



DeSoto County Historical Society News

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

www.historicdesoto.org

January 2024

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

Meeting Notice

Our January Member Meeting will be held Saturday, January 20, 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the **Arcadia Tourist Camp Centennial Celebration Open House** at the City Mobile Home Park, with the City of Arcadia, City Mobile Homeowners Association and a display of photographs and artifacts by the DeSoto County Historical Society. Free to attend, BBQ available for \$5.00 while supplies last, courtesy of the City of Arcadia. Come learn about the history of Arcadia and DeSoto County becoming a haven for snowbirds.

The Board of Directors meeting will be held on Monday, January 15, at noon in the McSwain Room of DMH.



The City of Arcadia,
City Mobile Home Park Homeowners Association,
and the DeSoto County Historical Society
present the



Arcadia Tourist Camp Centennial Celebration Open House

at the City Mobile Home Park
US 17 & Maine Street
1:00 p.m. to 5 p.m., Sat., Jan 20

BBQ for \$5.00/plate while supplies last, courtesy of the City of Arcadia.
Historical display courtesy of Society.
Courtesy of the DeSoto County Historical Society

The Society will consider this event as their Jan. Meeting.

DESOTOPARK ARCADIA FLA. JAN 12-24



Photograph courtesy of the DeSoto County Historical Society
Barbecue at the Arcadia Tourist Camp

Successful Holiday Tour

We sold 96 tickets for the Holiday Tour of Historic Homes and Buildings on Dec. 9! Thanks to the following for selling tickets for us: Crews Bank and Trust, Member FDIC; Glass, Antique or Not; and Team Arcadia at the McSwain Arts and Cultural Learning Center; and to Linda Keen and Nancy Humphries on the night of the tour.

We appreciate all the owners who so generously and graciously opened their beautiful historic homes to our tour participants: Dr. Kerry Keiser of 606 E. Oak St., John DeGelleke and Marti Royo of 321 E. Oak St.; Allen and Linda Reesor of 313 W. Oak St.; the Twelve Tribes of 607 W. Oak St.; Carl and Barbara DeLory of 223 N. Monroe Ave.



—Continued on pg 3

We are grateful if you have recently renewed your membership or joined since September, 2023—You are covered for all of 2024.

Dues Past Due

The Society's annual dues are due on Jan. 1, so please renew your membership at your earliest convenience: bring cash or a check to the Museum or the membership meeting; mail your check or money order to P.O. Box 1824, Arcadia, FL 34265; or use the "donate now" button on historicdesoto.org to use your credit card or PayPal. Our members are the heart of our organization, so we look forward to your renewal.

Thank you for your support!

A Message From The President

Dear Members of the DeSoto
County Historical Society:

What a tremendous privilege it is to be a member and serve this historical society. As a lifelong DeSoto educator, I was frequently asked by my students to explain why I incorporated the history of this county and our country in my lessons. As one example, when I talked about Ernest Hemingway in my English classes, I would also discuss World War I and World War II, its impact on America, and how DeSoto County contributed to world events. At the end of our discussion, many of my students understood the importance of community support at Carlstrom Field and Dorr Field.

From research on the importance of the study of local history, the following points emerge again and again:

- *The study of local history helps us understand the context and culture of our own communities, as well as the challenges and opportunities they face.*
- *The study of local history enriches our appreciation of the diversity and complexity of human experiences across time and space.*
- *The study of local history fosters critical thinking and civic engagement by encouraging us to question, analyze, and evaluate historical sources and interpretations.*

Research concludes that by studying local history, we can learn more about ourselves, our communities, and our place in the world. This is why the DeSoto County Historical Society and your membership in this organization are so important to our community.

As a postscript, I have been so proud to see some of my former students become members and past officers of the historical society.

Adrian H. Cline, President

The Burton Family Foundation

Thanks to the Burton Family Foundation of Tampa, Florida, for the \$2,000 donation! The Society did not apply for—nor expect—this generous gift that we very much appreciate. If anyone knows how the Foundation selected the Society to receive this contribution, please contact Carol Mahler.

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.**

Contact Information

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John Morgan Ingraham House Museum

300 N Monroe Avenue

MUSEUM OPEN:

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

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

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Successful Holiday Tour

We are grateful to Dr. Bobby Bennett for donating the use of the Family Service Center and Annex as our “home base” and this year’s “building” on the tour, and to Kathy Severson for hosting us. Thanks to the following JROTC cadets for serving as docents at the 1925 West Elementary School, 1906 DeSoto County High School, and monument for the 1914 DeSoto High School: Isabella Ayala, Nicholas Casteel, Jose Delgado, Lee Jones, Natalye Martinez, Immanuel McKnight, Lucas Rollins, Saria Saunders, and James Thursby.



Wendy Garcia, Katherine Orozco & Regina Hudson help prepare the museum for the tour.

We appreciate Karen Smoke for designing such an attractive flyer for the Holiday Tour of Historic Homes & Buildings, and to René Collins, Elizabeth Kenney, and Carol Mahler for distributing flyers, and to Carol for writing and sending press releases. We are grateful to Kathy Bryce and Carol for researching the history of the homes, and to Carol for writing and designing the Holiday Tour brochure and narrations for all the structures.

Thanks to Carol Mahler, Ron Baynes, and JROTC Cadets Wendy Garcia, Xander Heyne, Regina Hudson, Lee Jones, Immanuel McKnight, and Katherine Orozco for cleaning and decorating the Museum on the morning of the tour. We appreciate Nancy “Eric” Erickson for preparing the luminaries and poinsettias, and delivering them to each home on the tour.



Above—JROTC cadets Joel Camacho and Jake Lowry served as docents that evening. Member Tonya Border welcomed guests and helped with tours



—Photos left column by Carol Mahler, right column by Susan

From left—Immanuel McKnight, Regina Hudson, Col. Ron Baynes, Lee

Jones, Katherine Orozco, Xander Heyne, and Wendy Garcia.



—More photos and continued on pg 8

Induction of Officers and Directors

Thanks to Sheriff Jim Potter, far right, for inducting the Society officers and directors at the December meeting, from left, Stella Parker, Vice-President Vernon Keen, Ellen Hutson, Treasurer Nancy “Eric” Erickson, Ruth Dunn, Luke Wilson, Secretary René Collins, Jeff Griffis, President Adrain Cline, Marsha Kransdorf, and Past President Norma Banas.



Banas Thanked For Her Service

President Adrian Cline presented a bouquet of flowers and a certificate of appreciate to our outgoing president Norma Banas for her two years of service. She will continue on the Board as “immediate past president.”



Mahler Thanked For Her Service

President Adrian Cline presented a bouquet of flowers and a card signed by the Board of Directors to Carol Mahler for all the work that she does for the Society.

Christmas Parade

We are grateful to Cindy McLeod Ely for decorating the wagon for the Society’s entry to the Christmas parade. Thanks to James Hampton for driving the truck to pull the wagon, Zane Dyal and Cindy for walking and handing out candy, and to Carol Mahler and Valerie Sciarretta for carrying the banner.



Photo at right—From left, President Adrian Cline, Ruth Dunn, Linda Keen, and Vice-President Vernon Keen.

Celebrating Arcadia’s 137th Birthday!

We are grateful to Carol Mahler for baking a reduced version of a Gingerbread Pound Cake from a 1881 recipe in “A Taste of History with Joyce White: Fifty Years in a Maryland Kitchen,” and for Adrian Cline, Nancy “Eric” Erickson, Linda Keen, Vernon Keen, and Ruth Dunn for helping her distribute two-bite slices to the City Council members and audience at the Dec. 5 meeting to celebrate the 137th anniversary of the incorporation of the Town of Arcadia on Dec. 6, 1886. Thanks to Carol for also reading the actual incorporations proceedings as recorded in the Manatee County records. (Remember that DeSoto County was formed in 1887.)



Commemorating Pearl Harbor Day

Thanks to President Adrian Cline for graciously accepting the role of “guest speaker” from American Legion K Post 11 Commander Ron Jones, Sr., at the commemoration of Pearl Harbor Day held on the 1924 Peace River bridge on Dec. 7. He opened the ceremony, and Chaplain Ray Dennison gave the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

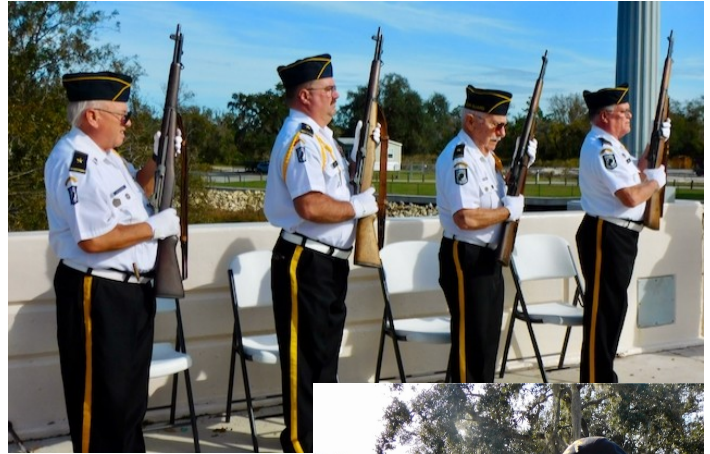
Cline talked about the impact of Pearl Harbor Day on Arcadia and DeSoto County, and how residents reacted. He referred to the Dec. 11, 1941, “Arcadian” newspaper—the first issue that followed the tragic event—revealing the “type of strength shown in this community.” He noted that President Franklin Roosevelt’s declaration of war was heard by school children on the radio for the first time in history, and they had plenty of questions—as did the adults.



He gave the statistics of those who died and were wounded in the attack on Pearl Harbor as well as the total military and civilian deaths during World War II estimated at 420,000. “That’s quite a price to pay for freedom and democracy,” he said.



American Legion Member Bob Thomas recalled the attack on Pearl Harbor that occurred when he was ten years old. Thomas and Cline threw a wreath—dedicated to the memory those who died in the attack on Pearl Harbor—into Peace River. Then, Dennison, Ron Jones, Jr., Thomas, and Jones, Sr., fired a gun salute, and Legion Member Art Southwell played “Taps.”



Above—Chaplain Ray Dennison, Ron Jones, Jr., Bob Thomas, and Ron Jones, Sr., fired a gun salute.

Left—President Adrian Cline provided the keynote speech.

Right—Art Southwell playing “Taps.”



Below, left—American Legion Member Bob Thomas and Adrian Cline threw a wreath—dedicated to the memory those who died in the attack on Pearl Harbor—into Peace River.

—Photos by Carol Mahler

Grave Restoration

Thanks to the Mike Tyson for donating the labor and materials for a coat of stucco for Morgan Bonaparte “Bone” Mizell’s grave cover in Joshua Creek Cemetery. We also appreciate Larry Johnston for paying Breanne Simpson, “The Grave Maid,” to clean the tombstone and grave cover, so that the new stucco could be applied.



DeSoto County Fair: Bounty of the County

The Society will have a display-only booth at the 2024 DeSoto County Fair, February 2 through Feb. 10, and we need help designing, assembling and setting it up. Please contact Carol Mahler to help.



Mark Your Calendars For May Day!

As part of the “bigger and better” 2024 Suncoast Remake Learning Days Festival, April 20 to May 4, the Society will hold a “Hands On History” event from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. on Wed., May 1, 2024, at the Arcadia Housing Authority, 7 Booker T. Washington Rd. in Arcadia. We’ll be dip-pen writing, typewriting, cane pole fishing, orange juicing, making a bucket brigade, and more! To join in the fun, please call or email Carol Mahler.



Calling High School Seniors

The Society awards scholarships to DeSoto County students to help with further education. Volunteer hours with the Society are necessary, so look for the volunteer buttons on this page and click to send an email to Carol to learn more about opportunities. Students should contact the high school guidance department to get a copy of the application form. Students attending virtual school or private school are also eligible: please contact [Carol Mahler](mailto:Carol.Mahler@desotocountyhistoricalsociety.org).

Here is another scholarship opportunity that can be applied for online:

Click link for the flyer: <https://selbyfdn.org/scholarship-eligibility/>

Online application, <https://selbyfdn.org/scholarship-application/>, opens on **Monday, January 1, 2024**, and closes on **Friday, March 1, 2024**, at 4:59PM EST.

For more information contact Scholarships and Special Projects Manager for the William G. and Marie Selby Foundation **Kiarra Womack**, kwomack@selbyfdn.org.



Save the date!

20th Annual

DeSoto County Historical Society

PAST • PRESENT • FUTURE
ARCADIA, FLORIDA

Pioneer Day

March 23, 2024

with the Arcadia American Legion sponsored Antique Tractor, Vintage Car and Hot & Miss Engine Show

Turner Agri-Civic Center, 2250 NE Roan St., Arcadia

863-266-5776 • desotocountyhistoricalsociety@gmail.com

www.historicdesoto.org • Like us on Facebook!

In Centennial
Commemoration
of the Arcadia
Tourist Camp



In Memoriam: Kathleen Ingraham Kuhns

We send our sympathy to Kimberly Kuhns Singh, Brenda Kuhns Neuman, and their families on the death of their mother, Kathleen Ingraham Kuhns. Born in 1946, she is the only child of John Morgan Ingraham, Jr., and Hazel Grimes Ingraham. Kathleen married Howard Kuhns and served as vice-president of his company, Kuhns Engineering Corp., established in 1981.

She and her family visited her grandfather until his death in 1980, in his house—now our museum. After Hurricane Charley trashed the house in August 2004, she wrote four applications for four different grants—totaling \$158,000—from Florida's Department of State, Division of Historical Resources, so that the Society could restore the home. Her applications were always top-ranked, and she supervised the work which was always completed on or before the deadline. She and Howard also bought the property east of the Museum for back taxes, and they donated it to the Society.

Kathleen and her family attended the grand opening of the Museum in 2014, and the day before, she and Carol Mahler painted the bathroom—one of the last pieces to be finished. She and Howard spent many hours trying to solve the problem of installing a HVAC system for the Museum. Over the years, she shared her expertise, memories, photos and more, and she arranged for the Ingraham/Langford Family Reunion at the Museum in April 2018. She died on Oct. 16, 2023. She and her husband will be buried in the Ingraham Family plot in Oak Ridge Cemetery at a later date.

In Memoriam: Beverly Charlene Jones

Beverly Charlene Jones was born on April 7, 1959, to David and Jerry Nathe in Dade City, Florida. Since she was a small child, she had lived in the community of Arcadia and then left to follow her work career. She was a member of the 1st Presbyterian Church. In high school she belonged to 4-H, Sub Debs, and the National Honor Society.

Later in life, she moved back to Arcadia and became involved with American Legion Riders, Auxiliary, and the Order of the Confederate Rose. She loved the Brew Crew coffee group and her many, many friends. Beverly enjoyed swimming, boating, traveling, camping, and fishing. She also loved blues music and dancing. She died on October 21, 2023.

She is survived by her husband Ronald Jones, her mother Jerry Fisher Nathe, son Steven Winhoven and brother David (Jeb Bush) Nathe of South Carolina.

From Our Sister Societies



Finding Your Elusive Ancestors
VIRTUAL SEMINAR
January 27, 2024, 10:00 a.m. – 4:15 p.m. (EST)
\$40 – Members; \$50 – Non-members

Register at: <https://mgsfl.org/store.php?sid=6>



Prizes!

Four Fantastic Speakers!



Steve Little, "A.I. and Genealogy: The Basics and a Bit Beyond"
Begin exploring the power of Artificial Intelligence, its limits and how it can be harnessed for genealogy. Discover how Large Language Models enhance efficiency, productivity & creativity. Unravel real-world use cases of A.I. tools in OCR cleanup, data extraction, narrative report cleanup and translations. Learn about the exciting future of A.I. in genealogy!



David Allen Lambert, "Adopting the Regiment: Researching & Recreating Your Ancestor's Revolutionary War Unit." When it comes to finding the full story of your patriot ancestor, it's important to broaden the scope of your research. This presentation will discuss how to "adopt the regiment" and find the story of your ancestor through the words and experiences of fellow veterans, using muster rolls, crew lists, pensions, affidavits, diaries, and other materials to piece together your revolutionary roots.



Diana Elder, AG®, "Who's Her Daddy? Testing an Ancestry DNA ThruLine Hypothesis for a Female Ancestor" Tracing the ancestry of a female born in the early 19th century is one of the most difficult research challenges. When no record actually names a father, discover how documentary records, a migration study, and DNA evidence can confirm a hypothesis in this pre-1850 case study.



Nicole Dyer, "Strategies for Overcoming Genealogy Roadblocks" When you hit a roadblock in your genealogy research, how can you find what you need to make progress? Discover how to stick to a research process, analyze clues, and use the FamilySearch Catalog to identify new records to search, gather hints from DNA cousin matches, and locate sources that are only available on-site.

Programs may be in-person, virtual or hybrid; free or for a modest charge. Check out their full calendar at: <https://mgsfl.org/eventListings.php?nm=34>

"Kickback"

Music at History Park

live music. Food truck. Byob chair and beverage

Wednesday, January 24, 2024
5:00 to 7:00 p.m.

Paul Cottrell

More events: www.puntagordahistory.com/events



Music the 2nd & 4th Wednesday of the month November through May.

In lieu of admission fees, the Punta Gorda Historical Society requests your donations for the ongoing maintenance of our buildings.

Thank you

Located at:
History Park, 501 Shreve Street, Punta Gorda FL 33950
www.puntagordahistory.com
Hosted by the Punta Gorda Historical Society

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Successful Holiday Tour

We are grateful to the following for serving as docents at the homes: Norma Banas, Tonya Bordner, Kathy Bryce, René Collins, Nancy “Eric” Erickson, Vernon Keen, Marsha Kransdorf, Jahna Leonard, Pam Miller, Stella Parker, Sydalee Parker, Valerie Sciarretta, Keith Wallace, and JROTC Cadets Joel Camacho, Jake Lowry, Selina Montes, and Trenton Swindle.



Thanks to Trent Anthoney of Canoe Outpost for donating buses and drivers for the event: himself, John Bragg, and Jessica Newhart. We appreciate Jeff Griffis, Carol Mahler, and Claire Miller for serving as docents on the buses, and to Susan Hoffman for donating her time and expertise to photograph the entire event.



We are grateful to Joshua Citrus for donating juice and fresh fruit for the refreshments at the Museum, to Jahna Leonard and Claire Miller for preparing the fruit, and to Carol Mahler for serving as chairperson of this event.



From lavishly landscaped and decorated exteriors to carefully appointed interior areas, all the homes and buildings on the tour delighted guests on the tour.

—Photos this page by
Susan Hoffman

Carol Mahler regaled tour goers with the history and past ownership of the homes on the tour.

Thank you Carol for putting together another great tour.



Please Volunteer For The Museum

If you enjoy meeting people and sharing our local history with them, then please consider becoming a volunteer at the Museum. You may read or talk from the narrations for each room as you guide visitors through the Museum. If you want to help, please contact Carol Mahler.

