



DeSoto County Historical Society News

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

www.historicdesoto.org

June 2026

This issue sponsored by - Michelle, Dan, & Dow in loving memory
of our parents, Eddie & Iris Garner.

Letter from the President

Dear Members,

You are cordially invited to our next membership meeting of the DeSoto County Historical Society on **Monday, June 15, 2026, at 12:00 p.m.** in the **McSwain Room at DeSoto Memorial Hospital.**

As part of the ongoing **America 250 Speaker Series**, the committee is pleased to present **Mr. Dave Williams**, who will share an engaging program on the **origins of the Tax Appraiser's Office in DeSoto County**. His presentation promises to shed light on an important chapter of our county's governmental and community development.

A **delicious complimentary "down home" meal** will be provided for all attendees, and we look forward to enjoying good food, fellowship, and local history together.

Thank you for your continued support of the Society and its mission to preserve and celebrate the rich heritage of DeSoto County. We look forward to seeing you on June 15.

Warm regards,

Adrian H. Cline

President, DeSoto County Historical Society

ALL UPCOMING DATES

June 9—Update of the County's Comp Plan—See page 6

June 12—Summer Reading Quest at DC Library—Page 4

June 15—Member Meeting—Details above

June 19—Juneteenth Walk—Page 5

July 4—AMS Arcadia Rodeo Display—Page 4

July 4—Downtown Evening Parade—Page 4

July 7—Manatee Genealogical Society Zoom—Page 7

July 8—Summer Reading Quest at DC Library—Page 4

MAY WRAP UP

MES Third Graders Visit The Museum

Thanks to the Memorial Elementary School third graders who donated a total of \$266.00 for their visits to the Ingraham House Museum for hands-on activities on May 18 and 19, including clothes washing, using a pitcher pump and learning about outhouses, making rubbings of the Florida native plants the pioneers used, stuffing the mattress and learning about chamber pots, writing with a dip pen and typewriter,

designing quilt patterns and rolling dough and using cookie cutters! We appreciate Carol Mahler and Valerie Carter for working together to

organize the activities and classes, and we thank all the MES third-grade teachers for bringing their students: Valerie Carter, Heather Chandler, Ashley Grimaldi, Julia Holliday, Shirley Howell, Paige Whitlock, and Christina Zolkos.

—Cont. next 2 pages



MES Third Graders Visit The Museum

—Con't from pg. 1

We are grateful to the following volunteers for helping with the hands-on activities: Kathy Apodaca, Kathy Bryce, Tracy Dillon, Cindy Ely, Nancy “Eric” Erickson, Linda Keen, Vernon Keen, Bobbie Mears, Chelsea Palmer, Karen Smoke, and Keith Wallace. We appreciate Dylan Tindall for taking photographs on May 18, and Carol for taking photos on both days. Our special thanks goes to those who helped to prepare for the visits: Jahna Leonard, Carol Mahler, and Duffy O'Donnell as well as those



who came to help with clean up on May 18 so that everyone could attend the Board meeting: Ron Jones, Sr., and Duffy.



—Photographs
this page and
previous page by
Carol Mahler



MES Third Graders Visit The Museum

—Con't from pg. 2



Tracy Dillon, owner of Riven Oak Farm, volunteered to help the students learn about native plants. She shared the following comments: “While the leaves of native plants were unfamiliar to most, several kids recognized leaves that they’d seen at their grandparents’ house. Grape and elderberry were the most familiar, and they liked the idea of jams and jellies. A few had teas or cough syrups made from native plants (by Aunts and Grandmas, usually). Several discussed the plants that their livestock like to eat.

“Only few were familiar with rubbings, so the moment the veins of the leaves started to appear on their papers seemed like magic to them. We talked about how this technique could be used on other textured items, like gravestones, for documenting history and—in the case of leaves and plants—identification.

“I thoroughly enjoyed my first experience as a volunteer at the John Morgan Ingraham House Museum. The Society made volunteering easy: all the materials and information we needed were provided. Cards with native plant leaves included age-appropriate descriptions of the uses of the plants on the back. The third-graders were good readers and helped each other with the few unfamiliar words. All the background information was provided on sheets that could be read aloud or retold in my own words. No special knowledge was needed. The hands-on activities kept students busy and engaged, and the five-minute time the students spent at each station was perfect—long enough to explore the topic without students getting fidgety.”



Photographs this page—Top left, bottom left and top right by Carol Mahler.

Second and third above by Dylan Tindall.

More photos on page 8.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Summer Reading Quest: Local History

The DeSoto County Library's Summer Reading Quest Program begins on June 5, and the Society will participate on two dates: at 10:30 a.m., on June 12, to present the history of animal branding; and at 1:00 p.m., on July 8, to show Arcadia as a Train Town. If you would like to volunteer, please contact Carol Mahler.

Please Share Your Arcadia Rodeo Artifacts

At the request of the Arcadia Main Street (AMS) organization, the Society will set up a mini-museum in the new Arcadia Main Street office at 17 N. Polk Ave., that will feature a history of the July 4 Arcadia Rodeo, so the Society invites everyone to bring their Arcadia Rodeo memorabilia for the one-day display during AMS's America 250 July 4th Celebration Arcadia Market: 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on July 4.

The event will include vendors, food trucks, and live music in the Tree of Knowledge Park and along Oak St. in downtown Arcadia. AMS will also have a window decorating contest with a People's Choice Award. In addition, between 3:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m. on July 4, AMS will cut the ribbon for the new downtown murals at 29 S. Polk Ave. and 14 E. Oak St..

If you have memorabilia or artifacts about the July 4th Arcadia Rodeo to share, please contact Carol Mahler.

Independence Day Parade

The Arcadia Moose Lodge is sponsoring the Independence Day Parade, and unlike in years past, it will start at 6:30 p.m.! Thanks to Cindy McLeod Ely for organizing the Society's entry: our covered wagon with walkers alongside it. If you'd like to join in the fun, please contact Cindy at 863-990-7899 or cmely26@hotmail.com.

CLICK THIS BUTTON TO SEND AN EMAIL TO CINDY TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT WALKING IN THE 4TH OF JULY PARADE.



CLICK THIS BUTTON TO SEND AN EMAIL TO CAROL TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT VOLUNTEERING AT THE LIBRARY PROGRAMS OR LENDING ARTIFACTS FOR THE RODEO DISPLAY.

Historical Society Newsletter Sponsors

Jan. - **Adrian and Jane Cline** in loving memory of **Howard and Celia Sorrells.**

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

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

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. - **Adrian and Jane Cline** in loving memory of **Ada Carlton Cline, Adrian B. Cline, Hazel G. Cline**, and **Donna Faye Cline.**

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 June-July-August.

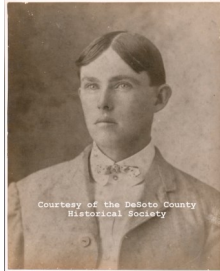
The Howard and Velma Melton Historical Research Library in the **Ingraham Seed House**
120 W Whidden Street

Open by appointment only:

Research assistance available. 863-266-5774

"I Wonder Wednesday" on Facebook

On May 13, we posted a photograph of an unknown man, and Gaila Adams responded that the man resembles Roy Petteway, Sr., of Wauchula.



On May 20, known as Emancipation Day or Freedom Day because that was the day in 1865 that the Emancipation Proclamation was read in Florida after the Confederate States of America surrendered Tallahassee to the U.S., we posted an unknown photograph of an African-American man sitting in a two-wheeled cart pulled by two oxen. Save Southern Heritage Florida responded that "... real freedom came through ratification of the 13th Amendment to the Constitution in Dec. 1865."



On May 27, we posted two photographs of women—one in a straw hat and one in an off-the-shoulder dress. Greg Mayfield, president of Southern Water and Soil Septic System Experts, responded that the woman



is Maude Stribling Ingraham (1883-1929), wife of John Morgan Ingraham.



Juneteenth

On September 22, 1862, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States of America, issued "The Emancipation Proclamation" stating, "... all persons held as slaves within any State or designated part of a State, the people whereof shall be in rebellion against the United States, shall be then, thenceforward, and forever free."

Texas was the last Southern state to hear about the Emancipation Proclamation when U.S. Major General Gordon Granger and his regiment arrived in Galveston on June 19, and announced that slavery had ended. The first official Juneteenth celebration was held in 1866 in Texas and its observance has spread across the United States from then to the present time.

Juneteenth is an elision of June 19th and is also known as Juneteenth Independence Day, Freedom Day, Jubilee Day, and Liberation Day, and commemorates the end of slavery in the United States.

A holiday of observance in Florida, Juneteenth is now a national holiday as well as the oldest national commemoration of the end of slavery, uniting our country in celebrating freedom for all, including the passage in 1865 of the 13th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution abolishing slavery in the United States.

Society Will Contribute To Juneteenth Display

The Sisterhood of Shiloh Missionary Baptist Church will celebrate Juneteenth with a "Juneteenth Walk" at the DeSoto County Library, 125 N. Hillsborough Ave., from 11 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. on Friday, June 19. "The Walk" is a metaphor for "walking through history" or a timeline of "the journey" from Africans to African Americans. The Society will contribute some local history to the display.

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Take the Mobile-Friendly,
Online, Self-Guided
Tour of Historic
Downtown Arcadia

What's Your Vision of Our County?

You're invited to a workshop with the Board of County Commissioners to discuss the update of the County's Comprehensive Plan (Comp Plan) to 2050. Scheduled at 1:00 p.m. on June 9 in the County Administration Building, 201 E. Oak St., the workshop will include an opportunity for public comment. If you've ever agreed or disagreed with the Board's decision about what development to allow or reject, this is the time to share your thoughts and/or your vision for the County's future.

as well as the provision of public services and facilities." Changing conditions in the County, surrounding regions, and the State have made the current Comp Plan outdated or inadequate.

Jennifer Codo-Salisbury, director of the Central Florida Regional Planning Council (CFRPC), wrote, "The Comp Plan's goals, objectives and policies reflect the County's vision for the future and how it will meet the needs of existing and future residents, visitors, and businesses. The Plan informs decision-making and guides growth and development."



You may also share your ideas through a survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/desoto2050>. The survey asks questions, such as "What do you love about DeSoto County? What should change? Where should growth occur? How to preserve rural character? [and] What services are needed?"

Our County adopted its first Comprehensive Plan in 1991, and it was last updated in 2004. In addition, an "Evaluation and Appraisal Report" (EAR) is required every seven years so that local governments may assess and update their CP to guide future growth. Our County completed an EAR in 1998 and in 2009.

The Comp Plan is "the blueprint to guide the development of land, economic growth, resource protection,

For more information, contact Jennifer Codo-Salisbury, jcodosalisbury@cfrpc.org or at (863) 534-7130 ext. 178 or check the Comp Plan Update Website at <https://www.cfrpc.org/desoto-county-comprehensive-plan>

This is a great opportunity for high school and college students to get involved and think about what kind of community they want to raise their families in...or even look into some of the career options in planning and community development. —Ed.

Museum Included In New Wayfinding Signs

In 2025, the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) awarded a \$25,000.00 Community Challenge grant to the Arcadia Main Street (AMS) program. The grant category is “Enhancing pedestrian safety by creating safer streets and sidewalks, with a focus on people age 50-plus, with funding support from Toyota Motors North America.”

The AMS project “will install pedestrian-friendly wayfinding signage in downtown Arcadia. The signs will highlight key destinations, historical sites, and cultural landmarks.” Now the signs have been installed downtown and two of them point the way to the Ingraham House Museum! The Society thanks Arcadia Main Street for including the Museum in this downtown improvement.



At the intersection of Oak St. and Monroe Ave., the John Morgan Ingraham House Museum is included in the wayfinding sign

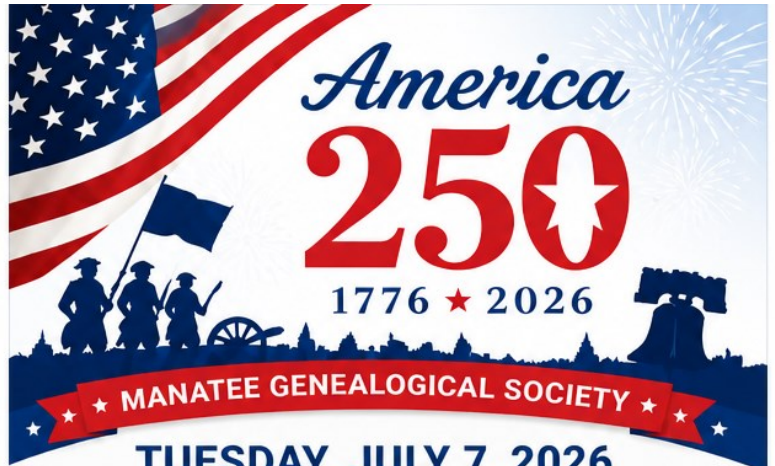
that is part of the AARP Community Challenge Grant awarded to Arcadia Main Street.

— Photograph courtesy of Carol Mahler.

Special Thanks

We appreciate Paul Seusy, a Pioneer Day sponsor for many years, for sending a thank-you card to the Society, postmarked Feb. 12, 2026, with the following note: Dear Carol—Thank you for your tireless work for the Historical Society.”

Attend A Free Zoom Event



MANATEE GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

TUESDAY, JULY 7, 2026
10:00 AM – 12:00 PM EST
 ★ ZOOM-ONLY EVENT ★

PROGRAM TITLE:
“Your Revolutionary War Ancestor: A Case Study”
PRESENTED BY CRAIG R. SCOTT



A Revolutionary War ancestor can be a goldmine of information if you know where to look. This lecture aims to examine types of service, compiled military service records, pension applications, settled accounts, and where other documents can be found using a step-by-step methodology in a case study.

Craig Roberts Scott, MA, CG, FUGA is the President and CEO of Heritage Books, Inc. A professional genealogical and historical researcher for more than forty years, he specializes in records of the National Archives, especially those that relate to the military. He has coordinated the Military tracks at IGHR, SLIG, and GRIP in years past. He is currently the Coordinator of the SLIG Consultation Track, helping students solve their brick wall problems.

Following the presentation, stay online for our **“Members Helping Members” session.** ★

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC – ADVANCE REGISTRATION REQUIRED
 To attend, non-members must register at least one day in advance by emailing:
info@mgsfl.org

★ ★ **<https://mgsfl.org>** ★ ★

info@mgsfl.org
<https://mgsfl.org>

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.



Having fun and creating memories...



...And learning too!
—Photographs by Dylan Tindall
and Carol Mahler

