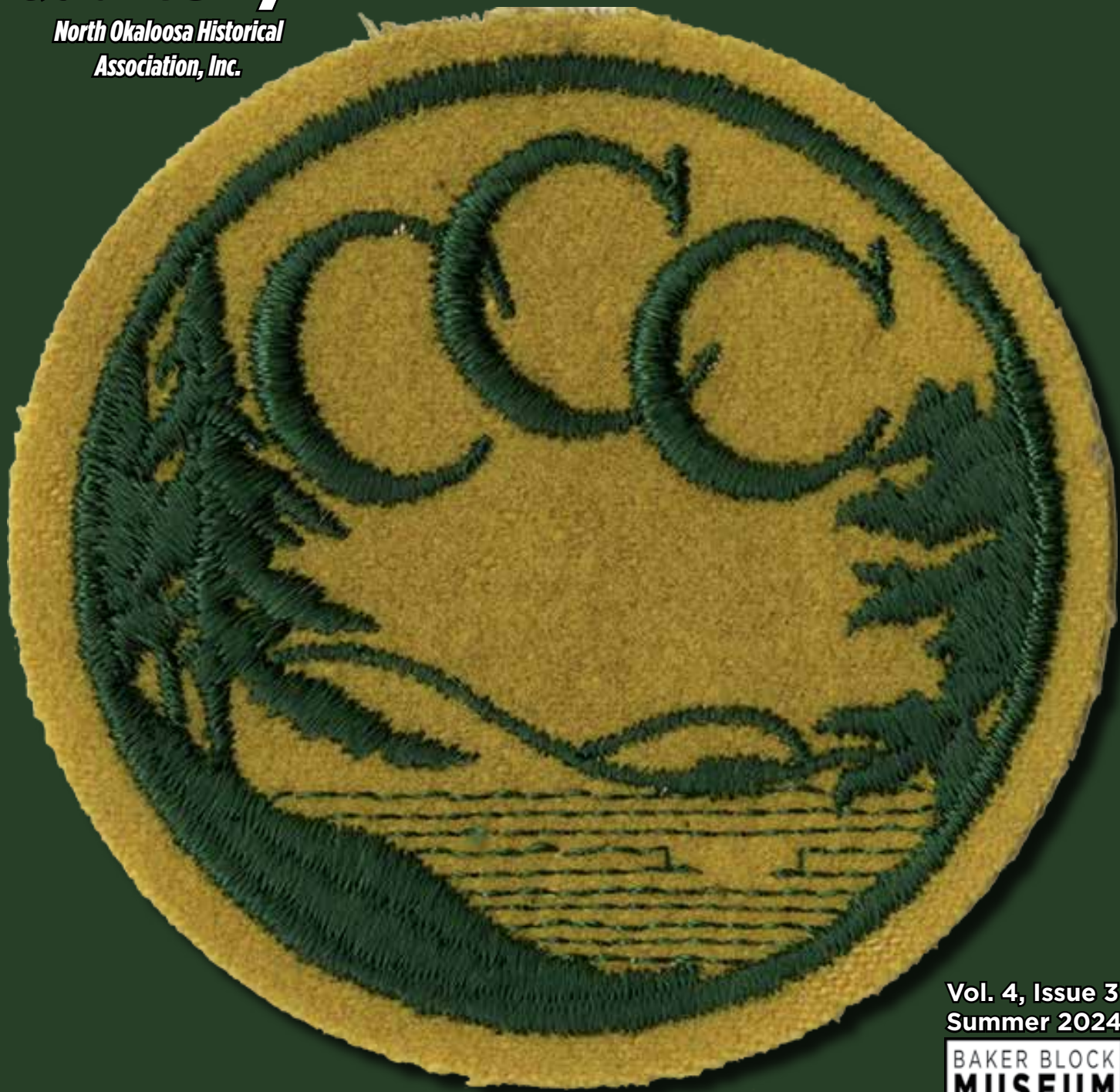


# ***Okaloosa Historical Quarterly***

***North Okaloosa Historical  
Association, Inc.***



**Vol. 4, Issue 3  
Summer 2024**

**BAKER BLOCK  
MUSEUM**



**OKALOOSA COUNTY, FLORIDA**

**Discover. Experience. Connect.**





A memorial statue to the Niceville Civilian Conservation Corps stands at Turkey Creek Nature Trail Park. Civil Conservation Corps worker statue No. 77 was dedicated to the enrollees of CCC Camp Bigby that was established as one of the first Florida CCC camps in 1933.

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Niceville's Civilian Conservation Corps camp





**Summer 2024, Vol. 4, Issue 3**

**North Okaloosa Historical Association, Inc., Mission**

The mission of the North Okaloosa Historical Association, Inc., is to collect, preserve, and promote the history of Okaloosa County, the northwest Florida Panhandle, and the surrounding communities.

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The Baker Block Museum is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization of the North Okaloosa Historical Association, Inc., and is managed by its Board of Directors.

The *Okaloosa Historical Quarterly* is published by the North Okaloosa Historical Society, Inc., and is an authorized publication for distribution to Museum members and visitors. Contents of the *OHQ* is copyrighted, all rights reserved.

Items to be considered for the *OHQ* may be submitted to the Museum at P.O. Box 186, Baker, FL 32531 or emailed to [bakermuseumnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:bakermuseumnewsletter@gmail.com). Deadline for submission is March 15, June 15, Sept. 15, and Dec. 15 for consideration in the next quarterly issue. Articles received after the deadline will be considered for future use. All submissions will be edited for accuracy, clarity, brevity, and conformance with *OHQ* guidelines.

**On the cover:** In 1939, this circular patch with the landscape design was the official insignia for the Civilian Conservation Corps. It was worn on the left shoulder and on the Army-issue wool cap of the Civilian Conservation Corps dress uniform.

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**FOLLOW ON**

[bakerblockmuseum.org](http://bakerblockmuseum.org)





**Archaeology of  
Northwest Florida**  
A tour through our heritage

**Saturday, July 20, 1 p.m.**  
**Hilton-Shaw Genealogy Library**

**16th-century shipwrecks**  
**Native American encampments**  
**Civil War gun battery**  
**Spanish fort and mission**  
**Historic cemeteries**  
**Nation's oldest battleship**



— FLORIDA PUBLIC —  
**ARCHAEOLOGY NETWORK**



# Director's Notes



**T**he tornado activity that crossed the panhandle in the early morning hours of May 10 damaged area businesses, residences, trees, and foliage along its path. We are still not sure if it was a tornado or

straight-line winds when it reached Baker, but we do know that it was strong enough to lift metal from the roof and the entire porch of our 1880s log cabin.

I am grateful to the North Okaloosa Historical Association board members, their spouses, and volunteers who stepped forward to do the clean up and roof repairs that were an immediate need in our heritage park. They include Stephanie Holcombe, Tracy Curenton, Brenda and Raymond Russell, Sharry and Keith Rustin, Laura and Jon Beck of Copper Saddle Western Wear and their friend, Kylee Seymour.

These folks came together in our time of need and were able to stop the roof leaks and clean the park in time for the Mother's Day Event planned for the next day. Thanks to their hard work, "Muffins With Mom" sponsored by Copper Saddle Western Wear was a success. Laura donated proceeds from this event to the Baker Block Museum and is also responsible for the fresh flowers and planters seen around the museum. She has just celebrated her third year at the Copper Saddle Western Wear and we are grateful for her and Jon's continued support of our local community and as part of our museum.

We are still in need of replacing the back porch on our "dog-trot" cabin, re-roofing the cabin, and finding a new porch swing, but are so thankful the damage was minimal.

We are always looking for anyone interested in volunteering at the museum and have a variety of task to choose from. The volunteer list ranges from greeting patrons, helping with genealogy research, filing and organizing the library to exhibits and displays. There's outdoor tasks needed in the park such as mowing and grounds keeping to cabin repair and general maintenance. So, if you are retired and looking for something to do or know of anyone needing community service hours, please consider helping at the museum.

*Ann Spann*



# MUSEUM NEWS

## Park cabin sustains storm damage



On May 10, severe thunderstorms spawned an outbreak of tornadoes in the Florida Panhandle and in Alabama. At 4 a.m., a tornado warning was issued for the Munson area with the twister heading east-southeast with Baker in its path.

From the report by the National Weather Service in Mobile, “The tornado started along State Highway 4 about 3 miles west-northwest of Munson where pine trees were snapped and power lines were downed...The tornado peaked in intensity at an estimated 115 mph (EF2) over Munson...then took a slight jog to the east-southeast as it

paralleled State Highway 4 east of Munson with numerous pine and oak trees snapped on both sides of the road. Snaps continued into Okaloosa County, Florida, where the tornado is estimated to have lifted to the northwest of Baker.”

The National Weather Service reported hurricane-force winds racing toward Baker between 100 to 110 mph. These winds lifted the west-facing porch of the Museum’s large “dog-trot” cabin and flung it up and over the cabin. Half of the porch landed directly behind the cabin. The other half, with the porch swing attached, landed

75 feet away on top of the shed behind the Laurel Hill Vener Mill tool shed building in the park. A portion of the porch pierced the outhouse and knocked it off its foundation and caused a little damage to the back of the chicken coop as well.

Damage to the cabin included the porch ripped off and a portion of the roof wood stripped away, the felt underneath the tin roof stripped off, all but one log tree porch support flung aside, porch floorboards lifted, and water damage inside both rooms of the dog-trot cabin.

Winds also stripped away flashing on the western edge of

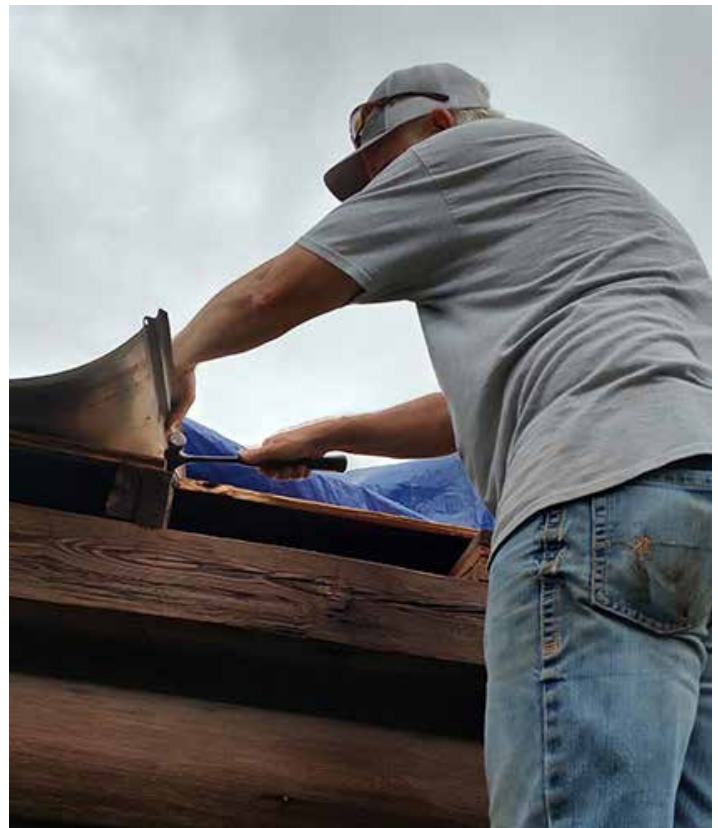
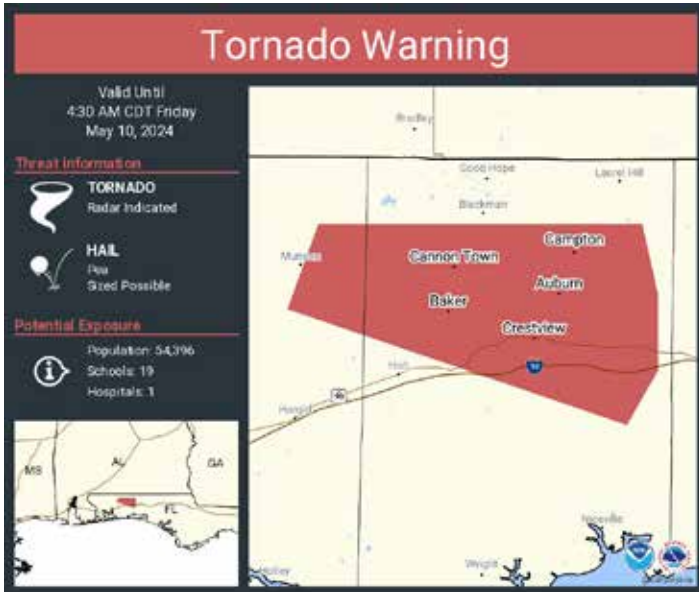


the Museum roof. Other than rainwater pouring in from a roof leak in the Mercantile Store and no electrical power, there was no other damage to the Museum itself. Most of the damage was limited to the Heritage Park.

Immediately following the storm, North Okaloosa Historical Association

members arrived around 6:30a.m. and surveyed the damage. Not long after, Okaloosa County storm survey crews stopped and also took stock of the damage for the county. By 9 a.m., board members, their spouses, and Copper Saddle Western Wear store volunteers began park cleanup.

A temporary roof was replaced on the cabin using tin from the destroyed porch. The four log poles that held up the porch were undamaged and salvaged for later porch replacement. It is not known when the cabin roof will be repaired or the porch will be replaced due to funding challenges.





# Baker Arts Festival

**3rd**  
**Saturday**  
At the Baker Block Museum







This year's Baker Arts Festival brought a number of talented artists to the Museum's Heritage Park April 20. The variety ensured there was something for visitors of all ages.





# Pigeon Racing

Our May **3rd Saturday** event featured a presentation about pigeon racing, presented by Al Muller from Holt. Al's been racing pigeons since he was about 16 years old.

His presentation covered a number of interesting facts about the unique characteristics of the pigeon that enable them to fly long distances and home in on a specific location, a trait that gave them the name "homing" pigeon. "Wherever you take it, when it's released, it goes home," he said.

Pigeons have been present throughout history. Ancient Greeks passed laws that forbid harming pigeons. Alexander the Great used them to send communications to his army, a







technique used by the allied and axis forces in both World War I and II. The German army had sophisticated pigeon operations and U.S. capture of a pigeon loft was considered a high priority during World War I.

Following the presentation, Al held a drawing of audience names to see who would get to release one of the four pigeons he brought. Skylar Thompson, 7 years old, was chosen to release the pigeon. Once released, it circled the building once to get its bearing, then headed for home in Holt.







## Celebrating Mother's Day in the Park

Copper Saddle Western Wear held a Mother's Day vendor event in the Heritage Park May 11 with more than 20 crafts and food vendors...and farm animals.

The storm from the previous day that destroyed the porch roof of the large cabin didn't dampen the spirits of those who visited the Park that day.

The Museum, normally open the third Saturday of each month, opened its doors to give Park visitors an extra Saturday to enjoy the inside displays.

Proceeds from the event went to the Baker Block Museum. The North Okaloosa Historical Association is grateful for the generous donation.



# Congratulations!



Copper Saddle Western Wear owners Laura Beck and Ranger.

## Copper Saddle celebrates 3 years in the Block



North Okaloosa Historical Association tenant Copper Saddle Western Wear celebrated its third anniversary May 27. The store, owned and operated by Laura Beck, is located in the first store space of the Baker Block Museum building next to State Road 189. Laura is also a sponsor of the Baker Block Museum.

Visit Copper Saddle online at [cswesternwear.com](http://cswesternwear.com), on Facebook, and Instagram. Copper Saddle takes a number of types of payment

from cash to cards to various forms of online payments.

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## 25 years of volunteerism at the Baker Block Museum

North Okaloosa Historical Association, Inc., board member Brenda Russel will celebrate 25 years of volunteer service to the Baker Block Museum in August. She began volunteering in 1999, three years after the Museum opened, and has assisted in just about all aspects of the Museum, from greeting visitors, conducting tours, helping researchers in the Hilton-Shaw Genealogy Library, and feeding other volunteers, to rolling up her sleeves and getting down and dirty with maintaining the log cabins and ensuring the Museum is spotless and ready for visitors. She often demonstrates open-hearth cooking in the one-room 1880s log cabin during Baker Heritage Day. Brenda is currently serving as NOHA president.





# Be a volunteer!



**The Baker Block Museum is looking for people who:**

**Like history  
Like interacting with Museum visitors  
Can do light computer work  
Can organize files  
Enjoy working outdoors**

**Flexible hours**

**See Museum Director Ann Spann  
850-537-5714 or [bakermuseum@aol.org](mailto:bakermuseum@aol.org)**





## 1930s Coleman Lantern

During the Baker Arts Festival April 20, Eric Clark from Columbus, Ohio, walked into the Museum and dropped off a Coleman “Sunshine of the Night” 56B model kerosene/gas lantern. It has a brass base, a wooden handle and an aluminum reflector with a double mantle.

This model was made from 1947-1954 and was used by many for nighttime gigging of flounders or frogs.

## Millerville School

The image below is of the Millerville School circa 1914-1915. The school was located behind where Pilgrim Rest Baptist Church is now. Millerville later became Baker School.

This photo, donated to the Museum by Mary Richardson of the Allen family from Baker, was taken by Jesse L. Kimbro, a rural mail carrier who lived in Galliver.





# Smokey Bear turns 80



**S**mokey Bear, American campaign and advertising icon of the U.S. Forest Service and one of the world's most-recognized characters turns 80 years old August 9. Since 1944, Smokey has been working hard to inspire Americans to prevent wildfires. The Smokey Bear Wildfire Prevention campaign is the longest-running public service campaign in U.S. history, according to the American non-profit Advertising Council. His image is protected by U.S. federal law and is administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the National Association of State Foresters and the Ad Council.

## Beginnings

In the spring of 1942, Japanese submarines off the coast of Santa Barbara, California, fired shells that exploded near an oil field close to the Los Padres National Forest in hopes of starting a wildfire. Shocked, Americans were concerned incendiary shells exploding in Pacific Coast forests would ignite forest fires. (The Japanese again employed explosives by launching balloon bombs in 1945, sending them aloft to drift over Washington and Oregon forested areas. See the *Okaloosa Historical Quarterly* 2023 spring issue for more information on Japanese balloon bombs.) During this period, fewer firefighters and

other able-bodied men were available because they were fighting the war in Europe and the Pacific. Due to the lack of manpower, an idea was formed to educate and enlist Americans to be more careful to help prevent fires from starting. Early posters informed that “forest fires aid the enemy” in an effort to drive the fire prevention message home.



1944 Department of Agriculture, State Forest Service poster.



In 1944, Smokey Bear was born. His likeness was approved by the Forest Service on August 9 and his first fire prevention campaign poster, delivered on October 10, showed Smokey dousing a campfire with a bucket of water.

The 1944 Smokey Bear campaign began with “Smokey says—Care Will Prevent 9 Out of 10 Forest Fires.” It changed in 1947 to “Remember...Only YOU Can Prevent Forest Fires.” Because of an outbreak in wildfires in natural areas other than forests, the slogan was changed in April 2001 to “Only You Can Prevent Wildfires.”

### Hotfoot Teddy

Six years after the birth of Smokey Bear, a three-month-old bear cub was found clinging to a tree in the Lincoln National Forest in New Mexico. The five-pound cub tried to escape what is now known as the Capitan Gap fire that swept through a portion of the Capitan Mountains forest in 1950. Clinging to the windward side

of the tree, his paws and hind legs were burned by the fire. Initially named Hotfoot Teddy, he was soon renamed Smokey and was treated for his burns by Ranger Ray Bell of the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish and his family. In June 1950, Smokey was flown to the National Zoological Park in Washington, D.C.

Smokey remained at the National Zoo until his death in 1976. He was returned to Capitan where he was buried in the Smokey Bear Historical Park.



Judy Bell, daughter of Ranger Ray Bell, and her family helped nurse Smokey back to health.

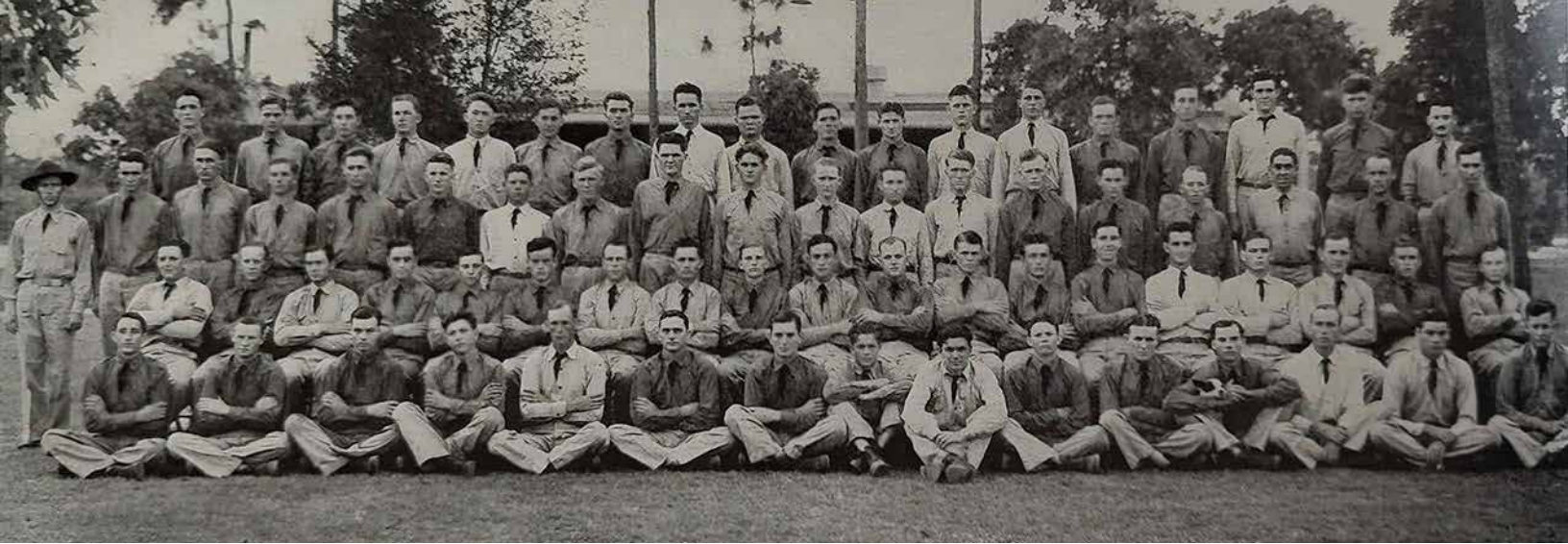


Smokey enjoys a dip in his pool at the National Zoo in Washington, D.C.



Smokey Bear made an appearance at last year's Baker Heritage Festival.





# FDR's Civilian Conservation Corps

*During its nine-year history, the Civilian Conservation Corps put more than three million men to work across the United States to help conserve the nations depleted natural resources that were badly managed during the early 20th century.*

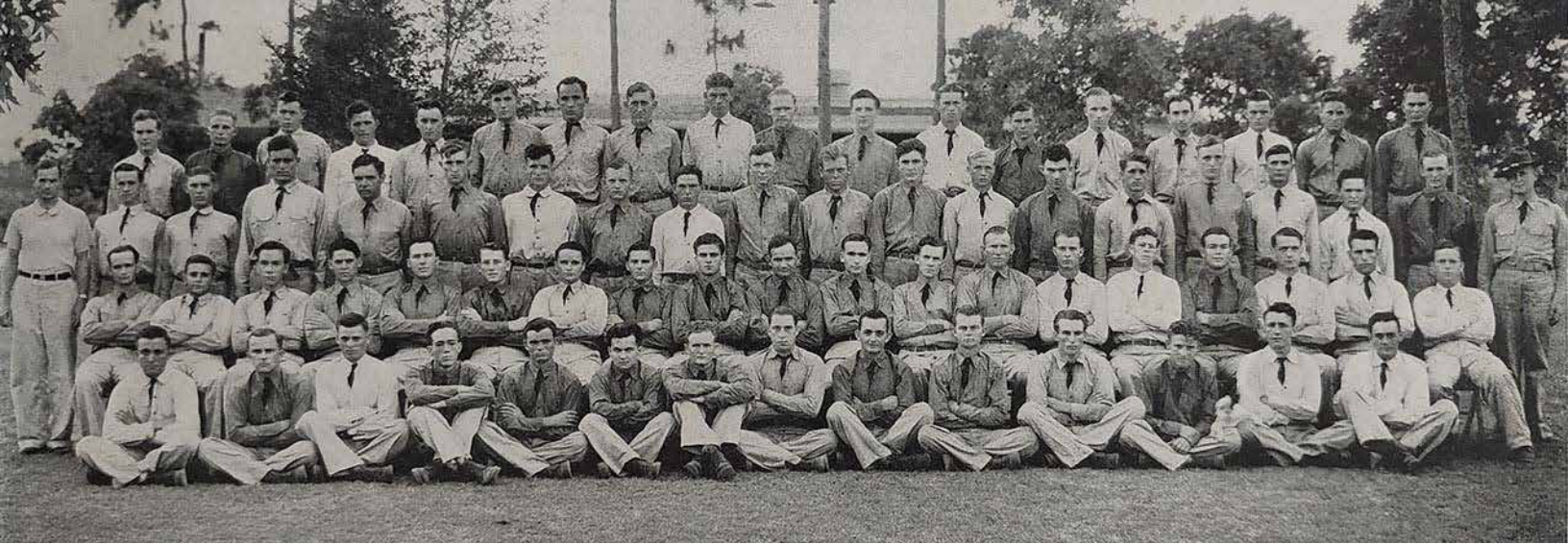
**I**n 1933, in the midst of the Great Depression and only 27 days after President Franklin D. Roosevelt began his first term of office, a special session of the U.S. Congress passed legislation that would put more than three million men to work. The “Act for the Relief of Unemployment through the Performance of Useful Public Work, and for Other Purposes,” signed March 31, 1933, established the Emergency Conservation Work program—changed in 1937 to the Civilian Conservation Corps. One of the most popular of Roosevelt’s New Deal policies and programs, the CCC set the course for the nation’s largest back-to-work relief program in history. The newly established CCC was designed to help pull young men out of poverty by putting them to work. He followed that up with several executive orders further establishing the

framework for the CCC making good on his March 4 inaugural statement that “our greatest primary task is to put people to work...”

In addition to providing work for the unemployed, the act’s focus was on conservation, preservation, reforestation, and firefighting. The act also had a statement about non-discrimination against race, color, or creed. This allowed African Americans and Native Americans to participate in the program as well. Convicted criminals were not allowed to enroll in the program.

The act also established that the program would receive three hundred million dollars of unobligated funds under the terms of the 1932 law entitled “An Act to relieve destitution.” This New Deal program was to continue for two years, “and no longer.” However, in 1935, Congress passed the





Left and right: Members of Company F-3 1402, Civilian Conservation Corps Camp Bigby in 1936. The camp was made up of men from Florida, Georgia, and Alabama. Of the 165 names on the roster, 35 were from Okaloosa County.

Emergency Relief Appropriations Act that extended the CCC program to March 31, 1937. Congress again extended the program for another three years by formally establishing the CCC, but did not make it a permanent organization.

### **Organization**

With the act barely six days old, the president immediately followed up the new law with a number of executive orders to direct how the program would operate. In 1933, FDR issued more than 15 executive orders regarding the conservation program. His orders established a director, his title as Executive Director of Emergency Conservation Work, and his salary (\$12,000 per year); an advisory council made up of representatives from the Secretaries of War, Agriculture, Labor, and the Interior; and that funding would flow through the War Department.

Initial enrollment was limited to young, unemployed, single men between the ages of 18 to 25. They had to be U.S. citizens, pass a physical examination, and come from “distressed” families. Initial compensation was set at \$30 a month for a 40-hour, Monday-through-Friday work week; however, \$25 had to be sent home, leaving members with \$5 for the month. A

1941 CCC government pamphlet said that of the \$30, \$8 went to the enrollee, \$15 had to be sent home, and the remaining \$7 went into a special savings account given to the enrollee at the end of his term of service. All food, housing, clothing, and medical care was provided. Obligation was for a minimum of six months up to two years.

Later in the program, the age limit was extended to 17- to 28-year-olds. Enrollment was expanded to include older local “experienced” men who lived near CCC camps and could teach work skills. World War I veterans in their mid 40s were also allowed to enroll, selected for participation by the Veteran’s Administration.

African Americans. The Act for Relief of Unemployment stated that “no discrimination shall be made on account of race, color, or creed” and initially, camps were integrated. After July 1935, African Americans were restricted to segregated camps.

Native Americans. Initially, Native Americans were prohibited from joining the CCC. The restriction was lifted a few weeks into the program because of the dire conditions on reservations. The Office of Indian Affairs selected enrollees and administered the program on the reservations. There was no age restriction



and most enrollees were married and lived at home. More than 80,000 Native Americans participated in the program.

By April 6, 1933, there were 25,000 men enrolled in the CCC. Less than three months later, more than 300,000 men were enrolled in 1,500 camps across the United States.

Once selected for the program, all enrollees had to report to two-week physical training at a U.S. Army installation before moving on to their assigned work camps. The Army was somewhat alarmed at the poor condition of the men as they arrived. Many were underweight due to lack of food during Great Depression and had not been employed for two or more years. The primary objective of initial training was to feed and condition them for the physical work they were going to perform.

The Civilian Conservation Corps was divided into nine regional corps areas, each under command of a U.S. Army general. The conservation corps structure mirrored U.S. Army corps areas.

The first CCC camp, Camp Roosevelt, was established April 17, 1933, in the George Washington National Forest of the Blue Ridge Mountains in what would become the Shenandoah National Park near Luray, Virginia.

Each camp was composed of up to 200 men who lived in tents at first. As time went on,

wooden-framed buildings began to replace most of the tents. Buildings included barracks, officers quarters, bath/latrines, administration, infirmary, and schoolhouses. Many young men earned their high school graduation equivalent as well as vocational training through the CCC educational program.

Enrollment in the corps peaked in 1935 to more than 500,000 enrollees and 2,600 camps. By 1940, with the dawn of World War II on its doorstep, the United States began phasing out the program, turning equipment, structures, and building over to military operations. Reserve officers in charge of the CCC camps were being called to active service and young men were either drafted or voluntarily answered the call to duty. The number of CCC camps were gradually reduced to the point that Congress voted to liquidate the program, dispose of the infrastructure and equipment, release the remaining 60,000 enrollees, and close down the now remaining 350 camps in 1942. The program officially ended June 30, 1942.

During the nine years the CCC was in operations, more than 2.5 million men participated in 4,500 camps around the United States. A number of public structures built between 1933 and 1942 such as stone bridges, hiking trails, cabins, picnic sites, national parks, and more remain to this day.



DeSoto State Park in northern Alabama was built by the Civilian Conservation Corps. Some of the structures built by the CCC are still in use today such as the stone bridge (left) and park entrance and stone building used as a ranger station. (*DeSoto State Park*)



# Biggy Bayou Breeze

COMPANY - 1402 - NICEVILLE, FLORIDA - TUESDAY, FEBRUARY, 12TH, 1935

## PRIZE CAMP OF DISTRICT "G"

### BRIEF HISTORY OF CAMP BIGGY, CCC FLORIDA CAMP F-3

Camp Biggy has the distinction of being the first Company in 4th Corps Area to complete conditioning at Ft. Benning and of course the first CCC Camp in the State of Florida.

The Company was called into being April 30, 1933, with Capt. Walter Biggy as Camp Commander from whom it derived its name. The junior officers were Capt. W. Hagg, Executive Officer, 1st. Lt. J.W. Howard, Camp Medical Officer. The Forest Personal were John H. Stone, Proj. Supt., Ranger E.R. McKee and Clinton G. Smith, Forest Supervisor of the entire Choctawhatchee National Forest, containing at that time about 20,000 acres.

On Sept. 15, 1933 Capt. Biggy returned to his permanent company at Ft. Benning. He was succeeded as the Camp Commander by Capt. Ben L. Tew, who served in this capacity until about February, 1934, when he was succeeded by Capt. Bridges. After about six weeks Capt. Bridges was succeeded by Capt. D.E. Haven. Capt. Haven served as Camp Commander until December 1934, when our present Camp Commander, Lieut. Leland (cont. on page 3)

### THE EMANCIPATOR



### NOTED IMPROVEMENTS IN CAMP MORAL OF FLORIDA CAMP F-3

It is true the statement, "The Best Camp In District "G", covers a world of territory, but we, as members of Co. 1402 have a perfect right to feel that way about it. We do, and until disproved, we shall see it thus.

What constitutes an outstanding Camp? We believe District, together with Corps Area would designate that camp which is running the most smoothly and has the highest morale, the best camp.

Since Lt. Stokes has taken command of the camp improvements have followed. We are getting better meals as a result and they are much better prepared.

New interest is being manifested in our Educational Program. Lt. Stokes with his entire staff, is interested in seeing us take advantage of the opportunity to fit ourselves for more gainful occupations after our term of enrollment is out. He has an enrollment of twenty-one boys in his wood-working class. Lt. Vaughan is offering a course in High School English, Lt. Hoffman is teaching us radio.

Our recreation room has been sered inside, attractive seats have been provided, curtains, a mantel, new

(Continued on page 3)





Civilian Conservation Camp F-3 1402 in Niceville was located approximately one-half mile north of the Jackson Tower (now Jackson Guard) across from where Lula J. Edge Elementary School is now on State Road 85.

## CCC Camp F-3 1403, Niceville

*Niceville became the location of one of the first three forestry CCC camps organized in Florida.*

In April 1933, it was announced that President Franklin D. Roosevelt approved three new 200-men Civilian Conservation Corps camps in Florida. They were to be located in the Osceola National Forest near Lake City, at Jupiter Springs in the Ocala National Forest, and the Choctawhatchee National Forest at Niceville. Initial planning was for two camps of 100 men each in the Choctawhatchee forest, at Niceville and Camp Pinchot; however, when the camp strength was set at 200 men each, the CCC camp at Pinchot was abandoned.

An additional four camps were announced a month later to be located in the western part of Bay County, the northern part of Columbia County, the center of Liberty County, and one near the county line of Duvall and Nassau counties. Other northwest Florida camps included one in Milton and one at Metts fire tower

at the head of Holley Creek near DeFuniak Springs. Plans for forest crews included building roads, bridges, fire lines, and overall improvement of the forest.

Although a conditioning site was established at Fort Barancas in Pensacola, men assigned to the Niceville camp completed their initial training at Fort Benning, near Columbus, Georgia, according to a May 1933 *Pensacola Journal* article.

The first 188 Florida camp designees to complete their conditioning training departed Fort Benning in May for the Niceville Camp F-3 1402 with Captain Walter A. Bigby of the 67th Infantry, U.S. Army, in command, according to a front-page May 25 article from by the *Okaloosa Messenger*.

They departed Fort Benning May 18 in four passenger cars of the Louisiana and Nashville Railroad en route to Niceville,





Photo is courtesy of the Niceville Online History Center at boggyflorida.com whose purpose is to document early history of Niceville.

passing through Montgomery, Alabama. They changed trains in Pensacola where they were greeted with hot coffee while awaiting a train to Crestview. The men arrived in Niceville at 8 a.m. the next morning and were temporarily encamped on the Niceville High School grounds.

Shortly after arriving in Niceville, a number of the men began their Forest Service work in the Choctawhatchee National Forest which covered approximately 400,000 acres under the supervision of project superintendent John. H. Stone.

Work on a permanent camp started as soon as the CCC “boys” arrived. Out of blackjack thicket growing in white sand, they built 14 buildings and a recreation area that consisted of a baseball field; tennis, handball, and volleyball courts; and a boxing ring. Since the boys worked from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday, off-duty time was their own. In addition to the forestry work above, the Niceville crew installed and maintained telephone lines and surveyed, stumped, and cleared an 80-acre landing field.

Two years later, the camp was described as a “veritable oasis.” A description of the camp

from the 1936 District G annual says,

*“Green lawns stretch over wide expanses and flowers of various hues, both native and domesticated, bloom continuously from early Spring to late Fall. Walkways [sic] through the lawns are hedged with native flowering sage, and red rock outline the parks, which extend throughout the length of the Camp, in front of the barracks.”*

At Camp Bigby, morning hours were devoted to education with 45 minutes each day devoted to school activities. This worked better since the boys were too exhausted after a hard day’s work to attend school in the evening. While employed by the CCC, many camp boys completed work for high school graduation.

In late December 1933, several boys were injured when the truck they were in collided with another truck near Lake City. According to December 29 *Okaloosa News=Journal* article, one boy suffered a skull fracture and was taken to the Veterans Hospital in Lake City. Four others wound up with cuts and bruises.

Then, in the early morning hours of January 19, 1934, a 2 a.m. alarm went out that aroused



the CCC boys: downtown Niceville was on fire. The camp emptied immediately. Because there was no running water, they formed bucket brigades to assist fire crews from the Choctawhatchee National Forest who helped save the small 1,000-person town from total destruction. Three grocery stores, a dry goods store, creamery, the post office building, a hotel, drugstore, and a fish company were destroyed in the blaze. The fire began in a store and spread to the waterfront. Damage was estimated at \$100,000, and few were covered by insurance, according to an Associated Press news article.

According to the small history in the 1936 annual, Camp Bigby boys planted millions of seedlings, built and maintained hundreds of miles of roads and trails, and built wooden and concrete bridges across streams. They thinned the forest of worthless growth, marketed millions of feet of lumber and thousands

of barrels of turpentine and resin. Miles of telephone lines were constructed and buildings and towers erected.

By 1938, the CCC was beginning to draw down and 291 camps needed to be closed by July 1 to meet budgetary restrictions. Niceville's Camp 1402 was one of the ones selected to end operations. In October 1939, Camp F-3 1402 became P-83 1402 when it was relocated to Otter Creek where work was conducted on private forested land. Months later, after the Forest Service gave 384,000 acres of the Choctawhatchee National Forest to the War Department, CCC Camp 1413 was relocated from Georgia to Niceville, became Army-1 Camp 1413, and began developing Eglin Field.

For an extensive history of the CCC camp at Niceville, visit the Niceville Online History Center at [boggyflorida.com](http://boggyflorida.com).

## The 1936 CCC boys of Niceville's Camp 1402

In the 1936 Official Annual of District G, of the 165 names on the roster of Niceville's Company F-3 1402, 15 were from Niceville, six were from Crestview, four from Laurel Hill, three each from Baker and Holt, and two each were from Milligan and Garniers. Walton County had 12 names, mostly from DeFuniak Springs; Escambia County had three names, and Santa Rosa County only had one name. Falco and Floral, Alabama, had three and one names, respectively.

### Niceville

M.R. Ellison (leader)  
 Clyde V. Crosby (assistant leader)  
 James R. Helms (assistant leader)  
 Willis Whitfield (assistant leader)  
 Joel L. Willingham (assistant leader)  
 Jessie S. Adams  
 A.A. Frazier  
 Raymond Grace  
 Joel C. Helms  
 Ira F. McCullough  
 W.J. Nathey  
 Kenneth Reddick  
 Pella Webb Thomas  
 Herman A. Weekley  
 Vincent A. Whitfield

### Crestview

H.F. Powell (leader)  
 J.T. Barrow

Elvin J. Clark  
 F.J. Griner  
 P.W. Hurst  
 M.D. Jones

### Laurel Hill

Terrell G. Sasser  
 I.A. Steele  
 Harold B. Strickland  
 P.D. Youn

### Baker

Elijah N. Cook (leader)  
 M.S. Maxwell  
 David L. Stiller

### Holt

Howard J. Franklin  
 Alvin Matthews  
 Elign Melvin

### Milligan

C.T. Wadsworth  
 M.T. Wadsworth







# **Old Okaloosa Police Stories**

**Saturday, Sept. 21, 1 p.m.  
Hilton-Shaw Genealogy Library**

**Presented by Mike Simmons  
Escambia County Sheriff's Office historian**



# Little Free Library in the Heritage Park

Take a Book. Share a Book.

**Did you know the Museum has TWO Little Free Library® book exchanges in the Jeanette and Charles Henderson Heritage Park? The little red schoolhouse library near the day care center has children's books while the cabin library facing Georgia Avenue has reading material for grownups.**

**The libraries are near large oak trees with bench seating so readers can sit and enjoy their book selections.**

**Both libraries are registered with the Little Free Library® system.**





# SPONSORS

The North Okaloosa Historical Association, Inc., would like to thank our sponsors for their continued support of the Baker Block Museum.



Trevia Buckner, CPA



TheRestroom



BAKER AUTO PARTS



# SHOP

All items are available in the **Baker Mercantile Gift Store.**



**Noritake gold-rimmed plate, \$5**

8-inch round Noritake hand-painted, gold-rimmed Manchu flowered cake plate



**Anheuser-Busch holiday beer stein, \$24.95**

1987 Holiday beer stein featuring the Anheuser-Busch world famous Clydesdales



**45-rpm golden oldies 50 cents each**

45-rpm records by Ray Charles, Diana Ross, Chubby Checker, Andy Williams, and others are available.



**Various cookbooks \$7.95 each**

These cookbooks were written by Barbara Swell, who has been cooking since she was 9 years old after winning a blue ribbon at the West Virginia County Fair.



**Plastic dinosaurs \$2**

10 different Animal World dinosaurs about the size of green army men. For ages 3 and up.



**Fighter gliders \$1.25**

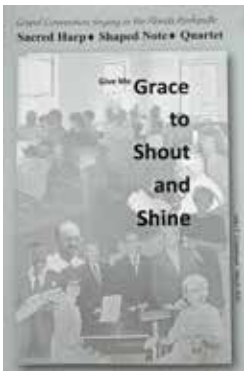
Light balsa wood, rubber band propelled gliders based on World War 2 fighter planes. Various models.

All this and much, much more is available in the **Baker Mercantile Gift Store.**

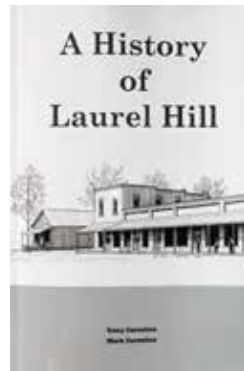


# Okaloosa County History Series

Available for sale in the **Baker Mercantile Gift Store**, on eBay, by email at [bakermuseum@aol.com](mailto:bakermuseum@aol.com) or by calling the Museum at 850-537-5714. **\$20 each.**



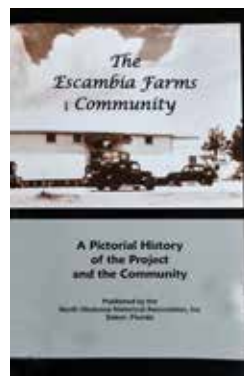
*Give me the Grace to Shout and Shine*, the newest book in the history series, focuses on the three most prominent gospel singing methods in the northwest Florida panhandle throughout the years: Sacred Harp, also known as fasola, five- or seven-shape note convention singing, and later, the gospel quartet.



Drawing from interviews, newspapers, public records and photographs, *A History of Laurel Hill* tells the story of this historic town. The book covers the early history of the area under Spanish rule through the Civil War, the coming of the railroad, the Great Depression and into the modern era.



*Turpentine in the Florida Panhandle* casts turpentine as a significant element impacting the way of life in the Northwest Florida panhandle. It describes an integrated experience—culture, industry, and human condition—in the lives of those who lived it.



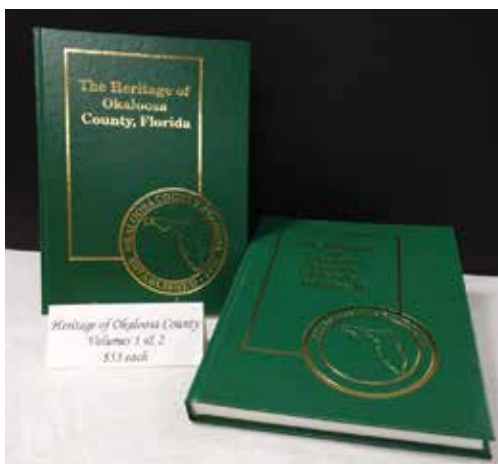
Present Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal program included aid to American migrant workers and tenant farmers. The Resettlement Administration created a planned farming community in the northwest corner of Okaloosa County in 1936 known as Escambia Farms. By 1939, the community had grown to 72 families and included a school to educate the more than 220 children.



Okaloosa County has a rich military history. *Okaloosa Strong: The Homefront* is a sampling of the people, places, stories, and events during wartime in the county.



Officially founded in 1883, Crestview became a stop on the Pensacola & Atlantic Railroad. The geographic center of the county, the town became the seat of the newly established county seat in 1917. Crestview is situated on a rise between the Yellow River 4 miles to the west and the Shoal River 4 miles to the east. *A Pictorial History* illustrates how Crestview changed into the largest city in the county.



## Okaloosa County Heritage Books

Volume I & II

**Limited Quantity**

Includes a history of Okaloosa County, pioneer families, industry, schools, churches, towns, family stories, and genealogies.

**\$53 each**

# 18th Annual Baker Heritage Day Festival

**Saturday, Nov. 16, 2024  
9 a.m. to 3 p.m.**



## Vendor Application

\$50 per 10' x 10' space  
\$60 per 10' x 10' space with electricity  
Limit of 2 spaces per vendor

- Spaces are assigned by the date the application is received.
- Exhibitors must furnish tables, chairs, tents, covers and any other items required for their displays.
- Exhibitors must be set up and in place by 8:30 a.m. and stay until 3 p.m. the day of the event.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of art or craft:

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Have you participated before?   Y   N

Do you require electricity?   Y   N

Complete the form and return it no later than Oct. 18 to:  
Baker Block Museum  
PO Box 186  
Baker, FL 32531

For more information, please call the Baker Block Museum at 850-537-5714 or email at bakermuseum@aol.com.

**Sponsored by the North Okaloosa Historical Association, Inc.**

Baker Block Museum • 1307B Georgia Ave • Baker, Florida • 850-537-5715 • [www.bakerblockmuseum.org](http://www.bakerblockmuseum.org)





# Create a Legacy

## Make a legacy gift to the Baker Block Museum



### How would you like to be remembered?

Legacy gifts are one of the most significant demonstrations of commitment to the community an individual can make. A legacy gift, deferred gift, or planned gift is one you decide upon now and that provides for your favorite nonprofit program later.

You can leave a wonderful legacy to the Baker Block Museum by including the North Okaloosa Historical Association, Inc., in your estate planning. There are many tax advantages when you make a planned gift. We encourage you to consult with your attorney or financial planner for your specific circumstance.

### Bequests

While there are a number of ways to build a legacy contribution, a charitable bequest is one of the easiest and most popular ways to leave a lasting impact on the Museum.

You may designate our organization as the beneficiary of your assets by will, trust, or other instrument. Simply specify an amount, a percentage of your estate, or what remains of your estate to the North Okaloosa Historical Association, Inc., after you have provided for your children or other beneficiaries.

For more information on legacy gifts, contact the Baker Block Museum at 850-537-5714.

*The North Okaloosa Historical Association, Inc., is a non-profit 501(c)(3) charitable organization. Donations are tax deductible.*

# SUPPORT

North Okaloosa Historical Association, Inc.

## Membership News

### NOHA Board Members

- **President - Brenda Russell**
- **Vice President - Lucile King**
- **Treasurer - Sharry Rustin**
- **Secretary - Stephanie Holcombe**

### Members:

**Nina Adams**  
**Joyce Arnett**  
**Melissa Barrett**  
**Tracy Curenton**  
**Doug Hibbing**

### Emeritus Members:

**Judy Cadenhead**  
**Connie Dukes**  
**Phyllis Enzor**  
**Jeanette Henderson**

### 2024 Goals

- **Increase new membership by 30%**
- **Complete the historical marker application**
- **Transcribe digitized oral histories**
- **Stripe front parking spaces and place parking and park signage**

**New Members:** Michael and Jullian Harker, family membership

## Why become a member of the North Okaloosa Historical Association?

Besides supporting the preservation of the history of Okaloosa County, membership in the NOHA has its benefits:

- » Membership card
- » *Okaloosa Historical Quarterly* magazine
- » 10% discount off books and calendars published by the NOHA
- » Email notification of special events
- » Invitation to the annual meeting in January

Lifetime members receive all of the above, PLUS:

- » 20% discount off books and calendars published by the NOHA
- » Recognition in the annual report
- » 10% off nomination for any Family Heritage Wall of Honor submission



# North Okaloosa Historical Association



## Membership Form

Membership in the North Okaloosa Historical Association, Inc., is open to anyone interested in preserving and documenting the history of Okaloosa County and its pioneering families. NOHA serves as the governing body for the Baker Block Museum. Member benefits include the *Okaloosa Historical Quarterly*, e-mail notification of special events, discounts in the Baker Mercantile store, and an invitation to the annual meeting in January.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State and Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of membership (check one)

- Individual      \$25 per year
- Family            \$50 per year
- Student          \$15 per year
- Lifetime          \$250

\_\_\_\_\_ I would like to volunteer at the Baker Block Museum

\_\_\_\_\_ I have items I would like to donate to the Baker Block Museum

\_\_\_\_\_ I have photographs that I will allow to be scanned for the Museum's collection

Return this form with your contribution made payable to:

**North Okaloosa Historical Association**  
Membership  
P.O. Box 186  
Baker, FL 32531

The North Okaloosa Historical Association is a 501(c)(3) organization. Membership and any donations are tax deductible.

**Jeanette and Charles Henderson  
Heritage Park  
Pavilion Rental Agreement**



The pavilion at the Jeanette and Charles Henderson Heritage Park may be rented for half-day or whole-day events. Reservations are on a first-come, first-served basis.

**Pavilion Rules**

- The Park is open to the public at all times.
- A reservation gives the reserver the right to use the pavilion for the allotted time frame. If the pavilion is occupied upon arrival, the reservation receipt should be presented to those using the area.
- Please leave the park in good clean order upon completion of your rental.
- No drugs or alcohol are allowed on park premises at any time.
- No fires are allowed in the park.
- Motor vehicles are prohibited inside the fenced area of the park.
- Public toilets are not available. They may be rented at the expense of the reserver.

A **reservation fee**, applied to the rental cost, is required 30 days prior to any scheduled event to reserve the date.

\_\_\_\_\_ \$25 for half-day rental

\_\_\_\_\_ \$50 for all day-rental

Rental fees must be received 10 days prior to rental date or the Baker Block Museum will consider the reservation canceled. **Cancellations made less than 5 days prior to the event will forfeit the reservation fee.**

A \$25 refundable clean-up deposit is required to rent the pavilion. If the pavilion is not returned to its original condition, the deposit will not be refunded.

\_\_\_\_\_ \$25 clean-up fee (refundable)

\_\_\_\_\_ \$100 half-day (approximately 4 hours)

\_\_\_\_\_ \$200 whole day (approximately 8 hours)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Contact Person / Event

\_\_\_\_\_  
Event Date / Time

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
City

\_\_\_\_\_  
Zip Code

\_\_\_\_\_  
Phone

\_\_\_\_\_  
Email

Approved by \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_



# EVENTS

July							August							September						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6					1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
28	29	30	31				25	26	27	28	29	30	31	29	30					

- 4 Independence Day
- 12 2024-25 Okaloosa County school year starts
- 2 Labor Day
- 18 North Okaloosa Historical Association Board meeting, 6 p.m.
- 16 North Okaloosa Historical Association Board meeting, 6 p.m.
- 11 Patriot Day
- 20 **3rd Saturday**  
**FPAN: Archaeology of Northwest Florida, 1 p.m., library**  
Museum is open from 10 a.m.-3:30 p.m.
- 17 Museum is open from 10 a.m.-3:30 p.m.  
**Regular Museum hours: Tuesday-Friday Every 3rd Saturday 10 a.m.-3:30 p.m.**
- 19 North Okaloosa Historical Association Board meeting, 6 p.m.
- 21 **3rd Saturday**  
**Old Okaloosa Police Stories, 1 p.m., library**  
Museum is open from 10 a.m.-3:30 p.m.
- 22 First day of Fall



## Western wear for men and women

Cinch, Roper, Ely Cattleman, Red Dirt Hat Co., Old South Apparel, Tanner Mark, and more!

1307 Georgia Avenue, Baker, 850-865-7060, Open Tuesday-Sunday

# Baker Heritage Day



**Saturday, November 16  
9 a.m.-3 p.m.  
Heritage Park**



- **Arts & Crafts**
- **Music**
- **Food**
- **Demonstrations**



**Baker Block Museum Heritage Park  
At the corner of Hwy 4 and 189 in Baker  
850-537-5714**