

Press Release

Hernando County Welcome Center
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CHRISTMAS ORNAMENTS ARE HERE!

Download online form at www.naturallyhernando.org and order early

The Hernando County Tourist Development Council is pleased to present the 2008 series collector Christmas ornaments, each depicting a unique and beautiful work of art created by local artist, Mary Alice Queiros.

The Hernando County design celebrates the natural heritage of the "Nature Coast" with a depiction of Jenkins Creek, so-named for Cyprian T. Jenkins (1811-1893). From an article (*St. Petersburg Times*, September 2006), the following: "At the centennial of the United States' birth, July 4, 1876, Jenkins sent a manuscript to the Library of Congress to celebrate the early history of our nation ... In the "Settlement and Latter History of Hernando County," he chronicled what little is known of our earliest history. As one of the first settlers of the County, he reported that of the original 77 white families that settled the County, only 9 men and 5 of their wives were still alive."

In 1845 Jenkins purchased land in Hernando County, and by 1850 he was at Bayport, where he met and married his wife in 1857. Cyprian T. Jenkins was active as both a private timber man and a state timber agent. With the outbreak of the Civil War in 1861, Jenkins served as an officer with the Florida state troops. He was elected state representative of Hernando County and served in the Florida Legislature in 1862 and 1863. (For more on Jenkins, go to www.fivay.org/hernando2.html.)

The City of Brooksville design honors "The Brooksville Woman's Club", established in 1910. Meetings were held in each others homes. In 1915 they purchased the property located at 131 S. Main Street in Brooksville. As club membership increased, members grew and sold sweet potatoes to build the current clubhouse, completed in 1931.

The Brooksville Woman's Club originated the first Library in Brooksville in 1918, Finger Printing, first Christmas Parade and Christmas Fantasy of Trees. The Club is very active today, hosting the annual Victorian Tea, the Festival of Trees and tour of historic homes for the holidays. The ornament is standard size in a burgundy colored matte finish with gold print, and features a depiction of the current Clubhouse.

Our artist, Mary Alice Queiros, is well known throughout Hernando County for her tireless efforts in The Brooksville Mural Society. The Mural Society is responsible for the selection of the site and artistic rendering of an event or lifestyle that bears historical significance to Brooksville and Hernando County. In October 2008, a new mural was unveiled and dedicated during the annual Founder's Week celebration. Mrs. Queiros was instrumental in the creation and continued operation of the Brooksville City Hall Art Gallery, which celebrated its tenth anniversary earlier this year.

Mrs. Queiros has resided in Hernando County since 1995, coming here from Massachusetts after retiring from elementary teaching for thirty years. Mrs. Queiros has 4 children, 14 grandchildren and 2 great-grandchildren.

A limited number of the ornaments are signed and numbered by the artist. Standard unsigned ornaments are also available. The cost of signed and numbered ornaments is \$15.00 each, and standard ornaments are \$10.00 each, plus State sales tax.

Plan to stop by soon at the Hernando County Welcome Center, 30305 Cortez Blvd., Brooksville (inside the Best Western Hotel at SR 50 and I-75) to purchase your special limited edition 2008 Christmas ornaments. For more information, please call our office at 352-754-4405. Or, visit our website at www.naturallyhernando.org where you will find a link to view the ornaments and the form to place your order.