



DeSoto County Historical Society News

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

www.historicdesoto.org

August 2025

This issue sponsored by - **Charlotte Hill Carter** in loving memory of her husband, **Frederick Lawrence Carter**.

UPCOMING EVENTS

MONTHLY MEETING NOTICE

A Message From The President

Dear Members and Friends:

We are delighted to invite you to the next regular meeting of the DeSoto County Historical Society, to be held on **Monday, August 18, 2025**, in the McSwain Room at DeSoto Memorial Hospital.

A luncheon will be available in the hospital cafeteria beginning at 11:30 a.m., with the formal program commencing at 12:00 p.m.

We are honored to welcome **Judge Gilbert Smith Jr.**, who will deliver an illuminating address on the evolution of the justice system in both Manatee and DeSoto counties from 1855 through 2025. Drawing upon decades of legal scholarship and personal experience on the bench, Judge Smith will recount the legacies of the colorful lawyers, judges, and civic leaders whose passions and personalities helped to shape Arcadia and Bradenton into the vibrant communities we know today.

Your presence and participation would greatly enrich our discussion. Kindly mark your calendar for August 18 and join us for fellowship and historical insight.

Very truly yours,

Adrian H. Cline

President, DeSoto County Historical Society

JULY WRAP UP

Dedication of Coach Fred Carter Pavilion

Thanks to Adrian Cline and Carol Mahler for representing the Society when the City dedicated the Coach Fred Carter Pavilion on July 25. Adrian spoke about Frederick L. Carter (1938-2016) who taught in and out of the classroom. The pavilion is a “symbol of his impact . . . open, strong, and welcoming “ as was the coach. He also noted that “one person with passion and purpose can change lives”—and that was Coach Carter. He also thanked Carter’s family “for sharing him with us.”

Carol Mahler gave a brief history of the Smith-Brown Recreation Complex that once included the Smith-Brown gymnasium, jointly funded by the City, County, and School District, now the heart of the Louis and Gloria Flanzer Boys and Girls Club. She praised and thanked the City for the more-than-half-million-dollar improvements to the Complex and appreciated them for restoring the historic name to the park and for naming the pavilion in honor of Coach Fred Carter.



Society President Adrian Cline, also retired superintendent of schools, gave a remarkable appreciation of Coach Fred Carter at the dedication of the pavilion in the Smith-Brown Recreation Complex.

At the end of the ceremony, the Carter family gathered for a photograph, from left, Ronald Williams, Rosalind Williams, Tonya Carter, Ally Bloomfield, Romona C. Gollman, Charlotte Hill Carter, Gerald Carter, Falana C. Staples, Saundra Hill Peacock, Vonda C. Morrison, Edwin Carter, and Jimi Hill.



—Photographs courtesy of Carol Mahler

JULY WRAP UP—Con't

Bus Tour For New Teachers

We appreciate Francesca Anderson, assistant director of Instructional Services, for inviting Carol Mahler to give the narration for a bus tour of DeSoto County for the new



teachers on Tues., July 29. Mahler not only told the history and helped direct the bus driver, but she also made sure that the tour kept to the scheduled 75 minutes! Anderson has already asked her for a repeat performance next summer.



Above—Carol Mahler provided an engaging history of DeSoto County and Arcadia on the bus tour for new teachers. Right—Teachers board the school bus for the tour.

—Photos from School District of DeSoto County Facebook page

Historical Society Newsletter Sponsors

Jan. - **Alvie Davidson** in memory of his parents, **Ollie & Mary Lee Davidson.**

Feb. - **René Collins** in memory of **Terry and Evelyn Collins.**

March - **Dale, Patty & Sue** in loving memory of our parents, **Howard & Velma Melton.**

April - **Arlene Conley** in loving memory of my husband, **Warren Conley**, and my parents, **Leo and Hazel 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.**

John Morgan Ingraham House Museum
300 N Monroe Avenue

MUSEUM OPEN:

9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Thursdays

and on the second and fourth Saturday of the month.

CLOSED May-June-July-August.

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

Florida Cracker Meal Saturday, October 4, 2025

Join us for dinner at our evening meeting at Pine Level Church. More details and tickets available at our member meeting—get yours early, this event always sells out!

Contact Information

Editor: dchsocietyfl@gmail.com

Historian: Carol Mahler, 863-445-0789
desotocountyhistoricalsociety@gmail.com

President: President: Adrian Cline, 863-494-5758
adriancline@outlook.com

OUR COLLECTION GROWS AND GOES...

An important part of maintaining a museum collection is deciding what to keep, and what needs to find homes elsewhere.

Historic Costumes Donated

Some years ago, a collection of historic costumes was donated to the Society by Philip Terry, and we thank Carol Mahler and Claire Miller for sorting through and choosing the clothing in good condition that is appropriate for Society volunteers to use for Pioneer Day. We appreciate Carol for washing and mending those clothes and donating the rest of the costumes to Charlotte Players, 1182 Market Cir, Port Charlotte, except for some sewing patterns she donated to Kerry Brooks in Orlando, a seamstress who makes clothes for re-enactors.

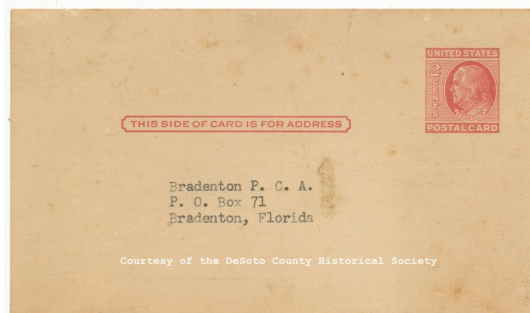
Sherrie M. Moody, Executive Director of Charlotte Players, wrote, “I would like to personally thank you on behalf of the Charlotte Players for your generous donation of clothing. Charlotte Players is celebrating its 65th Season in 2025-2026. It is because of the support of patrons like you that the Charlotte Players can continue to provide quality community theatre and educational opportunities to children and adults alike. Again, thank you for your support.”



Bradenton Production Credit Association

We appreciate Carol Mahler for contacting Research Librarian Jonathan Torkos of the Manatee County Historical Research Library about accepting the donation of three postcards from the Bradenton Production Credit Assoc., and after he agreed, for mailing them to him.

“In 1933, the Federal Government set up the Production Credit Associations on a national level to provide money for the farmers to produce crops for the nation. This was one of the first and most important steps in bringing the nation out of the [Great] Depression. . . . The Bradenton Production Credit Association received its charter on Dec. 2, 1933, and in 1967, was renamed the Southwest Florida Production Credit Association to serve “farmers over a nine-county area with branch offices in Bradenton, Arcadia, Wauchula, Sebring and Clewiston.” —from p. 19 of the History of Agriculture in Manatee County written in 1969 (<https://mymanatee.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p16681coll2/id/12326>)



We are also grateful to Jonathan for suggesting that Carol contact Leah Lapsynski of the Sarasota County History Center about the donation of a 1960 R. L. Polk City Directory for Sarasota.

1960 R. L. Polk City Directory for Sarasota

We are grateful to Carol Mahler for contacting Leah Lapsynski of the Sarasota County History Center about a 1960 R. L. Polk City Directory that had been donated to the Society, and to Leah for accepting it for their collection. We thank Carol Mahler for driving to the old Osprey School, 337 N. Tamiami Trail, now the location of the Osprey Library and History Center, and delivering the book to Elizabeth Jimenz. Carol appreciated a quick tour of the facility with Elizabeth.

Elizabeth Jimenz holds the 1960 Sarasota City Directory that the Society donated to the Sarasota County History Center. She is happy to have it as the one currently in their collection is in very poor



condition. Below—The entrance to the old Osprey School, built in 1927, has a Florida Historical Marker to tell the history and an entrance to both the Osprey Library and the History Center, owned and operated by Sarasota County.

—Photographs courtesy of Carol Mahler.



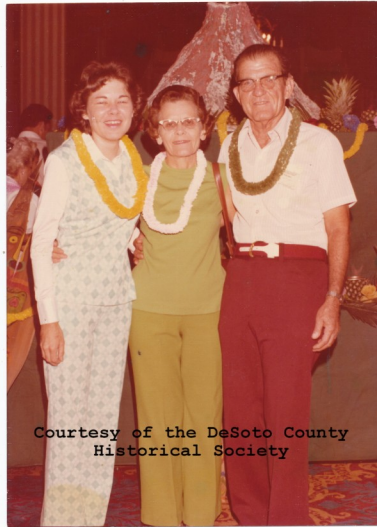
BPCA Postcard: “The Bradenton Production Credit Association is “completely farmer-owned and farmer-controlled. It provides permanent and dependable source of short and intermediate-term credit for the farmer.” —from the History of Agriculture in Manatee County.

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OUR COLLECTION GROWS AND GOES ...Con't

Donation To The Collection

Thanks to Carol Mahler for meeting Janet Cordero in Ellenton, Florida, and to Janet for donating photographs and other memorabilia that belonged to her friend Carolyn Coker (1941-2020) originally from the Crews and Coker families in DeSoto County, but a resident of Palm Harbor for most of her life. Carolyn worked from 1974 until her retirement in 2011 for the Hillsborough County Property Appraiser. These materials will be archived in the Howard and Velma Melton Historical Research Library.



Carolyn Coker stands with her mother Lenora Crews Coker and her father Rutherford Bartow Coker in an undated photograph circa 1980s, one of the many photographs donated to the Society by Carolyn's friend Janet Cordero.

GRATITUDE & APPRECIATION

Gratitude For New Members

Thanks to Mr. and Mrs. Lonnie Lomski for joining the Society as business members! In March, they purchased the Rosin Arcade, the last commercial structure built in downtown Arcadia. In 1927, Simon Rosin opened his "Boston Store" with a huge celebration. He also rented the south part of the building to the U.S. post office for 10 years, and the post office boxes lined the east-west open hallway aka "arcade," so the structure was often called "the Post Office Arcade."

Rosin retired in 1939, sold his business to his longtime employee C. E. Adams, who kept only the men's wear dept. and traded locations with Dr. Louis W. Koch. He opened his drugstore there and bought the building in 1947. By 1976, the Koch family closed most of the building because it had deteriorated. Len and Elida Hazen bought and rehabilitated the building in 1989 and painted the exterior pink. The structure soon became known as the "pink building," hence the Lomski's business is "The Pink Building."



The U.S. Post Office rented the south half of the Rosin Arcade (aka "The Pink Building") for ten years, and had their service windows and postal boxes lining the east-west arcade or open hallway. This photograph shows the east entrance on Polk Ave., now the dining room for the Broken Spur Diner, 10 S. Polk Ave.

Gratitude and Thanks

We are grateful for the Legacy Writing Workshop, led by Mr. Christopher Parent, Community Partnership Specialist for Empath Health at our monthly meeting on July 21, 1025. Building on the first workshop he presented for us, he again shared a workbook and a prompt to get us started. It was fun to hear the stories people came up with recalling their oldest family member. We hope you are continuing with putting your thoughts in words to share with family. Mr. Parent suggested setting aside a short time period to get started. Share individual stories to get feedback, or save in a folder and print them out for future generations. There are so many possibilities, but you have to get started.

President Adrian Cline presented a Certificate of Appreciation to Mr. Christopher Parent for presenting the workshop on July 21.

—Photograph courtesy of Linda Keen



GRATITUDE & APPRECIATION

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Appreciation For Volunteers

Although Milo Moreno portrays Acrefoot Johnson, his great-great-great grandfather, at Pioneer Day and other occasions, he is also a volunteer at the Museum. We thank him for his work weeding the flowerbeds with Carol Mahler and cleaning the wooden chairs from the 1912 courthouse donated to the Society by the County. Two will soon be on display at the Oak Park Inn and two at the Arcadia Main Street office. We are grateful to Carol Mahler for designing plaques and signs detailing the history of the chairs.



Under the oaks in the backyard of the Museum, Milo Moreno cleans one of the historic wooden chairs from the 1912 court house. —Photograph courtesy of Carol Mahler

The Selby House aka Clark Family Home

We appreciate Chris Reesor of Rebuilding Together Greater Florida for helping Carol Mahler to move hand-made historic windows and some original wood-frame screens replaced at the Selby House, 513 E. Hickory St., and we thank Charlotte Behavioral Health Care (CBHC) for donating them to the Society! CBHC is “our area’s largest not-for-profit provider of community-based behavioral health care, offering a full range of mental health services and substance use disorder treatment in Port Charlotte, Punta Gorda, Englewood, North Port, Sarasota, and DeSoto and Lee Counties” (<https://www.cbhcf.org>).

On January 1, 1923, Jack and Nan Clark purchased the home from, and signed a mortgage with, the DeSoto Building and Development Company. The Clark family house has characteristics of the “bungalow style”-- a low-pitched roof,

broad eaves with brackets, and masonry piers supporting the front porch roof. After talking with the Clarks’ youngest son Jack who was born in Sarasota in 1926, Carol wrote an article about the home’s history that is featured in *Recollections IV: A Collection of Historical Photographs, Documents, Letters, Diaries, Stories, Recipes, Sayings, and Other Memorabilia* about Arcadia and DeSoto County, Florida. Copies of the publication are available through the Website or from select downtown merchants.



Chris Reesor of Rebuilding Together Greater Florida stands next to the van, donated in part by the Selby Foundation, that he used to help Carol Mahler move historic hand-made windows and screens from The Selby House, formerly the Clark Family home, donated by Charlotte Behavioral Health Care to the Society. —Photograph courtesy of Carol Mahler

Gratitude For Donations

We are grateful to Tom and Sandy Peterson for their generous donations of \$250.00 in 2025 and \$500.00 in 2024! We also appreciate them as longtime members and supporters of the Society.

Gratitude and Thanks



A Certificate of Appreciation was also presented to Dylan Tindall for sharing a brief history of DeSoto Memorial Hospital with the Society at our June meeting.

—Photograph courtesy of Linda Keen

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Gratitude For Donations

We thank Sheila Siddiqui for her donation of \$100.00 for material about her grandfather, Tom Anderson (1899-1950), in the Howard and Velma Melton Historical Research Library, that Carol Mahler scanned and sent to her. She wrote, "My grandfather passed on November 11, 1950, so this picture of him in his patrol car was probably one of his last photographs, since this article is from Oct. 5, 1950.

"My grandmother, Alice Anderson (Mrs. Anderson) in the article would tell us stories of working in the jail, because the family (my grandparents, my mother, Vivian (as a teenager) and my uncle Tommy, (as a teenager), lived in the same building but on a different floor, from what I understand. My grandmother told us our grandfather (Sheriff Anderson), died from a heart attack when he was driving his patrol car to a call and the car ran into a ditch when he suffered his heart attack."

Although Sheriff Tom Anderson suffered from a heart attack on Oct. 29, he did not die until two weeks later on Nov. 11, 1950. Carol Mahler scanned the clipping of his obituary, published in The Arcadian newspaper, and sent it to his granddaughter Sheila Siddiqui.

Appreciation For Newsletter

When Beverly Bateman renewed her membership, she included this note: "The newsletter is very enjoyable and well done! Congrats!"

**Tom Anderson,
County Sheriff,
Died Saturday**

Courtesy of the DeSoto County Historical Society

**Officer Suffered
Heart Attack
On September 29**
11-16-50

Tom Anderson, who was serving his second term as DeSoto County sheriff, died early last Saturday afternoon at Arcadia General Hospital where he had been a patient for the last two weeks. Sheriff Anderson suffered a heart attack on October 29, and was carried to the hospital. Late last week his condition was reported as somewhat improved, but he was suddenly stricken again shortly after noon on Saturday, and died within a few minutes.

Thomas Milton Anderson was a native of DeSoto County, and was born September 23, 1899. He spent his entire lifetime in this community, and was considered among the top law enforcement officers in this state. Before being elected sheriff in 1944, he served on the

TOM ANDERSON

police force of the City of Arcadia, and was Chief of the Department when he was chosen as county sheriff. He had also served as a

Gratitude from Scholarship Recipient

"Dear DeSoto County Historical Society:

"I am writing to express my gratitude to this organization for taking the time to read my scholarship application and selecting me for the DeSoto County Historical Society's Scholarship. I am truly honored to have been selected and grateful for your support.

"As someone who is pursuing a major in nursing, this scholarship will significantly impact my ability to further my education by finishing my Associate of Arts degree and then transferring to university to pursue a Bachelor of Science in Nursing. I am committed to my goals and will continue to strive and hope to give back to my community in the future as you have supported me. Thank you so much for your support.

"Sincerely, Luz Maria Hernandez-Casimiro"

Recipient of the Society's \$1,000 scholarship, Luz Maria Hernandez-Casimiro kindly donated her time and talents volunteering



at two Pioneer Days and shared her graduation photograph for this newsletter.

—Photograph provided

**MANATEE
GENEALOGICAL
SOCIETY**

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

Speaker: Rebecca Whitman Koford
"Becoming Betsey: Find Female Ancestors with Cluster Research"

Zoom Meeting Tuesday,
September 9, 2025

10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. EST

For more information & link: Email:

info@mgsfl.org