



DeSoto County Historical Society News

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

www.historicdesoto.org

December 2024

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

UPCOMING EVENTS

Happy Birthday To The City!

The Society will celebrate the 138th birthday of the City of Arcadia at the start of the Council meeting scheduled at **6:00 p.m.** on **Tues., Dec. 3**, in the Council Chambers, 23 N. Polk Ave., in Arcadia. Society members will serve a bite of a cake baked from a historic recipe to everyone in honor of the story of how Arcadia received its name. Be sure to attend this fun and festive occasion marking when the Town of Arcadia was incorporated on Dec. 6, 1886.

In 1883, when the new settlement on the east shore of Peace River applied for a post office, the pioneers gathered to choose a name. Supposedly, the Rev. James Madison Hendry (1839-1922) suggested "Arcadia" in appreciation for Arcadia Matilda Albritton Coker (1860-1932), the woman who baked a cake for him when he stayed overnight at her parents' home as he traveled with his sawmill to the new settlement. He wanted to honor and repay her kindness by naming the new town for her.

Sat., Dec 7—10 a.m.—Pearl Harbor Day Memorial Ceremony—
1924 Peace River Bridge

Pearl Harbor Memorial Ceremony

December 7, 2024 10:00 am
Old Peace River Bridge

Sponsored by
American Legion Post K-11
DeSoto County Historical Society
Public Invited

Member Meeting:

Monday, December 16

DeSoto Memorial Hospital -
McSwain Room
Room open at 11:30 a.m.
Meeting 12 noon

David Williams, DeSoto County
Property Appraiser, will install the 2025
officers and board.

Thanks to Adrian for arranging a
concert for us for our Dec. meeting by
the DeSoto Middle School choir!



Sat., Dec 7—6 p.m.
Christmas Parade—Oak Street

Join us for this night parade—
bring wearable battery operated
holiday lights if you have them.
Meet on Orange Ave by 5:30 p.m.
near the Methodist Church.



ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES
are due January 1.
See back page for details.

NOVEMBER WRAP UP

Gratitude To The Barancik Foundation

We are grateful to the Charles and Margery Barancik Foundation of Sarasota for making a \$1,000.00 donation to the Society for the efforts of Carol Mahler who wrote a brief history of education in DeSoto County for them and an outline of her presentation. Then on Nov. 8, she regaled the staff and board of directors with some history of DeSoto County as they drove on a bus to Arcadia and then through downtown, to the Speer Center, middle school, high school, Mosaic Arena, and to All Faiths Food Bank Resource Center where they enjoyed a presentation and a tour of facility. Carol disembarked at the Louis and Gloria Flanzer Boys and Girls Club. We appreciate Nancy “Eric” Erickson for driving Carol to the Foundation’s offices so when she returned to Arcadia her car would be there as well.



Teri Hansen, President/CEO of the Barancik Foundation, wrote the following note to Carol: “You were so informative and such a delight to be with Friday as my board trekked to Arcadia. Thank you so much for sharing your knowledge with us and you got rave reviews on my board post-event survey.”

Above—Carol Mahler poses with the Barancik Foundation’s staff and Board of Directors outside of All Faiths Food Bank Resource Center in Arcadia.

Right—Society President Adrian Cline thanks Carol Mahler for her efforts that resulted in a \$1,000.00 donation to the Society from Barancik Foundation.

—Photograph courtesy of Dylan Tindall



Remembrance Day Observed

We appreciate Carol Mahler for presenting a brief history of Carlstrom Field and how the “British Plot” was established at Oak Ridge Cemetery during the Remembrance Day ceremony held on Nov. 10 by British-American Club of Englewood and the British-American Club of North Port and attended by the Senior British Military Advisor to the U.S. Central Command at MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa and the SBMA Team. The ceremony honored and remembered the 23 Royal Air Force (RAF) cadets who died during pilot training at Carlstrom Field in Arcadia and Riddle Field in Clewiston during World War II.

The ceremony was timed to include two minutes of silence when World War I ended at the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month (11:00 a.m., Nov. 11) also known as Armistice. Known in the United Kingdom as Remembrance Day and observed on the Sun. closest to Nov. 11, the anniversary was first marked as Armistice Day in the U.S. and since 1954, as Veterans Day. The only holiday that honors veterans in the UK is Remembrance Day.

Right—On Nov. 10, those assembled in Oak Ridge Cemetery for the Remembrance Day ceremony saluted the Union Flag during the playing of the British National Anthem.

Below—Senior British Military Advisor Air Vice Marshal Mark Chappell laid a poppy wreath at the base of the flag for the 23 RAF cadets buried in Oak Ridge Cemetery during the Remembrance Day ceremony. The poppy

became a symbol of remembrance because of the poem “In Flanders Fields” written by Canadian doctor Lt. Col. John McRae.



A Message From The President

**** Season's Greetings from the DeSoto County Historical Society! ****

As we gather to celebrate this festive season, we extend our heartfelt wishes to all our valued members of the DeSoto County Historical Society. May your holidays be filled with joy, warmth, and cherished moments with loved ones. Thank you for your unwavering support of this organization and dedication to preserving our rich Florida and DeSoto County history. We look forward to another year of sharing and celebrating our heritage together.

May 2025 be a year of growth, learning, and positive change. Let us support one another, cherish our shared moments, and strive to make a difference in our community. Together, we can create a brighter, more inclusive, and prosperous future.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year,

Adrian H. Cline

President, DeSoto County Historical Society

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.

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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
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

NOVEMBER WRAP UP—Con't

Veterans Day Parade

Thanks to Norma Banas for driving her truck in the Veterans Day Parade on Nov. 11 and to Carol Mahler and Nancy “Eric” Erickson for decorating Norma’s truck with our Veterans Day placards. (Special thanks to Allen and Linda Reesor for allowing us to park in their driveway on W. Oak St. to do the decoration.) We appreciate Carol and Karen Smoke for wearing their historic costumes and carrying a placard in one hand and the banner in the other and to Eric for carrying two placards.



We are grateful to Veterans Day Parade Chairman and Announcer Troy Hughes for awarding a trophy for “Best In Class” to us, and to his mother, Jackie Tucker, for her unflinching dedication to organizing the annual Veterans Day, Arcadia Rodeo, and Independence Day Parades.



—Photos courtesy of Carol Mahler

Suncoast Remake Learning Days 2025

Presented by the Suncoast Campaign for Grade-Level Reading, with the support of The Patterson Foundation, Suncoast Remake Learning Days (SRLD) is a 15-day, free, regional learning festival from Saturday, April 19, 2025, through Saturday, May 3, 2025, across Charlotte, DeSoto, Manatee, and Sarasota counties. This celebration highlights innovative experiences and opportunities for participants of all ages to develop their sense of creativity, perseverance, and curiosity.



Suncoast Remake Learning Days launched in 2022 across four counties with 150 free family events—including a “Hands-On History” event hosted by our Society. By 2024, the festival expanded from 10 to 15 days, featuring 304 events presented by 276 other community organizations and our Society.



We’re planning to participate in SRLD 2025 by offering “The Magic School Bus”—a fun way for families to learn about our local history while they travel to other SRLD events—and other activities. To volunteer click the orange button to send an email.



Norma’s red truck was the perfect vehicle for our parade entry. Never underestimate what Carol & crew can do with masking tape and binder clips!



NOVEMBER WRAP UP—Con't

First Graders Enjoy Field Trips To Museum

Thanks to Carol Mahler and Teacher Kalyn Browning for organizing two days of hands-on activities for the first grade classes from West Elementary School: learning about the history of chamber pots, lighting (candles and kerosene lamps), mattresses, outhouses, pitcher pumps, telegraph (and Morse Code), telephones, typewriting, washing clothes and hanging them on a line, and writing with a dip pen.

We appreciate the first grade teachers from West Elementary School for arranging for the field trips, with permission slips, chaperones, and more: Kalyn Browning, Deshay Burbidge, Ms. Galloway, Sherry Ritchie, and Jenny Rivera.

We are so grateful for our amazing volunteers who helped the students learn each activity: David Bryce, Kathy Bryce, Linda Keen, Vernon Keen, Bobbie Mears, Allen Reesor, Karen Smoke, Keith Wallace, and Tonya Wallace. Thanks to all of them for help in cleaning up and to Carol Mahler for setting up with help from Linda Keen and Vernon Keen on Nov. 19 plus David Bryce and Karen Smoke on Nov. 20.

On Nov. 19, half of the first grade classes from West Elementary School walked to the Museum and enjoyed hands-on activities with their teachers, chaperones, and Society volunteers.



On Nov. 20, the other half of the first grade classes from West Elementary School walked to the Museum, and they finished learning history through the hands-on activities before the rain started!

—Photos courtesy Carol Mahler



Save the date!

21ST ANNUAL
DeSoto County Historical Society
PAST • PRESENT • FUTURE
ARCADIA, FLORIDA

PIONEER DAY
MARCH 29, 2025

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

Turner Agri-Civic Center, 2250 NE Roan St., Arcadia
historicdesoto.org ~ desotocountyhistoricalsociety@gmail.com

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

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. Online:

<https://historicdesoto.org/support/>

(Scroll to the bottom of the page, click for the Membership Form. After filling out the form go back and click DONATE button.)

Thank you for your support!



*Wishing all of our Members and Friends
a Joyous and Peaceful Holiday with
Blessings throughout the Coming Year.*



WE THANK YOU for your past support...and hope you will continue to support us in the coming year.
We hope you will join us for our Member Meeting on **Monday, December 16 at 11:30 a.m.** in the McSwain Room, DMH.

- ★ Show support for your new Board members and your Historical Society.
- ★ Celebrate the inauguration of our officers and directors.
- ★ Enjoy music by DeSoto Middle School Choir
- ★ Pay your dues for 2025.



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Name _____
Spouse _____
Mailing _____
Address _____
City _____ Zip _____
Phone (____) _____ New _____ Renewing _____
Email _____

Membership Dues

___ Individual	\$25.00
___ Family	\$40.00
___ Sustaining	\$50.00
___ Company	\$100.00
___ Winter resident	\$12.00
___ Winter res. family	\$20.00
___ Donation	\$_____
___ Magnetic name tags	\$10.00

Dues are due in January.
Make your check payable
to the DeSoto County
Historical Society.

The DeSoto County Historical Society is a 501(c)(3) not-for profit corporation, dedicated to preserving and promoting the history of DeSoto County for future generations. Like us on Facebook!

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