



FOCUS

The Official Monthly Newspaper of Main Street Fort Pierce

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FAMILY FUN ALL WEEKEND

Presented by:

Bluewater Grill, Cobb's Landing & the Original Tiki, Budweiser, Chuck's Seafood, Clear Channel Communications, Fort Pierce Yacht Club, Hoskins, Turco, Lloyd & Lloyd, Lawnwood Regional Medical Center, Ocean Chiropractic & Health, St. Lucie News Tribune, Sunrise Ford, and Waste Management.

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Main Street Focus
122 AE Backus Ave.
Fort Pierce, FL 34950

Become A Member

It Takes All of Us to Make Our Historic Downtown Prosper and Grow!



Main Street Fort Pierce wants to invite you to become a part of the renaissance of our Historic Downtown area. Over the past twenty years, we have worked to repair streets and sidewalks, upgrade storefronts, renovated the Sunrise Theatre, Old City Hall and the Platts Backus House, sponsor charrettes to design a downtown "Master Plan," built the Manatee Observation and Education Center and so much more! Annually, Main Street Fort Pierce sponsors over 30 events — most which are free of charge.

Yet there is still so much more to be done! We need you to be involved in our continued planning for the area. Become a member and support Main Street financially. We rely on the participation and the voluntary annual dues from our members to accomplish our goals and complete our projects.

Whether you own a downtown business or you just love Historic Downtown Fort Pierce, we need your energy and support to continue to rejuvenate our community's heart and soul.



Why Main Street Fort Pierce?

- Downtown Fort Pierce is an important employment center.
- The area is a reflection of the community image.
- Locally owned businesses keep profits in town and support other local businesses and community projects.
 - A vibrant downtown creates a feeling of "hometown pride" and sense of place.
- The downtown district is a public gathering area, where parades, special events, and celebrations are held in a unique setting.
 - Community character and historic integrity cannot be recreated.

What are Membership Benefits?

- Your membership dues are an investment in the future of Historic Downtown Fort Pierce, helping us to sponsor improvements and events throughout the year.
- Members receive advanced notice and invitations to special events.
 - You will receive the monthly subscription to *Main Street Focus* magazine and links to *Focus On-Line*.

As a member of *Main Street* you are automatically aligned with others who want to preserve the past and influence the future of Fort Pierce. You can belong to Fort Pierce *Main Street* at one of eight different membership levels, starting at just \$15.

Main Street Membership Levels

Benefactor Levels	Community Levels	Corporate Levels
Headline Sponsor (\$1,000)	Main Street Student Membership (\$15)	Main Street Small Business Membership (less than 10 employees) (\$100)
Patron Sponsor (\$500)	Main Street Friend Membership (\$25)	Main Street Medium Business Membership (11-50 employees) (\$250)
	Main Street Family Membership (\$50)	Main Street Large Business Membership (51 or more employees) (\$500)

Please Take a Minute to Join Today!

Complete the form below and join our growing group of committed members. By joining Main Street Fort Pierce, Inc., you are supporting the economic well being of the entire community.

Name: _____ Membership Level: _____

Company/Organization: _____

Street Address: _____

City / State / Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____



Become a Member of Main Street Fort Pierce

Three Easy Ways to Join!

- 1 – Call Main Street Fort Pierce at (772) 466-3880
- 2 – Visit our Website – www.mainstreetfortpierce.org, click the Membership Link
- 3 – Fill out the form below and mail to:

Main Street Fort Pierce
122 A.E. Backus Avenue
Fort Pierce, Florida 34950

Paranormal Team Explores the Platts-Backus House

by Tamara Dourney

The Platts-Backus house has long been a cornerstone of our community. Originally built in 1896 by Dr. Clyde Philip (CP) Platts, the area's first full-time doctor, the two story home also played host to a thriving artistic community throughout its period as A.E. Backus' residence and studio. That storied past is exactly what led our local paranormal investigation group, the G.R.I.M. Society, to turn their attention to the building that now houses the offices of *Main Street Fort Pierce*.

Founded in 2007 by my husband James and I, the G.R.I.M. Society is comprised of a small team of researchers operating with the mission of scientifically exploring claims of the paranormal. We do this through the documentation and recording of data which we then share with the community at large. The G.R.I.M. Society is not a group of 'ghost hunters' looking for a thrill; instead, we hope to document enough of the often-reported yet inexplicable occurrences that are labeled as paranormal to provide at least a glimpse into the origins of these phenomena. The nature of our investigative strategy, which focuses on buildings with an extensive history, made the Platts-Backus house an ideal location for study.

Prior to the investigation, I'd heard the occasional reference to odd activity in the building, but couldn't find any real accounts of the paranormal. Naturally, I asked my husband if he knew of any.

Samantha Dourney, junior investigator for The G.R.I.M. Society, entering the Platts-Backus house during the recent paranormal investigation. ▼



"I'd heard rumors several years ago about strange footsteps and sounds in the building, but it's been so long ago that I don't remember when, where or who told me. I think I just filed it away in the back of my head until the opportunity came up."

The quiet nature of the building provided a wonderful chance for us to bring our two children, Samantha and James, along on an investigation. They rounded out our team of four and we spent the night prowling the darkened halls of the Platts-Backus house. Without any specific area of the building to target, we decided to set up an array of video cameras and audio recording equipment to cover the major traffic areas, then carried additional cameras and environmental data loggers as we moved through the site.

Our time in the house was seemingly quiet, with only the occasional sense of activity. The activity that was experienced was completely auditory—the sound of footsteps or the occasional hint of music playing. We continually checked the environment noting that there were no fluctuations in temperature or in the electromagnetic field. After our allotted time was up, we headed home and got some rest. We knew we'd need it in order to review the data we'd collected; in total, there were seven hours of video recordings, six hours worth of audio and numerous still pictures that required sifting through.

The audio and video collected that night turned up some interesting results, some of which appear to corroborate the personal experiences previously reported. Several times during the night, various members of the group heard the faint sound of music in different locations. During the investigation, a camera placed in the attic recorded what sounds to be faint music coming from somewhere in the distance. Another example of this dual documentation comes when all four of us are standing on the upstairs landing; while there, we heard what sounds like several voices in conversation coming from downstairs, a sound that seems to be captured by the recording equipment.

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Summer on the Water

by Dan Dannahower

Our beautiful spring weather has arrived. Many days this time of year offer smooth glassy conditions on the Indian River Lagoon and very tame conditions on the ocean. It's a great time of year to get out on the water, unwind, and bring home a fresh seafood dinner. There's always action to be had, it's just a matter of doing a little checking around in order to be successful. Your local tackle shops and marinas are a great source of information and are always willing to help with advice on where to go and what's biting.

For those who might want to step it up a notch and maybe even win a prize there are a number of summer fishing tournaments and events that are fun for both participants and observers. Many tournaments have a wide variety of participants and win or not, you're sure to have a great time competing. If you're interested you can get more information on any of these events from the friendly Fort Pierce Marina staff at 464-1245, or from our local bait and tackle shops.

By the time you read this the annual *Hibiscus Tournament* and *SKA Saltwater Classic* will have been completed.

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In addition to these two incidents, we found odd sounds on the recordings that did not match any of the reported personal experiences. While in the studio, we captured what appears to be a whisper. The unknown voice appears during a conversation that was taking place amongst the team, making it quite interesting. Finally, while the team remained seated in the same location, the sound of footsteps could be heard coming from another room.

Capturing evidence can be an exciting moment, but it must be accompanied by a healthy dose of skepticism. While the recordings do indeed reveal some interesting occurrences during our investigation at the Platts-Backus house, other factors must be considered. The location of the property in downtown Fort Pierce raises the possibility of sound contamination. Music could

The popular *Hibiscus Tournament* benefits the **Hibiscus Children's Center** which is well known for its work with disadvantaged children in our area. The *Florida Law Enforcement Tournament* scheduled for June 25th should also be complete.

Upcoming tournaments include the very popular *Southern Kingfish Association Fishing Rodeo* on August 28th and the *4-H Club Fishing Tournament* on September 3rd and 4th. For most tournaments, weigh-ins and award ceremonies are open to the public and even if you don't care to enter an event they provide an opportunity to view some incredible catches or maybe cheer on your favorite contestant.

Whether you want to participate and try your hand as an entrant, or just come out and watch the amazing catches that come from our local waters the summer tournament schedule offers a little something for everyone. Come on out and experience the fun and camaraderie our beautiful coastal resources have to offer.

easily have come from one of the numerous restaurants or bars located nearby, or even from cars passing on the road outside.

However, contamination does not present a likely explanation for the sound of footsteps we recorded, nor does it provide an alternative cause for the whispers during our question and answer sessions. Based on these two possibilities, and on the limited time period available for the investigation itself, it is impossible to draw any conclusions. I believe my husband put it best when he summarized his report:

"It is the official opinion of the G.R.I.M. Society that the *Main Street* offices are an ideal location for further investigation. The opportunity to return to the site with the intent of confirming or eliminating outside sources for the sounds we recorded would be illuminating."

Fort Pierce Inlet Pier Cleanup

On Saturday, June 4th the *Marine Cleanup Initiative, Inc.* (MCII) with 16 volunteer divers, three captains and their vessels, cleared less than 10% of the debris from under the waters below the fishing catwalk on the northwest side of the South Causeway.

Over 1,600 pounds of mid to large-sized debris was cleared before strong winds and shift in current ended the dive. "If trash were treasure, we brought in some booty today," said Captain Voss, Operations Director for MCII. Divers brought up 20 casting nets, several anchors, 100' of chain and rope, numerous lures, fishing gear and miscellaneous debris. Four of the nets were so large it took a come-along to pull them onto the boat.

This collection brought the 10-year total of debris removal by *Marine Cleanup Initiative* to nearly 100 tons. "We are making great strides in getting this under control," said Voss. "Every piling and post connected to a fishing pier is covered with nets upon nets and there are crabs, fish and other marine life trapped in each one. It is our mission to release these animals and remove this debris from our estuary, inlets and near shore reefs."

Underwater cleanup continues throughout the summer along the Treasure Coast. For more information go to www.MarineCleanupInitiativeInc.org and sign up, or call Captain Don at 772-528-0675.

Volunteer divers, George McDaniels & Cris Gosse unload casting nets cleared from under a local fishing pier.



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