two weeks in a five gallon bottle and seemed to be thriving. Saturday was closing day and another Children's Day which opened at 10:00 AM. There was a farmer's calling contest, with prizes for the winners and at 4:00 PM there was a prized girl's personality contest for girl's ages fourteen to twenty. Although not directly connected to the Fair, on Saturday, November 7, The Citadel football team hosted Clemson College at Johnson Hagood Stadium. All seating was reserved and admission tickets to the game were \$2.00 each. The Clemson team would win that game over The Citadel by a score of 20-0.

1937



The 1937 annual Charleston Agricultural and Industrial Fair was opened at the Johnson Hagood Stadium on Monday, November 1, and closed at 11:00 PM on Saturday night, November 6. The midway attractions were supplied by Sheesley's Mighty Midway, and on October 31, they arrived on a forty-car



train that was unloaded at Rutledge Avenue and Simons Street. Sheesley advertised forty shows and rides, and Susie, the world famous elephant and her troupe would perform. The show boasted a personnel of seven hundred men and animals. Ladies were admitted free of charge on Monday after 6:00 PM, also Children's days were Tuesday and Wednesday. Admission charges were adults 25 cents and children 10 cents. The buildings were full of exhibits, livestock and poultry for the visitors to enjoy and a large number of entries were received in these departments. In the commercial exhibits, the United States Forestry service operated a bolopticon, which was a slide machine that showed forest scenes, timber management areas, road construction, and fire fighting. Next to this was a display of forestry tools and posters warning about the dangers of forest fires. On Monday Betty Burke, of Los Angelos, a twenty-two year old with the show was buried in a specially constructed wooden box six feet below ground level. Air vents were provided at each end of the box, and periscopes and a telephone were installed to enable her to be seen and to have conversations with the public. She was fed through the periscope opening, and her telephone number was 5646 and could be called during the day or night. A trained nurse and a male attendant who could remove her from the ground if necessary were located in a nearby tent at all times. Miss Burke used to do a swimming and diving act but once she saw a man do this stunt she said to herself, "I can do that!" and so she did. The poultry judging was on Tuesday by B. F. Ricketts from Ohio and a red cockerel owned by Mrs. David B. Jones was declared

the champion bird of the show. Mrs. Jones gladly accepted a silver goblet for her efforts. On Friday two hundred and thirty five children from the Charleston Orphan House and the City Orphan Asylum were admitted free to the fairgrounds, rides and shows. Later, they were served refreshments as guests of the fair association. A different fireworks show was given every night of the fair. Many local merchants ran newspaper ads that encouraged readers to stop by their fair booth for a visit. Free acts included Wilno the Great, who was shot from a large cannon over two moving ferris wheels twice a day. Wilno was born Otto Willi Wiedrich (1904-1984) in Dresden, Germany where he began his career. He performed around the world with his sixty feet high arching flight into a safety net two hundred feet away. One of his greatest feats was a flight over a giant ferris wheel at the 1936 New York World's Fair. Also included was the noted high diver Jimmy Jamison, who dived twice a day with his nightly dive done into a flaming pool that was ignited by lighting gasoline on top of the water. At midnight on Saturday, Betty Burke was removed from her underground box. During the week, many of her telephone callers informed her that the entire fairgrounds area was once a potter's field used for burials before the city turned it into a play area. Mr. Frampton stated that the fair was a success and that close to 100,000 people were admitted.

1938



The 1938 Charleston County Fair was opened on Monday, October 24, at Johnson Hagood Stadium. Officials estimated that between four and five thousand people were in attendance on opening day and expectations were to have one hundred thousand for the week. The three fair buildings were made ready to house the wide variety of



exhibits that were to be displayed and enjoyed by the expected throngs of visitors. Much of the attending crowd could get to and from the fair by riding the new city buses that were in service courtesy of the South Carolina Power Company. These new buses had recently replaced the ailing trolley car system. The brand new cattle building, which was filled to capacity, was used for the first time, offering better facilities and more space to accommodate the growing exhibits. Approximately 40 head of cattle, 238 pigs and hogs and 356 birds were on exhibition. Dallas B. Jones, president of the Charleston Poultry Association had charge of the poultry exhibit at the fair and during fair week, the Palmetto Pigeon Club held its annual pigeon show and featured homing pigeons. Fair association officials reported that the agricultural exhibits, both community and individual, were of greater variety than last year. Judging on Monday night awarded the Johns Island community display with a one hundred dollar first place prize. Adams Run and Wadmalaw Island were tied for second place, Goose Creek placed third and Mount Pleasant was fourth. The one hundred dollar award for the best individual farm award went to the Three Oaks plantation of Mr. and Mrs. Walter Hills. The Strates Shows, one of the largest companies on the road, brought in the midway attractions on thirty railroad cars. The show supplied eighteen rides, twenty shows and advertised a staff of seven hundred people and animals. Booked during the fair was Madam Smithley, an eighty-five pound lion tamer who handled a mixed group of lions and another headliner was the Five American Eagles, trapeze artists who performed sixty-five feet in the air without

a net. Officials of the fair chose the trapeze act after it was endorsed by three different out of state fairs. A new ride at the fair was erected and was called the "Boom-er-rang". All rides and shows were five cents each. Two Children's Days were held on Tuesday and Saturday, when all children under the age of sixteen were admitted free of charge until 6:00 PM. Admission to the fairgrounds was 25 cents for adults and 10 cents for children, and elaborate fireworks were to be seen every night. A 1939 four door Pontiac sedan was given away on Friday night at 10:30 PM and the winner had to be present to win. Thirty-six local businesses offered a free raffle ticket for the car with every twenty-five cents purchased. Mr. Frampton was so gratified at the crowd which attended the presentation of the car that he announced that next year the fair association would endeavor to give away two or three automobiles. Closing day was the longest day of the week, with the gates opening at 9:00 AM. The fair closed at midnight on Saturday, October 29, and was deemed more successful than ever.

1939

THOUSANDS THRILLED
at the
CHARLESTON A. & I. FAIR
All This Week!
JOHNSON HAGOOD STADIUM
CHARLESTON

THE BIG CATTLE SHOW!
The MAMMOTH SWINE SHOW!
The Interesting Mercantile Exhibits!

THE GIGANTIC MIDWAY!
The 70 People Grandstand Revue!
Jimmie Lynch's DEATH DODGERS
Saturday Afternoon

Don't Miss:

Adults
25c
Children
10c

In late September of 1939, Miss Marguerite Rodgers, secretary to Mr. Frampton, began distributing large yellow automobile bumper signs advertising the fair. More than fifteen hundred of these bumper signs were available for distribution. The 1939 Charleston Agricultural and Individual Fair opened at 6:00 PM, on Monday, October 23, at Johnson Hagood Stadium and continued through Saturday, October 28 with a large midway and numerous exhibits of farm products produced by the local communities and individuals. Cash prizes of \$100, \$75, and \$50, were awarded for first, second and third place in each class. Ladies Night and Children's Days returned again on the program. Admission for the fair was 25 cents for adults and 10 cents for children and the gates opened daily at 10:00 AM. During the fair radio station WTMA did several live broadcasts from the fairgrounds. All of the agricultural, livestock, and poultry exhibits were in place to entertain early visitors to the fair and all of the results of the livestock shows were printed in the local newspaper. The judging of the animals was done by Ed Keyser, of Summerville, superintendent of the Clemson College Experiment station and A. L. Durant, an extension livestock specialist. Poultry exhibits of the Charleston Poultry Association were judged on Tuesday of fair week. At 8:00 PM that night the poultry association held it's annual banquet at the Francis Marion Hotel with it's president, David B. Jones, presiding. Invited guests included W. M. Frampton, president of the fair: Emmons Welch, fair secretary and I. Blank, treasurer of the fair association. All week at the fair, Frank Wirth's spectacular grandstand musical revue, "Les Ambassadeurs Revue", performed twice a day inside the stadium and featured special scenery, special effects, and a seventy person cast. The James E. Strates Shows returned and boasted a mammoth midway and presented sixteen thrill rides and eighteen super shows. The Dobas family, who were all born and bred in the circus business was a

CHARLESTON FAIR
FOR 1939 CLOSES
W. M. Frampton, President
and Manager, Says He is
Proud of Showing

four member acrobatic group from New Jersey, helped to entertain the crowds daily. On Wednesday night, following the musical revue, a large crowd assembled on the playing field inside the stadium when Mrs. F. Lee Peebles of Rutledge Avenue, won a new 1940 Plymouth automobile. She had three tickets in the drum of 700,000 tickets and could not speak while at the microphone, but managed to thank little Loretta Seabrook who, while blindfolded drew her lucky winning ticket. On Friday night after the musical revue, Philip A. Torlay of Beaufain Street, won a new 1940 Hudson sedan when his ticket was drawn from the large drum, containing 800,000 tickets, by little Glenna Weaver. On Saturday which was closing day, the main program feature of the day was Jimmy Lynch and his Death Dodgers, who gave a series of breath taking examples of automobile stunt driving that took place in a special arena on Harmon field. Mr. Frampton stated that the fair was a success and was certainly aided by the exceptionally good weather for the six days during the fair.

1940



The News and Courier of Tuesday, October 1, 1940, reported that posters and automobile bumper signs advertising the Charleston Agricultural and Industrial fair, which opened on October 21, were being distributed in the



area. Mr. Frampton, president of the fair association, announced that one thousand of the bumper signs, that were printed in red and blue, would be attached to automobiles. Mr. Frampton also announced that he would be giving a series of broadcasts over radio station WTMA on the agricultural, industrial and educational features of the fair. The 1940 Charleston County Agricultural and Industrial Fair was again held at Johnson Hagood Stadium and the surrounding fairgrounds, opening on Monday, October 21 and closing on Saturday, October 26. The midway attractions were again provided by the James E. Strates Shows that had a payroll of more than five hundred persons and used it's own railroad train of twenty five cars for transporting the nineteen rides, twenty shows and other attractions. Tuesday and Saturday were the normal Children's Days that offered free admission. Other attractions on the midway were the flying motorcycle



act in which the riders dodge around three large lions who roam loose in the motordrome and "Monkey Land," a show with more than fifty monkey actors, including Susie, the chimpanzee, who sings, dances and smokes a tobacco pipe. Appearing twice a day was Zacchini, who was billed as the world's most fearless aerialist. He was shot from a large cannon, over two ferris wheels and landed in a large net. Hugo Zacchini (1896-1977) was born into a touring Italian circus family, the projectile Zacchinis, human cannonballs who were shot

out of a cannon that was designed by their father. In the 1920's Ildebrando Zacchini invented the compressed air cannon, as a proposal for a military exercise for the Italian government, and he tested it on his son Hugo. When the government rejected the idea, he thought that shooting his family members in the air from the cannon could be included as a permanent act in his circus show program. Hugo was later affiliated with Ringling Brothers Barnum & Bailey Circus for many years and stayed with the circus until he was sixty years old. Thursday, during the fair, was designated Army and Navy Day and members of those services were admitted free to the fairgrounds, if they appeared in uniform. The fair also featured the usual livestock, poultry and pigeon shows, commercial exhibits and many other special exhibits. The State Highway Department, the South Carolina Department of Vocational Education, the Boy Scouts of America, the South Carolina State Forestry Department and the Charleston County Library were among the many exhibitors at the fair. Local radio station WTMA also had a booth at the fair and broadcasted live reports, including the opening ceremonies on Monday, from the fairgrounds every night by Walter Speight, a roving reporter who used a portable transmitter. In the radio booth, Associated Press teletype printers were in operation to show the public just how the news originates. The hostesses at the radio booth were Misses Meredith Smith and Alicia Rhett.

1941

The 1941 Charleston County Fair dates were from Monday, October 20 through Saturday, October 25. The livestock and poultry exhibits during the fair were held in the Fair Association building located near Johnson Hagood Stadium. At this time, the Stoney Field was being used as a recreation area by the United States Army, so the midway and the other exhibits had to be set up elsewhere. The original fair plan was to not have the livestock and poultry shows because

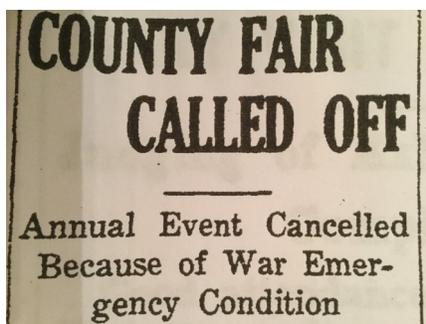
**MANY ORPHANS
ENJOY FAIR**
Children Guests in Afternoon; O. G. W. Marjenhoff Wins Auto



there was no way to use County Hall for this purpose. The farmers let it be known that they wanted to have the shows take place so the fair association decided to hold it in the buildings they owned at the fairgrounds. No admission was charged for the livestock shows. County agent, C. W. Carraway, was the superintendent of the livestock department and David B. Jones ran the poultry show. Mr. Frampton also arranged for the midway area to be set up in the open field located behind the Rivers Junior High School on upper King Street next to the Charleston County Hall. The other exhibits would be set up in the Charleston County Hall, that was located next to the school. The admission price at the grounds at County Hall was 30 cents for adults and 10 cents for children. The James E. Strates Shows provided the midway attractions that included Zacchini, the human cannonball, who was shot out of a cannon over the midway and land in a large net. Among the Strates Shows traveling performers was Harry Villeponteaux, a local man who once lived at 32 Mary Street and did a flying trapeze act on the midway. Before he left Charleston he was an apprentice ship-fitter at the Charleston Naval

Shipyard. He learned his tricks on a crude flying trapeze made by stretching a bar from his automobile to the garage. It was the first time that he had performed before a home town crowd and many in the audience recalled his numerous back yard stunts. On Wednesday scores of children from the local orphanages were guests of the fair and enjoyed the rides and shows and were later treated to refreshments. The main feature of the day was the drawing for the evening's grand prize, a new automobile. Mr. O. G. W. Marjenhoff, of 58 Maple Street won the new car and stated, "This is the first time in about forty years that I have ever got something for nothing." Mr. Marjenhoff, who operated a soft drink concession at the ball park, only had one ticket and it was the one given to him when he paid his way into the fairgrounds. A long list of prizes were offered in the poultry and pigeon shows and the Charleston Stamp Club sponsored a stamp exhibit, after a long absence, at the fair. The club's exhibit consisted of eight display classes, with stamps that were mounted in frames and prizes were awarded for first and second place in each class. If there was only one exhibitor in any class, they would be awarded the first place prize. The exhibits were insured and the name, address and telephone number of the exhibitor and the value of the stamps were written on the back of each frame. The community and individual agricultural exhibits were at County Hall and offered four prizes of \$100, \$75, \$50 and \$25 to be awarded in each class, Miss Caroline Alston, who was the home demonstration agent was in charge. Johns Island won the community exhibit award and the individual category was won by Creekside Farm owned by Mr. and Mrs. Bryan Walpole. The theme of the 1941 fair was National Defense and there was an exhibit to promote the sale of Defense Bonds and Stamps was sponsored by the Junior Chamber of Commerce. There were three other military type booths on display that included the Stark General Army Hospital, Fort Moultrie and "Food for Freedom." There were two "Children's Days", Tuesday and Saturday and thousands of local students took advantage of the free admission and reduced prices for rides as well as the many shows.

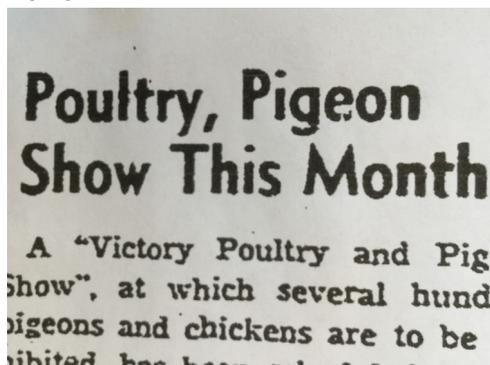
1942



After the successful 1941 fair the Charleston area and the United States began to change like it never had changed before. After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, the entire world was in turmoil and the Charleston area was no exception. The Stoney field fairgrounds were possibly going to be used to house anti-aircraft troops designated to protect the Navy Yard, the Ordnance Depot, the municipal airport and other local industries. Charleston served as a main information center during the "air war" in October and would continue in the same capacity in case of an emergency. There were twenty five observation posts within the county and each post was manned by at least twenty men. They were charged with scanning the sky and to relay any information about any incoming enemy planes to the information center. From there the officer in charge could direct the activity of pursuit ships and anti-aircraft artillery. Fort Moultrie was placed on the alert and it's guns were made ready if needed and air raid tests were completed in October. On December 9, 1941, the News and Courier reported that the board of directors of the Charleston

Chamber of Commerce and the Charleston Retail Merchants Association went on record opposing the continuance of county fairs as they were being conducted at the time. They felt that the fairs similar to the one that was just held in October were detrimental to the business interest of the city. Neither organization were against the idea of a county fair, but it was only the carnival and the following crowds that they attracted that were harmful. During some of the earlier fairs the police had been called to investigate the conduct during some of the midway shows and after further discussions with the fair officials the show could be closed for the fair in the better interest of the public. On September 25, 1942, Mr. Frampton, as President and Manager of the Charleston Agricultural and Industrial Fair, announced that after a meeting of the Board of Directors of the Association, that the Charleston County Fair would not be held because of the War Emergency and the uncertain times. He also announced that the contract with the James E. Strates Shows was cancelled until further notice. A successful fair could have actually been held, but Mr. Frampton said that the fair directors were concerned about the scarcity of gasoline and tires, and he said that the "most patriotic move would be to cancel the event." Another factor that was considered had to do with the lighting, since no outside display of lights after dark were allowed under the then dim out regulations. In late October, Mr. Frampton, as President of the South Carolina Agricultural Society, announced that the Society would sponsor the Victory Poultry and Pigeon Show to be held at the Charleston County Hall on upper King Street. There were more than five hundred entries for the show and an admission fee of twenty-five cents was charged, to cover awards and ribbons, was charged for the public. The event was quite well attended.

1943



The Charleston Agricultural and Industrial Fair at Johnson Hagood Stadium was not held in 1943, however, in early October 1943, it was announced that the Victory Poultry and Pigeon Show would again be held on October 25, 26, and 27. The show was held at the lumber yard of the Cole Lumber Company that was located at 17 Huger Street. The lumber yard was chosen for the show because the Charleston County Hall on upper King Street which was in military use, was not available. The owner of the property was Mr. C. E. Cole, who was a member of the executive committee of the Charleston County Poultry Association, and he volunteered the use of his property for the show. The admission was free and was open for the public to attend. Entry fees to the show were used to buy trophies and approximately fifty people would be entered. Mr. Frampton, as President of the Agricultural Society of South Carolina, said the Society would take an active part in the event, donating ribbons and furnishing standard coops in which the birds would be exhibited.

1944

As in 1943, the Charleston County Fair of 1944 was not held because of World War II. In late October 1944, German prisoners of war were temporarily moved to Stoney field

from their normal camp that was located on Saint Andrews Boulevard at Colony Drive in Avondale. The prisoners were transferred as the result of a storm that came through the area, but were returned the next day to make some needed repairs at their camp. Also in October, General Charles P. Summerall, the president of the Citadel, and chairman of the local Red Cross chapter announced that the Citadel-Terrace service club, which was organized in 1941 to provide entertainment for the service men stationed at Stoney field presented a check for \$551.53 to the Charleston Red Cross chapter. On November 10, 11, and 12, 1944 at the Stoney field fair poultry building, the Charleston Racing Pigeon Club, the Palmetto Pigeon Club and the United States Army exhibited a large display of around five hundred homing pigeons. The exhibits were open to the public and there was no admission charged to enter the show. The Army display was supervised by Sergeant Joseph Bishop of Fort Benning, Georgia, where he maintained a flock of two thousand birds for the army. Sergeant Bishop was an accomplished pigeon expert for the Army and had taken the display to numerous southern cities. The pigeon show was being held in connection with a convention, headquartered at the Charleston Hotel on Meeting Street, of pigeon fanciers from many surrounding states. On Saturday night, the delegates to the convention were treated to a shrimp and beer supper that was held for them at Coburg Dairy, off of Savannah Highway. The United States Army was using homing pigeons in almost all of its' departments, but especially for paratroopers, who operated behind enemy lines often and were usually without any other form of communication.

1945

Fair Asking Army For 2-Week Use Of Stoney Field

World War II officially ended on September 2, 1945, however, the usage of Stoney field and it's surrounding buildings, were in question for use by the Charleston County Fair. The United States Army was still in

control of the property and had not yet released the property back to the City of Charleston. Mayor E. Edward Wehman, Jr. stated that the city was powerless to act until the war department returned Stoney field back to the city in satisfactory condition. On October 15, 1945, Mr.

County Fair Opens With Big Midway, Variety of Exhibits



Frampton and Ben Scott Whaley, an attorney and member of the Agricultural Society of South Carolina were in Washington D. C. to request the use of the entire Stoney field area in order to hold the Fair in 1945. The War Department did not agree to return the property to the City



of Charleston but fortunately did agree to give the Fair Association special permission to use the field and the buildings

in order to hold the fair as scheduled. On Monday, November 5, 1945, the Charleston County Fair opened the gates at 4:00 PM. Thereafter that year, the fair opened at 2:00 PM and closed at midnight, except on Saturday, November 10, when it opened at 9:00 AM. "Ladies night" and "Children's Days" were again on the schedule. Farm yields were severely cut that year because of a number of reasons, but those that were offered were said to be specially fine. Home canned products for showing were more limited than usual, due to decreased yields brought about by recent heavy rains. Among the unusual displays at the John's Island community booth were canned marsh hen, upper pig's ears, coffee beans raised in the county, and tung nuts from which tung oil is made. At the Mount Pleasant booth, there was sugar cane from Snee Farm, quince fruit from Cainhoy, Japanese persimmons and a blanket made from wool that was grown at Snee Farm. The livestock show, poultry and pigeon exhibits, with some four hundred birds in number were promised to be the best ever shown here. Among the agricultural exhibits located in the industrial building was a successful demonstration of the grits enrichment process, loaned by Clemson College, a cotton products exhibit from the Commissioner of Agriculture Roy Jones and the Ten Point Farm Program sponsored by the South Carolina Extension Program. There was also a miniature model of the Santee-Cooper project on display. A model airplane contest that was sponsored by the fair association and the Truluck Flying Service was a special feature. The commercial exhibits were full and also included the American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the American Red Cross, and the United States Army Recruiting service. Paid admissions for Wednesday was about ninety six hundred patrons. The fair had given out eighteen thousand admission tickets to forty eight schools to be used on the Children's Days and it was estimated that fifteen thousand of these tickets were used. The 1945 midway attractions were again provided by the James E. Strates Shows and were billed as the largest ever to be in the city. There were some twenty side shows and about fifteen rides. A vigorous protest against the prices being charged was lodged on November 7, with Mr. Frampton, president of the fair, by then State Senator Oliver T. Wallace. Mr. Frampton and Senator Wallace conferred with the carnival management and then announced a reduction of prices for children's day, which was Saturday. All major rides, for which 36 cents had been charged for children as well as adults, would be reduced for children to 28 cents. Many of the shows at the carnival were not owned by the management, as the senator explained, and the reduction of prices could be arranged only through a conference. There were the usual bingo booths, several weight guessing showmen and many other concessions. Two special features of the fair were, Wilno the Great, who was shot from a cannon over two ferris wheels into a net and a high diver, John A. Jamison, who made his nightly dive from one hundred twenty feet into a flaming pool of water. Jamison, who was forty four years old at the time, said that he was only one of some three or four high divers left in America. He said he dives about two hundred and fifty times a year and had been diving for twenty years, but would not say how long he might continue doing his dangerous act. Mr. Jamison would return to the Charleston area again in 1955 to perform his diving act at the fair during that year. He was a proud Navy veteran of World War II and served his country with distinction in the Pacific Theatre. All of Charleston and the surrounding areas most certainly missed the fair during the war years, so it made perfect sense that the crowds would turn out and

re-attend this community event that benefited everyone who attended and they did just that.

1946

The 1946 Charleston County Fair opened on Monday, November 4, 1946, at 6:00 PM, at Stoney field. Mr. Frampton commented that, "The fair this season will be bigger and better in every respect." Opening night was again Ladies Night, and they were admitted free of charge. The James E. Strates Shows provided the midway again with forty railroad cars of amusements and featured the return of Wilno the Great, also known as "the human cannonball." Wilno was shot from a large cannon over the top of two giant ferris wheels twice a day. They also advertised eighteen thrilling rides, twenty tented shows and a mile long glittering midway. The attendance prize was a 1946 Ford and you got a coupon for the Saturday night drawing when you entered the gate with your ticket. You could also buy additional coupons if you chose to do so. The usual agricultural, livestock, poultry and business exhibits were in place for viewing. A large showing of cattle and swine was exhibited and David D. Jones was in charge of the poultry and pigeon show which was said to be one of the largest in the southeast. Edisto Island, Ladson, Wadmalaw and John's Island had community booths. Farmers with individual booths were Vardell Legare of John's Island, Bryan Walpole, also of John's Island and Glen Kinsey, of Mount Pleasant. One hundred baby chicks that were donated by Sears Roebuck & Company, were placed in the care of 4-H boys and girls by Miss Caroline Alston, home demonstration agent, and C. W. Carraway, county agricultural agent for display during the fair. The Marmac Furniture Company of North Charleston rented four booths that measured forty feet by ten feet and displayed a full line of home furnishings. Many civic and public service organizations rented booth space to include the Charleston County Health Department, the Red Cross, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Veterans Service Bureau, American Legion, South Carolina Public Service Authority and the South Carolina truck experiment station. Under the leadership of Mrs. H. Jermain Slocum, president of the Garden Club of Charleston, five garden clubs exhibited a massive arrangement of fall flowers. A number of businesses on display included eight new ones that showed products ranging from electric appliances and awnings to house trailers, power yachts and the latest model airplane. One new popular event was the first calf scramble, which was one of Mr. Frampton's ideas. Young

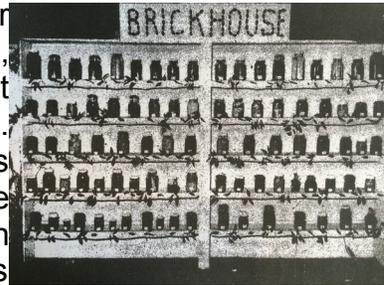


4-H club members attempted to catch and tie up a loose calf in the open arena. The thirty six calves for this event were donated by local businesses and individuals. One can only imagine the entertainment value of this event. One young man, Tommy Legare, of Johns Island, won the \$10.00 prize for capturing his calf first. Officials of the 1946 Fair were commended for not allowing beer to be sold on the fairgrounds or in the buildings during the fair. Mr. Frampton stated that, as far as he knew, this was the only fair in the state of South Carolina where beer was not allowed. The fair closed on Saturday, November 9, and the News and Courier reported that the county fair was an institution well deserving the support of all business and professional men and that the fair this year had been the best held and that the fair to be held the next year would be even better.

1947

**Thousands See
Exhibits at
Fair Opening**

The 1947 Charleston County Fair operated from Monday, October 27, through Saturday, November 1, at the Stoney field location. Mr. Frampton announced that this was the largest fair in the history of the event and really should be called an exposition, instead of a fair. The fair offered four ticket gates



to handle the patrons and, had two parking lots with attendants to handle the parking duties. Monday was the usual Ladies Night with the ladies being admitted free of charge when accompanied by one paid admission. Tuesday and Saturday were again Children's Days and special tickets for these two days were sent to all of the schools in the city and county. Space in the exhibit buildings was completely sold out, more than thirty Charleston county farmers had entries in the cattle showing and more than one thousand entries were submitted in the poultry and pigeon divisions. The livestock building housed over one hundred head of cattle, one hundred and fifty three hogs and the named winners of these shows were printed in the local newspapers. On Wednesday, at 6:30 PM, the popular second calf scramble was held inside Johnson Hagood Stadium. Forty young future farmers attempted to halter one of twenty one calves and get it across the finish line to be declared the winner of the event. Little Legare Walpole, of John's Island, fought a tough calf that was twice his weight, all the way from the 10 yard line to midfield to be the first 4-H club member to win a calf. Thomas Edge, who was ten years old had the crowd on their feet as he wrestled his calf up and down the field several times before the calf finally went through the finish gate, dragging young Thomas behind him. One calf that was roped was later released and was chased again after the field judges decided that a spectator had aided the captor in making his calf secure. The youngsters who completed this task kept the calf for one year to return to the fair and sell it at the fat cattle auction. Mr. C. W. Carraway, the local county farm agent, was at the public address system during the calf scramble. Also speaking briefly were G. Chalmers McDonald for the Fair Association, Russell Long of the local radio station WCSC and J. Edwin Schachte, Jr., President of the Charleston Junior Chamber of Commerce. After the scramble, the fat cattle auction was held, hotel and restaurant owners, as well as individuals placed their bids. M. Baker and Sons, a local meat processor on Meeting Street Road, offered to pick up, dress and deliver any steer purchased at the auction. Also newly added this year was a pig scramble that operated under the same basic rules as the calf scramble. Those who entered the scrambles were required to obtain parental permission before participating. The Strates Shows brought a greatly improved program and a variety of eighteen shows to the midway. Additional children's rides were also featured, including miniature airplanes, a boat ride and miniature ferris wheels. Free daily acts included the Three Franks who performed on their lofty rigging seventy five feet above the ground, followed by Miss Clara on her aerial perch, that was one hundred and seventy five feet high. It was announced that the local Red Cross chapter would have a first aid station at their exhibit booth located in the rear of the full main commercial exhibit building. Trained first aid workers would be on duty at all times, and anyone with any type of injury should report

to the booth for treatment. The home demonstration department showed all kinds of canned products that were put up locally including frozen meats, seafood, dairy products, syrup, molasses, jellies, jams, pickles, potatoes and many other items. Community exhibits came in from Ladson, John's Island, Edisto Island and Wadmalaw, as well as two individual farm presentations from Mr. and Mrs. Glenn Kinsey, of Snee Farm in Mount Pleasant, and Mr. and Mrs. W. M. Hamilton, of Stanyarne Hall, John's Island. On Thursday, starting at 4:00 PM, the Prop Busters Club demonstrated model airplanes ranging from rubber band powered models to speedy little jet planes, highlighting precision flying, speed flying and stunt flying inside the stadium area. The local Prop Busters Club was sponsored by the Charleston Exchange Club. Friday was guest day for all of the newspaper delivery boys in the city. Also on the schedule for Friday night, was a high school football game at the stadium between the Charleston High School team and the Cooper River Devils. The North Charleston team won that game 42-0. Saturday was closing day, and it featured the combined swine show of Charleston County and its' five neighboring counties and was designated as Farmers Day.

1948



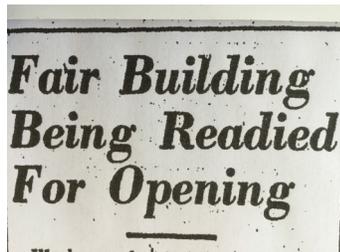
The 1948 Charleston County Fair opened on Monday, November 1 and closed on Saturday, November 6, 1948. A 4:30 PM flag raising ceremony opened the fair on Monday afternoon and featured a platoon of Marines and color bearers from a local Marine detachment. The bugler for the opening was Sergeant K. R. Clark and retreat was held by the Marines at sundown each day with the bugle calls being broadcasted to all parts of the fairgrounds. Accompanying the officials of the fair, at the opening ceremony, were

General Charles P. Summerall, President of The Citadel, Charleston Mayor William McG. Morrison and State Senator Oliver T. Wallace. Prior to the fair opening day, a strip of land measuring twenty feet wide and six hundred feet long was added to the fairgrounds property. Fill dirt was brought in and covered a strip of marshland located just south of the main fair building. The Garden Club of Charleston, which was assisted by several other community clubs, decorated the main exhibit building. There were four communities that displayed vegetables, grains, processed foods and other product and they were Ladson, Mount Pleasant, John's Island and Wadmalaw Island. There were also individual farm exhibits by Bryan Walpole and Mrs. M. W. Hamilton, of John's Island, and Glenn Kinsey, of Snee Farm. Mr. Frampton announced that the cash prizes that were to be awarded at the fair would be increased for this year. The top winner was awarded a blue banner and \$125, the second, a red banner and \$100, and third place, a yellow banner and \$75. No entrance

CHARLESTON AGRICULTURAL & INDUSTRIAL FAIR	
OPEN TONIGHT ALL THIS WEEK	
Sensational Free Acts EACH AFTERNOON AND NIGHT Agriculture—Industrial— School—Poultry—Livestock & Home Exhibits	
SCHOOL DAYS TUESDAY, NOV. 1 and SATURDAY, NOV. 5 ALL SHOWS AND RIDES CUT IN HALF FROM 1 TO 7 P. M.	
STRATES SHOW	ON THE MIDWAY 27—RIDES—27 22—SHOWS—22 WORLD'S BEST MIDWAY

fees were charged for the agricultural entries and all entries were guaranteed \$25. The chance to win a hearing aid was offered at one booth and nearby a dairy bar was located with items available for purchase. A realistic trading post booth manned by cowboys, advertised Edward's Department Store which was located on King Street and other locations. The James E. Strates Shows advertised twenty seven rides, twenty two shows and one hundred wild animals that were all brought to the Charleston fair on forty-five railroad cars. There were also free acts in the afternoon and night every day. The usual agricultural, livestock, poultry and school domestic science displays were all in place for viewing. The popular calf scramble also returned and was held inside the stadium area on the playing field. A youth band composed of fifty county grammar school students played a concert at the calf scramble. The band was organized in 1946 by interested parents of the St. Andrew's area and the conductor was Patrick Joseph Leonard. Mr. Leonard founded the Leonard School of Music in 1945 and operated the business until 1972 when he retired and turned the school over to his son, Daniel Joseph Leonard. The commercial building was full of various items for the fair patrons to enjoy and radio station WCSC had set up its' headquarters in a corner booth. Lining the walls were displays of venetian blinds, woodcraft manufacturing, candy and many other things. In the mechanics line, a Willys jeep, motorcycles and numerous bicycles could be examined up close.

1949



In 1949 the Charleston County Agricultural and Industrial Fair opened on Monday, October 31, and ran through Saturday, November 5, at the Stoney field fairgrounds. A patriotic flag raising ceremony again opened the fair activities. Mr. Frampton announced that each day was to be a special day and that the school children would be admitted free of charge again on Tuesday and on Saturday. The delivery of the free admission tickets to the city and county schools was completed on October 20. The James E. Strates Shows again provided the midway, and they added a special Kiddieland that offered rides and shows for children that included riding ponies, miniature trains, a water boat ride, an airplane ride, a ferris wheel and a small roller coaster. The show advertised twenty seven rides, twenty two shows and more than one hundred wild animals that were all brought in on a special forty-five car railroad train that arrived early on October 30. The fair association distributed thousands of tabloid newspapers in the area advertising the six day event. The newspaper featured pictures made the previous year at the fair and listed all of the upcoming entertainment. Older patrons at the fair could relax on one of the four large ferris wheels that were set up on the midway. A special attraction at the fair was the showing of Adolf Hitler's \$28,000 Mercedes automobile, which he used prior to and during World War II. A contest to name the king and queen was held during the fair. The contest was sponsored by radio station WHAN and the winner was selected from those submitting letters on "Why I would like to take my mother to the fair." The winner of the contest was announced on Friday afternoon. The first aid station

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	ON THE MIDWAY 27—RIDES—27 22—SHOWS—22 WORLD'S BEST MIDWAY

was again in place and manned by members of the local chapter of the American Red Cross, and the Charleston County Band made up of musicians from the county public schools played concerts on Tuesday and Wednesday. Also on Wednesday, the annual calf and pig scrambles were held in the stadium, and the children from the local orphanages were admitted to the fairgrounds free of charge. After the pig scramble was over the fat steers from last years fair were auctioned off inside the stadium. The auction was open for anyone to bid and usually the winners were local restaurants and hotels. Included within the swine exhibitors were L. F. Brant and William Stevens from Hillerent farm of North Charleston who brought purebred Berkshires and R. C. Hearne, also of North Charleston, exhibiting purebred Hampshires. The poultry and pigeon show occupied an entire building and had a wide variety of birds that included geese, pigeons, chickens, ducks, guineas, bantams and assorted game fowl. The main fair exhibit building included a group of industrial and commercial exhibits, automobiles, household furnishings, farm machinery and many other products. Community and individual farm exhibits were judged on Tuesday and they included Ladson, Edisto Island and John' Island. Individual farm exhibits were Brick House and Creekside from John's Island and Snee Farm from Mount Pleasant.

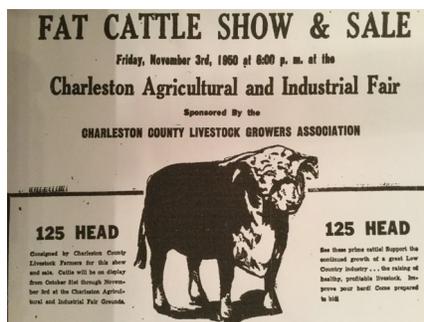
1950



In September of 1950, Mr. W. McLeod Frampton announced that the Charleston County Fair would open on Monday, October 30, at 7:30 PM and close on Saturday, November 4. The opening program was witnessed by directors of the fair association, city officials, and several special guests and every day during the week was designed as a special day. He also announced that the ever popular calf scramble, one of the fair's outstanding annual events, would be repeated again, under the supervision of Mr. Carraway and that the James E.

Strates Shows would provide the entertainment on the midway. Local newspaper ads advertised twenty eight rides, twenty two shows and four giant ferris wheels for the patrons to enjoy. Also featured was "The Great Telesco", known as the aerial gladiator, who preformed on the top of a one hundred and fifty foot flexible steel pole. Ladies night was held again on Monday, also Tuesday and Saturday were again special school children days, and they were admitted to the fair free of charge up to 7:00 PM. Students in the city and county

**Charleston County
Fair Will Open
October 30**



schools who were absent from school when the tickets were distributed during the week before the fair were given passes at a special booth on the fairgrounds. On Friday, November 3, a fat cattle show and sale was held at 6:00 PM, featuring one hundred and twenty five head of cattle that were sold to the highest bidder. The auction was conducted by J. T. Herndon of Ehrhardt, South Carolina. Some of the sponsors for the cattle auction were Hay Oil Company, Coburg Dairy, Farm and Home

Supply, Charleston Oil Company, Ray Waits Motors and Fort Sumter Chevrolet. The educational, farm, livestock and commercial exhibits were more extensive than ever before. Visitors saw scores of exhibits including produce from truck farms, fine grains, seafood, fruits, vegetables, cattle and hogs, prize chickens, pigeons, rabbits, home furnishings and equipment, and farm machinery. Mr. Carraway and Philip Higdon were co-chairmen for the livestock exhibition and Randolph Hull was in charge of the poultry show. Mr. T. M. Scharlock handled the Stamp Club display and Lottie C. Cordray, Charleston County home demonstration agent, had the community booths, individual farm booths, needlework and canning. The winners were announced in the agricultural booth display division at the fairgrounds. The Ladson community farm display and the Weona farm exhibit were the winners for their classes, and they displayed many of the various items that were produced on their farms. The Ladson booth included all varieties of farm produce, canned goods, preserves and a needle work display. The Weona farm booth included varied products from the farm, a miniature barn surrounded by many farm implements, and a tiny pasture of growing grass, in which a herd of miniature farm animals were grazing. The grand prize winners in the "Kids King and Queen of the Fair" essay contest were crowned on Saturday afternoon at the fairgrounds. Mr. Traynor Ferillo conducted this annual contest in conjunction with radio station WHAN on Market Street.

1951

CHARLESTON
AGRICULTURAL AND INDUSTRIAL
FAIR
NOW AND ALL THIS WEEK

AGRICULTURAL - INDUSTRIAL - SCHOOL
 4-H CLUB - POULTRY - COMMERCIAL
 LIVESTOCK - DOMESTIC SCIENCE
 And Many Other INTERESTING EXHIBITS

SENSATIONAL FREE ACTS DAILY
 ★ WORLD-FAMED WALLENDAS ★
Sensations On the High Wire
 ★ THE GREAT KARRELLS ★
Barre Girls On Revolving Ladders
 ★ CALF SCRAMBLE, THURSDAY NIGHT, 8:00 ★

EVERY DAY A BIG DAY!

CHILDREN'S DAYS FREE GATE TUESDAY, OCTOBER 30
 SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 3

ALL RIDES AT REDUCED PRICES UNTIL 6 P. M.

The 1951 annual Charleston County Agricultural and Industrial Fair was opened on Monday, October, 29, at 7:00 PM and closed on Saturday, November 3. Monday was "Ladies Night", and all ladies who were accompanied by a gentleman were admitted free of charge to the grounds. Tuesday and Saturday were once again recognized as "Children's Days". School children were admitted to the fairgrounds free of charge up to 7:00 PM and to shows and rides at reduced prices. Mr. Frampton, manager of the fair association, was in charge of all of the commercial exhibits and a full exhibit building. An outstanding returning attraction for the children was the coronation of the kids "King and Queen" of the fair on the closing day, which was Saturday. Contestants were required to write a letter on "Why I like to take my mother to the fair". Letters needed to be mailed to Mr. Traynor Ferillo, at the local radio station WHAN at 152 Market Street for judging. The winners of this contest were given lifetime passes that entitled each winner to take an escort to any of the James E. Strates rides and shows. The annual 4-H Club calf scramble was held on Thursday night at 8:30 PM on the stadium field and was sponsored by the Charleston Livestock Growers

Annual County Fair
Official Opening
Set For 7 P. M. Today



Association and the Jaycees. After the calf scramble was over, the calves that were captured at last year's fair were auctioned off during the Farmers Fat Cattle sale, together with other steers that were raised by county farmers. Randolph Hull was in charge of the poultry exhibit and the judging of poultry, pigeons and rabbits was on Tuesday, October, 30. Poultry was judged by J. W. Dennis, licensed general judge of the American Poultry Association from Williamsburg, Virginia. Pigeons were judged by Harold LaBoone of Abbeville and Bill Hahn, Jr. of Greenwood judged the rabbit show. Lottie Cordray, Charleston county home demonstration agent, was in charge of the community booths, individual farm booths, needlework, and canning. Cash prizes were again offered in both the community and individual farm classes. The entire display included samples of fancy work, garments, cabinet work, and many other items demonstrating life on a farm. The James E. Strates Shows provided twenty eight rides, twenty two shows that were brought in on a forty-five railroad car train and boasted a staff on the grounds of eight hundred people to serve the fair patrons. The Terrell Jacobs Wild Animal Circus was also featured on the midway. Two daily sensational, free acts included the Great Karrells, an act of seven daring girls on elevated ladders and the world famous Wallendas, with their amazing high wire act.

1952



In September 1952, Mr. Frampton announced the names of the committee chairman for the 1952 fair that would open on Monday, October 27, at 7:30 PM and close at midnight on November 1 at Johnson Hagood Stadium and the surrounding grounds. C. W. Carraway, local county agricultural agent, would handle the popular annual calf scramble; he and Ray Waits were co-chairmen of the livestock exhibit. Randolph Hull had the poultry show; Dr. T. M. Scharlock, the Stamp Club; Matilda Bell, the community and individual farm booths, needlework and canning. Traynor Ferillo was the publicity director of the fair. The executive committee of the Fair Association included E. W. Bailey, E. H. Pringle, E. S. Welch, G. Philip Higdon, M. O. Gardner, G. E. Lancer, C. G. Cole and W. McLeod Frampton. Visitors at the fair saw scores of exhibits and so many other items that illustrated life on a lowcountry farm Ladies Night and Children's Days were again included on the schedule. Many commercial exhibitors at the fair included promotions in their newspaper advertising during fair week, as did the Home Sewing Center at 208 King Street, and it was announced that T. Cambridge Lawrence would serve as Mr. Frampton's assistant in charge of the commercial exhibits. Anyone who was interested in a fair booth needed to contact the Fair Association office which was located in the Peoples Building on Broad Street in room 414. The Fair Association urged every community and family farm in the county to help enlarge their displays during this fair. The popular annual essay contest for the King and Queen of the Fair returned again under the direction of Traynor Ferillo and he would announce the winners on a live special broadcast over radio station WHAN on Thursday at 5:30 PM. On Wednesday at

**CHARLESTON
FAIR
LAST DAY
CLOSES MIDNIGHT
TONIGHT
CHILDREN'S DAY
TODAY**

1:00 PM, the fat cattle sale was held in the 4-H area of the livestock barn. Louis Baker, vice-president of the Charleston County Livestock Growers Association and chairman of the fat cattle sale, said that the association was deeply grateful to the buyers who had made the sale a success. He also hoped to be able to arrange bigger and better sales so that more livestock could be offered with a resulting larger number of buyers. The cattle buyers, who spent more than \$20,000, included Greenwood Packing Company of Greenwood, Southland Provision Company of Orangeburg, The Citadel, Rodenberg Super Markets of Charleston, Walter's Meat Market of Charleston, Bower's Super Market from Remount Road, Arthur Nash, Harry Clark, I. T. Carter, John Limehouse and the Francis Marion Hotel on King Street. Winners in all of the classes of the cattle and swine shows were printed in the News and Courier newspaper on November 2. The 4-H calf scramble was held on Thursday at 8:30 PM and for the first time ever in having this event girls were allowed to participate. The calves were again donated by local civic leaders and business firms. Attractions on the midway were again furnished by the James E. Strates Shows, who advertised twenty seven thrill rides, twenty two shows and other exhibits that were brought in on a forty-five car train. Also included was "The Terrell Jones Wild Animal Circus" under a canvas tent. The Hollywood Sky Rockets performed twice a day on swaying poles one hundred fifty feet in the air.

1953

CHARLESTON AGRICULTURAL & INDUSTRIAL	
FAIR	
FARM — LIVESTOCK — INDUSTRIAL 4-H CLUB — POULTRY — SCHOOL DOMESTIC SCIENCE EXHIBITS	
MON. WOMEN ADMITTED FREE WHEN ACCOMPANIED BY GENTLEMEN	
SENSATIONAL FREE ACTS DAILY	FUN and THRILLS FOR ALL
Children 14 Years Old and Under Admitted FREE DAY OR NIGHT TUESDAY AND SATURDAY	School Days On Tuesday & Saturday All Scholars Admitted FREE Prices to Rides REDUCED
ON THE BIG MIDWAY	

The Annual Charleston Agricultural and Industrial Fair for 1953 opened on November 2, at 7:00 PM, at Johnson Hagood stadium and the Stoney field fairgrounds, and closed at midnight on Saturday, November 7. Inside the three fair buildings, visitors to the fair saw scores of exhibits including produce from truck farms, fine specimens of grain, local fruits and vegetables and local livestock raised by the members of the Charleston Livestock Growers

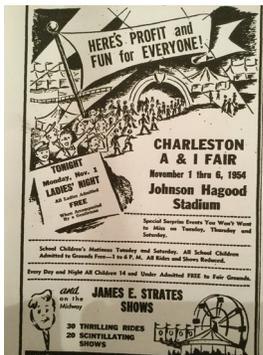


W. M. Frampton

Association and the local 4-H club members. Mr. Frampton announced that the popular 4-H calf scramble would be held on Thursday night at 8:00 PM, with thirty boys and twenty girls competing for one of twenty five calves that were donated for the event by local Charleston business men and that the contest would be directed by G. Philip Higdon. Before the calf scramble, a group of cattlemen on horseback put on a cattle cutting exhibition in the stadium. The riders demonstrated the proper methods in separating individual animals from a herd using quarter horses that are bred and trained for this purpose. Afterwards, due to bad weather the scramble would have to be postponed until Tuesday after the fair ended and then the 4-H members attempted to catch the calves and the bring them into a pen at the end of the arena. Some of those who caught a calf were Robert Butler, Tommy Risher, Elizabeth Hills, Jimmy Murray, Ray Horne, Judy Youmans, Vera Crosby, Karl Boatright, Harold Dasinger and Philip Higdon Jr. The young boy or girl would raise their calf and return with them at next year's fair to be sold at the fair's fat cattle auction sale that was held on Wednesday at 2:00 PM during fair week. The proceeds from the cattle sale went directly to the 4-H owners of the calves who returned to the fair. A total of sixty-six steers were offered for sale during the 1953 fat cattle sale. Some local

merchants offered fair week specials, such as Brandon's Beauty Shop at 39 John Street. They advertised their regular ladies \$10 color or machine permanent wave for \$5 during the fair and you could make your appointment by calling 2-2231. The entries in the stamp exhibit that was sponsored by the Charleston Stamp Club were judged on Tuesday night. Also on Tuesday, judging was done in the adult beef cattle department and the poultry department, pigeons in the show were judged on Wednesday. In the poultry department more than twenty-five trophies and cash prizes as well as large premiums were awarded to winners of first, second and third place. The poultry show that featured three hundred top quality birds, was cosponsored by the Fair Association and the Charleston Poultry Club, with Randolph Baker and Jack Roof in charge. John Wunderlich, a nationally known judge from St. Louis, Missouri was the poultry judge during the fair show. A dark Cornish bantam shown by John Hamrick, was the grand champion winner. Jack Roof won the best display of one variety with his black rosecomb bantams and P. J. Demasi from Torrington, Connecticut was the winner of the Distance Cash Award, for coming from the furthest location. Other poultry winners were listed in the Charleston Evening Post on November 7. Exhibitors also displayed rabbits, ducks, geese and other animals. Monday was "Ladies Night" again and the "Children's Day" feature held during the fair was repeated on Tuesday and Saturday. All children under the age of fourteen were admitted free of charge to the fair day or night, on those days. The community displays in the main building contained samples of preserves, jams, jellies, needlework, local farm products and many other local items and crafts. Aaron W. Leland handled the community exhibits and Matilda Bell, Charleston County home demonstration agent, was in charge of fancy work and garments. The Strates Shows provided twenty eight thrill rides and twenty two big shows during the fair that were brought in on forty-five railroad cars and boasted an eight hundred person staff.

1954



On October 6, 1954, Mr. Frampton announced the plans for the 1954 Annual Charleston Agricultural and Industrial Fair to be held from Monday, November 1 through Saturday, November 6, 1954 at the Stoney field fairgrounds and the Johnson Hagood Stadium. He announced the individuals who would be handling the various departments. Matilda Bell, home demonstration agent, was in charge of needlework, C. J. Livingston, county agricultural agent, and C. W. Carraway would handle the 4-H division, G. Philip Higdon had the livestock exhibit, David Jones handled the poultry and pigeon shows that were sponsored by the Charleston Poultry Association, Elias Ball was the manager of the Charleston Stamp Club exhibit and Traynor Ferillo directed the publicity for the Fair Association. Mr. David Jones and his family were the longtime owners and operators of Jones Hatchery and Feed Store on King Street just



north of Line Street. A premium list booklet, containing complete information about the rules concerning entry fees and awards was printed and was made available to the general public. The premium booklet was sponsored by the Livestock Growers Association and was compiled and arranged by Mrs. Albert J. Sottile. The usual Ladies Night on Monday and the two Children's Days, Tuesday and Saturday were again on the schedule. Many fair events and promotions were repeated year after year for many reasons. Some of these events were very popular with the returning crowds and Mr. Frampton was quite aware of this. He also counted on many of the same people to help run the different departments during the fair because he knew them well and could rely on their continued support and work. The fifth annual 4-H calf scramble was held on Tuesday, November 2, inside Johnson Hagood Stadium at 7:30 PM and there was a separate admission charge for this event, adults were one dollar and fifty cents and children were thirty-five cents. Some thirty calves and about sixty 4-H boys and girls were released at the same time, at opposite ends of the football field. The club members only had a short piece of rope and had to secure one of the calves, then maneuver it through a gate at one end of the field. As in previous years, the boys and girls that did this, kept the calf for one year and brought them back as yearling heaves to the fairgrounds to be sold at the fat cattle auction on Wednesday afternoon. A successful cattle auction that was sponsored by the Charleston County Livestock Growers Association was conducted by Col. Ray Rentz of the Herndon Stock Yards from Ehrhardt, South Carolina and one hundred head of cattle were offered for sale to the highest bidder. Twenty-six calves returned from the 1953 calf scramble and were included in the fat cattle sale. Some of the 1953 4-H members who participated were Betty Kennedy, Vera Crosby, Robert Butler, Steve Taylor, Freddy Day, Glenn Reeves, Harold Dasinger, Betty Boatwright and Jimmy Murray. Some of the sponsors who donated calves for the 1954 calf scramble were, Coburg Dairy, Dr. Otto M. Strock, Hay Oil Company, WCSC Radio and TV, Charleston Coca-Cola Bottling Company, Stuhr's Funeral Home, South Carolina National Bank, C&S National Bank, Port City Bank, Cross Seed Company, Jones Hatchery and Feed Store, Southern Ice Company and the Charleston Evening Post and News and Courier newspaper. On November 1, twenty local businesses ran a newspaper ad in the Charleston Evening Post advertising the upcoming calf scramble and rodeo, in support of better cattle raising in the lowcountry. After the scramble was over, a new rodeo event was held that featured numerous riding events. Riders in the rodeo exhibition demonstrated riding, roping, bulldogging and other horse related events. Participants included A. E. Boynton, A. E. Boynton, Jr., Dorothy Boynton all of Green Pond, Buck Anteau of the U. S. Navy, Donnie Buck and Eddie Buck of Mount Pleasant, H. E. Talbot and Kenneth Hazelton. The Strates Shows advertised thirty rides and twenty shows on the midway. The poultry show award winners were announced on Friday and were all listed in the News and Courier newspaper on Saturday, November 6. Clarence Hare of Montezuma, Georgia judged the poultry show and Harry Reynolds judged the pigeon entries. Conrad Cooledge's Australorp cockerel and Mrs. Randolph Hull's Dark Cornish hen took top honors and were judged the best of show. Some of the best pigeons presented in the show belonged to Louis Hoppmann, L. E. Weeks, T. B. McCarthy, David McDonald and J. C. Hamrick. Prior to the beginning of the fall fair, on June 15, 1954, the Agricultural Society of South Carolina awarded the W. McLeod Agricultural Scholarship, to Clemson to

Aimar White of Mount Pleasant. White was a recent graduate of Moultrie High School on Coleman Boulevard and a former president of the Moultrie 4-H Club. He became involved with 4-H as a youngster and was also a participant in the 1949-1950 calf scramble.

1955



In September 1955, it was reported that the exhibit, livestock and poultry buildings at the Johnson Hagood Stadium were being repaired and painted, in preparation, for the 1955 Annual Charleston County Fair, which would run from Monday, October 31, through Saturday, November 5 until 11:00 PM. The Fair opened at 7:30

County Fair Preparations Being Made

PM, and as usual, Ladies Night and Children's Days were on the schedule. Mr. Frampton announced, on September 23, that a sheep show and an exhibition of Mexican burros, belonging to Ray M. Buck, a cattle rancher from Mount Pleasant, were among the new features at the upcoming fair. Almost all of the department heads from 1954 returned for the 1955 fair and they included G. Philip Higdon had livestock, Matilda Bell had the community club agricultural exhibits, David B. Jones and Harry Reynolds for the poultry and pigeon shows, Traynor Ferillo did the



publicity, and Mrs. Albert J. Sottile prepared the premium booklets. Local newspaper ads announced there would be displays for the 4-H club, livestock, domestic science, horticulture, poultry, school, farm, industrial, and a host of other educational exhibits. The livestock judging took place on Tuesday during the fair. A new livestock event was the first annual show of the Coastal Rabbit and Cavy Breeders Association. W. Park Farrow, of North Augusta, American Rabbit Breeders Association judge, supervised the judging of the show. All of the winners of the various classes in the rabbit

show were printed in the Charleston Evening Post. On Monday night the awarding of prizes were made for the community, individual farm, 4-H club, and the Home Demonstration Club exhibits. The Charleston County Council of Farm Women took first place in the community booth class, with the James Island High School Junior Homemaker's Association second and the Snee Farm exhibit was the first place winner in the individual farm display, Jenkins Hill Farm was second. In the 4-H class, the Charleston County 4-H Club Council won first place, with the North Area 4-H Club second and the John's Island Home Demonstration Club won the blue ribbon in their category, with Deer Park being second. It is interesting that the very popular 4-H calf scramble was not held during fair week, but did occur on Tuesday, November 15 at 7:30 PM in Johnson Hagood Stadium. The Strates Shows returned with the midway and offered thirty rides, twenty big shows, Kiddie Land



Jimmy Jamison

rides, a wild animal zoo and fun and thrills for the family. Twice a day at the fair, high diver Jimmy Jamison dove from a platform one hundred feet high into a tank of water that was fourteen feet in diameter and six feet deep. Balanced on his toes, he did a backward somersault and hurtled into the tank. This was simple, to hear him describe it to a local reporter but breathtaking to watch him do it. There were two dives each day and during the nighttime dive, gasoline was poured on the water and was set on fire. He began diving as a young boy in Waterbury, Connecticut, diving off of a dam that was 85-90 feet high and his mother did not know what her son was up to. Mr. Jamison was a United States Navy veteran of World War II, who served on the aircraft carrier Cowpens, CV-25, in the Pacific theatre and traveled with the show with his wife and children. His ship furnished aerial support at Kwajalein, Palau, Saipan, Iwo Jima, Leyte Gulf and Okinawa. On Friday, November 4, Mr. Frampton stated in the Charleston Evening Post that the grounds had been packed each night and that by the close of the fair he expected fifty thousand visitors to have attended the fair.

1956

**County Fair's
Six-Day Run
Opens Oct. 29**
Premiums Totaling \$1,250
To Be Awarded To Exhibits

On September 11, 1956, Mr. Frampton announced that the annual County Fair would be held from October 29 through November 3 adjacent to Johnson Hagood Stadium. Opening night attendance may have only been slightly affected because Fats Domino was performing in a show at Charleston County Hall on King Street that same night. Mrs. Albert J. Sottile compiled and arranged the premium list booklet, which was sponsored by the Charleston Poultry Association. These premium booklets could be obtained at the office of the Fair Association that was located in the Peoples Building on Broad Street. Michael O. Gardner was the superintendent of the main exhibit building and Cambridge T. Lawrence was the fair's sales representative for renting the commercial exhibition space. Isabel Heaton and Mrs. G. Chalmers McDermid handled the 4-H club, farm and community displays, while David B. Jones had poultry, pigeons and rabbits and G. Philip Higdon had the remaining livestock. Mr. Higdon oversaw the livestock show, which was open to livestock growers of Charleston County and to livestock growers from around the state if space was available. The beef cattle department would award about \$1300 in prize money during the show and the judges were Gus DuRant and Earl Dunnett. The poultry judging was done by Z. E. Lott from Augusta, Georgia and Harry F. Reynolds judged the pigeon show, which was for racing pigeons only. On November 4, the News and Courier printed all of the winners in the various poultry and pigeon classes. A Rhode Island Red owned by J. D. Carter was named standard breeds champion. The champion in the bantam class was a Dark Cornish bird also shown by J. D. Carter. Randolph Hull's Light Blue Check hen was the winner of the old pigeon class. Elias Ball worked the stamp exhibition and Emily K. Honour had the fancy work exhibits. On October 16, Mr. Frampton stated that all of the community exhibits would be judged by representatives of the Clemson College

CHARLESTON
AGRICULTURAL & INDUSTRIAL
FAIR
OPENS TODAY—ALL THIS WEEK
AGRICULTURAL—INDUSTRIAL—FARM—
LIVESTOCK—4-H CLUB—POULTRY—
DOMESTIC SCIENCE—MACHINERY—
AND A HOST OF OTHER EXHIBITS

LADIES' NIGHT LADIES ADMITTED TO FAIR FREE TONIGHT WHEN ACCOMPANIED BY A GENTLEMAN.	YOUTH AND SCHOOL DAYS SCHOOL DAYS, TOMORROW, TUESDAY, SATURDAY, NOV. 3, CHILDREN OF SCHOOL AGE AND UNDER, ADMITTED TO GROUNDS FREE ON BOTH DAYS.
STRATES SHOWS 30—RIDES—30 20—BIG SHOWS 50—RAILROAD CARS	PRICES TO RIDES REDUCED BOTH DAYS. BUSES DIRECT TO FAIR GROUNDS, Johnson Hagood Stadium

Extension Service. The military and naval installations in the area took an active part in the fair with the Third Army Recruiting display being on the grounds and the Navy and Air Force both being represented with displays. The James E. Strates Shows provided the midway attractions again and advertised thirty thrill rides and twenty big shows that were brought into town on a fifty railroad car train. Included in the shows was a wild animal circus and menagerie. As usual Ladies Night on Monday and Youth Days (formerly called Children's Days) were again on Tuesday and Saturday. The Fair featured the usual agricultural, industrial, farm livestock, 4-H club, poultry, domestic science, machinery and a host of other exhibits that Mr. Frampton said would be more extensive than ever.



Robert B. Scarborough

1956 was the last year that the local county fair would operate under the name of the Charleston County Agricultural and Industrial Fair. On September 7, 1956, the establishment of the Coastal Carolina Fair was proposed by the Exchange Club of Charleston. The fair would be patterned after similar expositions that were being sponsored by existing Exchange Clubs in Savannah, Macon and Augusta, Georgia. A committee spokesman (probably Robert B. "Bobby" Scarborough) stated that the matter had been under consideration for about three years and that the project had been approved by the clubs' board of control. The Club's committee for the fair was made up of Robert B. Scarborough, Club President William L. "Bill" Rucker, John E. Huguley, Arthur Baker and Harold A. Petit. This was a huge challenge for the

Club because at the time, the Exchange Club of Charleston had a one hundred member cap on the membership. This idea of a Club sponsored fair was surely discussed at length, but the committee decided to move forward to present a quality fair to the Charleston area. The plans called for a non-profit organization which would use excess funds to sponsor community service programs. Presently these funds are administered through the Exchange Club's AIMS committee that receives, reviews and decides on grant requests from multiple tri-county non-profit organizations and the club's service programs. A club spokesman stated that community service projects during the last year (1955) had seen more than seven thousand dollars spent in the community. The plans also called for a site, probably located outside of the city limits, on which to construct several permanent buildings and several different possible fair locations were being considered. Another challenge was the fact that the property lease contract with the county fair association and the City of Charleston would expire at the end of 1956.

On Thursday, September 13, 1956, at it's weekly luncheon meeting, the Exchange Club of Charleston approved the plans for holding a Coastal Carolina Fair in the Fall of 1957. Robert B. Scarborough, chairman of the club's project committee, reported this information to the club, after three years of study of the fair project, and he also said that at least two locations had been investigated as possible sites for the fall event. A club spokesman stated, "Our hope is to establish a real community fair with which every citizen of this area can identify himself and in which the entire area can take pride. We

ask the cooperation of everyone in this matter and we promise that all are dedicated to using this fair for it's obvious purpose, the general betterment of the lowcountry." A letter to the editor in the News and Courier on September 18, congratulated the Club on it's decision to sponsor the fair and offered best wishes for a long and successful event. Also at the meeting, Gerald J. Downey was inducted into the membership by the Reverend George A. Nickles, the club chaplain and a past president of the club, and T. Luther Haynie was appointed to the board of control.



Jack Leland

On September 16, 1956, Jack Leland, who was the News and Courier newspaper Farm Editor, wrote a lengthy article that endorsed and encouraged the proposed new ownership of the Charleston County Fair by the Exchange Club of Charleston. He stated that the establishment of a Coastal Carolina Fair at Charleston by the Exchange Club was good news for the entire lowcountry and that it would be a clearing house for new ideas in farming, industry, and livestock production. Mr. Leland noted that the Charleston Exchange Club had a distinguished record of community service in the Charleston area. He said that based on that record alone, the Exchange Club's sponsorship of a fair should commend itself to the people of the lowcountry. He also stated that the establishment of a lowcountry fair would seem to be a natural companion to the area's current growth and that the Exchange Clubs were founded on the idea that every individual has something to exchange with others. In the 1950's, The News and Courier furnished a reporter to all of the major local service clubs and the club's activities were reported in the following morning's paper. Jack Leland was the local reporter who attended the weekly meeting of the Exchange Club of Charleston and reported the notable activities of the club for the newspaper. The newspaper was unhappy with the value of the county fair and felt that it was time for another organization to take over it's operation. Around the time of the 1953 fair he commented to a group of members who were sitting at his table that the club should consider taking over the management and operation of the fair. In the history of the Coastal Carolina Fair that was written by Bobby Scarborough, that he started writing in 1996, seemingly credited this one moment in time with the beginning of the Coastal Carolina Fair as we know it today. After Jack Leland's comments at that meeting several members of the club discussed the possibilities of beginning the process of getting involved with the fair. Jack Leland passed away in 1999 but surely he was ultimately happy with helping to get the Exchange Club of Charleston involved in the operation of the fair. His initial encouragement and support of the Exchange Club's involvement in the fair would aid in the transition and success of the event and affected Charleston's Fair History for the future. Later, on December 6, 1956, at the regular weekly luncheon meeting of the Exchange Club of Charleston that was held at the Francis Marion Hotel, joint statements were made by the fair and the club that the club would take over the management of the Charleston County Agricultural and Industrial Fair beginning in 1957. About thirty local area civic, political and business leaders attended the meeting as guests of the club that day. Dean M. D. Farrar, of Clemson's School of Agriculture, spoke to the group and he urged the club to make the fair, "The voice of tomorrow in

agriculture.” William McLeod Frampton, the veteran manager of the fair, was unable to attend the meeting, but he issued a prepared statement. His son, Dr. G. Creighton Frampton, Charleston County Superintendent of Education, and a member of the county fair association, represented him at the luncheon. Dr. Frampton said, “We were delighted when the Exchange Club offered to accept the responsibility of sponsoring, managing, and promoting the Charleston County Fair in order that they might make this fair an even larger fair.” William L. Rucker, Exchange Club president, stated, “We of the Exchange Club feel honored that the Fair Association has chosen our club as their successors in the management of the Charleston County Fair. We of the Exchange Club of Charleston promise to do everything in our power to justify the confidence that has been placed in us and to make the fair grow with our community and truly represent its agriculture, industrial and commercial interest.” On Thursday, January 10, 1957, at the regular weekly meeting of the Exchange Club of Charleston, Robert B. Scarborough was named president of the new fair association, a position that he would hold six different times, and W. McLeod Frampton was named as an honorary member of the Exchange Club. He was the fourth such man to be honored in this way by the Club, as the other honorary members were General Mark W. Clark, President of the Citadel, Representative L. Mendel Rivers and Paul Mason of Reid City, Michigan. Mr. Frampton stated that he would work with the new organization in setting up the 1957 fair.

The 1957 Coastal Carolina Fair begins.

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