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THE PRESIDENT’S REPORT

HISTORICAL SOCIETY RALLIES SUPPORT TO PRESERVE TAMPA’S UNION STATION

By NANCY N. SKEMP

Sixteen years ago, several concerned citizens gathered in Tony Pizzo’s living room and the Tampa Historical Society was born. The Society has had many challenges and accomplishments since that evening in 1971. We have grown to a membership of over 750, purchased a lovely house for headquarters, developed a small museum, and provided interesting programs and activities for our members as well as our community.

In the last 16 years we have also seen an increased awareness of history and preservation in Tampa. Fortunately organizations such as Tampa Preservation, Inc. and Historic Tampa/Hillsborough County Preservation Board were formed as well as T.H.S. This year we had the opportunity to show our strength to City Council when we rallied together in behalf of the Union Station. The council was greatly impressed with this strong faction and it is pursuing different avenues to preserve and restore the Union Station.
Our goal in 1986 to develop the Knight House into a museum is nearly complete. The Open House in May was a preview of the museum. All in attendance were delighted with what they saw. With the direction of new board member, Donna Hole, a docent program should be complete by year's end, and Tampa Historical Society's museum should be open for public view by early 1988.

Public awareness is very crucial to an organization such as Tampa Historical Society. During the Christmas holidays we were invited to be a part of the new Festival of Trees Parade. Thousands of people in attendance saw our banner in the parade.

Also, thanks to the expertise of board member, Terry Greenhalgh, a public service announcement was created and TV time was donated by WTSP Channel 10. The airing of this PSA during the summer months brought in scores of telephone calls from citizens interested in joining Tampa Historical Society.

Volunteers are a most important part of any non-profit organization. I want to thank all of the people who have helped Tampa Historical Society to function this year. Without your time and caring we would not be able to keep our doors open. I also want to thank the board of directors which has stood behind me and helped me through another year as your president.

The experience of the last two years has been challenging and rewarding for me.