



Volume #20

Summer 2024

Friends of Hofwyl–Broadfield Plantation Newsletter

Located at 5556 US Hwy 17N

Near the intersection of US17 and GA99 Phone 912-264-7333

The historic site is open Tuesday-Sunday with the tour of the historic house beginning on the hour. If you have any questions about visiting, please call the office staff at 912-264-7333. This park is maintained by the state of Georgia. Bill Giles, Site Manager, can be reached at bill.giles@dnr.ga.gov.

July 11 and July 18 from 9-11:30 a.m. Junior Ranger Camp

June & July 2024 Plein Air Art Exhibit is at the Darien Art Museum

August 2024 Plein Air Art Exhibit is at Glynn Visual Art

August 3, 2024 at 11 a.m. Jason Freeman author of the book Liberty Street

September 2024 Plein Air Art Exhibit returns to Hofwyl-Broadfield State Park in the auditorium

On a beautiful day in April the artists gathered for the Albert Fendig Plein Air Art Event at Hofwyl-Broadfield.



They planned and sketched.

They picnicked on the beautiful grounds.



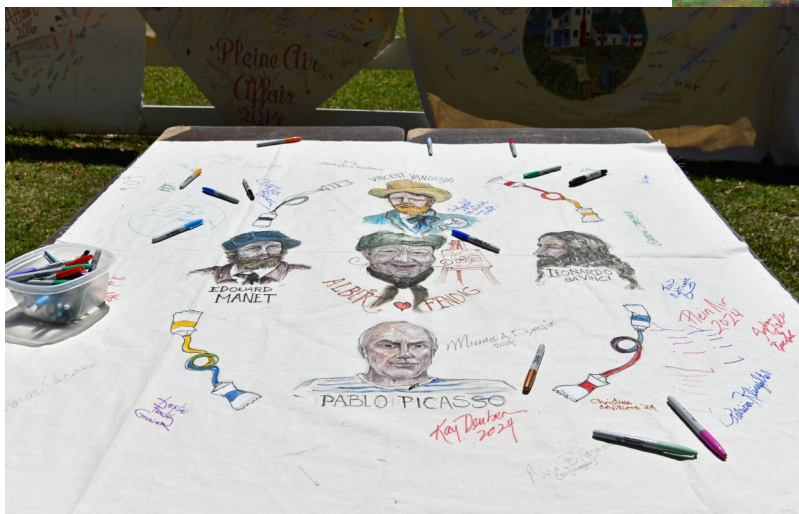
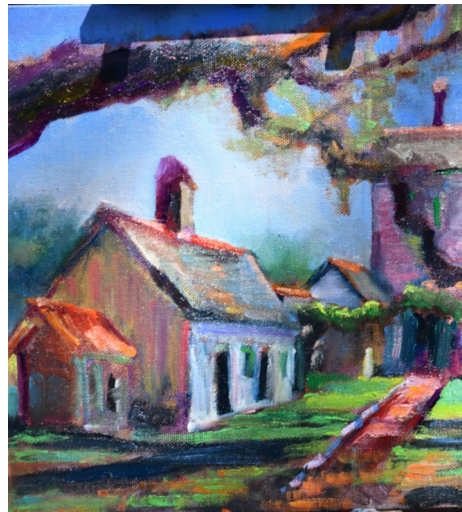
Albert toured the grounds to welcome the artists.



And they painted



so many beautiful paintings.



And the fine
artists signed their
names for the
future artists to
admire.

Kip LoPreski

She has a one in a million name, and she lives up to it. It is very important to have a smiling face to greet our visitors, and she has it. I asked her to tell me something about herself, and here it is in her own words.

“I was born in Statesboro, GA., and my family moved to Millen, GA a year later. We lived there until I graduated from Jenkins County High School and headed to college. My Daddy owned the AM radio station WGSR. One of my hobbies is listening to music. Rock and Roll is my first choice with Country coming in second. In my senior year of high school, I had an hour-long Rock and Roll radio show on Saturday afternoons. It was so much fun queuing up the vinyl records.

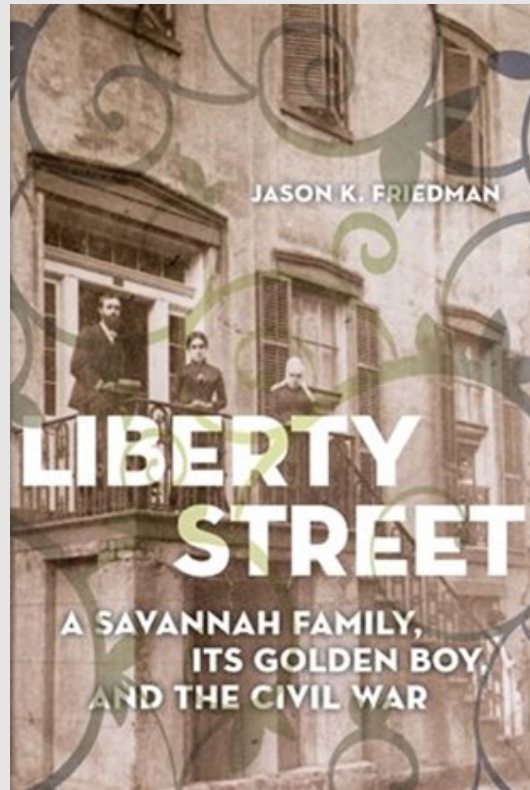
There wasn't much to do in Millen. We had a movie theatre for entertainment. We also had Magnolia Springs State Park, and I have lots of memories of time spent at the park. My hobbies include reading and animals. I could read all day, and it would be 'purr-fect' to have a cat curled next to me.

Working at Hofwyl-Broadfield is such a blast. I am in the learn mode-there is so much to know about the history of Hofwyl. The five generations that called Hofwyl home were truly exceptional people.”



Coming August 3rd at 11 A.M. to Hofwyl –Broadfield State Park

Jason Friedman, Author of Liberty Street



A Savannah Family, Its Golden Boy, and the Civil War

The story of one of Savannah's first and most prominent Jewish families, the son who died on the battlefield, and the house that remembers it all.

Gratz Cohen's ghost seemed to haunt the apartment as its new owner worked to bring it back to life. As the work progressed, Jason Friedman became obsessed with understanding who the Cohens were, and how their story fit into existing narratives about the Jewish South and the Civil War. *Liberty Street: A Savannah Family, Its Golden Boy, and the Civil War* is a family saga wrapped in a memoir of Friedman's own southern Jewish upbringing and return home, and the way an old house became a portal to another world. The Cohens are well-known among those versed in southern Jewish history, but sensing that there was more to their story than had yet been told, Friedman set out to learn as much as he could about the family and their world. Friedman provides a nuanced look at what it meant to be a wealthy Jewish family before and during the Civil War, and paints a portrait of a sensitive young man tormented by conflicting pulls of love and duty. Delving into the lives of an extraordinary Southern Jewish family, *Liberty Street* meditates on the uses of memory and the ways our understanding of the past influences how we live today.

(Miriam Cohen, daughter of the Cohen's on Liberty Street married James Troup Dent of Hofwyl-Broadfield)

Junior Ranger Camp



July 11th and July 18th

9-11:30 a.m.

Ages 6-12

Cost \$10.50

For more information call 912-264-7333

Ask to speak to Ranger Allie Ellis



The Only Way to Cross

By

S.T. Lanter

I got a stunning dark red tooled frame for Sir Arthur, & He looks grand in it.
Undated letter from Ophelia to Arabella Burns Clark Cleveland, ca. 1931.



Figure 1 Captain Sir Arthur Henry Rostron, 1929; the flyleaf of Capt. Rostron's autobiography, *Home From the Sea*, 1931, with an autographed dedication to Ophelia.

The oft told tale of the night of April 14-15, 1912 when the ‘unsinkable’ *RMS Titanic*, four days into her maiden voyage to New York, struck an iceberg at 11:40 p.m. foundering two hours and forty minutes later at 2:20 a.m. taking 1,500 people to their deaths.

One interesting tidbit on the legend of the Night to Remember is that Harland & Wolff Belfast, Ireland, the builders, never claimed *Titanic* was unsinkable. Vice-President of White Star Line, Philip Franklin, the owners, made that claim in a newspaper interview, “We place absolute confidence in the *Titanic*. We believe that the boat is unsinkable.” A marketing ploy misconstrued from a May 1911 special addition of *The Shipbuilder Magazine* on the new

‘White Star’ liners Olympic and Titanic, then under construction, and how safe they were because of the 16 watertight compartments that could be sealed:

*instantly...from the captain’s bridge...in the event of accident...by simply moving an electric switch, [to] instantly close-the [watertight compartment] doors throughout and make the vessel **practically unsinkable** [my emphasis].*

The hero of that tragic night was Captain Arthur Henry Rostron commanding Cunard’s *RMS Carpathia*. Receiving *Titanic*’s S.O.S. at 12:25 a.m. the *Carpathia* was 58 miles away which at her rated speed of 14 knots would require four hours to traverse. Captain Rostron drove the *Carpathia* past her rated speed to 17 knots (some accounts say 17.5 knots) and keeping a sharp lookout for ice bergs (*Carpathia* passed at least six large ice bergs in the dark) cut the time to three and a half hours, arriving at the location of the sinking at 4 a.m. Picking up Lifeboat #2 ten minutes later. Rostron rescued 706 survivors (and three small dogs), unfortunately three people died in the lifeboats and one more died enroute to New York. All four were buried at sea.

Captain Rostron was later Knighted, 1926, for his heroism and leadership in the rescue and service in World War I. He became the ‘Commodore’ of the Cunard line in 1926 until his retirement in 1931.

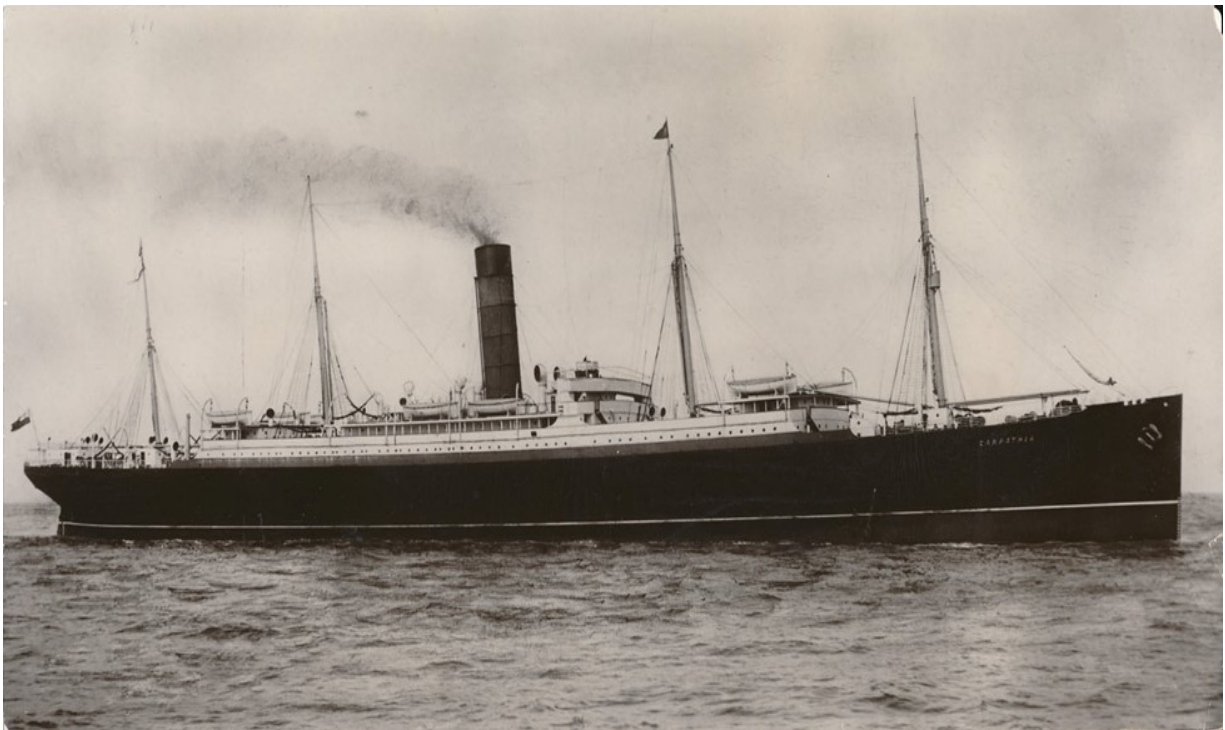


Figure 2 Cunard’s *RMS Carpathia* rescuer of *Titanic*’s survivors. Sunk by German U-boat U-55 July 17, 1918 off the southern coast of Ireland.

Ophelia and Miriam, like their grandfather Solomon and father James took many trips to Europe. Ophelia's grandfather Solomon Cohen began the tradition of crossing the Atlantic First Class in May 1867. Seeking escape from reconstruction and his grief over son Gratz's death he booked passage on Cunard's *SS Malta* to Liverpool. His extended family, wife Miriam, daughter (and Ophelia's mother) Miriam 'Mamie' Cohen Dent, daughter Isabela 'Belle' Cohen O'Driscoll, son-in-law Frank O'Driscoll and niece Georgina Cohen traveled '1st Cabin' at a cost of \$135 each to England.

Ophelia was ecstatic about her first trip to Europe in 1922:

Yes Paris, Paris, Paris!! Do you take that in? For I don't not even yet and I've known it a whole week!!! So I'll repeat slowly—I'm going to Paris with Fran and Mot on the Olympic, Sept. 23rd for 6 weeks!!!!!!

Ophelia did sail for Spain on September 23, 1922 but not on 'old Reliable' *Olympic*—*Titanic*'s sister ship—but on the White Star Line *SS Cretic*. However, she did get to see *Olympic* cruising "beside us" for a time on her 11-day crossing of the Atlantic. She and her friends, as befitted their station, as first-class passengers, dined at the Captain's table.

On landing in Spain, the party spent several weeks "motoring" across the countries of Spain and France. She was thrilled and perhaps a little shocked by Paris.

I have been to Paris...and once to the Folies Bergere, the most absolutely completely naked performance I've ever seen, the chorus had nothing over their bosoms at all. Nothing over their stomachs and not a stocking in the entire company. Some of the leading ladies were clad only in a skin-tight pink net, so of course!!!! fortunately, or unfortunately I couldn't understand the conversation!

She returned to the US, leaving Cherbourg November 14th on board Cunard's *RMS Mauretania* with Captain Rostron in command.

Sir Arthur Henry Rostron, pictured above, was Ophelia Dent's favorite captain as she cruised to and from Europe. In this, she was no different than many frequent 1st Class ocean travelers during the heyday of the great Atlantic Liners. Often 'frequent sailors' of the time chose certain captains, ships or shipping lines and would only sail with them.

In late June of 1931 after 'Mother Dent's' death, Ophelia's old friends Frances and Mot Belin, Alice and Pierre DuPont took her on her second trip to Europe on board Cunards's *RMS Berengaria*.

Ophelia wasn't as excited this time, writing Arabella from aboard the *RMS Berengaria*:

The going away was of course thrilling but not so gay as last time, because either it was too devilish hot or there were too few people for there are only 240 first class. All the old personnel welcomed us in a most friendly way but as yet we haven't seen hair nor hide of the Captain altho' we have been asked to have cocktails with him tonight. I know I shan't like him!

On Sunday, June 28, 1931 Ophelia and her party sat *at the Captain's table* [Capt. Sir Edgar Theophilus Britten, R.D., R.N.R.]!!!!!!! Her friend Alice Belin Dupont was seated next to the new captain, and Ophelia rubbed elbows with retired Captain Sir Arthur... [who] ... invited [us] to the Captains (Captain Commander Sir Arthur R. G. Rostron, K.C. R.C.B. H.M.R.U.) cabin for cocktails & cigarettes!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Ophelia was pleasantly surprised about the evening opining that *The [new] captain and his cocktails were very nice, & he found us nice too, for he has asked us up for today but he can't touch Sir Arthur who goes back on this boat.*

Writing again on board the *RMS Berengaria* just prior to landing (likely at Cherbourg on July 4, 1931), she eagerly anticipated skipping Paris, motoring across Europe, and visiting the Chateau d'Andelot, in the Jura Mountains:

Just imagine me lolling back in an open LaSalle rolling through France when I ought to be driving a Dodge milk wagon in Georgia. Isn't it a funny world?

Arriving at the chateau her friends went off to have lunch with French acquaintances in Lyons she stayed behind and enjoyed the solitude. A young friend of Peter Belin (the son of Mot and Frances Belin), flirted with her, but she wasn't having it. Writing:

[I've spent a] heavenly day on top of this mountain...Peter [Belin] & John Lowther his English friend ... have been most gallant & beamed [beaux to] me to such an extent that I have shooed them off ... and am now by myself & having a lovely time!

Ophelia returned to America July 27, 1931, and *driving a Dodge milk wagon in Georgia*, aboard the Norddeutscher Lloyd Line *SS Bremen*. As befitted a bona-fide member of the low country aristocracy, traveling in style, first class—always!

Traveling to Europe was an adventure. New York City was exotic and exciting prior to sailing. There were sites to see, Broadway Plays to attend and films in color to view. *We went up on top the Empire State building* (opened May 1, 1931) *after dinner last Saturday, & it was truly marvelous! The view clear and superb and the Berengaria in its berth looked like*

a peanut!”

They had dinner on the roof top garden at the Ritz. *“Then we went to see Beatrice Lillie in her review Which was awfully good and she was perfectly splendid, but it was so devilish damn hot that I almost felt sick, and the poor actors and actresses could hardly get through their dances!!*

We went to see Eddie Cantor in ‘Whoopee’ (released Oct 1930; early color film) which was utterly, utterly side splitting from start to finish. But ...[there] was a show down there [at the docks] too...[people] coming aboard in full evening dresses and gorgeous wraps and flowers everywhere, and masses and masses of people.”

It was exciting. First class offered the well-heeled the best foods, finest beverages, luxurious accommodations, pampered attention from the stewards and stewardesses during the crossing. A First Class ticket bought convivial atmosphere, glittering social evenings, and to the few, the honor and privilege of dining at the Captain’s Table. However, there was a darker side to traveling First Class, in the event of disaster, survival chances were greatest in First Class. For example, in the tragic loss of *RMS Titanic*, 61% of First Class survived as opposed to 42% of Second Class, and 24% each of Third Class and the crew.

Ophelia dined at the Captain’s Table with her peers and favorite captain “Sir Arthur” during the glittering age of the great ocean liners. Enjoying a leisurely ocean voyage, in an era before the jet age and ‘jet setters’ rendered it obsolete, a time when first class was the only way to cross!