

**Okaloosa
Historical
Quarterly**

*North Okaloosa Historical
Association, Inc.*

**WOODMEN
OF THE
WORLD**

**BENEVOLENT
SECRET BENEFICIARY
FRATERNITY**

Vol. 4, Issue 2
Spring 2024



Discover. Experience. Connect.

OKALOOSA COUNTY, FLORIDA



Clockwise from top left: John Christian in the Old Holt Cemetery; Jefferson Sanders and Aaron Carr in the New Holt Cemetery; S.E. Mount in the Pilgrim Rest Baptist Church Cemetery; C.C.L. Barrow in the Old Bethel Cemetery; Joe M. Morrise in the Almarante Cemetery.

Treestone memorial markers honoring the Woodmen of the World members can be found in a number of cemeteries in Okaloosa County and throughout northwest Florida.

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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.

CONTACT

Phone: 850-537-5714

Mail: P.O. Box 186
Baker, FL 32531

Email: bakermuseum@aol.com

Location:
1307 Georgia Ave.
Corner of State Road 4 and
Highway 189 in Baker

bakerblockmuseum.org

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.

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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. 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: Woodman of the World life insurance certificate number 14113 in the amount of \$1,000 was issued to W.H. Swiney from Dorcas.

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FOLLOW ON

bakerblockmuseum.org



Baker Arts Festival

Saturday, April 20, 2024

**9 a.m.-3 p.m.
Heritage Park**

**For more info:
850-537-5714
bakermuseum.org**



Director's Notes

3rd Saturday is where it's at at the Baker Block Museum



We were excited to kick off 2024 by dedicating our research and genealogy library in honor of two founding members of the North Okaloosa Historical Association, Inc.: Rosa Nelle Moore Hilton and Faye Barnes Shaw. These two women are part of the reason this museum exists, and as educators, it was only fitting to dedicate our library as the Hilton-Shaw Genealogy Library. Although it was named posthumously for Rosa Nelle, we were thankful Faye could join us in January.

Our February **3rd Saturday** event was a very interesting presentation by Mike Thomin from the Florida Public Archaeology Network. He educated us about headstones and the wealth of information you can get from them. Then in March, longtime Northwest Florida resident Raymon Melvin brought a number of items from his personal turpentine collection to discuss how turpentering was accomplished in northwest Florida during the 1800s through the early 1900s.

And our **3rd Saturday** fun continues with our 3rd Annual Baker Arts Festival April 20. We still have a few vendor booth spaces available. Cost is \$40 for a 10-foot by 10-foot space, or \$50 if electricity is needed; however, there are limited spaces with electricity. In addition to vendors, the Museum will be selling barbecue sandwiches with sides and homemade ice cream.

Then for May's **3rd Saturday**, we've arranged for Holt resident and bird enthusiast Al Muller to come talk to us about racing pigeons. He likes to call them "thoroughbreds of the sky." Modern pigeon racing goes back to the 19th century and was introduced to the United States around 1875. Al is a member of the New Gulf Coast Racing Pigeon Club and has been racing pigeons since he was 16 years old.

Come join us the **3rd Saturday** June for our homemade ice cream. We make it using a John Deere Model E hit-and-miss firing engine that turns the ice cream freezer. It might take the fun out of hand cranking a churn, but it's fun to listen and watch the engine at work.

We have a lot more planned for the rest of 2024. Keep checking our website and Facebook for more information about what's happening at the Baker Block Museum.

Ann Spann

IN MEMORIAM

J.T. Garrett

May 28, 1927 – March 3, 2024



J.T. and Elsie Boyette Garrett are inducted into the Family Heritage Wall of Honor in 2017.

Our local and historical communities lost a lifelong north Okaloosa native and member of the greatest generation with the passing of J.T. Garrett March 3. He had a deep love for local history, had lived through much of it, and had a wonderful ability for sharing and preservation with his God-given talent for story telling.

J.T. (John Thomas) was born May 28, 1927, at the home of his grandparents in Holt. He grew up in Milligan where his parents, James T. “Tommie” Garrett and Etta Sanders Garrett owned and operated Garretts Store. His mother taught elementary grades in the Milligan School where J.T. attended until 8th grade. He graduated from Baker High School in 1944, a year early, due to a correspondence course through the University of Florida because of the ongoing war in Europe and the Pacific. After graduation, J.T. joined the U.S. Navy and served his country during World War II aboard a ship in the Philippines

Upon leaving the Navy, J.T. used the GI Bill to attend Jacksonville Barber College, a craft he practiced for eighteen years at



The couple were married September 21, 1951, at the Milligan Baptist Church. Elsie passed away in 2020.

the Pensacola Naval Yard, Eglin Air Force Base, and on Main Street in Crestview. He later worked with the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services as a petroleum inspector, where he retired after twenty-two years of service.

J.T. Married his high school sweetheart, Elsie Boyette, September 21, 1951, in the First Baptist Church of Milligan. She preceded him in death in 2020 after 69 years of marriage.

In 1949, J.T. found himself as a stand-in for Gregory Peck and an extra in the movie “Twelve O’Clock High” while it was being

filmed at what is now Duke Field and other sites in the local area.

In 1991, Elsie entered J.T. in a Mayberry look-alike contest hosted by the University of North Alabama in Florence, Alabama. He won the “one bullet in the pocket” Barney Fife contest and for many years traveled through the southeast representing Barney with his look-alike Andy Taylor partner, Sterling White. His role as Barney included being a backstage guest at the Grand Ole Opry in Nashville; six Mayberry shows in Branson, Missouri; and grand marshal in more than eighteen parades and appearances at numerous car shows and festivals in the local area, including at the Baker Block Museum’s annual Baker Heritage Day events.

Additionally, J.T. and Elsie were inducted



ABOVE: J.T. Garrett (left) stands with Sterling White, the Andy Griffith look-alike, on the porch steps of the Baker Block Museum. Garrett’s 1964 Ford Galaxy police cruiser, a replica of the one used on “The Andy Griffith Show,” is parked in the background.

LEFT: At the Baker Heritage Festival. BELOW: Garrett’s 1964 Ford Galaxy patrol car.



into the Family Heritage Wall of Honor in 2017.

J.T. is survived by his son Lynn Garrett and wife, Tamela; his daughter, Renee Garrett Barrow and husband Chris; three granddaughters; and nine great-grandchildren.





Hilton - Shaw Genealogy Library

Museum library has a name

Hilton-Shaw Research Genealogy Library was dedicated in January to two long-time Okaloosa County residents and founding members of the North Okaloosa Historical Association.

The North Okaloosa Historical Association, Inc., board of directors unanimously voted to dedicate the Museum's research and genealogy library to two founding members of the original board. During discussion at a monthly board meeting, two names stood out: Rosa Nelle Moore Hilton and Faye Barnes Shaw. These two women were not only founding members, but were long-time county residents as well as educators.

Representing her aunt Rosa Nelle at the dedication ceremony January 20 was Carolyn Shanks from Tallahassee. She shared fond memories of her favorite aunt and said she was always interested in education and had a hand in creating the first library in Crestview.

"The library started in Crestview when Rosa and her husband owned a hotel in downtown Crestview," said Shanks. "Behind it, they had some apartments. Rosa donated one of those apartments to start the Bob Sikes Library."

Faye was surrounded by family members during the ceremony who came from as far away as Robertsdale, Alabama, and near Tallahassee. "It's a privilege for my name to

be mentioned in the same sentence as Rosa Nelle Hilton's," she said. "Everybody loved Rosa Nelle."

Faye thanked all involved in the creation, organization, and operation of the Museum by listing an ABC of who helped create the Museum. "We could go down the alphabet and tell about the people who have made this museum a success, beginning with Ann [Spann, museum executive director]—best journalist around," she said. B was for Brenda Russell and her husband, C for Charles and Jeanette Henderson, D for David Reeder.

After she told a short story about Reeder and the work he did helping to restore the



Faye Barnes Shaw (left) and Carolyn Shanks, niece of Rosa Nelle Moore Hilton.



Rosa Nelle Moore Hilton

Rosa Nelle Moore Hilton was born in Baker in 1913 and graduated from Baker High School in 1929. Her 47-year teaching career included elementary, high school, and college-level education. She spent her last 12 years as the English department chair at Okaloosa-Walton Community College. Rosa Nelle was chairman of the first library board that became the Bob Sikes Public Library.

A charter member of the North Okaloosa Historical Association, Rosa Nelle was instrumental in obtaining a grant for the establishment of the Baker Block Museum.



Museum Executive Director Ann Spann (right), helps Faye Shaw (left) and Carolyn Shanks unveil the new name of the Museum library during the dedication ceremony January 20 at the Baker Block Museum.

Faye Barnes Shaw

Faye Barnes Shaw was born near Jay, Florida, in 1931. Her family moved to the Escambia Farms Project at age 6 and she graduated from Escambia Farms School in 1951. She attended Graceland College in Iowa and started her teaching career at Holt School

and later moved to Bob Sikes Elementary School. Later, she moved to Baker School where she became assistant principal. She retired in 1992 after 31-and-a-half years.

Faye was a charter member of the North Okaloosa Historical Association and served as vice president of the board.

building, she continued the alphabet. “That brings us down to E, and E stands for everyone else.” She paused while the audience laughed. “Everybody who has volunteered—they have come to love it and they are just so proud of

this institution. The museum is a wonderful place,” she said. Shanks agreed. “Rosa would be very pleased with what’s happening today,” she said.

Tombstone Tales

Cemeteries, symbols and stories



Mike Thomin from the Florida Public Archaeology Network talks to a crowd about the kinds of information that can be gleaned from cemeteries.



Mike Thomin from the Florida Public Archaeology Network joined us February 17 for our *3rd Saturday* event. He is the manager of FPAN's Destination Archaeology Research Center in Pensacola and said cemeteries are his most challenging work, "but it's the most rewarding."

According to Thomin, cemeteries are outdoor living museums that change over time where you can learn about local life. For instance, 18th century cemeteries were generally attached to churches. Grave marker images tended to be dark with skulls and crossbones connoting death. And many were made out of slate. By the 19th century, burial rites started to change, especially with the beginnings of embalming to preserve the body. Grave markers were made out of marble, brownstone and limestone—and granite after the Civil

War—and imagery started to get away from doom and gloom. Cemeteries changed even more in the 20th century. They became more park-like, similar to what we see today.

Thomin offered steps in examining burial markers in cemeteries:

1. Analyze the writing. There's a lot of information from writing such as birth, death, and even epitaphs.
2. Examine any imagery or symbols. Death heads, anchors, harps, different types of flowers—they all symbolize something about the person buried there.
3. Look at the overall stonework. Marble or granite could mean wealth, while concrete, otherwise known as "vernacular," could mean the family was from a lower income level.

Overall, a change in pattern could represent a change in culture.



Raymon Melvin demonstrated how several tools he brought were used during the gathering of gum or resin from pine trees in the 17th and 18th centuries..

Turpentine in the Old South

One of Northwest Florida’s most avid collector of all things turpentine visited the Museum March 16 to share his knowledge of the industry. He said old fashioned turpentine in the Unites States began about the 1700s. By 1934, there were around 2,000 turpentine stills in the southeast United States with the last ones built around 1960.

Early on, workers would hollow out a box in the base of a pine tree, then slice streaks above it to get the gum or sap to drip into the base. Each day, the gum would be scooped out and put in a bucket, then transported to a still where it would be processed into turpentine and other byproducts.

Cutting a box into the tree eventually killed it, so workers learned to hang a cup on the tree to catch the drippings. This not only preserved the life of the tree, but allowed multiple gallons of gum to be harvested from one tree.

Turpentine workers were paid by the barrel, said Melvin. One barrel held 55 gallons. Those who worked in the field harvesting the gum worked for a dollar a day.

During the winter, small stills would boil out the copper oven kettle and make moonshine. “All a still is is a large moonshine still,” said Melvin.,



Raymon Melvin brought a scale model of a turpentine still, built by Melvin, Troy Grimes, Bobby Cosey and Debbie Melvin.

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**

Flexible hours

**See Museum Director Ann Spann
850-537-5714 or bakermuseum@aol.org**

April is Volunteer Month

The Baker Block Museum has a number of projects of all types all year long that require all types of skills. Here's just a few:

- Museum inventory
- Light maintenance work
- Meeting and greeting visitors
- Special events
 - Baker Arts Festival
 - Creepy Cabins
 - Heritage Day
- Administrative
 - Computer
 - Filing

For more information contact the Museum at (850) 537-5714.



Volunteer Phillip Garrett rebuilds the steps for the porch that connects the two log cabins in the Jeanette and Charles Henderson Heritage Park Oct. 13, 2023.

The Baker Block Museum is always looking for people with all types of skills to help keep the Museum and Park looking its best.

Racing is for the birds

Al Muller is scheduled to talk about the sport of pigeon racing May 18 at 1 p.m. in the Hilton-Shaw Genealogy Library

On a quiet Saturday morning in Holt, Al Muller is sitting in a lawn chair, sipping a cup of coffee and watching the skies over his home, waiting. Then, without fanfare, he sees it, popping up over the trees. One of his racing pigeons has returned home from a long-distance race.

At that point, the serenity of the morning is broken as pigeon owners begin texting back and forth, checking race times against each other. “Everybody’s on the phone checking to see which pigeon has the fastest time,” says Muller.

Muller is one of 19 members of the New Gulf Coast Racing Pigeon Club based in Pensacola that includes members from Holt, Crestview, DeFuniak Springs, Milton, Pensacola and Baldwin County, Ala. The clubhouse is in Pensacola and members meet on Saturday afternoons.

Racing pigeons since he was about 16 years old, Muller, 72, is enthusiastic about the sport. “It’s fun,” he says.

Modern pigeon racing has its beginning in Belgium during the 19th century. Pigeon racing was first introduced to the United States about 1875 in Philadelphia with regular racing beginning around 1878. Known by many names—homing, messenger, carrier—the racing pigeon is a more athletic bird than those found perched on park statues.

Owners liken their birds to thoroughbred racehorses. “Pigeons are known as



thoroughbreds of the sky. If horse racing is known as the sport of kings, pigeon racing is the sport of princes...or less,” Muller says with a smile.

However, in the “Kentucky Derby,” “Preakness” or “Belmont” of racing pigeons, birds can cost hundreds of thousands—even millions—of dollars. Case in point: one 2-year-old racing pigeon named “New Kim” from Belgium sold in November 2020 for a record-breaking \$1.9 million to an anonymous bidder in China. The hen will not race, but will be used for breeding. Muller admits that spending \$1.9 million for one bird “is a little nuts.”

While big-time pigeon racing is about large payoffs in the hundreds of thousands of dollars or more, locally, it’s more low key. “It’s really more for fun,” says Muller. “We keep everything friendly.” He says he tries to keep about 40 to 50 racing pigeons of various ages in the bird loft on his property. Lifespan is 15 to 20 or more years.

“Pigeons leave the nest at about four weeks and are banded at five days old,” he says. The band, made of plastic-coated aluminum, is unique to the bird, much like a social security number. In addition to the band, racing pigeons carry a radio frequency identification, or RFID, chip on the opposite leg. This records their flying times when racing.

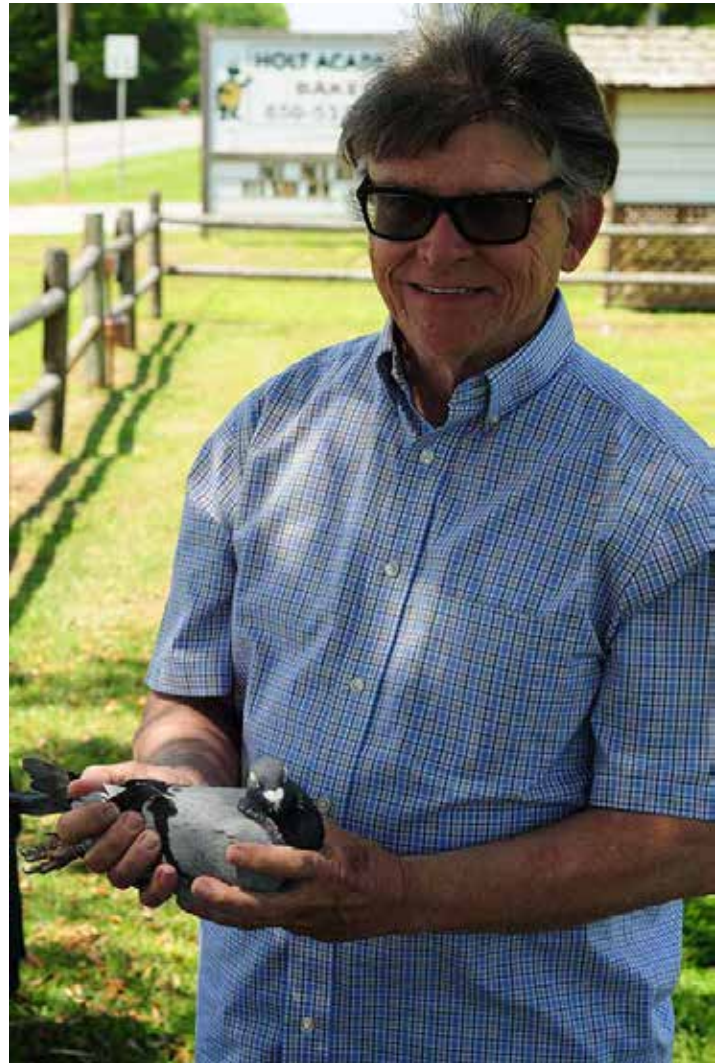
When racing, pigeons are transported to a prearranged point and released en masse. The impulse to return to the roost is “overpowering,” says Muller. “They usually come home, or they die.” Once released, the birds fly until they return home. “Pigeons can fly 50 miles per hour non-stop—no food, no drink,” he says. And it’s not the first bird home that wins the race, it’s the fastest, as recorded by the RFID chip.

Muller begins conditioning his birds for duration races by releasing them for periods of time to fly around his home. This allows them to begin strengthening their wings. He increases the release times as the start of the racing season creeps closer.

The first race in October is a short distance of around 100 miles from Greenville, Ala. Distances get longer as the season continues through to January to build up to a 350-mile race at the end of the racing season. On race day, pigeons are released miles from their home loft, the distance determined by the race. Owners typically put all their birds in the first race of the season to see what kind of racing shape they are in, according to Muller.

One of the largest pigeon races in the state was the Florida Pigeon Derby this past February with a \$1.4 million payout spread over first to 100th place. The 2,549 birds from 515 lofts flew in the 387-mile race.

While nowhere near as big a race as the Derby, Muller and his club-member friends still get excited when the pigeons race. Once the birds are released, it’s a waiting game to see who can claim bragging rights.



Holt resident Al Muller, holding one of his birds, has been racing pigeons since he was about 16 years old.

Pigeon facts

- “Pigeon” is French for “dove.”
- Pigeons mate for life.
- Both male and female pigeons produce milk to feed their young.
- Pigeon racing is an international sport.
- Biggest race: South Africa
- Hardest race: Thailand One Loft Race
- Fastest recorded pigeon: 98 mph during a 3-hour journey
- Fastest racing pigeon: thoroughbred homing pigeon
- Distance traveled in one day: up to 700 miles



The cannon above was salvaged along the east coast of Florida as part of the 1715 Spanish Treasure Fleet. It is on loan to the Museum from the Florida Bureau of Archaeological Research, Florida Division of the Historical Resources, Florida Department of State, and can be seen on display in the military section.

Spanish Silver Fleet's fatal encounter with a hurricane

by the NOAA Hurricane Research Division

Early on the morning of July 31, 1715, a Spanish treasure fleet was caught by a severe hurricane while exiting the Bahama Channel. Eleven ships of the fleet were either sunk or foundered upon reefs along the Florida coast.

With end of the War of Spanish Succession

in 1714, the Spanish Crown was in desperate need of funds. No major shipment of goods from Spain's New World colonies had been undertaken during the War, so a fleet of galleons was organized to visit various ports of call around the Spanish Main to gather both royal and private treasure to be shipped

to Cadiz, Spain. Since the majority of the goods consisted of silver coins and bullion, the venture was dubbed the Spanish Plata (Silver) Fleet. Due to numerous delays, the fleet of twelve ships didn't leave the harbor in Havana, Cuba, until July 27, 1715, well into hurricane season.

The voyage began with fair weather, but once they turned north into the Bahama Channel the ships encountered contrary northeasterly winds. As the winds strengthened, the fleet was forced to a crawl as it tacked into the wind in the narrow channel. A French ship, the *Grifon*, which was forced by security concerns to sail with the fleet, made good time and broke with the fleet to speed ahead to a rendezvous point off the Carolinas. But the heavy-laden Spanish ships were left to lumber on, and they began to experience the signs of an on-coming hurricane. Captain General Don Juan Esteban de Ubilla found himself trapped between the uninhabited, reef-strewn Florida shore to his west, and the shallow, English, pirate-strewn Bahama Bank to his east, and had no choice but to try to clear the channel before the worst of the storm struck.

It was a race he lost and the hurricane overtook the fleet just as it emerged from the channel. Three ships were sunk in deep water, the other eight driven onto the Florida coast from present-day Fort Pierce to Wabasso (north of Vero Beach) where they wrecked upon rocks and reefs. Of the 2,500 sailors and passengers, 1,000 perished in the storm including Ubilla. The rest struggled for survival on an

inhospitable coast. Two boats were salvaged from the wrecks and were sent for help, one to St. Augustine the other back to Havana. Most of the survivors were rescued and salvage operations were begun almost immediately. Meanwhile, the *Grifon* made Brest, France, by September 2, unaware of the fate of the rest of the fleet.

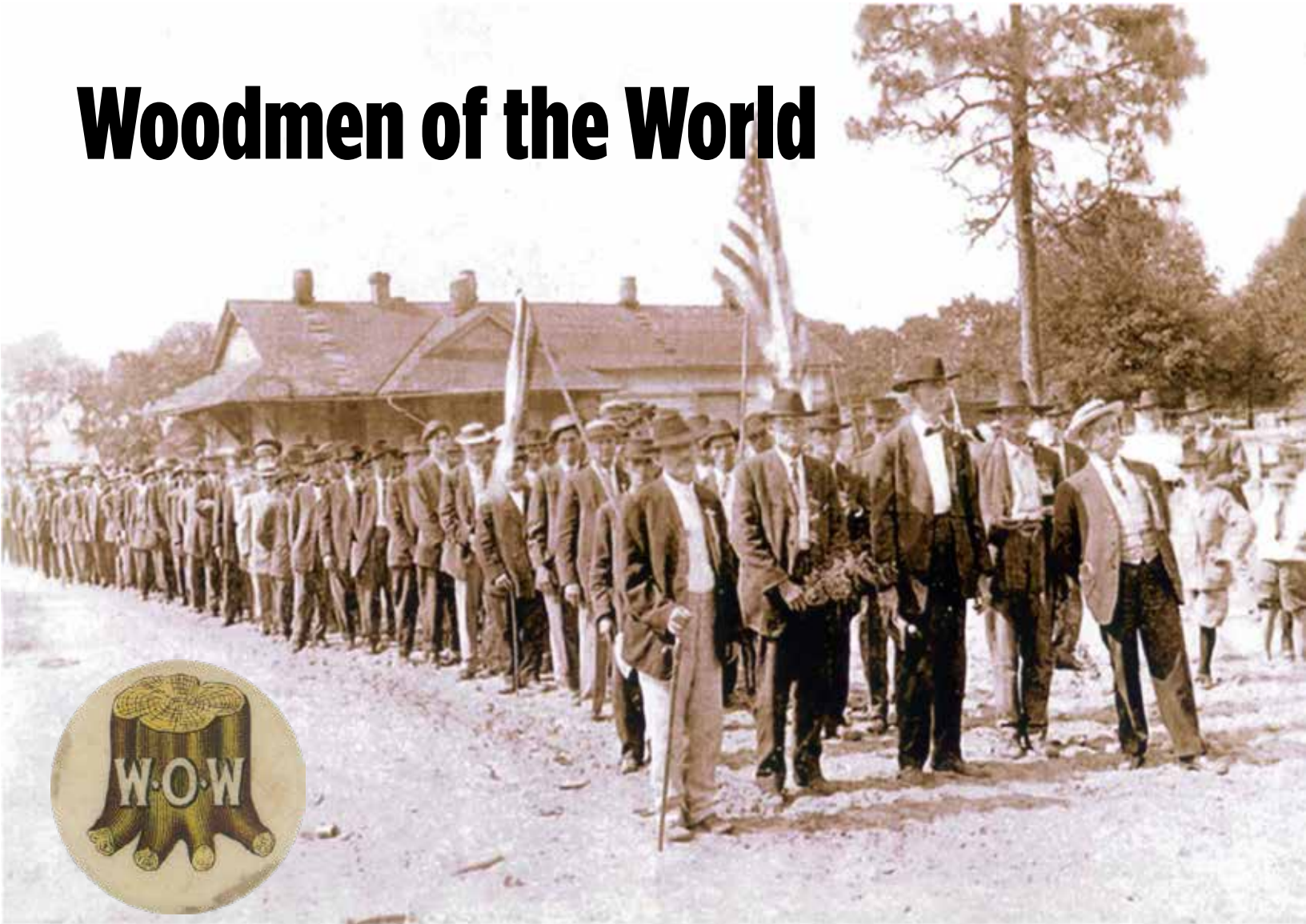
Much of the treasure was recovered and shipped on to Spain. But word of the disaster reached English ears, and privateer Henry Jennings carried out a daring raid on the Spanish salvage camps claiming what treasure they had stored for shipment home. Eventually, the Spanish abandoned salvage operations and English opportunists occupied their camps to claim what was left in the wrecks. When the pickings became slim, even the English left the site.

Memory of the wrecks eventually fell from common knowledge. It wasn't until the early 1940s that amateur archaeologist Charles Higgs discovered evidence of the salvage camps in the dunes near the Sebastian Inlet. Later work by the Florida Park Service associated the camps with the Silver Fleet wrecks. A passing hurricane in 1955 washed away some of the dunes around the camps revealing many artifacts and silver coins. This touched off renewed salvage efforts by local builder Kip Wagner and his Real 8 Company. They eventually recovered thousands of coins and pieces of jewelry and a number of cannon. The discovery led to the establishment of a state park and museum, and to the area being dubbed The Treasure Coast.

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Woodmen of the World



Woodmen of the World gather in Holt in the early 1900s on Main Street, just south of the railroad tracks. According to Holt resident and historian Max Cooper, the tall man, third from left leading the procession, was his grandfather, George W. Cooper. Dan Carr of Holt is to his right (second from left). The Holt railroad depot is in the background. (courtesy of Max Cooper)

During a walk through many cemeteries in Okaloosa County, a person might notice one grave marker stands out among all the others. Made of concrete, it's shaped like a tree stump with sawed-off branches and has a round shield on it above the name of the deceased. Some trunks stand on a pile of logs, some have axes or doves or flowers. All were erected by the same organization: the Woodmen of the World.

In the years following the Civil War, fraternal societies began cropping up at such an amazing rate, the time from late 19th to early 20th century is now known as the Golden Age of Fraternalism. During this time, it's been estimated that as much as 40 percent of the adult population of the United States was a member of

at least one fraternal order. Woodmen of the World was one such fraternal organization.

The Woodmen of the World, a "secret benevolent fraternal society," was established in the late 19th century by Joseph Cullen Root. In 1882, after listening to a sermon by pastor Sydney Crawford at the First Congregational Church in Lyons, Iowa, about

“pioneering woodmen clearing away the forest to provide for their families,” Root was inspired to form the Modern Woodmen of America, a fraternal society that would “clear away” the problems of financial security for its members. He realized life insurance was too expensive for people of limited means who wanted to make provision for their families in the event of sickness, accident, or death, so he wanted to help ease those burdens. The newly established MWA was designed help defray those problems. Activated in 1883, Root wrote the ritual and served as the first Venerable Consul of Pioneer Camp No. 1 and was the first Head Consul of the new order.

That first year, 562 life insurance certificates were issued. Ten years later, by the end of 1893, more than 124,000 certificates had been issued. Modern Woodmen had grown to 42,694 members by 1889.

Unfortunately, less than a year later, Root was forced out of the organization he formed due to internal strife. He resigned and moved to Omaha, where, still inspired to help provide financial security for families, he organized the Woodmen of the World in 1890 with just six members. It grew substantially from there. More than a mere insurance organization, WOW was a fraternal organization that promoted good fellowship, brotherly love, kindness, and the welfare of all mankind, according to an editorial in the *Pensacola Journal* in 1915.

Florida's first Woodmen

In 1892, the first Woodman of the World camp was organized in Pensacola as Live Oak Camp No. 1. Camps were numbered in order of establishment within each state. T.E. Welles was elected as camp commander of a nine-man staff made up of an advisor lieutenant, banker, clerk, watchman, a sentry, and three managers. The camp unveiled its first treestone memorial marker a year later for Woodman Captain H.C. Northrup in St. Jude's Cemetery with Pensacola Mayor W.E. Anderson delivering the eulogy. Treestone memorial unveiling ceremonies were a momentous event and were announced in the local paper, attracting WOW members and

nonmembers alike.

Not long after, other camps began springing up throughout the state. Tallahassee's Leon Camp No. 2 followed Pensacola's lead. Jacksonville established camp number three. DeFuniak organized its camp (No. 10) in 1894 and Pensacola formed a second WOW camp, Hickory Camp No. 21, in 1895. A third Pensacola camp, Olive Camp, was made up of Greek citizens and met for the first time in 1919.

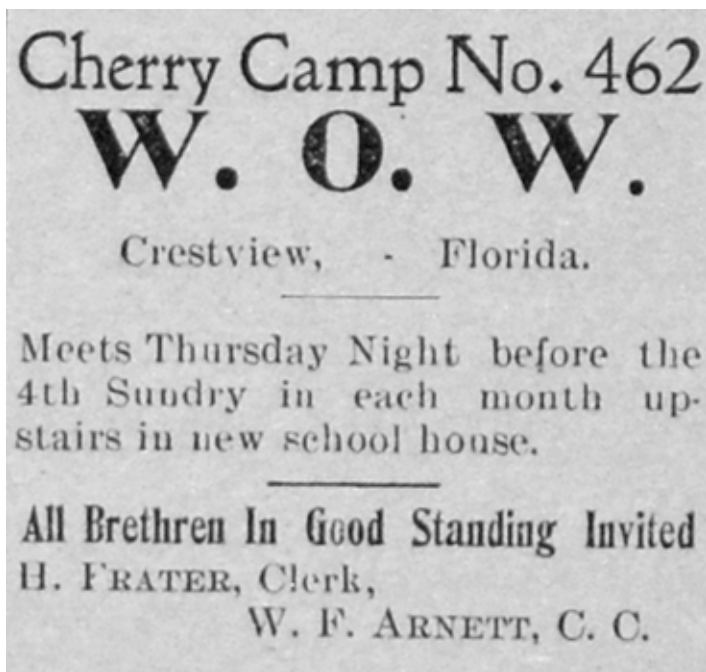
Other northwest Florida camps were established: Milton's Blackwater Camp No. 33 in 1896, Warrington's Pine Tree Camp No. 40 in 1898, Century's Camp No. 55 in 1902, Jay's Green Spring Camp No. 259 in 1909, Bagdad's camp in 1910, Brent's camp in 1912, Paxton's Dogwood Camp No. 265 in 1913, and Bagdad's Cedar Grove Camp in 1923. Camps were also established in Laurel Hill, McDavid, Lakewood, Munson, and Freeport.



Joseph Collen Root

Crestview may have had at least two camps at one time—Cherry Camp No. 462 (as early as 1913 with W.F. Arnett as camp commander) and Crestview Camp No. 609. (Crestview also had a Modern Woodmen of America camp that organized October 5, 1917, with M.L. Wheelus as post consul, William H. Mapoles as counsel, R.B. Rucker as advisor, H.E. King as banker, F.C. Webb as clerk, J.D. Cobb as escort, S.A. Smith as chief forester, J.D. Garrett as sentry, B.D. Atwell as Watchman, and Dr. E.R. Marsh as camp physician.)

By 1913, there were nearly 700,000 members and more than 10,800 camps worldwide. Governors, mayors, and other notable people were members of the Woodmen



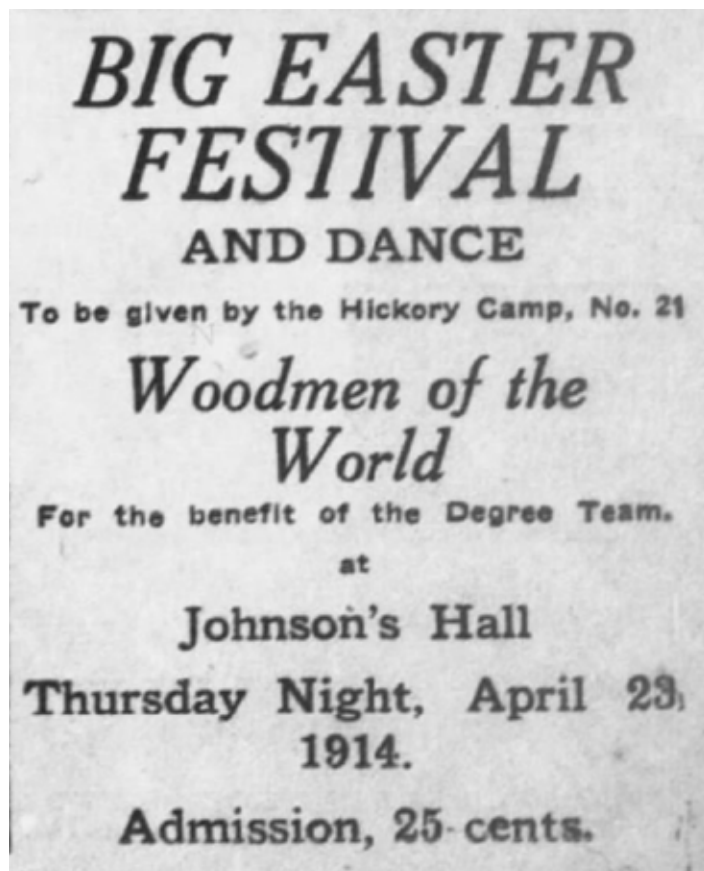
Crestview Woodman Cherry Camp No. 462 began appearing in the *Okaloosa News=Journal* in 1918. The number denotes there were 461 camps established in Florida before the one in Crestview.

of the World, such as Florida's Governor Park Trammel who served from 1913 to 1917.

Woodmen activities

Woodmen of the World labeled itself as a "secret benevolent fraternal society," which meant its inner functions, rites, and rituals were concealed from the public. However, many of its activities were open to the public. And although a fraternal organization, WOW camps were also very civic minded. They organized a number of community events such as dances, baseball games, parades, and Fourth of July picnics, and were avid promoters of the community they lived in. Pensacola was also extremely supportive of its two WOW camps.

Woodmen and the city had a symbiotic relationship. The city realized the organization could draw hundreds of thousands of people—members, family, tourists—to big events and WOW relied on city support for large-scale assemblies. In 1915, the annual district encampment of the Uniformed Rank, consisting of regiments from Alabama, Georgia, and Florida, was held August 30 to September 4 in Pensacola, the largest number of people to ever visit the city for that length of time. Somewhere between 750 to 1,000 members of the Uniform Rank attended. These members



The Pensacola Woodmen of the World host an Easter festival in 1914.

of the Uniformed Rank dressed in uniforms, drilled, paraded, and lived in encampments during these events. The War Department assigned a U.S. Army officer to drill them and they had dress parades every afternoon.

To pull this off, WOW needed the support of the city of Pensacola to find an appropriate campground site, ensure it had appropriate buildings, lights, and running water for showers. This would cost the city \$1,000, a large sum in 1915. The citizens came through and the encampment was a huge success. Participants enjoyed the camp location on Palmetto Beach with access to the water, dances, parades, and other week-long activities. It was so successful, Pensacola was chosen as the site again in 1916 to a huge success. The city tried for a three-peat in 1917, vying for the national "grand encampment" to be held at Fort Barrancas, thanks to approval by Secretary of War Newton D. Baker, but WOW headquarters decided Mobile, Alabama, would be a better place in case the Army decided it needed Pensacola's military base due to the ongoing World War I. Unfortunately, the

1917 encampment was canceled due to the war.

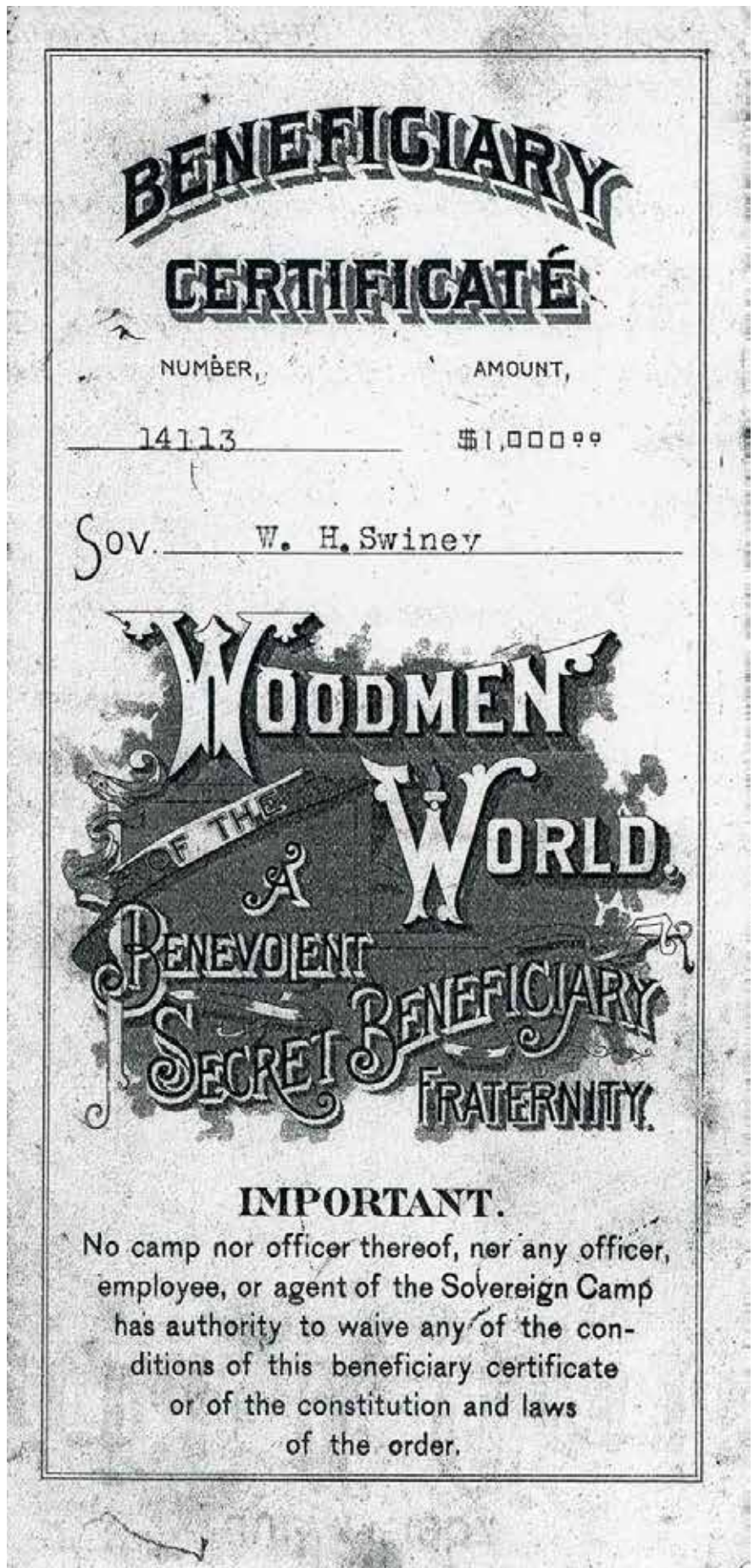
It pays to be a member

Woodmen of the World was not the only fraternal benefit organization to offer life insurance during the Golden Age of Fraternalism. Besides WOW and Modern Woodmen of America, the Knights of Columbus, the Royal Neighbors of America, the Tribe of Ben-Hur, and many others offered financial assistance in the form of life insurance.

When Root established Woodmen of America, he purposefully set insurance rates lower than other insurance orders at the time. Rates were available in even amounts from \$500 to \$3,000 and varied depending on age. The younger the person, the cheaper the rate. In 1893, young men between the ages of 16 to 28 years of age would pay 20 cents a month; between 29 to 41 years of age the cost was 25 cents a month for a \$500 insurance certificate or policy. Those who regularly paid their insurance costs for 20 years were given a "paid in full" policy for life. In addition, a grave memorial monument was provided for an additional \$100. Unfortunately, the treestone grave markers program was abandoned nationwide in the late 1920s due to cost. This occurred about the time the nation dipped into the era of the Great Depression.

WoodmanLife

Woodman of the World continued to grow and support its membership. In 1910, WOW contributed more than \$13,000 to hurricane and tidal wave victims following Galveston's category four hurricane also known as the Great Storm of 1900. Around 8,000 fatalities were mostly due



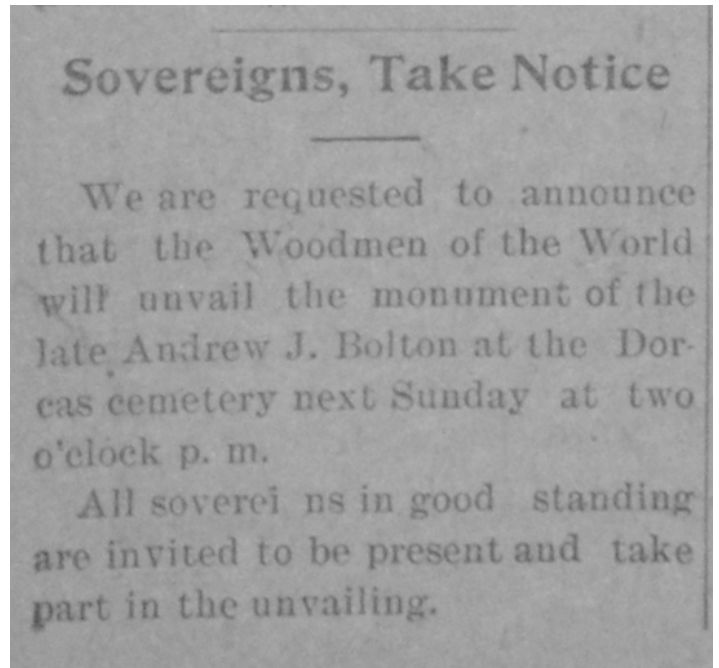
This Woodman of the World life insurance certificate belonged to W.H. Swiney from Dorcas.



The emblem of the Woodmen of the World included a dove for peace and three tools of the lumber trade: a maul, an ax, and a hammer.

to storm surge in what is considered the deadliest natural disaster in U.S. history. The storm destroyed about 7,000 buildings and left approximately 8,000 to 10,000 people homeless out of a population of 38,000.

By 1915, membership surpassed 750,000. In 1934, during the Depression, WOW chapter donated more than \$160,000 for food, clothing,



The January 18, 1918, issue of the Okaloosa News calls all Woodmen members to honor the late Andrew Bolton at a treestone memorial unweaving in Dorcas.

medical supplies, and fuel. In 1958, it adopted the slogan, "The Family Fraternity." By 1979, there were 802,000 members nationwide. Woodmen of the World reached many other milestones, too many to enumerate, throughout the next 40 decades as a non-profit fraternal benefit society. In June 1915, Woodman of the World began marketing itself as WoodmanLife in June 1915. It has chapters in all fifty states and the District of Columbia.



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

3rd
Saturday
At the Baker Block Museum



Racing Pigeons



Thoroughbreds of the Sky

Saturday, May 18, 1 p.m.
Hilton-Shaw Genealogy Library
Presented by Al Muller



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.



SIGNSOFHOPES.COM

Trevia Buckner, CPA



The Restroom



BAKER AUTO PARTS



SHOP

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



Pyrex Town & Country refrigerator dish: \$12.95

This is a mini vintage Pyrex 1 1/2 pint refrigerator dish #0502 in the Town & Country pattern, introduced in 1963 (no lid). Size: 4"x6"



St. Michael porcelain dish: \$7.95

This porcelain St. Michael fan-shaped dish, made in the late 1980s-early 1990s, is painted in an "oriental blossom" design. Made in Japan. Size: 11"x8.5"



Oversized buffalo nickel paperweight: \$6.95

A novelty paperweight made to look like a 1913 buffalo/Indian-head nickle. Size: 3 inches in diameter.



13"x16" Barney Fife retro metal poster: \$11.95

This sign would look great on any wall. Buy dad an early Father's Day gift. Many other themes available. Size: 13"x16"



Star child's toy harmonica: \$3.50

Future musicians can begin learning how to play with this beginner Star K520 harmonica. Made in China. Plastic and tin. Size: 4"x1"



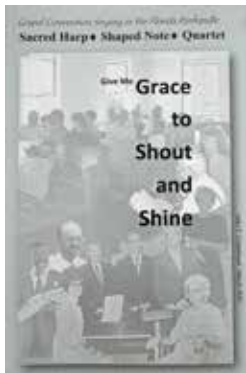
Set of 6 plastic turtles: \$1

Get a set of six plastic turtles of various colors and designs. Size: 1"x1/2"

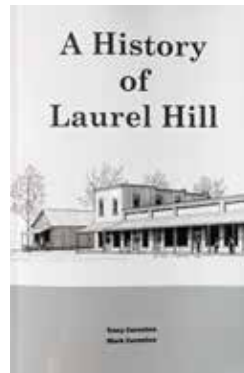
All this and much, much more is available in the **Baker Mercantile Gift Store**.

Okaloosa County History Series

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



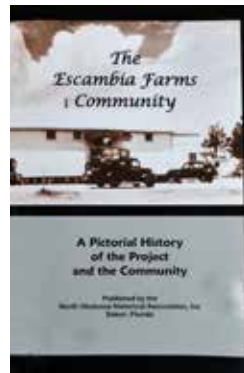
Give me the Grace to Shout and Shine, the newest book in the history series, focuses on the three most prominent gospel singing methods in the northwest Florida panhandle throughout the years: Sacred Harp, also known as fasola, five- or seven-shape note convention singing, and later, the gospel quartet.



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.



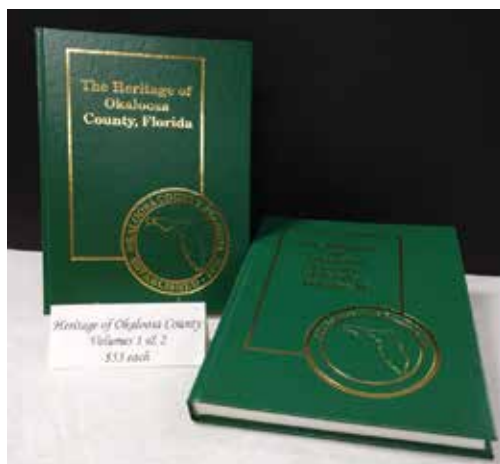
Present Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal program included aid to American migrant workers and tenant farmers. The Resettlement Administration created a planned farming community in the northwest corner of Okaloosa County in 1936 known as Escambia Farms. By 1939, the community had grown to 72 families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

Baker Arts Festival

**Saturday, April 20, 2024
9 a.m. to 3 p.m.**



Vendor Application

\$40 per 10' x 10' space

\$50 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:

Do you require electricity? Y N

Children attending the event with parents must be under adult supervision at all times.

Complete the form and return it no later than March 11 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



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
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**

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

April							May							June						
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	4							1
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
28	29	30					26	27	28	29	30	31		23	24	25	26	27	28	29
														30						

- 15 Tax Day
- 18 North Okaloosa Historical Association Board meeting, 6 p.m.
- 20 **3rd Saturday Baker Arts Festival**
9 a.m.-3 p.m., Park Museum is open from 10 a.m.-3:30 p.m.
- 23 Passover begins
- Regular Museum hours:
Tuesday-Friday, every 3rd Saturday, 10 a.m.-3:30 p.m.**
- 2 National Day of Prayer
- 5 Cinco de Mayo
- 12 Mother's Day
- 16 North Okaloosa Historical Association Board meeting, 6 p.m.
- 18 **3rd Saturday Pigeon Racing: Thoroughbreds of the Sky**
Museum is open from 10 a.m.-3:30 p.m.
- 27 Memorial Day
- 6 D-Day
- 14 Flag Day
- 15 **3rd Saturday Homemade Ice Cream**
Museum is open from 10 a.m.-3:30 p.m.
- 16 Father's Day
- 19 Juneteenth
- 20 North Okaloosa Historical Association Board meeting, 6 p.m. and Solstice, first day of Summer



Come join us for free ice cream for our

3rd Saturday



Saturday, June 15, 1 p.m.

3rd Saturday



At the Baker Block Museum

Join us in 2024 for the following events

**April 20, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., Heritage Park
Baker Arts Festival**

**May 18, 1 p.m., Hilton-Shaw Genealogy Library
Racing Pigeons: Thoroughbreds of the Sky**

**June 15, 1 p.m., Museum
Homemade Ice Cream**

**July 20, 1 p.m., Hilton-Shaw Genealogy Library
Archaeology of Northwest Florida, presented
by the Florida Public Archaeology Network**

**October 18 & 19, 6:30 p.m.
Creepy Cabins**

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

**Keep checking social media and our website
for more 2024 events.**