



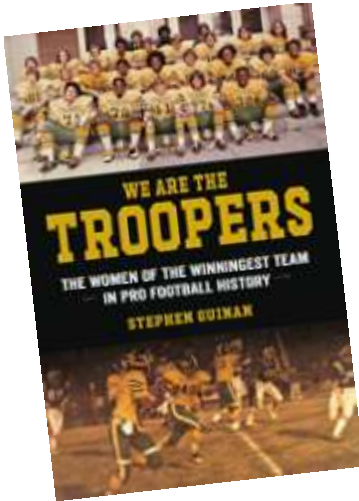
DeSoto County Historical Society News

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

www.historicdesoto.org

January 2023

This issue sponsored by - Alvie Davidson in memory of his parents, Ollie & Mary Lee Davidson



Nancy Erickson to Speak at January Meeting

Nancy Erickson, a member of the Toledo Troopers, “the winningest team in Pro Football History” will talk about a new book published about the team that includes her: *We Are The Troopers* by Stephen Guinan. An outstanding athlete, she had already been hired to direct Arcadia’s Recreation Department when she had a chance to try out for the Toledo Troopers. The City of Arcadia held the job for her until she played her first and only season.

At the January meeting, she will talk about her experience in the National Women’s Football League as well as her work in Arcadia. For example, the federal civil rights law enacted as part of the Education Amendments of 1972 and most commonly known as Title IX helped Nancy to start girls sports teams of all kinds in Arcadia. She will have copies of the book to sell and sign.

Monthly Member Meeting:

Thursday, January 12th
at the **Family Service Center Annex**
corner of N. Orange Ave. & Effie St.

Bring a lunch and visit at 11:30 p.m.

We will provide beverages and desserts.

PROGRAM at NOON
President Norma Banas will lead a short business meeting, followed by introduction of our guest speaker, **Nancy Erickson**.

Learn more:

<http://www.toledotroopers.com/>

<http://wearthetroopers.com/>

<https://www.toledo.com/news/2014/10/10/toledo-local-features/what-does-a-football-player-look-like/>

The Toledo Troopers were a professional women's American football team based in Toledo, Ohio. The Troopers began play in 1971 as a member of the Women's Professional Football League, and later played in the National Women's Football League.



Arcadia Main Street Wine Walk

Thanks to Carol Mahler and Karen Smoke for setting up a booth in the Tree of Knowledge Park to showcase the Society at the Arcadia Main Street Wine Walk on Fri., Dec. 2. They talked with folks, gave out brochures and Pioneer Day “save-the-date” cards—plus candy to any who could read the “history” of Hershey’s Bars or Tootsie Rolls. They also collected \$41.00 in donations.



Carol chats with Arcadia City Councilman Keith Keene.



Carol listens as children read about the history of candy in the old fashion ‘penny candy’ jars.

—Photos this page by Karen Smoke & Cindy Ely

Christmas Parade

We are grateful to Cindy McLeod Ely and Carol Mahler for preparing the Society’s “walking unit” for the Christmas parade and for donating candy for distribution! We appreciate Cindy and Karen Smoke for carrying the Society’s banner



decorated with Christmas lights, and Carol Mahler for wearing a sign board she designed and had printed in memory of Kaylee Hampton and Cail Dyal. We are grateful to Zane Dyal, Jackie Hampton, Keely Wood, and Madison Wood

for handing out candy and Pioneer Day save-the-date cards to those along the parade route.



This year was a somber parade for us. While we were celebrating the start of the Christmas Season, we were also remembering and missing our



members Kaylee Hampton and her son Cail Dyal. We lost Kaylee and Cail in September of this year. They were both very active and important to the Historical Society in many ways. Cail and sister Jacki were our “official” whip crackers and they participated in parades and at every Pioneer Day. Their mother Kaylee, husband James and other siblings also joined us in parades as well as volunteering at Pioneer Day and anywhere they were needed. Please remember to keep their family in your thoughts and prayers during this Christmas Season.

—Cindy Ely



Pearl Harbor Day Commemoration

Thanks to Carol Mahler for organizing the Pearl Harbor Day Commemoration held at 10 a.m., Dec. 7, on the old Peace River Bridge. We appreciate Norma Banas for giving the welcome; Dr.



Sharon Goodman, the invocation; City Manager Terry Stewart for singing the National Anthem; and the DeSoto High School JROTC Color Guard, under the direction of Sergeant Robert Newell, for presenting the colors: Darrecus Barteo, Davian Gamez, Katherine Orozco, and Maria Villa. We appreciate Sheriff Jim Potter for speaking about Pearl Harbor Day and Carol Mahler for reading a poem written by Ada Cody in 1942 to honor and remember the first casualty of World War II from DeSoto County.

We are grateful to Steve Owens for providing the sound system and a recording of "Taps," City Council Member Judy Wertz-Strickland for presenting the memorial flower wreath, and World War II Veterans Jim O'Leary and Lou Towne for casting the wreath adrift in Peace River in memory of all those who died during the attack on Pearl Harbor. Thanks to Kim Wertz of the Valley Florist, 7 E. Oak St., for making and donating the wreath and to DeSoto County Parks and Recreation Department for the use of electricity in the concession stand for the sound system. We appreciate the American Legion K-Post 11 for holding the annual commemoration for so many years and to everyone who attended the ceremony and remembered the event that spurred the U.S. to enter World War II.



Above left—Dr. Sharon Goodman, right—DeSoto High School JROTC Color Guard. Below—City Manager Terry Stewart sang the National Anthem, Sheriff Jim Potter spoke about Pearl Harbor Day and the meaning of sacrifice.



World War II Veterans Lou Towne and Jim O'Leary.

—Photos by Carol Mahler & Karen Smoke

Happy 136th Birthday, Arcadia!

We appreciate Carol Mahler for writing the resolution of congratulations that she read at the city council meeting in honor of the 136th anniversary of the incorporation of the Town of Arcadia on Dec. 6. We are grateful to the members of the Board of Directors for signing the resolution at their Nov. 28 meeting. Thanks, also, to Carol for baking two Scripture cakes and cutting them into sample pieces that she and Karen Smoke distributed after the resolution was read.

We appreciate Norma Banas, Linda Keen, Vernon Keen, and Lou Towne for representing the Society and handing out brochures and Pioneer Day save-the-date cards.



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!

A Message from the President

I hope everyone had a good holiday and made gains toward full recovery from Ian. We had trying times and lost some good friends this past year but a new year awaits us. We are thankful for the support from so many of our members and friends and we are increasing our visibility throughout the community as well as supporting other community activities.

Pioneer Day is coming up. It is our showcase and our financial event of the year. To make it successful we ask that anyone who can give a few hours either in help preparing or during, we would greatly appreciate your help. Call Carol or me to ask how you can help. (See the reminder on pg. 6)

And, if you have not done so already, please send in your membership renewal. Better yet, pledge to encourage one person to come to a meeting and consider membership. A strong membership is needed to carry out our goals and activities, and your support encourages us to do more and to do better and more interesting activities throughout the year. God bless everyone, keep warm and see you in the new year.

Norma

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 Hanks 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

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.

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

Contact Information

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Meeting at Heritage Baptist Church

Thank you to Dr. David Bedell for hosting our December meeting at Heritage Baptist Church! We enjoyed our **“covered dish” luncheon with students from DeSoto Christian Academy** and their teachers and families. (We appreciate Cindy McLeod Ely for fetching and donating some beverages and ice.) **We are grateful to DeSoto County’s Clerk of Court Nadia Daughtrey for installing the Society’s officers and directors for 2023.**

Then we moved to the sanctuary, where the students re-enacted the Nativity and then performed a readers theater of the drama **“If He Had Not Come”** by Nan F. Weeks. Afterward, Dr. Bedell shared the history of Heritage Baptist Church using an excellent handout he had prepared—how the sanctuary was built and used by First Baptist Church and when it became Heritage Baptist Church.



Students from DeSoto Christian Academy re-enacted the Nativity. From top—Micheal Auxier portrays the angel and the shepherds are Kiaralee Gardiner and Alexis Guerrero. Joseph is portrayed by Joseph Guerrero and Mary is Kordeliah Gallimore, Baby Jesus is the McDermott baby.

Below, left—Group photo from left: Alexis Guerrero, Micheal Auxier, Joseph Guerrero, Kamyralee Gardiner, Kiaralee Gardiner, Kimberly Hersey, and Kordeliah Gallimore.

Norma Banas presents Dr. David Bedell with a certificate of thanks for hosting the meeting and arranging the wonderful program.

—Photos by Carol Mahler



DeSoto County’s Clerk of Court Nadia Daughtrey (at center) **Installs The Society’s officers and directors** for 2023. From left—Ellen Hutson, Luke Wilson, Jeff Griffis, Norma Banas (Pres.), Nadia, Karen Smoke (Sec.), Trudy Super, Carol Mahler (Museum and Library Coordinator), Vernon Keen (VP). Not pictured, Renee Collins, Stuart Swanberg (Treas.), and Lou Towne.



Saturday Night Lights Holiday Extravaganza

Thanks to Carol Mahler and Karen Smoke for setting up our booth under the Tree of Knowledge at the Saturday Night Lights Holiday Extravaganza on Saturday, Dec. 10. As the Society had canceled the Holiday Tour of Historic Homes and Buildings, we wanted to offer other support for Saturday **Night Lights' holiday event, so we agreed to an arts-and-crafts activity: salt-dough Christmas cookie ornaments.**

Thanks to Norma Banas for talking with people about **the Society and Vernon Keen for distributing "save-the-date" cards for Pioneer Day to the crowd.** We are grateful to Linda Keen, Carol, and Karen for helping the children to roll out the dough and cut their Christmas cookie ornament. We appreciate the donation of yarn and paper plates from Karen and the salt dough from Carol.



Karen Smoke and Linda Keen help children roll out the salt dough and cut their Christmas cookie ornaments.



Norma Banas waits to talk with people about the Society's work at the Saturday Night Lights Holiday Extravaganza at the Tree of Knowledge Park in Arcadia.

—Photos by Carol Mahler

Tidbit from the Past

From the Thursday, Jan. 9, 1908, *The Champion*, p. 1:

"Leads In Oranges: Arcadia As Seen by New York Packer's Man

"Arcadia, the capitol of DeSoto County, is indeed an Arcadian city, although at the present time, while the harvest of the orange is in progress, rest and pleasure are not so much in evidence as during the season of bloom and growth.

"Since the fire of 1905, which destroyed fully half of the business portion of the town, Arcadia has made some wonderful improvements in building up a city with brick, cement, and stone. Its streets are well paved. Its four banks and fine stores and business houses are equal if not superior to anything of the kind in the State. Its two newspapers, *The Champion* and the *DeSoto County News* are up-to-date publications and a credit to any city while the town has a general appearance of solidity which causes one to feel like wishing to live here always and calling it home.

"Arcadia is said to be the largest orange shipping station in Florida, its shipments last season reaching 250,000 boxes and while this season will fall much short of the above figure yet it is claimed the records of being the largest orange growing center in the state will not be broken even this year . . ." (<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn95047227/1908-01-09/ed-1/seq-1>).

Make a Memorial Donation

The Society welcomes and appreciates memorial donations in memory of those we have recently lost, 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/>. Donations may also be made by mail.



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-Care 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