

DEAD MAN'S ISLAND

This report is being compiled to present background and up to date information concerning the acquisition of Dead Man's Island by the City of Gulf Breeze.

Dead Man's Island is located at the head of Gilmore Bayou. The Island can be seen from Navy Cove, Holiday Inn, Gulf Breeze or along Highpoint Drive. The land area is 14-17 acres and is 10 feet above sea level at its highest point. Environmentally, it is a very sensitive barrier island in the bay. Two types of vegetation listed on the state endangers list grow on the island: Florida rosemary and sea oats. It is also the home of many song birds and a nesting site for sea birds and the endangered Least Tern.

On May 7, 1973, the City Council passed resolution NO 5-73.. endorsing the land acquisition proposal submitted to the State of Florida, Dept. of Natural Resources by Mrs. Jean L. Whitmire for the state to purchase this property under the endangered land act. The price asked was \$250,000. The state monies ran out before Dead Man's Island was considered.

To look for a way to save the island, Jean Whitmire, Margaret Mang Lynn Hunsley and Bob Moomaw formed a Citizens Committee. This group contacted state and federal government environmental agencies as well as the Natural Conservancy in Atlanta for help. Both contacts proved fruitless.

The Committee requested permission of Gulf Breeze to be allowed to raise money to purchase the property through pledges, donations and fund raising projects. The City Officials concurred and the Island Preservation Fund was established.

The owners of the island were Hugh Green, Mae Barlow and W.C. Coe. Mr. Green owned approximately 12 acres of the island and agreed to sell his property for \$65,000, and terms of 6% provided that the property remain in its natural state. Mrs. Barlow and W.C. Coe, both long time residents of Gulf Breeze, graciously donated their interest in approximately 5 acres of the island ... also provided that the property remained in its natural state.

Donations and pledges brought in \$18,000. Two garage sales raised another \$1,650. The Audubon Society supported our efforts to get Santa Rosa County to help; as a result the county pledged \$20,000.

The City of Gulf Breeze was reluctant to support the acquisition of the island even with all this support. Finally, the Committee proposed and showed the City that raising the fees on the Fishing Breidge by .05¢, we would be able to pay the city's share in purchase .. the money would not come out of city taxes. October 4, 1976, the City Council unanimously passed the motion to purchase the island with the following conditions:

- "(1) Clear, free and unquestionable title can be established
- (2) The island committee agree to remain a viable organization for fund raising until the island debt is paid off.

- (3) Fishing Bridge rates be so adjusted by November 1 to account for the cost.
- (4) A suitable agreement with Mrs. Barlow concerning her property can be reached by the City.
- (5) That all reasonable effort be made to allow the County to participate in this worthwhile agreement.

Discussion followed concerning the increase in Fishing Bridge fees to make up for the loss in operation plus possibly .05¢ to cover the cost of the City's share of the purchase of Dead Man's Island, providing the county puts up the \$20,000 originally committed."

The City appointed a committee to study the proposal of increasing the fishing bridge fees to complete purchase of Dead Man's Island and on November 1, 1976, the bridge fees were increased.

The annual payment on the island is \$8,600... and the note will be paid off in March 1986. Bills for pledges due are sent out on October 1, of each year by the committee. It has been our experience that most pledges are paid by return mail. All closing costs and payments associated with the purchase to date have been paid by the fund. At this writing \$213. is in the checking account and \$3,000 is in a savings account drawing interest.

The supporters and contributors have worked hard and are believers in this cause. The committee remains active and enjoys enthusiastic support from these fine people.

DEAD MANS ISLAND COMMITTEE
October 1, 1980

FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR ISLAND PRESERVATION FUND/DEAD MAN'S ISLAND

PURCHASE PRICE		\$65,000
DONATIONS:		
Santa Rosa County	\$20,000	
Garage Sales and Individual Donations	\$ 9,166	
Long Term Pledges	\$11,700	
BALANCE ON HAND:		
Savings	\$ 3,000	
Checking Account	\$ 215	
Pledges paid since October 1, 1980	\$ 780	
YEARLY PAYMENTS:		
Payment to Green through March, 1986 Including 6% interest	\$ 8,600.80 each year	
Pledges to be collected through 1985	\$ 5,020.00	
Misc. expenses paid by the fund (flyers printed... 32.65) (postage..... 10.01)	\$ 42.66	
<u>*COST TO THE CITY OF GULF BREEZE TO DATE</u>	\$ 7.00*	
RECORDING FEES:	\$ 7.00	

- (1) Interest has accrued on the fund monies, but no interest has been credited to the Island Account.
- (2) The increase of .05¢ on the Fishing Bridge has been collected but no monies have been credited to the Island Account.
- (3) Starting September 30, 1980, .05¢ of each ticket sold on the fishing bridge will be placed in the island fund.
- (4) \$4,100 has been placed in the budget for the 1981 payment. The amount reflects partial payment of interest and bridge fees not credited previously.

THIS STATEMENT HAS BEEN COMPILED BY JEAN WHITMIRE, CHAIRMAN OF DEAD MAN'S ISLAND. THESE FIGURES ARE CORRECT TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE.