



DeSoto County Historical Society News

P.O. Box 1824 • Arcadia FL 34265 • 863-266-5774

www.historicdesoto.org

December 2022

This issue sponsored by - **The McLeod children in memory of their Dad, Harold McLeod**

Deck the Halls with December Events—Join with Us in the Fa-la-la-la Fun!



We will have an information table at the Tree of Knowledge on Oak Street.

Fri. Dec. 2

\$20 Tickets

Our December meeting will be on Thurs., Dec 8, see details lower left. Your Society is starting the Holiday Season with a full schedule of events. Participating in community events provides us a great chance to meet new folks and make connections. Please join us, stop by to say hello, or give a friendly wave. Together we grow as a community, and foster our mission to preserve and promote the history of DeSoto County for future generations. To volunteer at any of these events, please call Carol Mahler at 863-445-0789.



Meet us by Trinity Church at 5:30 p.m. to walk with us, or wave as we pass by!

Sat. Dec. 3

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Tue. Dec. 6



The Society will present a Resolution of Congratulations to the City of Arcadia during the regularly scheduled City Council meeting at 6 p.m., on the 136th anniversary of its incorporation as the Town of Arcadia. —Read more on page 4.

We regret the cancellation of our Annual Holiday Tour of Historic Homes and Buildings on Dec. 10 because of damage by Hurricane Ian, but feel it was the right decision. Please mark your 2023 calendar now for this wonderful and festive exploration of some of Arcadia's historic treasures on December 9, 2023.

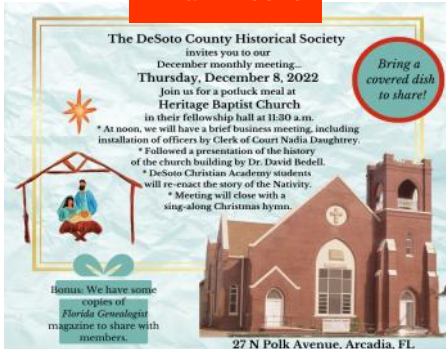
Happy Holidays!

Wed. Dec. 7



Meet with us at 10 a.m. on the 1924 Peace River Bridge for a brief service.

Thur. Dec. 8



December monthly meeting—Join us for a potluck meal at **Heritage Baptist Church**, 27 N Polk Avenue, in their fellowship hall at 11:30 a.m. At noon, we will have a brief business meeting, including installation of officers by Clerk of Court Nadia Daughtrey. Followed by a presentation of the history of the church building by Dr. David Bedell. DeSoto Christian Academy students will re-enact the story of the Nativity. Meeting will close with a sing-along Christmas hymn.

Sat. Dec. 10



We will offer a FREE hands-on children's activity, 4 p.m. at the Tree of Knowledge.

Message from the President

Hurricane Season is over! Hurricane Ian is behind us but the damages will be a long time erasing. Some of us were devastated while others not touched; yet everyone was affected in some way. What I see is that people, in trouble or not, came forward to help each other. I am so proud of our community and our people! I never heard grumbling, complaints, not despair. I heard, "How can I help?" I also see real leadership in individuals devastated by the hurricane, still working with the community and their organizations as if nothing was wrong. I am Blessed—as we all are—to be a part of this wonderful community.

Our Society, with Carol's tireless efforts, has continued to accept involvement with community activities, is working on Museum projects and tackling repairs and maintenance of our property. Our Board and volunteers continue to give their all. You will read about our activities throughout this newsletter.

Have a happy holiday season and we look forward to your continued membership and involvement to make our Society a productive and happy organization.

Norma

Annual dues in the DeSoto County Historical Society are due January 1. Payment may be made online, by mail, or in person at one of our gatherings.

Thank you for your support!

BECOME A MEMBER (Or renew your current membership!)

The DeSoto County Historical Society is an all-volunteer, not-for-profit organization dedicated to preserving and promoting the history of DeSoto County for future generations. We are a group interested in the rich heritage of our area. Learn our history, help others discover their heritage, join volunteers with interesting and fun activities, and be a part of an interesting group of people.

As a member you will receive a monthly newsletter inviting you to our programs and events, our monthly meetings, Pioneer Day festival on the fourth Saturday in March, and more. Your support

You may pay your dues online—go to <https://historicsdesoto.org/>. At the bottom of the About page you will find a box marked BECOME A MEMBER. Click **HERE** to open the membership form. CLICK **DONATE** BUTTON TO PAY NOW. You will receive an email acknowledging your payment. If making a payment by PayPal or Credit/Debit card, please include a note indicating your membership level or additional donation.

To pay by check, a membership form has been provided.

Historical Society Newsletter Sponsors

- Jan. - **Alvie Davidson** in memory of his parents, **Ollie & Mary Lee Davidson**
- Feb. - **J.R. Griffis & Jeff Griffis** in memory of their beloved, **Nancy Webster**
- March - **Dale, Patty & Sue** in loving memory of our parents, **Howard & Velma Melton**
- April - **Warren & Arlene Conley** in memory of **Hazel & Leo Williams**
- May - **Marshall and Hazel Whidden** in memory of our parents, **Marshall and Barbara Whidden**, and our beloved son **Douglas Marshall Whidden**
- June - **Michelle, Dan, & Dow** in loving memory of our parents, **Eddie & Iris Garner**
- July - **Ruth Dunn** in loving memory of her late husband, **Rudolph Dunn**
- Aug. - **Charlotte Hill Carter** in loving memory of her husband, **Frederick Lawrence Carter**
- Sept. - **Marguerite & Tom Hankins** in memory of **Mr. & Mrs. T.J. Pipkin (Pip & Alison Pickard Pipkin)**
- Oct. - **People for Protecting Peace River**
- Nov. - **Betty Hall Wood** in memory of her late husband, **G. Pierce Wood, Jr.**
- Dec. - **The McLeod children** in memory of their Dad, **Harold McLeod**

If you are a newsletter sponsor, please make your annual donation either when you pay your dues, or by the first of the month preceding the month you sponsor. —Thank you!

John Morgan Ingraham House Museum 300 N Monroe Avenue

MUSEUM OPEN:

9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Thursdays (except for the second Thurs. of the month),

9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on the second and fourth Saturday of the month.

Museum will be closed on 4th Saturday in December, the 24th, Christmas Eve.

The Howard and Velma Melton Historical Research Library in the Ingraham Seed House

120 W Whidden Street

Open by appointment only:

Research assistance available. 863-266-5774

**In Memory of
Albert Warren Conley**
(1939 - 2022)

Albert Warren Conley of Arcadia, Florida passed away peacefully at Good Shepherd Hospice in Lakeland, Florida on Saturday, October 29, 2022, after a prolonged battle with heart disease. Warren was the son of the late Byron B. and Marylee Conley of Bartow, Florida.

Warren was born in Tampa, Florida on December 30, 1939. After living in Bell, in Gilchrist County a few years, his family moved to Alma, Georgia where his father preached at the Alma Church of Christ.



After a few years in Alma, the family moved to Bartow, Florida when Warren was 9 years old. He considered Bartow his hometown. He graduated from Summerlin Institute, now Bartow Senior High School in 1958. He played football four years in high school and also participated on the track team.

Upon graduation from high school, he attended Troy State College, now Troy University for four years. He graduated in 1962 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration and a minor in History.

Warren entered the United States Air Force in October 1962 and after his basic training and tech school in Texas, he was assigned to 36 months active duty at Torrejon Air Base, Spain. He had met Arlene Williams in 1959 and on his 10 days leave before leaving for Spain, they became engaged to be married upon his return to the States. He returned in August 1964, and they were married September 5, 1964, in the Avon Park Church of Christ. After a short 3-week honeymoon, Warren returned to Spain to finish his obligation to the Air Force.

After leaving the service he spent the next 32 years working in Accounting for Holland & Knight in Bartow, Bowen Office Supply in Plant City and Grimsley Oil Company in Wauchula. He became disabled in June 2000 due to loss of his eyesight.

After moving to Arcadia in 1989, he began worshipping with the Fort Ogden Church of Christ, with Warren serving as Treasurer for many years. He was an active member of the DeSoto County Historical Society. He was also a member of the American Legion for the last several years. His hobbies included working in his yard and keeping up to date on politics.

In addition to his parents, Warren is predeceased by his brother Dale, and a brother-in-law C.D. Moore.

He is survived by his wife, Arlene; brothers and sisters: Louetta Moore, Bell, Lee (Gayle) Conley, Bartow; Norma (Jody)

Cannon, Ft. Meade; Mary (Ronnie) Henderson, Lakeland; Paul (Ginny) Conley, Ocala; Jim (Carolyn) Conley, Ocala; Barbara (Gary) Newell, Bartow; and Ruth (John) Trainor, Lakeland; sister-in-law, Iris Conley, Palm Harbor and numerous nephews and nieces.

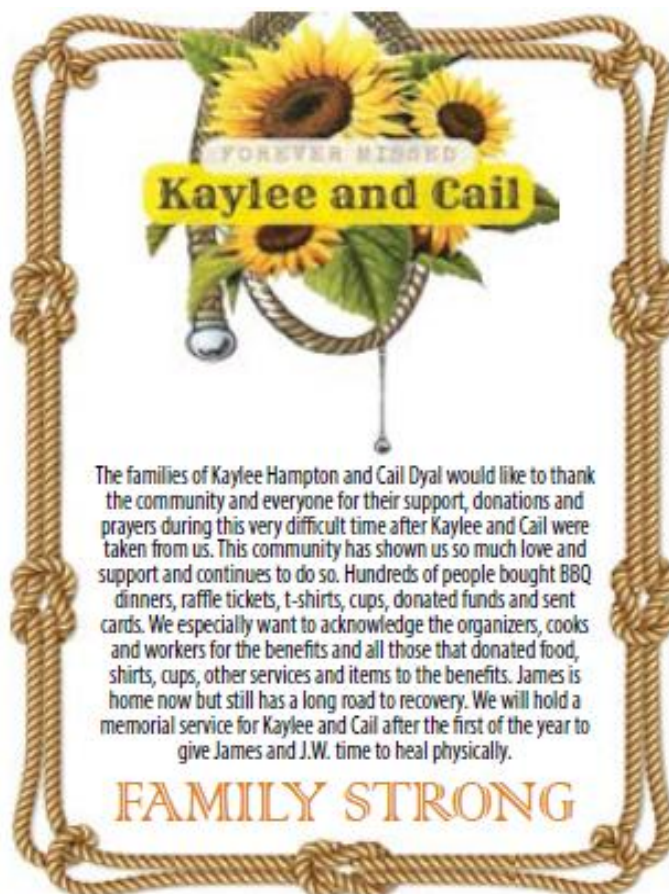
In lieu of flowers please make contributions to the Byron & Marylee Conley Scholarship Fund at Florida College, 119 N. Glen Arven Dr., Temple Terrace, FL 33617..

Visitation was Thursday, November 3, 2022, at 10:00 a.m. in the Chapel of Ponger Kays Grady Funeral Home and the service was at 11:00 a.m., followed by interment at Oak Ridge Cemetery, Arcadia.

Make a Memorial Donation

The Society welcomes and appreciates memorial donations in memory of those we have lost this year, or any other Society member. Funds are used for the maintenance of the Museum and Society property. Donations may be made online at <https://historicdesoto.org/>.

To donate by mail, make your check payable to DeSoto County Historical Society, Inc. and mail to: DeSoto County Historical Society, Inc. P.O. Box 1824, Arcadia, FL 34265. Please include a note with the purpose of your donation.





Resolution 2022-12-1

Whereas the mission of the DeSoto County Historical Society, Inc., is to preserve and promote the history of DeSoto County for future generations; and

Whereas celebrating and publicizing historic milestones—such as the 136th anniversary of the incorporation of the Town of Arcadia—helps to fulfill the Society’s mission; and

Whereas when the first settlers arrived in the 1850s, Peace River provided the main means of transportation, so the area was called Waldron’s Landing for Pioneers Francis Marion Waldron, his brother James Warren Waldron and their families; and

Whereas, Harris Raulerson plied Peace River in his side-wheel steamboat to tote supplies up river and haul produce raised by the settlers to markets in Charlotte Harbor, so the area also became known as Raulerson’s Landing; and

Whereas the produce raised by the first settlers was primarily potatoes—Irish or sweet or both—and these “taters” were stockpiled near the river awaiting transport, so the area was also known as Tater Hill Bluff; and

Whereas when the settlers applied for a post office in 1883, they discarded those colloquial names favoring instead the moniker “Arcadia” because the Rev. James Madison Hendry suggested the name in thanks to Arcadia Matilda Albritton Coker, the woman who had baked a birthday cake for him as he journeyed with his sawmill to the east shore of Peace River; and

Whereas the Florida Southern Railway laid tracks on the eastern shore of Peace River, and after the first train arrived on March 4, 1886, Arcadia remained the end of the line for three months, and during that time, the settlement gained enough population to incorporate as a town; and

Whereas, the notice to incorporate the Town of Arcadia and calling for residents living within the proposed boundaries to meet at the “store house” of J. W. Bailey to elect officers and organize a municipal government was published in the *Peninsular Gazette* newspaper of Fort Ogden in Manatee County; and

Whereas, the thirty-one registered voters chose Captain J. W. Whidden, J. D. Haygood, and T. J. Henderson as managers of the election, and when the ballots were counted, the following were elected: B. F. Baldwin as mayor; J.W. Bailey, F. M. Waldron, W. E. Daniels, E. E. Waldron, W. H. Hollingsworth, and C. G. Johanson as aldermen; George H. Altree as clerk and treasurer; and C. H. Bonard as marshal and collector, and

Whereas, the Town of Arcadia continued as the municipal government until 1901, when it was re-incorporated as the City of Arcadia.

Now, therefore, the DeSoto County Historical Society presents this Resolution of Congratulations to the City of Arcadia during the regularly scheduled City Council meeting on December 6, 2022, the 136th anniversary of its incorporation as the Town of Arcadia, and requests that the council members and residents of both the City and County join with the Society in celebrating this historic milestone.

Passed and duly adopted this 28th day of November 2022 by the DeSoto County Historical Society’s officers and directors.

(Signed)

Norma Banas, President

Vernon Keen, Vice-President

Karen Smoczynski, Secretary

Stuart Swanberg, Treasurer

Carol Mahler, Museum and Research Library Coordinator

Jeff Griffis, Director

Ellen Hutson, Director

Trudi Super, Director

Stuart Eric Swanberg, Director

Lou Towne, Director

Luke Wilson, Director

Eagle Scout Emmanuel Maldonado

Congratulations to Emmanuel Jesus Maldonado, a member of Boy Scout Troop 39, on receiving his Eagle Scout Award! The Society is grateful for his work on his Eagle Scout Project: sanding and refinishing the south porch and handicap ramp of the John Morgan Ingraham House Museum.



We also appreciate Scout Leader Ken Shatney and the other scouts who worked with Emmanuel. Thanks to Stella Parker for representing the Society at Emmanuel's Eagle Scout Court of Honor Ceremony on Oct. 22 at Trinity United Methodist Church.



A delicious luncheon was served at the boy scout house afterwards. Emmanuel has completed basic training for the Marines and will be continuing special training.

—Photos provided by Stella Parker

Gratitude for Gifts

Thank you to the following people for their generous donations: Leslie Dobbs, Director of Operations for ProTech Assessments, Inc., Environmental Site Assessments & Consulting Services, for her \$50.00 donation for research assistance; Ed Johnson for pressure gauges from the Gulf Naval Stores (aka The Stump Plant) facility in Nocatee; Dennis Mader for Challenge No. 10 Hand Crank Clothes Wringer; and Kathy Nott for a butter churn that belonged to her grandmother Thelma Yarborough, a wooden potty chair, and many old newspapers.

Save the date!

DeSoto County Historical Society's 19th Annual

Pioneer Day

March 25, 2023

with the Arcadia American Legion

sponsored Antique Tractor, Vintage Car,

and Hit & Miss Engine Show

Turner Agri-Civic Center, 2250 NE Roan St.

P.O. Box 1824, Arcadia, FL 34265 • 863-266-5776

desotocountyhistoricalsociety@gmail.com

www.historicdesoto.org • Like us on Facebook!

Lots of hands-on help is needed for Pioneer Day!

Contact Carol Mahler, 863-445-0789

desotocountyhistoricalsociety@gmail.com

Text or leave a message on the Society phone:

863-266-5774



Pioneer Day PLANNING meeting—

Monday, Dec. 19, 4 p.m.—Victory Baptist Church

Tidbit from the Past

From the December 24, 1908, *Champion* newspaper:

"We do not know if the wave of prosperity has struck DeSoto County, Florida, yet. It is reported as having reached Tampa, Pensacola and Jacksonville in time for the Christmas shopping . . . Christmas was a beautiful day in Florida this year. Warm, sunshiny and summer-like. Roses blooming in the yard, and gardens green and fresh with young vegetables. It surely is something worth grateful praise just to be alive in Florida."


Area Historical Organization Events



MANATEE GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY
Manatee County has a rich history from the Spanish landing of 1539 to the thriving Sun Coast area of today.

Speaker: Peggy Jude
“All About Your Name”

Manatee County Central Library Auditorium and Zoom
Tuesday, December 6, 2022 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. EST



Peggy will present this program in person, regarding a broad look at surnames. Topics covered include: the history of surnames, ways to learn more about yours, and those who share your name. Get tips on places to research your name, DNA options, and groups you can join.

Peggy Jude has been conducting genealogical research for her family and clients for over 40 years and specializes and teaches in five areas of genealogical interest: DNA, Preserving Family History and Heirlooms, Genealogical Methods and Records, Genealogical Technology and Swedish Genealogy.

Following the program and questions:
 There will be a moderated open discussion period relative to genealogical topics. Attendees are encouraged to ask questions on issues pertaining to the program.

<p>For more information: Email: info@mgsfl.org</p> <p>MGS meetings are virtual via Zoom and in-person at: 1301 Barcarrota BLVD West, Bradenton, Florida 34205; Ph:941-748-5555</p> <p>Internet: www.mgsfl.org</p> <p>Facebook: www.facebook.com/ManateeGenealogicalSociety</p>	<p>Monthly Membership meetings: held 1st Tuesday of the month.</p> <p>Next meeting: Tuesday January 10, 2023 Speaker: Allison DePrey Singleton, Allen County, Indiana Public Library Genealogy Center</p> <p>USPS: Manatee Genealogical Society PO Box 1194, Bradenton, FL 34206</p>
--	--

Info for Manatee Genealogical Society Events

Manatee Central Library, Main Auditorium
 1301 Barcarrota Blvd West, Bradenton, Florida

Guests attending via Zoom must register at least one day in advance by emailing: info@mgsfl.org.

Auditorium will open at 9:30 am. for in-person attendees. The Manatee Genealogical Society will provide refreshments for this meeting to celebrate the Holidays and our ability to re-unite in person.

The Zoom meeting will begin at 10:00 a.m. EST.

For more information, please visit our website at: <https://mgsfl.org/>.

"Kickback" Music at Punta Gorda History Park

501 Shreve Street, Punta Gorda
118pghs@gmail.com
 941-639-1887
<https://www.puntagordahistory.com/events>

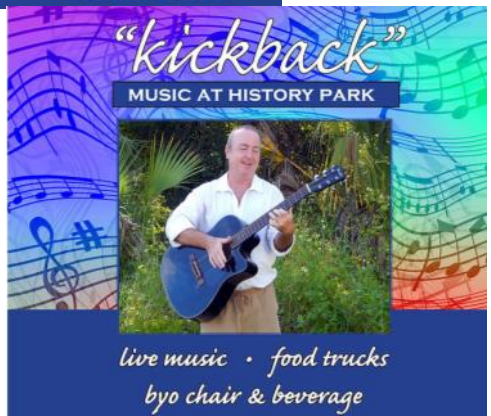
Join us the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of each month
 November through May
 5:00 to 7:00 p.m.

This is a Donation only event, all donations support the repairs & maintenance of our four (4) 100+ year old historic buildings.

Thank you to the Artists that will be Supporting Us.



Michael Haymans & the Hibiscus Band -
 Wednesday, December 14, 2022



Glenn Allen -
 Wednesday, December 28, 2022

*live music • food trucks
 byo chair & beverage*



MANATEE GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY
Manatee County has a rich history from the Spanish landing of 1539 to the thriving Sun Coast area of today.

MANATEE GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY
Bradenton, Florida
www.mgsfl.org

Presents Our 2023 Genealogy Seminar

Featuring

Blaine Bettinger, PH.D., J.D.
Cyndi Ingle
Michael D. Lacopo, D.V.M.
J. Mark Lowe, FUGA

Presenting Four Topics that Address:
“Finding Your Elusive Ancestors”
28 January 2023

Virtual Seminar
10:00 a.m. – 4:15 p.m.