

Fort Lauderdale *Historical Society* *Founders Dinner*

by Candice Russell

One of South Florida's best-known and most beloved public servants will be honored at the fifteenth Annual Founders Dinner of the Fort Lauderdale Historical Society on November 7th. E. Clay Shaw Jr. and his wife Emilie are the honorees at the event, set at the Hyatt Regency Pier 66 in Fort Lauderdale. "The Fort Lauderdale Historical Society is honoring the Shaw's to recognize them for their loyalty and commitment to our community," says Society president Paul McCawley.

For four decades, Shaw was a dedicated public servant in many roles. He started his career in Fort Lauderdale as a city prosecutor before serving as commissioner, Vice Mayor and Mayor. In 1981 he became a United States Congressman and served Florida's citizens for twenty-six years. Mrs. Shaw was a passionate community volunteer, participating in activities leading to the site where the society now stands. She co-chaired the city's Bicentennial Committee, worked for Florida House in the nation's capital and participated in the Congressional Woman's Club.

The Shaw's were chosen by a committee from the board of trustees. Gina Jackson, the society's community relations manager said, "last year we had close to three hundred people and raised almost \$90,000 for the Fort Lauderdale Historical Society's educational program. This year we hope to top this number."

School children are regularly brought to the grounds of the society, which houses four main buildings including the 1905 New River Inn with the Museum of History. It is the first building in Broward County on the National Register of Historic Places. Also on the grounds are the 1905 Philemon Bryan House, the 1905 Acetylene Building and the 1907 King-Cromartie House, a former residence of a pioneer family.

There is also a replica of the first county school house, where the education director dresses in old-style costume to deliver a school lesson to visiting students. The Hoch Heritage Center is a public research library housing the largest collection of material related to greater Fort Lauderdale and 250,000 precious historical photographs.

In a city where newness is valued and the lessons of history may be forgotten, the Fort Lauderdale Historical Society plays a valuable role in preserving the past and passing on its lessons to future generations. By getting to see how Floridians of many decades past lived and learned, young people gain a cherished perspective on their own lives.

Tickets to the event are \$150. The dress is business attire. Cocktails and a silent auction begin at 6:30 p.m., followed by dinner at 7:30 p.m. To make your reservation for this special event, telephone 954.463.4431, extension 19. 

