

McTear Named Amateur All Sports Award Winner

The 1980 Amateur All Sports Award Winner, Houston McTear, was named the winner of the award for his outstanding performance in track and field. He was recognized for his achievements in the 100m, 200m, and 400m sprints. The award is presented annually to the top amateur athlete in the state.



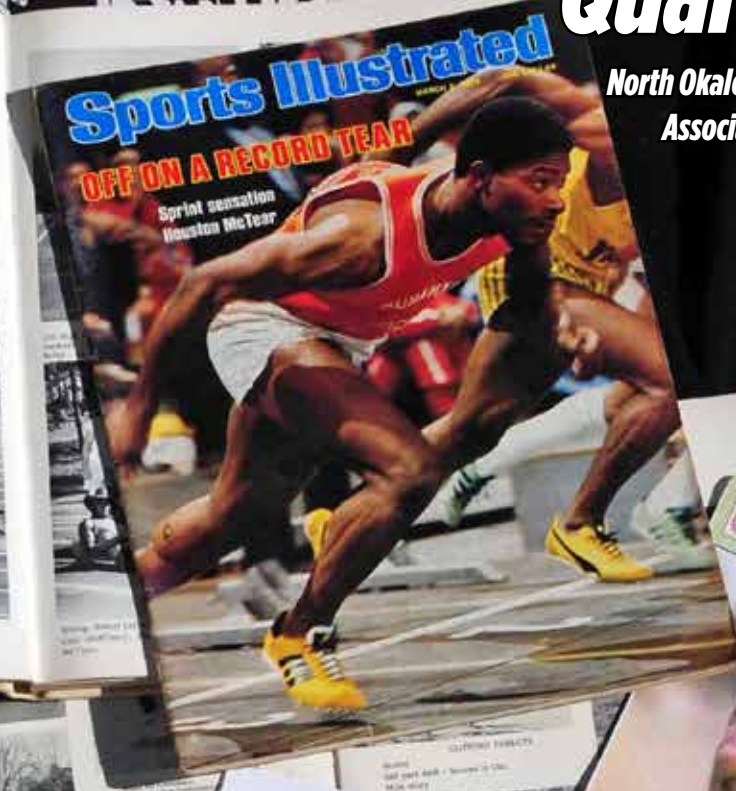
Okaloosa Historical Quarterly

North Okaloosa Historical Association, Inc.



Houston McTear

McTear, a track and field athlete, was named the winner of the Amateur All Sports Award for his outstanding performance in the 100m, 200m, and 400m sprints.



McTear: Olympic Bound

Places 2nd To Glance In Trials
Pate Won U.S. Open Title; Mahaffey Won Self Respect
Top Finishers

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McTear Wins 60 Against USSR

McTear, a track and field athlete, won 60 points against the USSR in a competition. He was recognized for his outstanding performance in the 100m, 200m, and 400m sprints.



City Slow Pitch Softball Team Placement Drawn

The City Slow Pitch Softball Team Placement Drawn. The team will compete in the upcoming season.

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Discover. Experience. Connect. OKALOOSA COUNTY, FLORIDA

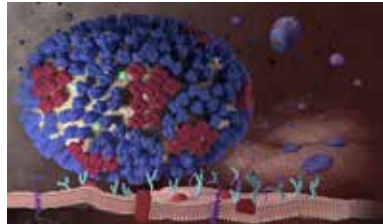
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www.bakerblockmuseum.org
The Baker Block Museum is a 501-3(c) non-profit organization of the North Okaloosa Historical Association, Inc., and is managed by its Board of Directors.

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. 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.

Director's Notes

We are excited with the prospects of a new year at the Baker Block Museum and the events we are planning.

Mark your calendars for our first annual Baker Arts Festival set as our **3rd Saturday** event in April. We are accepting vendor applications from artists and crafters who would like to showcase their talent and sell their products.

This event will be held in our Heritage Park April 17 from 9 a.m. until 3 p.m.

The month of July will mark the **25th anniversary** of the opening of the Baker Block Museum and we plan to celebrate with plenty of cake and ice cream during our **3rd Saturday** event July 17.

Watch our quarterly magazine, Facebook page, and website for more details as this milestone event draws closer.

As always, we appreciate and depend on the support from our local community.

Ann Spann

President's Message

Did you know that the Baker Block Museum's collection includes hours upon hours of local history on audio cassette tape, VHS, 8 mm movies and microfilm? Unfortunately, these resources are in danger of being lost. The materials are fragile and the equipment needed to access them is quickly becoming obsolete. Because of this, these records are not currently available to our visitors.

We have developed a plan to digitize these materials so they can be accessible to museum visitors and preserved for future generations. In August, we submitted a grant proposal to Impact 100 that would have funded this project in its entirety. Unfortunately, we were not chosen as a recipient of the grant. However, we remain committed to the project and have to rethink how to tackle the work.

The budget we developed for the grant proposal included \$68,000 to digitize 193 audio cassettes, \$1,440 for 16 video cassettes, \$567 for 2.5 hours of home movies, and \$19,725 for 30 rolls of microfilm. This will be a very expensive and time consuming project.

We decided our first priority is to digitize the audio cassette tapes because they include interviews with locals such as Boss Merritt, Mayo Ferdon, Rosa Nell Hilton, Herford Barnhill, Mabel Peaden, and Rosa Nell Hilton. Rather than outsourcing the digitization we will be using volunteers to do the work. If you would like to donate toward this project or volunteer to help, please give the museum a call at 850-537-5714.

Tracy Curenton

Editor's Letter

New year, new look

We have a new look! Welcome to the inaugural edition of North Okaloosa Historical Association, Inc.'s *Okaloosa Historical Quarterly*. The NOHA Board was looking for a way to expand our horizons, reach a wider audience, and educate the community about the rich heritage of our local area. Out of that quest, we decided to turn our newsletter into an historical journal.

We'll be tweaking the content and design a bit as we figure out just the right combination of elements to ensure the publication is educational, engaging, and entertaining for everyone while still containing membership and Museum information. Please feel free to offer your suggestions on how to make the *OHQ* even better.

There are so many stories to be told! Consider this an open invitation to share your articles for publication. Deadlines for publication are March 15, June 15, Sept. 15, and Dec. 15 for consideration in the next *OHQ*. Items received after the deadline will be considered for future use.

Discover. Experience. Connect. And enjoy the first issue of *Okaloosa Historical Quarterly*.

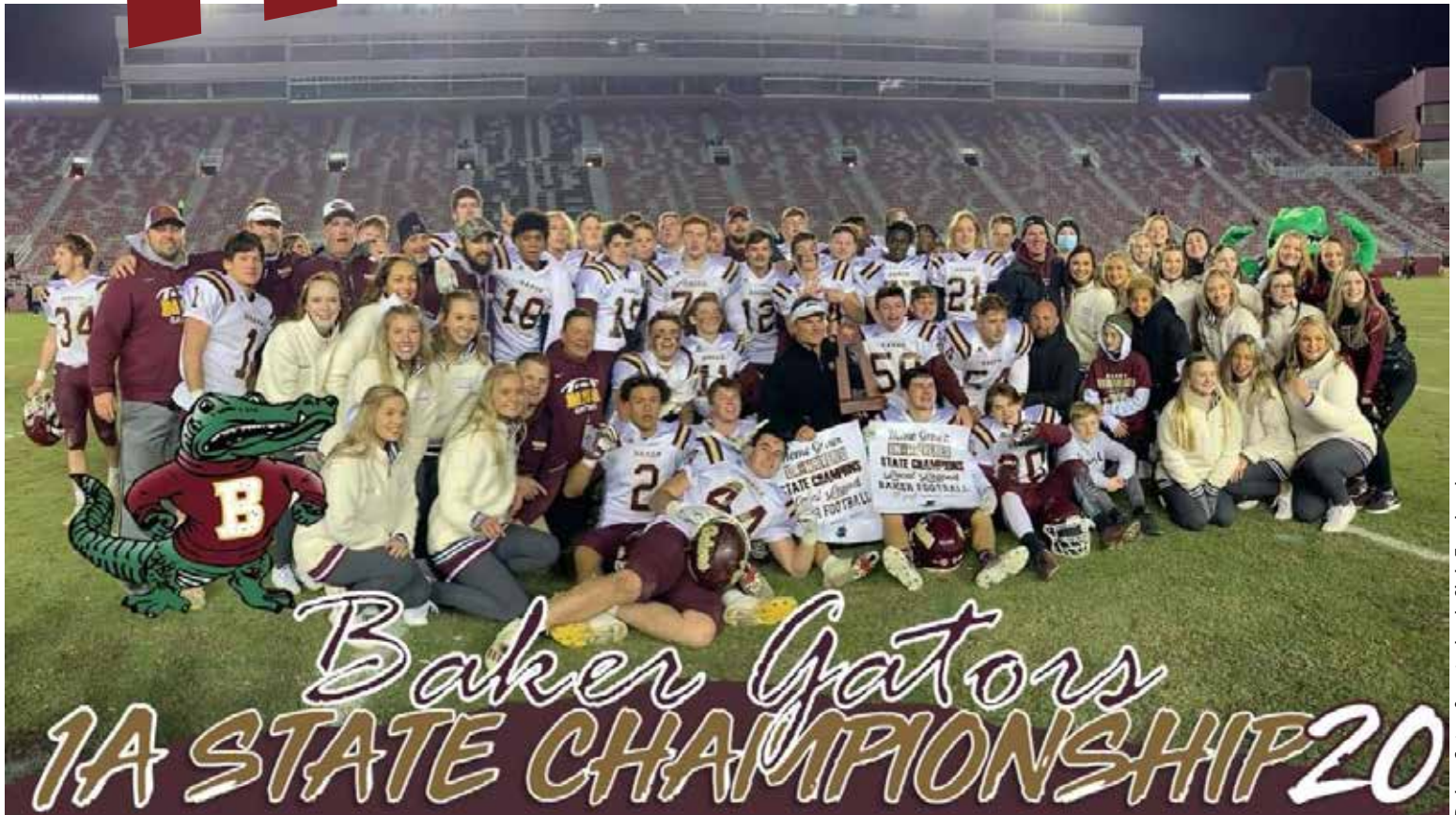
Stephanie Holcombe
Editor

#1

The number 27 is magical for the Baker Gators High School football team.

After scoring 27 points in last year's semifinal championship game, the Baker Gators won this year's state championship game 27 to 14—27 years after the last title in 1993.

5 is a pretty good number, too. This is the Gator's fifth state title. 1 is the best number, because the Gators are No. 1.



Baker Gator Quarterback Club Facebook



The Baker Gators have made nine championship appearances in 37 years resulting in five state number one titles.

- 2020
- 1993
- 1985
- 1984
- 1983

The Gators were also four-times runner-up at State.

- 2018
- 2016
- 1982
- 1980

Baker School's varsity football team took its undefeated season right through to the state championship in Tallahassee December 17, defeating the Hawthorne Hornets 27-14 and being crowned Class 1A champs.

Looking back at the beginning

The Baker Gridders, 1948

Hugh Adams
Morris Adams
Rhett Barnes
Carlie Gene Carroll
Parish Carter
Ray Cawthon
Tim Corbin
Aubrey "Bunk" Courtney

John Davis
Jimmie Foster
Randal Gilmore
James Herndon
Carlis Jackson
Robert Johnson
Morgan Howell
Louis Kish

Delano Lundy
Douglas Nichols
Selma Peacock
Winston Peacock
Dudley Walker
Ted Wilkerson
Dwight Melton

Cheerleaders

Joan Hayslip
Gladys Blue
Roslyn Reeves
Doris Demott
Betty Hudson
Jewel Webb



Baker Gridders, 1949-50. Front row: David Corbin, Leo Melvin, Dealno Lundy, Edgar Dowling, Jack Huggins, Dalton Howell, Warren Joiner, Billy Spooner, Manosh Beasley. Second row: Bud Adams, Dewey Elmore, Billy Gilmore, Joe F. Holloway, Marvin Arnett, Roland Williamson, Clark Cosson, Steven Kish, Coach Kish, Coach Walters, Coach John Blackshear. Third row: Floyd Stanley, Jack Livingston, Ben Hicks, Dudley Walker, Bill Brunson, Jake Adams, Louis Kish, Winson Peacock, "Doog" Adams

The Baker Gator football dynasty of today had an inauspicious start when the school fielded its first team in 1948. For the most part, most of the 23-man team knew nothing about the game and had never seen a football field until they played their first game in Uria, Alabama. One player asked the coach if they had to jump the goalposts to score a touchdown.

The team's first coach, Ed Kerkule, was a math, chemistry, and biology teacher who had no experience coaching, but unlike his players, he had played the game.

The players practiced on the baseball field with used equipment donated from Eglin Air Force Base's Eglin Eagles football team. They played home games on a cleared field on what is now Jack Stokes Road.

"I guess you could say our first stadium would have been a sandspur stadium," said

Carlis Jackson, one of the original team members during the 50th anniversary celebration in 1998. "The old field we played on was populated with sandspurs, among other things."

To earn money for football equipment such as cleats, some of the players cleaned the school's septic tanks.

"When I put my helmet on it came down over my eyes and scared me to death," said Carlie Gene Carroll about the donated equipment. "The helmet weighed more than most of the players did."

"When we needed to see the ball being thrown or in the air, we had to lift our helmets so we could see," said Aubrey "Bunk" Courtney.

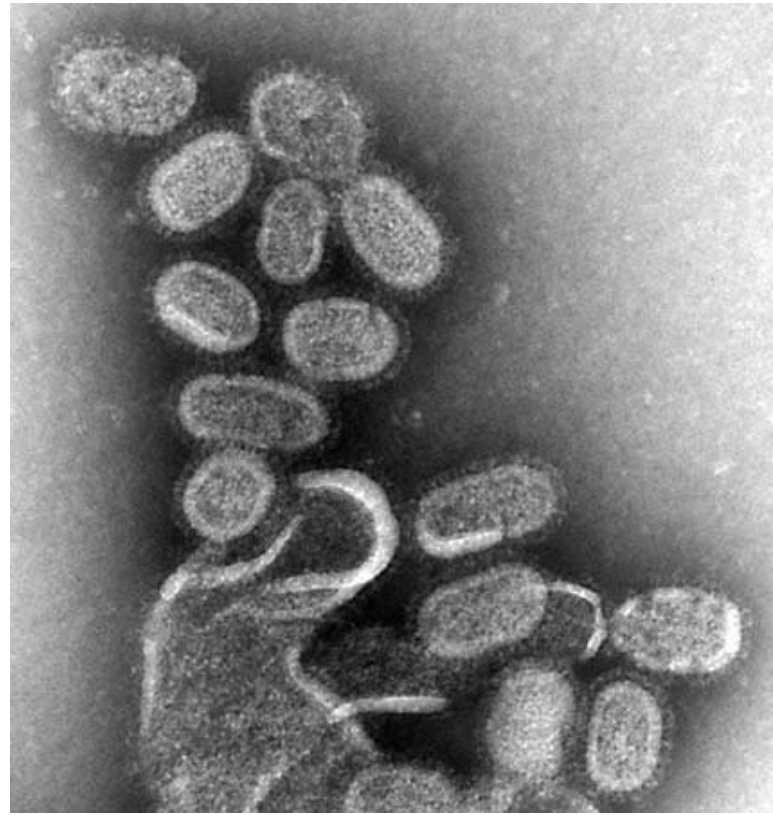
The Baker Gridders, as the new team was originally called, only won one game the first year, against Crestview's second team.

1918: Sickness strikes the world

The influenza pandemic of 1918 was the most severe pandemic to date, killing more people in 25 weeks than AIDS did in its first 25 years.

Just over 100 years ago, the world was trying to deal with a deadly pandemic known around the globe as the “Spanish” flu. An H1N1 influenza-A virus, the flu infected 500 million people or about one-third of the world’s population at the time. The death toll ranged from 20-to-50 million people, including 675,000 Americans.¹

Although there’s no definitive way to know for sure, most historians, scholars, and researchers today agree the influenza that rocked the world in 1918 to 1920 likely began in North America.² On March 4, 1918, An army cook named Albert Gitchell at Camp Fuston in Kansas was the first person identified with influenza during



the outbreak. Camp Fuston was a major training center for troops of the American Expeditionary Forces spinning up for World War I in Europe. Shortly, more than 100 soldiers were infected. Within a week, the number quintupled.³

Some scholars contend the virus began earlier in Haskell County Kansas, home to Fort Riley. In January 1918, 520 men there were sick. On March 11, cases were identified in New York City. Regardless of when it began, by April, the virus had reached Europe’s Western Front as American soldiers deployed for war. Some studies even suggest it began as early as 1915.

But if the virus had its roots in the United States, why was it called the Spanish Flu?

During World War I, countries participating in the conflict censored news coverage, especially regarding stories about troop readiness. Spain, who declared its neutrality in the war, saw no need to censor its news. When King Alfonso XIII came down with the flu, his sickness was reported in the Spanish press, giving the illness spreading around the world a new name: “The Spanish Flu.”

Three waves

The 1918 flu hit in three waves. The first wave, appearing in early March, literally



A temporary hospital in Camp Funston, Kansas, during the 1918–19 influenza pandemic (National Museum of Health and Medicine, Armed Forces Institution of Pathology, Washington, D.C.)

by Stephanie Holcombe

INFLUENZA PANDEMIC OF 1918-1919

One of the most severe and devastating pandemics in human history

Known as

Spanish Flu

Great Influenza Pandemic

and in Spain, the French Flu

1918 Flu Epidemic

La Grippe

The 1918 flu pandemic was an H1N1-A influenza respiratory illness

Influenza

- Contagious respiratory illness
- Caused by influenza viruses
- Affects nose, throat, sometimes lungs



Pandemic

- Outbreak of infectious disease over a wide geographical area
- Affects significant proportion of the world's population

Occurred in 3 waves

1st Wave

March 1918

- Identified in Kansas
- Spread through Western Europe
- Comparatively mild

2nd Wave

Aug-Dec 1918

- More lethal
- Quickly caused pneumonia
- Deaths 2 days after symptoms

3rd Wave

Jan-April 1919

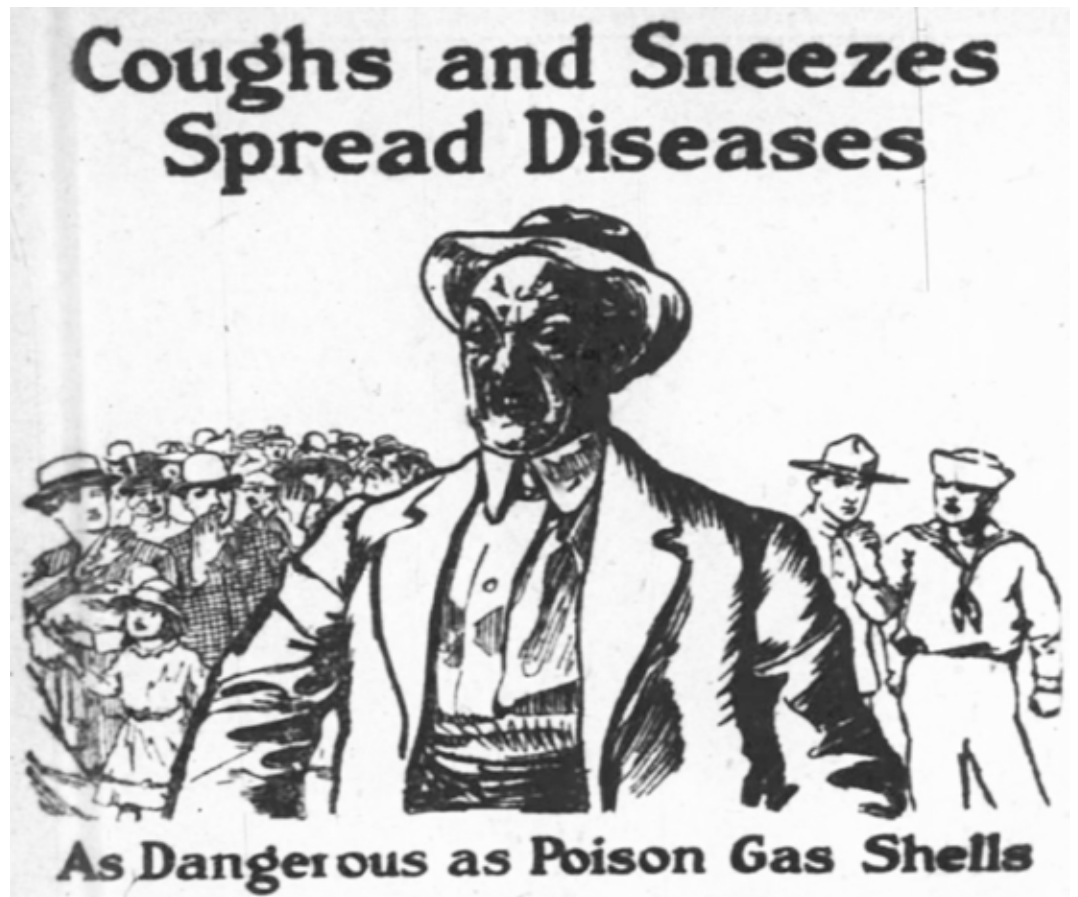
- People died within hours or days
- Began to subside by spring

Effect

- 1/3 of the world population infected
- Death toll: 20-50 million, including 675,000 Americans
- More men died of the flu than in battle during World War I

sailed across the Atlantic Ocean as U.S. soldiers traveled to fight in Europe. By April, the virus showed up on the Western Front, the main theater of war during World War I. By July, the virus had reached Poland. In addition to sick Americans, three-quarters of the French, one-half of the British and 900,000 German soldiers were ill, adversely affecting military operations. The good news: This bout was relatively mild; mortality rates were considered to be not much higher than normal. An estimated 75,000 people died during the first six months compared to 63,000 deaths that same period in 1915.

Early on, comparisons were made between the 1918 illness and what was known as the Russian flu, the Asiatic flu, or the epidemic of 1889-1890. Headlines touted it as “nothing new—simply the Old Grip or La Grippe.” News articles in papers such as the *Pensacola Journal* outlined treatment as bed rest, aspirin, and Vick’s VapoRub.⁴ One such article even offered advice to Pensacolans to “sterilize your nose” to avoid

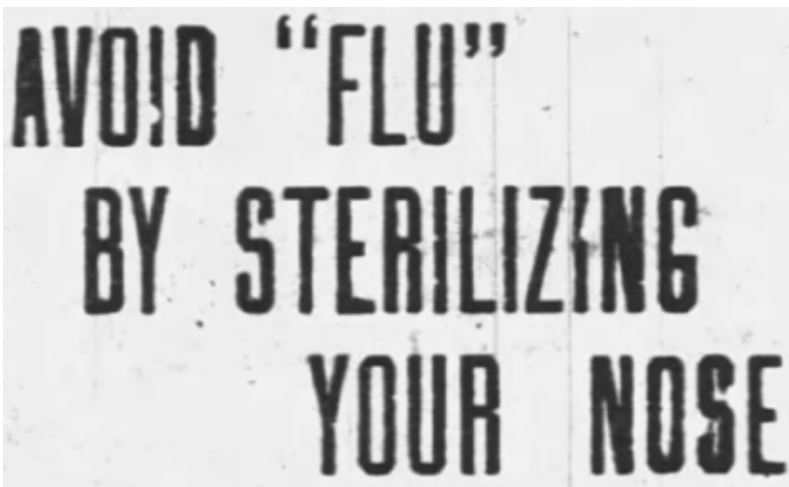


Pensacola Journal, Oct. 13, 1918

getting the flu. This was accomplished by sniffing Eucapine Salve, whose ingredients were oleum eucalypti, camphor, menthol, and oil of white pine, and also rubbing a little on the back of the tongue.⁵

Later in the summer, as the virus appeared to recede, guards were let down as people thought the worst was behind them. However, the second wave hit with a vengeance. From August through December, influenza ravaged the world. The U.S. War Department estimated 26 percent of the Army was sick—about one million men—and 30,000 had died. The Army lost 8,743,102 days among enlisted men due to sickness in 1918.⁶

The second wave was much more lethal than the first. Those who got sick died within hours or days after developing initial symptoms. And it was a horrible death: skin turned blue and lungs filled with fluids, suffocating the infirmed. At Fort Devens in Massachusetts, six days after the first new case was reported in September, the virus had spread to nearly 6,700 soldiers. More than 750 soldiers died



Pensacola Journal, Oct. 27, 1918

that month.⁷ October was the highest month for mortality, posting about 292,000 deaths as compared to approximately 26,000 during the same period in 1915. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, an estimated 195,000 Americans died just during the month of October.⁸

Virus transmission was by airborne particles from sneezing, coughing, nasal discharges, and spitting. Health officers in Mobile, Alabama, requested people to refrain from kissing.⁹ People were urged to wear masks made of gauze and cheesecloth as a front-line effort to help slow the virus. Like today's resistance to mask wearing, people then also opposed to the mask mandate, sometime drawing lines along political divisions.¹⁰



Pensacola Journal, Oct. 16, 1918

Across the United States, schools were closed, church services were canceled, and calls went out to find a cure. The flu delayed World War I enlistments, caused traffic delays, and sidelined telephone operator workers. Public gatherings were prohibited, dances were canceled, and movie theaters, bars, and saloons were closed.

Being a port city and home to the U.S.

Navy, Pensacola had the potential to become a hotbed of the virus, but public leadership took quick action and closed down schools, churches, movie theaters, and public spaces in an organized effort to contain the illness.¹¹ However, the *Pensacola Journal* was filled with news notes about its citizens who were ill or recovering, or in some cases, had passed away from the virus. Businesses were shuttered as workers became ill. Two Pensacola drug stores and a packing plant closed in early October. Telephone and streetcar service were affected, and policemen were "off duty" because of illness.¹²

"Influenza spreads over west Florida counties

The influenza is spreading over West Florida, according to reports which have been received from DeFuniak Springs, and other Walton county points.

Reports also indicate that Santa Rosa county is in the grip of the epidemic as there are many cases of the disease in Milton. Crestview and other Okaloosa county points report cases but so far no deaths from the disease have occurred, according to reports.¹³" *Pensacola Journal*

By the time the third wave hit in January 1919, the virus was less severe, but still deadlier than the first wave. As winter turned into spring, the virus was isolated to certain urban areas, such as New York City.

Contributing factor

At the peak of the pandemic, doctors prescribed large doses of aspirin as treatment for the flu. By comparison, today's regular aspirin dose is limited to 325-milligram tablets. Dosage is recommended not to exceed 12 tablets in a 24-hour period, which equates to almost 4 grams. In 1918, doctors were prescribing anywhere from 8 to 30 grams of aspirin a day. This enormous amount of aspirin became toxic in the body and

INFLUENZA HAS COME TO TOWN

Don't forget to give him the reception that will run him out—

TASTELESS CASTOR OIL
LIVER SALTS AND PILLS
FEVER TONICS
GRIPPE CURE
ORDERLIES, ETC.

THE CRYSTAL PHARMACY

The *Rexall* Store

Pensacola Journal, Sept. 29, 1918

caused pulmonary edema. Deaths rose in September and October as aspirin use increased, contributing to the overall pandemic mortality rate.¹⁴

The influenza pandemic of 1918 was the most severe pandemic to date, according to the CDC, killing more people in 25 weeks than AIDS did in its first 25 years.¹⁵ There were no vaccines or antibiotics to treat

the virus or secondary bacterial infections associated with it. Deaths associated with the spring and fall waves of the pandemic caused the average life expectancy in the United States to fall by 12 years.¹⁶ The death rate caused by the 1918 pandemic has not been matched either before or since. The H1N1 virus of 1918 continues to survive, appearing during each flu season.

Endnotes

1 "1918 Pandemic (H1N1 virus)." Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/pandemic-resources/1918-pandemic-h1n1.html>, accessed 3 January 2021.

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3 "1918 Pandemic Influenza Historic Timeline." Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

4 "Spanish Influenza—What It Is and How It Should be Treated." *Pensacola Journal*. 15 January 1919, page 5.

5 "Avoid 'flu' by sterilizing your nose." *Pensacola Journal*. 27 October 1918, page 3.

6 Byerly, Carol R. "The U.S. Military and the Influenza Pandemic of 1918-1919." Public Works report 2010 (Supplement 3). pages 82-91, www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2862337/.

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8 "1918 Timeline."

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10 Hauser, Christine. "The Mask Slacker of 1918." *New York Times*, 3 August 2020. <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/03/us/mask-protests-1918.html>, accessed 4 August 2020.

11 "Necessary vigilance." *Pensacola News Journal*. 21 October 1918, page 4.

12 "'Flu' advice by Mossman; find a serum." *Pensacola Journal*. 2 October 1918, page 1.

13 "Influenza spreads over west Florida counties." *Pensacola Journal*. 11 October 1918, page 3.

14 Starko, Karen M. "Salicylates and Pandemic Influenza Mortality, 1918-1919, Pharmacology, Pathology, and Historic Evidence." *Clinical Infectious Diseases*. Vol. 49, Issue 9, 15 November 2009, pages 1405-1410. academic.oup.com/cid/articles/49/9/1405/301441.

15 Channel News 4, 4 January 2010, archived: <https://web.archive.org/web/20100127100727/http://www.channel4.com/news/articles/world/spanish%20flu%20facts/111285>.

16 Roos, Dave. "Why the 1918 flu pandemic never really ended." *The History Channel* <https://www.history.com/news/1918-flu-pandemic-never-ended>, accessed 8 January 2021.

Black History Month

'The Fastest Man in the World'

On May 9, 1975, Houston McTear, an 18-year-old junior at Baker High School, ran the 100-yard dash in 9.0 seconds at the Florida High School Athletic Association state track championships. This tied the world record set earlier in 1974 by 23-year-old Ivory Crockett, the U.S. champion.

Houston was the son of Eddie and Margree McTear, the second of eight children. The family lived in a two-room house just across the railroad tracks from Fleming Lumber Company's sawmill in Milligan where Eddie McTear worked as a forklift driver. Stories tell of Houston racing the trains that passed along the track in front of his house.

After the state championship in 1975, Houston returned home to Milligan but his life was forever changed. Reporters wanted interviews. Colleges offered scholarships. Profiles of McTear appeared in *Sports Illustrated* and *People* magazine. He was selected as High School Athlete of the Year by Track and Field News. In October, he outran Bill Adams' horse during halftime at a Baker High School football game.

At the 1976 Olympic Trials in Eugene, Oregon, McTear came in second. His time of 10.16 seconds set a record for the fastest time ever run by a Florida high school athlete. He qualified for the Olympic track team, but an injury forced him to withdraw.

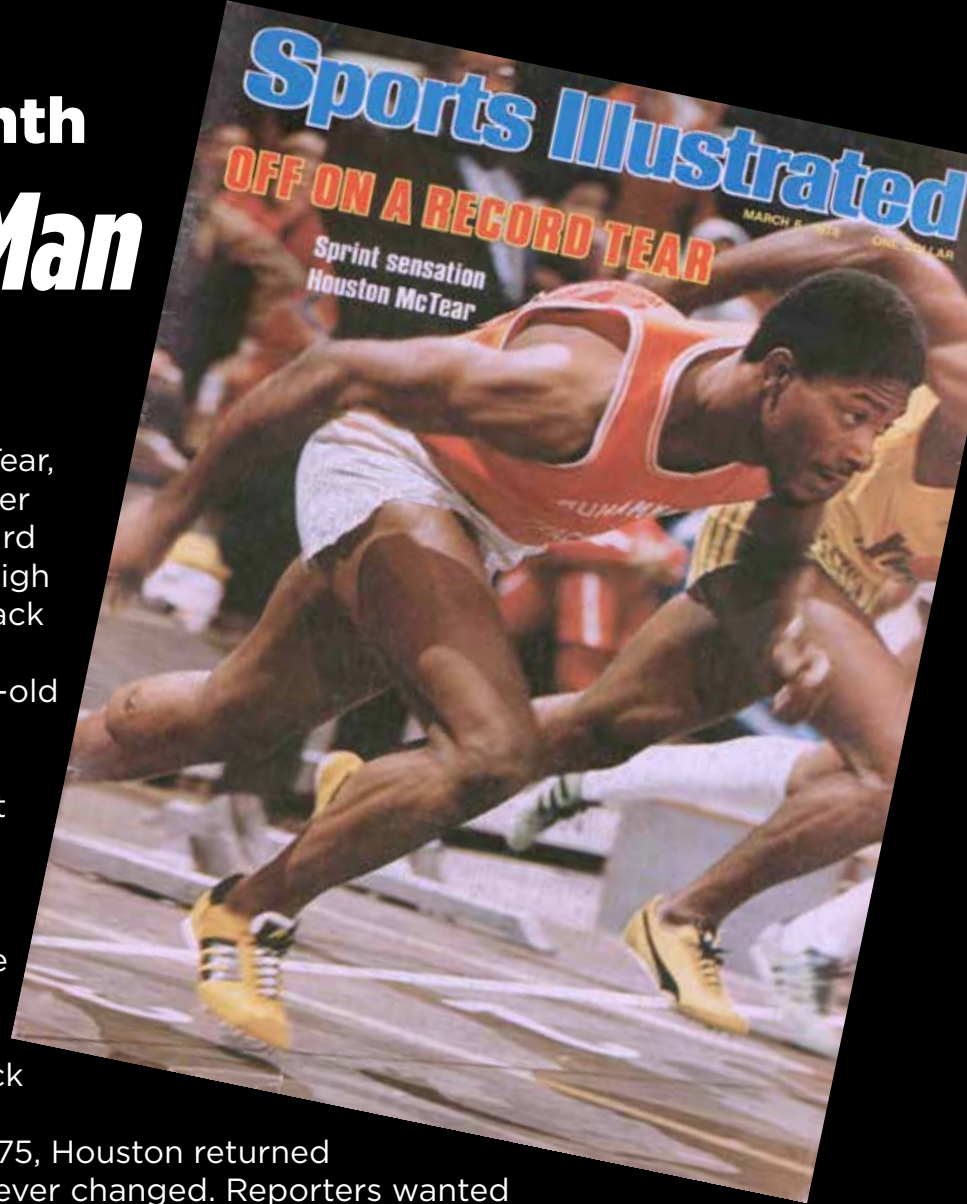
Shortly after this, McTear moved to California to train with the Muhammad Ali Track Club. His success continued. In 1978, he was featured on the cover of *Sports Illustrated* after breaking his own world record for 60 yards at the Amateur Athletic Union Indoor Track and Field Championship in Madison Square Garden.

In January 1980, he set a world record with 6.38 seconds in the 60-meter dash. He again made the Olympic team, but was prevented from competing when then-President Jimmy Carter boycotted the Moscow Olympic Games.

After this setback, McTear's life descended into drug abuse and he became homeless, sleeping on the beach in Santa Monica.

In 1989 he reconnected with former Swedish sprinter Linda Haglund, who was coaching track at Santa Monica College. The two moved to Sweden, where McTear began to train again. In 1990, at 33 years old, he won the 60-meter dash at the Swedish Indoor championships with a time of 6.68 seconds.

Houston McTear died of lung cancer in Stockholm, Sweden, on Nov. 1, 2015, at age 58.



by Tracy Curenton

Wall of Honor nominations now being accepted



The North Okaloosa Heritage Association is accepting nominations for the Family Heritage Wall of Honor program.

Established in 2012, the program is designed to honor area unsung heroes for their positive effect on their family and community, and their contribution to the history, formation and continued well-being of Okaloosa County.

Since its inception, 44 names have been added to the honoree board hanging in the Museum's research library.

It's easy to nominate someone. A nomination form and sample biography are included in this newsletter (see pages 5-6). Those wishing to nominate someone can also download a .pdf of the form and bio from the Museum's website.

Individuals may be nominated while still living or posthumously.

Nominations are due to the Baker Block Museum no later than April 30.

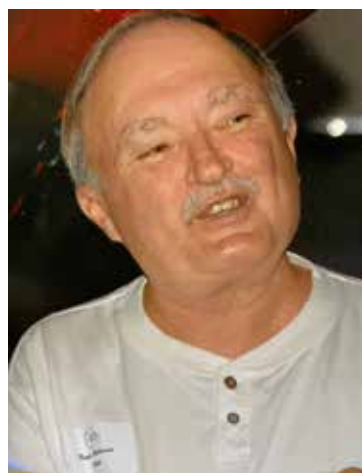
Single nominations are \$30; dual or family nominations are \$50. Fees are used to fund the program and recognize those honored.

The induction ceremony is scheduled for May 15 at 11 a.m. under the pavilion.

2010 Inductees



Caroline Baker Allen



Roger Robinson



Dr. George W. Barrow, Jr.

Family Heritage Wall of Honor

Sample Biography



Full Name of Nominee(s): Mayme Tyner, 3/15/1906 - 11/05/ 2002, Laurel Hill, Florida

Mayme Tyner was one of four children born to Mack and Effie Campbell Tyner, Laurel Hill, Florida. She was a life-long resident of Okaloosa County, living on the land of her forefather, Daniel Campbell. After passing the Florida Education written exam, Mayme began teaching school at age 14. Later she returned to school herself, finishing high school and college at Florida State University (then Florida State College for Women), finally receiving a master's degree in education.

Recalling her early childhood, Mayme talked about attending the annual four-month school which usually began the first Monday following the 4th of July. Prior to 1900, the school in the Laurel Hill area was a two-room shack with an enrollment of 70 students and two teachers. The teacher usually lived with local families who had a spare room.

Of her years teaching in the Okaloosa County school system she said, "It has been the rewarding experience of my life to attend the class reunions of my former students and to have them tell me of the effect I have had on their lives." She added that all she ever wanted to do was to help build a better community. Mayme was also a rancher and was a registered real estate broker for some 20 years.

The epitaph on her grave stone reads as follows: "I wait for green mornings to come again, my heart warm with friends I have made, students I have taught, and a daughter I have loved."

Written by _____

mailing address _____

phone _____

() I plan to be present at the induction ceremony; email _____

Family Heritage Wall of Honor Nomination Form



Eligibility:

- ◆ Individual(s) who lived or worked in Okaloosa County
- ◆ Living or nominated posthumously
- ◆ Signature endorsement of at least one family member and one friend/acquaintance

Full Name of
Nominee(s): _____

Town/Location: _____

Nominator
Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Requirements:

- ◆ Brief one-page maximum biography or story highlighting the positive contribution to, or enhancements of, the community, family life or traditions in Okaloosa County.
- ◆ 5x7 photo of nominee, black and white or color
- ◆ Donation of \$30 per individual or \$50 for a couple (e.g., Mr. & Mrs.)
Check or money order payable to “Baker Block Museum”
Donations are used to recognize nominees and to fund the program.
- ◆ Nominator or inductee to attend induction ceremony

Submit in person or via email no later than April 30 at 3 p.m.

Email: bakermuseum@aol.com

Mail: Baker Block Museum
Family Heritage Wall of Honor
P.O. Box 186
Baker, FL 32531

Baker Arts Festival

Saturday, April 17, 2020

9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Heritage Park



The Baker Block Museum is looking for artists interested in participating in the Baker Arts Festival April 17.

Artist, musicians, chefs, and craftsmen of all types with original creations are encouraged to participate in this all-day event.

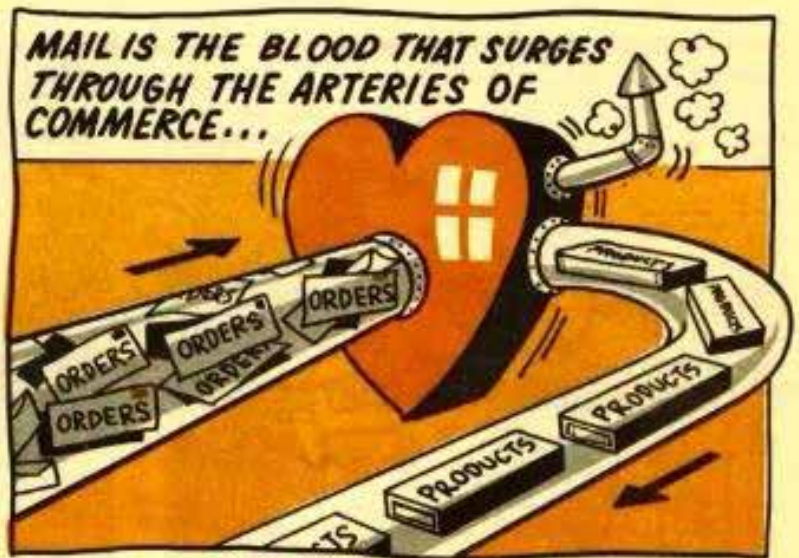
Booth fees are 10'x10' for \$40, \$50 for space with electricity.

Those interested should call the Museum at 850-537-5714.



MAIL MOVES THE COUNTRY

ZIP CODE MOVES THE MAIL



POD Publication 127 May 1968 (1)

U.S. Post Office Department, 1968

Mr. Zip, also known as "Zippy," was introduced in 1962 by the U.S. Post Office Department to encourage the general public to use the newly established nationwide five-digit ZIP Codes. ZIP stands for Zoning Improvement Plan, which began July 1, 1963.

Baker Post Office Postmasters

Alpheus B. "Alf" Morris	Cobb postmaster	Feb. 13, 1906
<i>Cobb name changed to Baker March 22, 1922</i>		
William C. Lester	Baker postmaster	March 22, 1912
Herbert L. Eiland	postmaster	Dec. 27, 1912
<i>Okaloosa County established Sept. 7, 1915</i>		
Mr. Oma C. Eiland	acting postmaster	July 24, 1940
Arthur Belah Moore	postmaster	Feb. 20, 1941
Thad J. Walker Jr.	acting postmaster	Oct. 31, 1943
Thad J. Walker Jr.	postmaster	Sept. 13, 1944
Ray Hudson	acting postmaster	Aug. 31, 1952
Clyde T. Reece	acting postmaster	May 15, 1953
Thomas M. Courtney	acting postmaster	Oct. 31, 1953
Donald A. Reeves	acting postmaster	July 15, 1955
Donald A. Reeve	postmaster	May 15, 1956
Peggy S. Owen	officer-in-charge	July 22, 1983
Rogie N. Sasser	postmaster	Aug. 20, 1983
David A. Sella	postmaster	May 4, 2002
Dana Patterson	officer-in-charge	Oct. 31, 2003
Rhonda G. Patterson	postmaster	Jan. 24, 2004
Kelly Lanning	officer-in-charge	Aug. 13, 2007
Kim Singletary	officer-in-charge	Sept. 27, 2020



Alpheus B. "Alf" Morris



Herbert L. Eiland



Thad J. Walker Jr.



Clockwise from left: Arthur B. "Bellah" Moore, David A. Sella, Rogie Sasser standing on front of the post office in 1984 where the Baker Mercantile store now resides, the abandoned post office as the block building was being renovated to house the Baker Block Museum, Donald Reeves and Rhonda G. Patterson (photos and information courtesy Donald and Sylvia Reeves estate)



Museum Happenings

3rd
Saturday
at the Baker Block Museum



Market Day

October 17, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.



The Museum hosted its first Market Day event in October designed as an outdoor yard sale in the Heritage Park Oct. 17. A number of vendors set up booths for shoppers hunting for bargains.

Feedback from vendors and visitors alike was they want the Museum to do this again.





December 19, 10 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

3rd Saturday
at the Baker Block Museum



Enjoying a little Christmas cheer

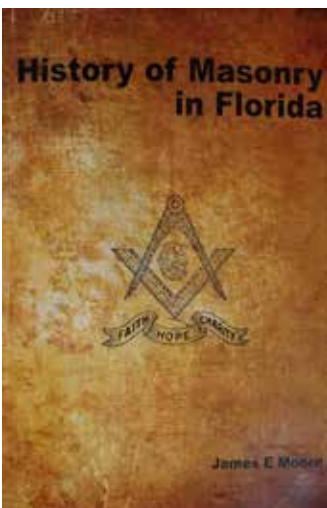
The Museum spread a little Christmas cheer Dec. 19 with cookies, brownies, candy canes and hot chocolate (with marshmallows) during the **3rd Saturday** event Dec. 19.



Museum Accessions



Crestview resident Ronald Ballard donated several items to the Museum last quarter. The items included: (above) a 5 1/2 foot crosscut, perforated-lance-tooth, felling saw, (left) a couple of hand-cranked lathes with tools and a cast-iron water ram. Water rams use the force of running water to pump water up an elevation, such as from a stream up into a house. All that is needed is flowing water, a pipe and the pump.



History of Masonry in Florida

As a celebration of its 100th anniversary, Crestview's Royal Arch Masons Chapter No. 40 commissioned a history of the fraternity covering primarily Walton and Okaloosa counties.

This book presents a summary review of Masonry in the Walton, Okaloosa, and Santa Rosa county region, today known as Masonic District Three, with an emphasis on Crestview Chapter No. 40, the Royal Arch Masons.

Author James E. Moore donated a copy of the book to the Museum's library in November. Jim Moore passed away Dec. 6 after a prolonged illness.



Barbara and Harold Clark, of Andalusia, Alabama, donated a motor-driven band saw (above left) to the museum in December. They also donated a Fennel Kassel level and wooden tripod (above right) that belonged to Harold's father, made in Western Germany, according to identification on the instrument.



Holt resident Donna Ash donated the 9x18-inch 1957 Eglin Air Force Base flightline photo (above) of the major Air Force combat and support aircraft her father, Donald Ray Adams, framed and hung on his wall for years.

Donald and Sylvia Reeves donation

Christmas came early to the Baker Block Museum this year in the form of the generous donations from the estate of Sylvia and Donald Reeves made by their family. The



goldmine of local history, genealogy, and old photographs represents the largest donation of material to the Museum and is a one-of-a-kind treasure that greatly enhances the Museum's collection and one members of the North Okaloosa Historical Association are proud to help preserve.

Both Donald and his wife, Sylvia Cook Reeves, were life-long residents of Baker; they were also genealogist and local history enthusiasts who worked with several museum projects throughout the years, including the publication of *The Heritage of Okaloosa County,* Volumes I and II.

Donald's love of old photographs and his relentless quest to identify everyone in the photos he amassed makes the collection even more historically valuable.

The Association is extremely grateful to Wanda Reeves Kelly and Debra Reeves Ross for entrusting the Museum with their parent's collection. Their giving spirit reflects that of their parents and embraces the Museum's mission to encourage future generations to discover, experience, and connect with local history.



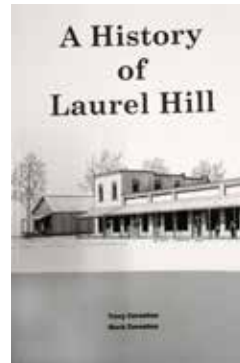
The material above is only a small sampling of the amount of research material donated by the estate of Donald and Sylvia Reeves.

Okaloosa County History Series

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



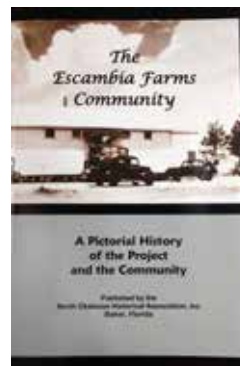
Give me the Grace to Shout and Shine, the newest book in the history series, focuses on the three most prominent gospel singing methods in the northwest Florida panhandle throughout the years: Sacred Harp, also known as fasola, five- or seven-shape note convention singing, and later, the gospel quartet.



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.



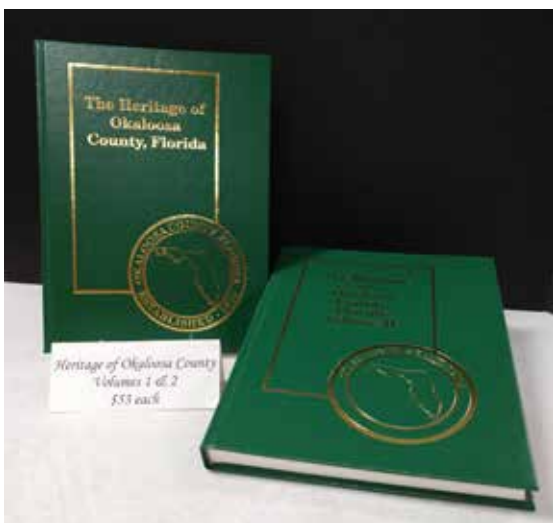
Present Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal program included aid to American migrant workers and tenant farmers. The Resettlement Administration created a planned farming community in the northwest corner of Okaloosa County in 1936 known as Escambia Farms. By 1939, the community had grown to 72 families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

We say 'Goodbye'

Ida Jeanette Cook

July 29, 1935 – October 25, 2020

Ida Jeanette Cook, a 2013 inductee of the Family Heritage Wall of Honor, passed away October 25. She was 85.

Jeanette was born in Blackman, Florida, in 1929, one of 14 children. She lived in the Blackman and Escambia Farms community all her life.

Jeanette attended Escambia Farms High School where she played basketball and graduated as class valedictorian in 1953. She married Raymond Cook March 14, 1954, and raised five daughters. She and Raymond were married for 66 years.

A stay-at-home mom for many years, Jeanette worked for a short time at Monsanto and later worked as a secretary for the Okaloosa County School District, retiring in 1998.

Jeanette was very active in all things Baker School, from volunteering to substitute teaching. She was a member of the "Teacher Corps Project," serving for many years. The board was instrumental in establishing a master's degree program for Okaloosa County teachers and the first pre-kindergarten program at Baker School.



Active in the local community, Jeanette spearheaded the creation of the Blackman Fire Department and the Blackman Water System because she believed the community members of Blackman and Escambia Farms deserved fire protection and good water. She and Raymond also donated land to build the Blackman Community Center which includes a playground.

Jeanette Cook is presented with a certificate honoring her as a 2013 Family Heritage Wall of Honor inductee from North Okaloosa Historic Association board member Phyllis Enzor.

Mack Brooks

April 13, 1930 – November 17, 2020

Mack Brooks, a 2014 Family Heritage Wall of Honor inductee, peacefully passed away at the North Okaloosa Medical Center November 17 after a brief illness. He was 90.

Brooks, a Crestview cultural icon, was a man of many talents: fiddle player, artist, historian, barber, just to name a few.

Born in Baker in 1930, Brooks lived his entire life in Okaloosa County. His family operated a blacksmith shop and grist mill on the site of the Museum's Heritage Park.

He was one of the original Baker Boys, growing up in a generation that drove cows up and down Yellow River, broke and raced horses along the Blackwater, boxed at Baker School and watched as young men marched off to fight in World War II. As a teen, he learned to play the fiddle, inspired by his grandfather and country music legend Roy Acuff.

In 1954, he married Inez Locke from Munson and the couple made their home in Crestview where Brooks purchased a barbershop on Main Street he operated for more than 60 years.

Through the years, his barbershop became a Saturday afternoon meeting place for pickup jam sessions of old-time country music with Brooks on fiddle. During musical breaks, Brooks would swap tales about county life and discuss local history and culture.

His barbershop was also his painting studio. In



between haircuts, Brooks painted from memory scenes of local historic buildings and long-gone landmarks from around Okaloosa County in an attempt to preserve history. The walls of his shop were covered with his paintings and black-and-white photographs of local figures.

In 2012, the State of Florida recognized Brooks with the Florida Folk Heritage Award as an

accomplished musician, artist and story teller, citing him as “a living testament to the county’s traditional cultural heritage.” One of his paintings hung in the State Capitol during the terms of Governor Lawton M. Childs, Jr.

Brooks is survived by his wife, Inez; his children, Johnny Mack Brooks of Crestview and Jequita Brooks-Barnsdale of Crestview.

Mack Brooks (left) visits with Junior Brooks and Morris Adams during his 80th birthday celebration at Uncle Bill’s Restaurant in Crestview in 2010.



North Okaloosa Historical Association

Membership News

New Museum Members

The Association welcomes the following members:

Wanda Kelly – Lifetime membership

**Annual renewals: Tracy Curenton, Leon Curenton, Brian Hughes
Duane Colt Denfeld, annual membership for two years**

2020 Goals

- **Increase membership by 30% – Goal met in November**
- **Apply for an Impact 100 grant – Goal met in June**
- **Complete historical marker application for the museum building**
- **Redesign Baker Block Museum website**
- **Complete Museum asset inventory – Goal met in October**
- **Accrue \$5,000 in sponsorships**

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

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.

Calendar of Events

January							February							March						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2		1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
24	25	26	27	28	29	30	28							28	29	30	31			
31							15	Presidents Day						17	St. Patrick's Day					
1	New Year's Day						18	North Okaloosa Historical Association Board meeting, 6 p.m.						18	North Okaloosa Historical Association Board meeting, 6 p.m.					
16	3rd Saturday						20	3rd Saturday:						20	3rd Saturday:					
	• Museum open from 10 a.m.-3:30 p.m.							• Museum open from 10 a.m.-3:30 p.m.							• Museum open from 10 a.m.-3:30 p.m.					
18	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day																			
21	North Okaloosa Historical Association Board meeting, 6 p.m.																			

Thank You!

The North Okaloosa Historical Association would like to thank the following sponsors for their support to the Baker Block Museum.



Enzor Management

BAKER AUTO PARTS

The Restroom

Baker Arts Festival

Saturday, April 17, 2020

9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Heritage Park

**at the corner of Highways 4 and 189 in Baker
850-537-5714 for more information**



**Experience
Discover
Connect**

1307 Georgia Avenue, Baker