

Okaloosa Historical Quarterly

*North Okaloosa Historical
Association, Inc.*



Falco, Alabama

Vol. 3, Issue 4
Fall 2023

BAKER BLOCK
MUSEUM



Discover. Experience. Connect.

OKALOOSA COUNTY, FLORIDA



Not much is left standing at what was once Falco, Alabama, except for an overgrown brick building standing next to McLelland Road that used to be the Bank of Falco and the old Masonic lodge building on Falco Road (above).

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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.

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

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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: The Falco train depot and Florida, Alabama & Gulf Railroad engine number 8.

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FOLLOW ON
bakerblockmuseum.org





2023 Baker Heritage Day

Saturday, Nov. 18

9 a.m.-3 p.m.

Heritage Park



Music



Demos



Fun!

The Baker Block Museum was the recipient of a \$5,000 grant from Florida Power & Light September 14. The money will be used for a concrete floor, electricity, lighting, and ceiling fans in our pavilion. I would like to thank Bernard Johnson, FP&L regional external affairs manager, and Brandon Eckard, FP&L project manager, for facilitating this grant and for traveling to the museum to present it. The pavilion in the Charles and Jeanette Henderson Heritage Park will be a great asset to the Museum and the Baker community when complete.

As we enjoy the cooler temperatures and signs of fall, we are excited to mark the beginning of our festival season. Creepy Cabins, our version of a haunted house, debuted last year as a trial run and we were surprised at the community response for the one-day event. North Okaloosa Historical Association board member, Stephanie Holcombe, is our Halloween enthusiast and creator of Creepy Cabins. We've decided to add another day to this year's event, along with a movie, games, and refreshments for the entire family. So mark your calendars and join us on Friday, October 20 for cabin fun, and Saturday October 21 for Creepy Cabins plus movie, games and refreshments...and be prepared for the creepy!

We are celebrating the 17th year of our annual Baker Heritage Day festival which is set for Saturday, November 18. There will be a variety of artist, crafters, musicians, and heritage demonstrators who fill the Museum's Heritage Park throughout the day, along with plenty of food and baked treats to choose from. This is a family friendly event that truly offers something for everyone.

Looking ahead to 2024, we have several *3rd Saturday* events scheduled, including the Baker Arts Festival March 16, as well as two Florida Public Archaeology of Northwest Florida presentations, Tombstone Tales, February 17, and Archaeology of Northwest Florida, July 20.

We hope to see everyone at our October and November events, along with our lineup of events for 2024.

Since this is the last issue of the *Okaloosa Historical Quarterly* magazine this year, I want to wish everyone a happy holiday season.

Ann Spann

MUSEUM NEWS

Beginning Beekeeping

July 15

3rd Saturday



Mike Garrett, vice president of the Tri-County Beekeepers Association, spoke to a crowd of nearly 30 people July 15 about how to begin beekeeping. His first message to potential beekeepers was, “You’re going to get stung.” He suggested beginning beekeepers find a mentor, join a beekeeping club, and “read, read, read.”

During the warm months, 95 percent of the bees seen moving from flower to flower are worker bees. “During the approximately six weeks of summer, they fly their wings off collecting pollen,” he said, while queen bees never leave the hive, laying between 1,000 to 1,500 eggs a day beginning mid-spring to build up the hive.

“You don’t need much to get started—a queen and five frames” also known as a “nuc,” short for nucleus colony, he said. “The hardest part is keeping a strong hive and keeping the bees from swarming.”





History of Falco, Alabama

August 19

North Okaloosa Historical Association lifetime member and historian Mark Curenton gave a presentation in August about the once-thriving community of Falco, Alabama. His presentation is this quarter's cover story and can be found beginning on page 16.

Native Plants, Native People

September 16

3rd Saturday

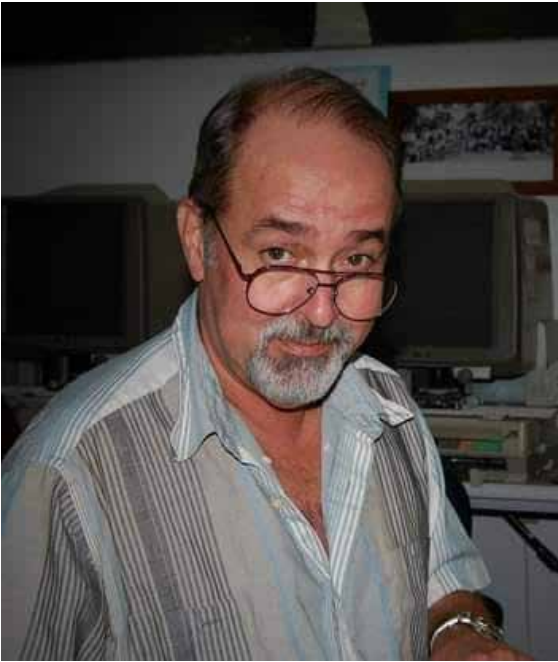


Barbara Clark, regional director of the Florida Public Archaeology Network, kicked off her presentation about native plants of Florida by stating something residents all know: “Florida has a bazillion plants.” According to Clark, “people have been using plants since there were people.” However, she immediately followed it up with a warning: “Please do not eat plants

in the woods without checking with your doctor.” In today’s world of prepackaged food, humans are not used to eating wild plants today. Following her talk, Sandy Dunn Smith who attended the presentation won a potted episcia plant, also known as a flame violet, that was donated by longtime Baker resident, Betty LaMarchand.



IN MEMORIAM



Jamey Broxson

July 23, 1961 - July 23, 2023

Former North Okaloosa Historical Association, Inc., board of directors member and fellow historian Jamey Broxson, 62, passed away July 23 at North Okaloosa Medical Center. A descendant of several pioneer families from the Florida panhandle, he grew up in Milligan and Baker.

James “Jamey” Waylon Broxson, Jr., was born July 23, 1961, in Crestview to James Waylon Senior and Margie Annette Alford Broxson. A graduate of Baker High School class of 1979, he was the president of the student council his senior year, was junior class vice president and was active in Junior Army ROTC where

he served as a member of the battalion staff. Jamey served in the U.S. Army and worked for the Okaloosa County Roads Division and lived most of his adult life in Okaloosa County. He was also founder of and administrator of the popular “Baker Memories” Facebook page.

Jamey is survived by his son, James Matthew Broxson of Baker, brother Randy Broxson of Holt, adopted sister Alison Broxson of Baker, and his step-brother Shannon Hart.

Jamey was buried in Baker’s Griffith Cemetery July 27.

Martha Collins Jordan

September 23, 1928 - June 17, 2023

Longtime County resident and North Okaloosa Historical Association lifetime member Martha Collins Jordan passed away June 17 at her home in Baker at age 94. She was born to Arthur and Emma Collins September 23, 1928, in Ashford, Alabama.

Martha received her math and elementary education degree from Troy University and her master’s in math at Florida State University. She met her husband, Reverend T.T. Jordan while attending Troy. They married in 1950.

Martha’s teaching career began at Holt Elementary School, and after just one year, continued at Baker School for another 14 years. She concluded her teaching career with 27 years as a math professor at Okaloosa-Walton Junior College. She continued to tutor in the community and volunteer in the public school system until well into her 80s.

Martha was a member of First Baptist Church of Baker where she served as treasurer. She served as treasurer of both the First Baptist Church of Baker where she attended and on the board of directors for the Okaloosa County Teachers Federal Credit Union. From 2002 to 2014, the credit union operated out of what is now the Baker Mercantile Gift Shop at the Baker Block Museum.



GROWING THE COLLECTION

The drafting set to the right was used by Lieutenant James Edward “Ed” McCracken who was a weather officer for the U.S. Army Air Forces during World War II. First Lieutenant McCracken used these tools, or tools like these, while conducting high-altitude weather experiments during a 30-day temporary duty assignment to Kirkland Army Airfield in New Mexico in early 1945. Two months later, his findings were part of the calculus that helped determine the impact of the nuclear cloud from the first test of an atomic bomb in the New Mexico desert. See the magazine’s salute to McCracken on page 26.



U.S. Representative Robert L.F. “Bob” Sikes presented the keychain and medallion (right) to Dr. Ed McCracken, the charter president of Okaloosa-Walton Junior College, now known as Northwest Florida State College, for his contributions to the local community.

When then-Captain McCracken left the military in 1946 after the end of World War II, he used the GI Bill to return to school where he earned both his master’s and doctorate degrees. Dr. McCracken was asked twice to become president of the newly established OWJC before he acquiesced at the third request, where he served for 24 years.



3rd
Saturday



SCREEPY CABINS RETURN

TO THE BAKER BLOCK MUSEUM



Friday, Oct. 20

6:30-8:30 p.m.

Saturday, Oct. 21

Games 6 p.m.

Movie, 7 p.m.

Creepy Cabins, 6:30-9 p.m.



**Cabins admission
\$3 per person**

SPONSORS

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



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FP&L presents \$5,000 grant to the Baker Block Museum

The money will go toward completing the pavilion in the Charles and Jeanette Henderson Heritage park.



Members of the North Okaloosa Historical Association, Inc., board of directors, are presented with a \$5,000 grant from Florida Power and Light. From left, Brandon Eckard, FP&L project manager; Museum supporter Betty Brunson; Lucille King, Tracy Curenton; Director Ann Spann; Doug Hibbing; Nina Adams; Brenda Russell; Sharry Rustin; Stephanie Holcombe; Bernard Johnson, FP&L regional external affairs manager.

Florida Power & Light awarded the Baker Block Museum a \$5,000 grant September 14 to help complete the pavilion in the Charles and Jeanette Henderson Heritage Park.

The grant will go toward a concrete floor under the 30-foot by 40-foot pavilion, electricity, lighting, and ceiling fans. The pavilion was built in October of 2019.

FP&L is committed to being a responsible corporate citizen and a good neighbor, according to its website. Giving to organizations such as the Museum helps to improve the quality of life in the community it serves.

The pavilion will be used for Museum and community events throughout the year. Contact the Museum for more information.



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.





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Make a discovery.

Share a memory.

Learn how to preserve family pictures, documents, stories (both written and audio), and connect and share with other family members.

Elder and Sister Riser, members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, will be on hand **each Wednesday from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.** in the Genealogy and Research Library to assist researchers with FamilySearch.

Falco, Alabama

No other community was as connected to North Okaloosa during the turn of the 20th century as Falco, Alabama.

by Mark Curenton

The completion of the Yellow River Railroad from Crestview, where it connected to the Louisville and Nashville railroad—also known as the L&N—to Florala in 1897 heralded a major boom in the lumber industry in northern Walton County and southern Covington County. The area was covered with virgin longleaf pine forests, and the railroad provided the means to ship lumber cut from these trees to market. The three great sawmills around Florala—the Britton Lumber Company in Lakewood, the Florala Sawmill Company in Paxton and the Jackson Lumber Company in Lockhart—all date from this period.

Another company that existed because of the Yellow River Railroad was the Florida and Alabama Land Company. Two of its original three shareholders were officers in the Yellow River Railroad and its original place of business was listed as Laurel Hill in the articles of incorporation. The company built a rail line from the Yellow River Railroad 2 miles south of Laurel Hill to its sawmill site in Covington County, Alabama, which they named Falco after the initials of the company. This rail line was later replaced by a railroad that ran south through Baker to join the L&N main line at Galliver.

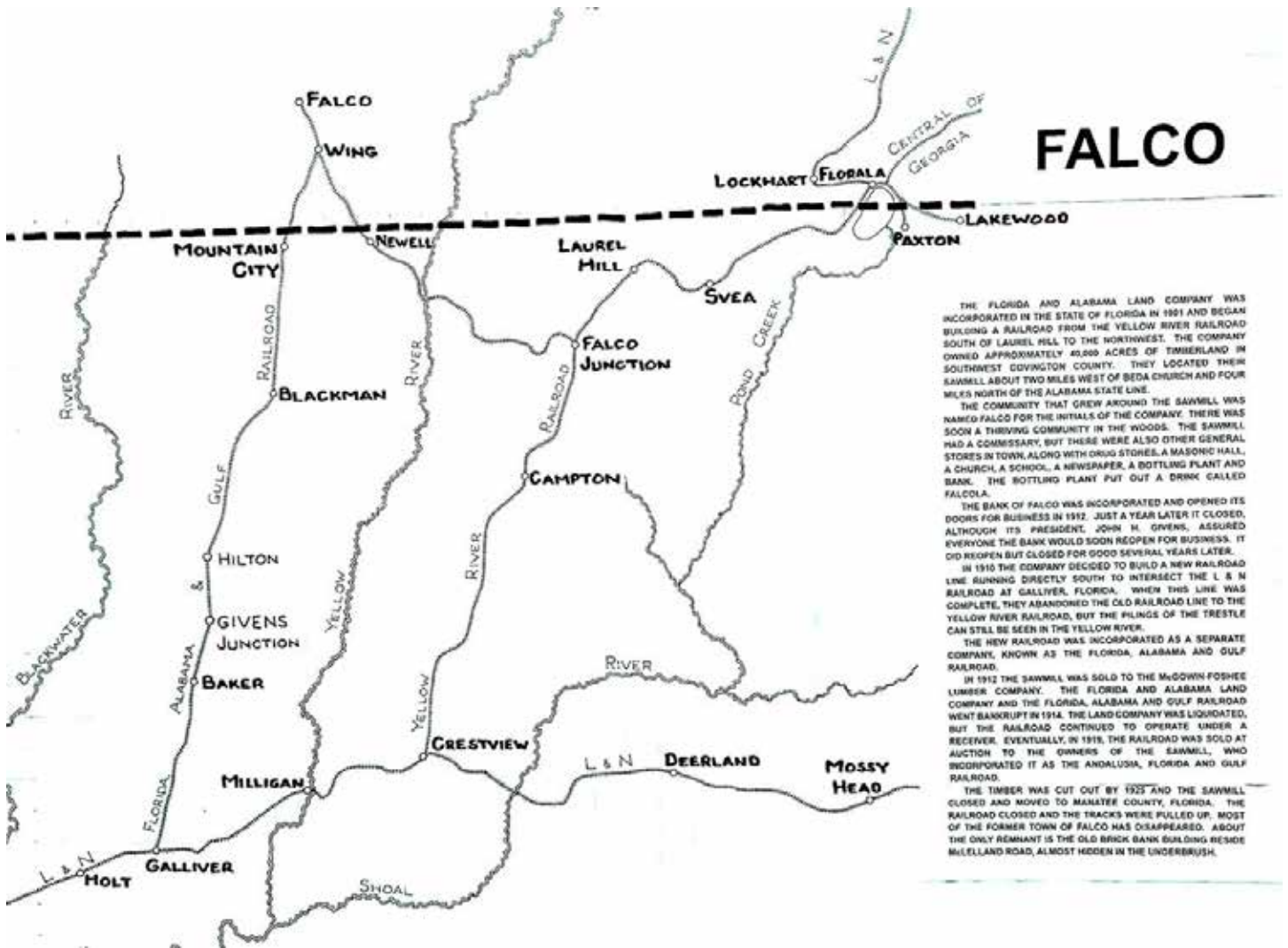
Florida and Alabama Land Company

The Florida and Alabama Land Company was incorporated in the State of Florida in



Florida, Alabama & Gulf Railroad Company Engine Number 8

1901 with a capital stock of \$100,000. The purpose of the company was “the purchase and sale of lands in Florida and Alabama; the purchase, cutting, and sale of logs; the manufacture of lumber and timber; the control and ownership of a private railroad or private railroads for the transportation of logs and lumber and other property of the corporation; the doing of all things incidental to such purposes; the acquisition, holding, use, and



THE FLORIDA AND ALABAMA LAND COMPANY WAS INCORPORATED IN THE STATE OF FLORIDA IN 1891 AND BEGAN BUILDING A RAILROAD FROM THE YELLOW RIVER RAILROAD SOUTH OF LAUREL HILL TO THE NORTHWEST. THE COMPANY OWNED APPROXIMATELY 40,000 ACRES OF TIMBERLAND IN SOUTHWEST COVINGTON COUNTY. THEY LOCATED THEIR SAWMILL ABOUT TWO MILES WEST OF BEDA CHURCH AND FOUR MILES NORTH OF THE ALABAMA STATE LINE.

THE COMMUNITY THAT GREW AROUND THE SAWMILL WAS NAMED FALCO FOR THE INITIALS OF THE COMPANY. THERE WAS SOON A THRIVING COMMUNITY IN THE WOODS. THE SAWMILL HAD A COMMISSARY, BUT THERE WERE ALSO OTHER GENERAL STORES IN TOWN, ALONG WITH DRUG STORES, A MASONIC HALL, A CHURCH, A SCHOOL, A NEWSPAPER, A BOTTLING PLANT AND BANK. THE BOTTLING PLANT PUT OUT A DRINK CALLED FALCOLA.

THE BANK OF FALCO WAS INCORPORATED AND OPENED ITS DOORS FOR BUSINESS IN 1912. JUST A YEAR LATER IT CLOSED, ALTHOUGH ITS PRESIDENT, JOHN H. GIVENS, ASSURED EVERYONE THE BANK WOULD SOON REOPEN FOR BUSINESS. IT DID REOPEN BUT CLOSED FOR GOOD SEVERAL YEARS LATER.

IN 1910 THE COMPANY DECIDED TO BUILD A NEW RAILROAD LINE RUNNING DIRECTLY SOUTH TO INTERSECT THE L & N RAILROAD AT GALLIVER, FLORIDA. WHEN THIS LINE WAS COMPLETE, THEY ABANDONED THE OLD RAILROAD LINE TO THE YELLOW RIVER RAILROAD, BUT THE PILINGS OF THE TRESTLE CAN STILL BE SEEN IN THE YELLOW RIVER.

THE NEW RAILROAD WAS INCORPORATED AS A SEPARATE COMPANY, KNOWN AS THE FLORIDA, ALABAMA AND GULF RAILROAD.

IN 1912 THE SAWMILL WAS SOLD TO THE McDOWNS-POSSIE LUMBER COMPANY. THE FLORIDA AND ALABAMA LAND COMPANY AND THE FLORIDA, ALABAMA AND GULF RAILROAD WENT BANKRUPT IN 1914. THE LAND COMPANY WAS LIQUIDATED, BUT THE RAILROAD CONTINUED TO OPERATE UNDER A RECEIVER. EVENTUALLY, IN 1919, THE RAILROAD WAS SOLD AT AUCTION TO THE OWNERS OF THE SAWMILL, WHO INCORPORATED IT AS THE ANDALUSIA, FLORIDA AND GULF RAILROAD.

THE TIMBER WAS CUT OUT BY 1925 AND THE SAWMILL CLOSED AND MOVED TO MANATEE COUNTY, FLORIDA. THE RAILROAD CLOSED AND THE TRACKS WERE PULLED UP. MOST OF THE FORMER TOWN OF FALCO HAS DISAPPEARED. ABOUT THE ONLY REMNANT IS THE OLD BRICK BANK BUILDING RESIDE MULLELAND ROAD, ALMOST HIDDEN IN THE UNDERBRUSH.

Map illustration by Mark Curenton

disposition of all property, real and personal, which may be necessary or convenient for the carrying out of the purposes aforesaid.”

The three original investors in the Florida and Alabama Land Company were Samuel Monod Cross, James Simpson Reese, and Ezekiel Ewing Reese. Cross, who owned 25 shares of stock, was a 34-year-old lumber merchant who lived in Pensacola. James and Ezekiel Reese were brothers who owned 37 and 38 shares of the company, respectively. Their mother was a niece to E.E. Simpson, the owner of a large sawmill at Bagdad in Santa Rosa County, just south of Milton. Ezekiel Reese was named after his great-uncle and received \$1,000 in E.E. Simpson’s will for being his namesake. James Reese was married to Laura Wright, a member of the Pensacola Wright family that was very prominent in the lumber industry and a sister to W.B. Wright, one of

the original incorporators of the Yellow River Railroad from Crestview to Florida. At the time of the incorporation of the Florida and Alabama Land Company, James Reese was president of the Yellow River Railroad and Ezekiel Reese was the general manager. Cross had been a groomsman at the wedding of James Reese and Laura Wright in 1894.

The Florida and Alabama Land Company purchased 40,000 acres of land in southwestern Covington County, Alabama. To access this property, and to ship out the lumber they planned to cut at their projected sawmill, they constructed a railroad that ran from the Yellow River Railroad westward. It crossed the Yellow River just south of where Big Creek enters the river and then ran northwest into Alabama. Two miles west of Beda Church and four miles north of the Florida line, the railroad reached its terminus and the company built its sawmill,



The Falco Hotel in an undated photo. The hotel was sold, dismantled, and the material was used to build the Covington Hotel in Opp, Alabama, around 1925.

using a circular saw. The community that sprang up around the mill became Falco.

Falco, Alabama

In 1903 the Falco post office was established and the Yellow River Railroad built a depot at Falco Junction. Hardware stores, drug stores, and a livery stable were all located in Falco within a few years, but the most common store was the general store. There were numerous general stores located in the community throughout the years.

A Masonic lodge was chartered and in 1906 its hall was completed. A Woodmen of the World lodge was chartered in 1908 with 28 members, and a Knights of Pythias chapter was also active in Falco. In 1910, a 40-room hotel was built to serve the community. The two-story building had a large dining room downstairs where regular dances were held. Bands regularly came from Pensacola to play for the festivities.

In 1912, 35 men signed a petition to incorporate the Town of Falco. An election was held July 24 at the Masonic Hall to vote on incorporating. Only 13 voters of the 35

who signed the petition turned out for the election: 12 voting to incorporate and one voting against. The election of a mayor and city council on September 16 elected Hilary Thompson as the first mayor of Falco.

The sawmill flourished, but a shortage of workers was a continuous problem. In 1906 it was noted in the newspaper that the sawmill was not operating because the mill crew had to be diverted to loading lumber onto railroad cars for shipment. Weather could also adversely affect operations. The mill used Stokes's mill pond to store its logs. During periods of drought, the pond would shrink too low for logs to be moved to the mill. In 1907, the dam burst, draining the entire pond. The mill had to close until the dam could be repaired and the pond refilled.

The mill used anywhere from 400 to 500 logs a day, cutting around 64,000 board feet of lumber per day. On September 28, 1908, it was claimed that the mill cut 80,000 feet of lumber that day.

Sawmill work could be dangerous. Machinery in the mills was driven by leather belts from a central steam engine. These

belts could catch a person and pull him into the machinery, crushing limbs or killing an individual. Pieces of lumber could shoot out of the saws unexpectedly. The work of cutting trees and hauling them out of the woods to the mill could also be deadly. In February 1904, a logging train derailed and demolished the engine and six loaded flat cars. The entire train crew was hurt, though none fatally. A year later men were not as lucky. A derailment killed three men of the section crew riding on the train and injured two others, one seriously with a leg cut off and the other leg broken.

Change in ownership

In 1902, the Reese brothers sold their Florida and Alabama Land Company interests to F.C. Brent, a Pensacola banker, and W.B. Wright, a wealthy lumberman and James Reese's brother-in-law. It seems likely that Cross probably also sold his shares of the company at the same time. The fact that these original investors sold the company just one year after it was organized suggests that Brent and Wright might have been anonymous partners from the beginning and just took formal ownership after the company was organized.

Just five years later Brent and Wright sold the Florida and Alabama Land Company to William K. Hyer, Jr, William A. Blount, and Jesse R. McLane. Hyer was a banker and Blount was an attorney, both from Pensacola. McLane was a lumberman who had been active in the Alabama Florida Lumber Company and the Geneva Lumber Company and lived in Geneva, Alabama.

Business continued to thrive for the sawmill and the town of Falco. On Saturday, August 21, 1909, John H. "Bud" Givens and Dennie D. Miles hosted a huge barbecue there. Givens was the manager of the sawmill, and Miles was a merchant in town as well Falco's postmaster. The mill closed down for the day. There was music and dancing, and during the afternoon a baseball game amused the crowd. Local political candidates took advantage of the gathering to press their cases. The crowd for the day was estimated at between two and three thousand people.

Shots ring out

Evidently not everyone was infatuated with Bud Givens's generosity. On Thursday evening, June 29, 1910, as he was returning to his room at the Falco Hotel from his turpentine still near Wing, someone fired a shotgun at him from the brush beside the road about a half mile from Falco. Givens was hit by buckshot in the leg, knee and hip. His startled horse sprinted to Falco where the wounded Givens called for his brother, Alex Givens. Informing him of the attack, Bud dispatched Alex and three other men with bloodhounds to track down his attacker. Starting from the site of the shooting, the bloodhounds followed the scent to the store of John A. Davis a half mile away. Olin Adair, Davis's bookkeeper, was barricaded inside the store. As the posse approached the building, the bell at Davis's house next door rang and a fusillade of shots rang out. Alex Givens was hit in the leg, breaking his thigh. Ben Finlay was struck in the ankle and George Coxwell received a flesh wound in his thigh. The fourth member of the posse, J. M. Barnes, escaped injury.

Adair was later apprehended, along with Davis, his three sons, and Frank Bowers. They all were almost immediately released on small bonds, only to have the sheriff come from Andalusia and arrest about 18 men, including parties from both sides of the shooting.

The original shooting allegedly resulted from bad blood between Givens and Davis. Givens, who was the manager of the Falco sawmill, had sent all of the employees of the sawmill and his turpentine still to do business at Davis's store, but later Givens accused Davis of selling liquor to the employees of the mill. Reportedly Givens was a strict teetotaler. Davis was arrested on the charge but was acquitted. Givens then threatened to take the case to the U. S. Court. By this time there was little love lost between the two men, but it is unknown what specifically set off this shooting.

This was not the only feud which resulted in a shooting in Falco. J.A. Martin, a watchman at the sawmill, sold some beef to Jack Kennedy around 1906. Allegedly, the beef was tainted,

but Martin would not refund Kennedy's money. In a confrontation, Martin shot and killed Kennedy. He was convicted and sentenced to five years in the state penitentiary. Kennedy had purchased a life insurance policy just ten days prior to the shooting. His father received \$1,000 payout on the policy.

A new connection

In 1910, the company decided to build a new railroad connection with the L&N. This time the route would go south on the west side of the Yellow River, through Blackman and Baker. Originally the plans were for the new railroad to intersect the L&N near Milligan, but eventually the junction was made at Galliver, five miles west of Milligan.

By February 1910, surveyors were laying out the route for the new railroad south of Falco. By the next month, crews were clearing and grading the right-of-way. Progress went swiftly, because wherever possible, the new route followed the lines of the old logging railroads that extended from the sawmill at Milligan. By May, steel rails were being laid on the track. The railroad was completed from Falco to Galliver by January 1911.

It was a two-hour trip from Galliver to Falco by train. Points on the railroad from Galliver northward were:

- Galliver – a depot shared with the L&N, a wye, and a railroad telephone
- Tank – a water tank
- Baker – a passing track, agent, section houses, and a railroad telephone
- Givens Junction – the junction with the Bagdad Land and Lumber Company's logging railroad, approximately 2 miles north of Baker
- Hilton – a spur track and loading platform, about where Cannon Town is, approximately 4 miles north of Baker
- Pipe Spring – a location with no facilities with a wye built by the McGowin-Foshee Lumber Company to allow their logging equipment to turn around while they were logging this area
- Blackman – a passing track, agent, and railroad telephone
- Mountain City – was neither a mountain nor a city, but had a railroad telephone, just south

Falco Bank to Continue Business and Pay All Depositors

The Bank of Falco, which closed a day or two ago, will be opened today prepared to pay all depositors in full and to continue business.

This announcement is made by President John H. Givens, who was in Pensacola yesterday.

President Givens closed the bank following a meeting of the directors Saturday on account of some dissatisfaction with the management. But after going into its affairs thoroughly and getting a recommendation from the Alabama Superintendent of Banks to continue business, President Givens yesterday made the announcement that the bank would be reopened at once, that business would be continued, and that every depositor would be paid in full.

This announcement will be received with much satisfaction by all of West Florida and South Alabama

Pensacola Journal, December 11, 1913, page 1

of the Alabama-Florida state line

- Wing – a passing track
 - Falco – a yard, wye, agent, railroad shop, engine house, and railroad telephone
- Of course, the reason for the railroad—the large sawmill—was also located at Falco.

By 1912, the advertised schedule showed the trip had been reduced to just an hour and fifteen minutes, with stops in Baker, Blackman, and Mountain City, Florida.

The tracks from Falco Junction, south of Laurel Hill, to Falco, were taken up in 1911, but the pilings are still visible in the Yellow River, just south of where Big Creek flows into the river.

At the same time the railroad was extended north, toward Rome, Alabama, a small community about six-and-a-half miles north of Falco. In September 1911, the railroad was incorporated as a separate company, called the Florida, Alabama & Gulf Railroad Company. The owners of the land company, Hyer, Blount, and McLane, were the three original owners of the new railroad. This incorporation was with the intention of adding passenger traffic and hauling general freight.

In 1912, the Florida and Alabama Land Company sold the sawmill at Falco and 13,000 acres of timber to McGowin-Foshee Lumber Company for \$440,000. McGowin-Foshee also bought the right to the timber on a large acreage in south Alabama and west Florida. This organization was an experienced lumber company, owning mills in Brewton and



A soft drink labled Fal-cola was produced at the Falco bottling plant in the early 1900s.

Samson, Alabama. The Florida, Alabama & Gulf Railroad was not included in the sale. The railroad's headquarters were located at Blackman. The Florida and Alabama Land Company also retained another sawmill they owned at Pensacola.

Also in 1912, Falco acquired a bank. The Bank of Falco was incorporated in December 1912, with an initial capitalization of \$15,000. There were 26 original stockholders who hailed from the local region, mostly Laurel Hill and Blackman in Florida, and Falco in Alabama. Givens was elected president.

Just a year after opening its doors, the bank abruptly closed, although Givens assured everyone the bank would reopen for

business. State regulators came in and Edward Hammond, special agent for the state banking department, was placed in charge of the bank's affairs. The bank eventually reopened, but it did not stay in business very long. Assets declined from \$31,000 in September 1914 to just under \$21,000 by May 1915. Once source says the bank went out of business permanently in December of 1916, but the real estate owned by the bank was not sold off until November of 1923.

The *Falco News* began publishing an eight-page newspaper in Falco in 1913 with I. B. Hilson as editor. A bottling plant was also operating in Falco at this time. They put out a drink called Fal-cola.

Also in 1913, Givens was elected as general

manager of the Florida and Alabama Land Company. At the same time he was also superintendent of the Florida, Alabama & Gulf Railroad, a partial owner of the Blackman Mercantile Company, the Falco Naval Stores Company, as well as the president of the Bank of Falco and the Bank of Laurel Hill.

In early 1914, the Florida and Alabama Land Company was declared bankrupt along with several other companies, including the First National Bank of Pensacola; the Florida, Alabama & Gulf Railroad Company; the Keyser-Muldon Company; the Southport Lumber Company; and the Southern Hardwood Manufacturing Company. All of these businesses were associated with Hyer. Crow, Rudolph & Company of Liverpool, England, was also forced into bankruptcy at this time. W. N. Roberts was appointed receiver to operate the railroad under the supervision of the federal court. Several other men served as receivers during the next few years.

The Falco mill was not affected by the bankruptcy of the other businesses, but through much of 1915, the mill was shut down due to low lumber prices. It resumed operations about the beginning of November.

Yellow River R. R. Schedule.

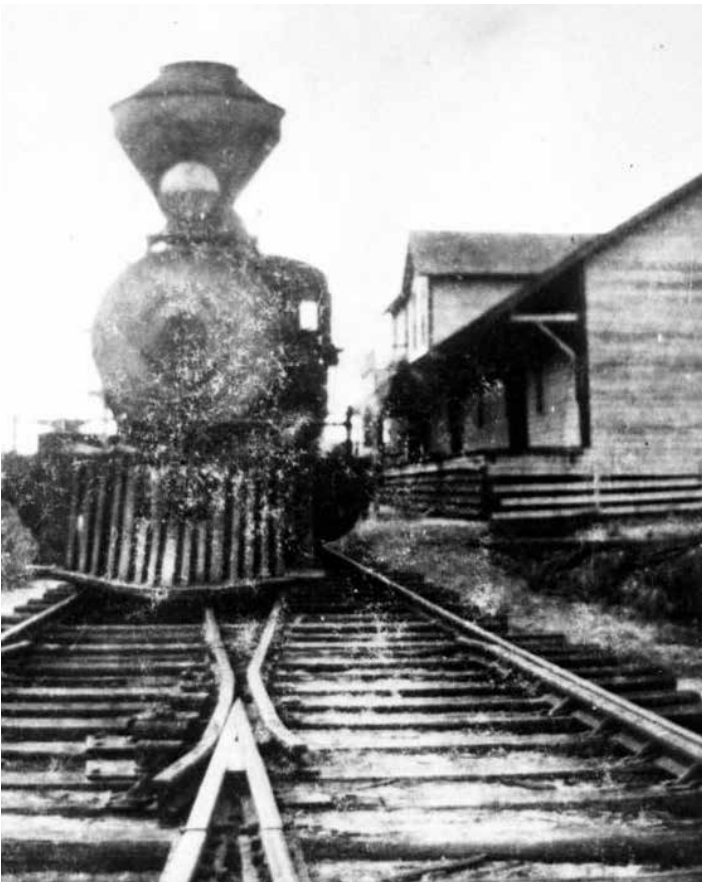
Daily No. 1	STATION.	Daily No. 2
P. M. ar.		lv. A. M.
7 10	Florala.....	7 10
6 52	Svea.....	7 28
6 36	Laurel Hill.....	7 42
6 31	Falco Junc.....	7 49
6 17	Campton.....	8 03
5 57	Auburn.....	8 23
5 45	Crestview.....ar.	8 35
No. 27	L. & N. R. R.	No. 28
5 45	Crestview.....lv.	8 45
5 35	Milligan.....	8 53
4 40	Milton.....	9 57
4 00	lv. Pensacola.....ar.	10 00

The railroad

All of the locomotives on the railroad were wood fired. The wood was provided at racks



The train depot in Falco, Alabama.



Engine No. 1 of the Florida Alabama and Gulf Railroad Company reaches the wye at the station at Falco before heading to the McGowin-Foshee Lumber Company sawmill yard in this undated photo from the 1900s.

along the track by private contractors. When the locomotive needed fuel it would stop at a rack, load up the tender with wood, and the engineer would write out a ticket for how much wood was loaded and deposit it in a box on the rack. The contractor would collect the tickets and send them in for payment. Wood was calculated in quarter cords. Some of the contractors tried stacking their wood as loosely as possible to get the most money for the least amount of wood. It was said that you could throw a log through some stacks of wood without hitting any of it. Train crews avoided these quarter cords forcing contractors to re-stack the wood tighter.

The railroad ran one train a day for most of its existence, although in the late teens it ran two trains a day to try to improve its finances. The track was also used by the sawmill's trains hauling timber to the mill as well as by the Horseshoe Lumber Company who paid railroad trackage fees for some of their logging trains.

The railroad from Falco to Galliver had been built on the cheap. Ties were merely trees cut down along the right-of-way, sawed to dimension, with no treatment. The railroad



The train depot in later years as the town slowly died.

also purchased rejected L&N ties for 20 cents apiece. Their lifespan was only about seven-to-eight years. Generally, there was no ballast along the tracks. The rails were leased from the L&N, requiring a monthly payment for their use. The L&N also assisted the Florida, Alabama & Gulf Railroad, and later the Andalusia Florida & Gulf, by providing extra cars and locomotives when necessary. The L&N performed maintenance on Falco's railroad engines when the job was too extensive for the local railroad's shop. There was a private machine shop in Galliver, owned by a Mr. McNair, that did repair work on locomotives. He did a lot of work for private logging companies.

The FA&G was separate from the logging railroad operated by the Florida and Alabama Land Company, and later the McGowin-Foshee Lumber Company. The sawmill had its own engines, log cars, and machine shop. Its logging railroads snaked out through the woods in all directions, responsible for bringing logs to the sawmill. These branch lines were hastily built and only temporary. As soon as timber in that

area was cut, the rails would be pulled up and another line laid down into another section of forest. Even though they were often owned by the same people, the lumber company had to pay trackage fees to the railroad to operate their logging trains on the tracks.

With the entry of the United States in World War I in April 1917, many of the men employed at the mill left to serve in the military. Advertisements in surrounding newspapers offered work at Falco to "experienced saw mill and yard men in nearly every department." One source said the FA&G was taken over by the United States Railroad Administration, a government agency created to run the railroads of the country and coordinate them to support the war effort. This is not confirmed.

According to Gus and Ruby Bryan's *Covington County History 1821-1976*, on July 3, 1917, a fire broke out in the sawmill's boiler room. The flames could not be contained, and the resulting inferno burned the mill and most of the town. The company did not think it would be profitable to rebuild so operations were moved to near Bradenton, Florida. However, this is not accurate. There is no record in contemporary newspaper accounts of a large fire at Falco in July 1917, and the sawmill was obviously operating after this date according to various newspaper articles from the time. There was a fire in June 1917 in the drying kiln at Falco that destroyed several thousand feet of lumber, but the sawmill itself was untouched.

After the end of the World War I in November 1918, the assets of the FA&G were ordered to be auctioned off to satisfy creditors. The Andalusia, Florida, and Gulf Railway Company was incorporated by the same men who owned the McGowin-Foshee Lumber Company. They needed the railroad to transport lumber cut at Falco to the market, and they purchased all the property of the former railroad for \$22,000 in October 1919 at a public sale in Crestview.

Captain J. C. Patterson described Falco and the sawmill in a letter published in the July 1, 1921, edition of *The Pensacola Journal* after he visited the sawmill town to erect a

new smokestack for the lumber company. He described the sawmill as one of the largest, with both a saw and planing mill. The sawmill was cutting from 65 to 75 thousand feet of lumber per day, and there was several million feet of lumber stacked in the lumber yard. Every day loads of lumber left Falco for Pensacola, but only in limited quantities because of the lack of demand for lumber. Mr. Robbins was the superintendent of the sawmill and Mr. Foshee was in charge of the mill, lumber yard, and railroad.

Falco for sale

The town of Falco was described as happy and prosperous. "There are several stores, a large hotel, and a good-sized church and nice, comfortable homes, and most every home has a large garden..."

Good times could not last forever and eventually the mill sawed all the timber that could be harvested in the area. In anticipation of the exhaustion of the timber in the Falco area, in 1924, the owners of the mill purchase 40,000 acres of land in eastern Manatee County, Florida, directly south of Tampa Bay. It was estimated there was between 170 and 180 million board-feet of lumber that could be cut from the timber on this land, enough to keep a sawmill in operation for about a dozen years.

Covington County History 1821-1976 stated that a fire destroyed the entire sawmill operation at Falco except for the office in 1924, but, once again, there are no contemporary newspaper accounts of such a destructive fire.

By 1925, the timber was gone, and the sawmill was closed. The McGowin-Foshee Lumber Company began advertising portions of the Falco mill and the lumber business for sale. In March of that year, an advertisement was published in *The Pensacola Journal* offering 20 mules, 40 oxen, and logging carts for sale. On April 10, an advertisement appeared in *The Tampa Tribune* stating the sawmill was cut out of the prior week and offered it for sale. It was described as a circular sawmill with a capacity of 75,000 feet per day. The three locomotives and fifteen logging cars, along with 90 percent of the town of Falco was also included in the offer. The

Andalusia, Florida, & Gulf Railway petitioned the Interstate Commerce Commission for permission to abandon the line from Galliver to Falco on April 9, 1925. Permission was granted to abandon the 25 miles of track on August 7.

Throughout the summer of 1925, advertisements appeared in newspapers offering various parts of the sawmill and other businesses at Falco for sale: bricks from chimneys and furnaces, flooring and siding, four boilers with all their associated fittings, timbers in size from 6x6 to 12x12 in the buildings, and galvanized roofing were all offered for sale. Everage & Ellison from Andalusia purchased the commissary at Falco and sold off all the goods. The hotel building was sold and dismantled; the materials were used to build the Covington Hotel in Opp, Alabama. By October, the lumber company was advertising for an experienced man to dismantle the AF&G and deliver the components to Galliver. It cost \$3,000 to dismantle the railroad.

With the closing of the sawmill and the abandonment of the railroad, Falco lost its reason for existence. The community continued for many years, growing smaller and smaller. The post office operated until 1955 before closing. Today the only physical remnant of Falco is the old brick bank building, nearly overgrown, beside McLelland Road, and the remains of the Masonic Hall.



In 1942, all that remained of the railroad to the sawmill was a bridge crossing the mill pond. (photo by John Collier, U.S. Farm Security Administration, Library of Congress)

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**

Veterans Day Salute

Army Air Forces Weatherman Captain James Edward 'Ed' McCracken

Dr. James Edward "Ed" McCracken, long-time resident of Valparaiso and charter president of Okaloosa-Walton Junior College, now known as Northwest Florida State College, performed key weather tests during World War II that were used to help physicists determine the fallout of the first atomic bomb test in 1945.



by Stephanie Holcombe
Photos courtesy of Lynne McCracken Vige

In 1945, 23-year-old First Lieutenant James Edward "Ed" McCracken was temporarily assigned to Kirkland Army Air Field as project officer to conduct weather tests for an undisclosed mission. According to his military orders, his 30-day temporary duty assignment was to conduct tests of the

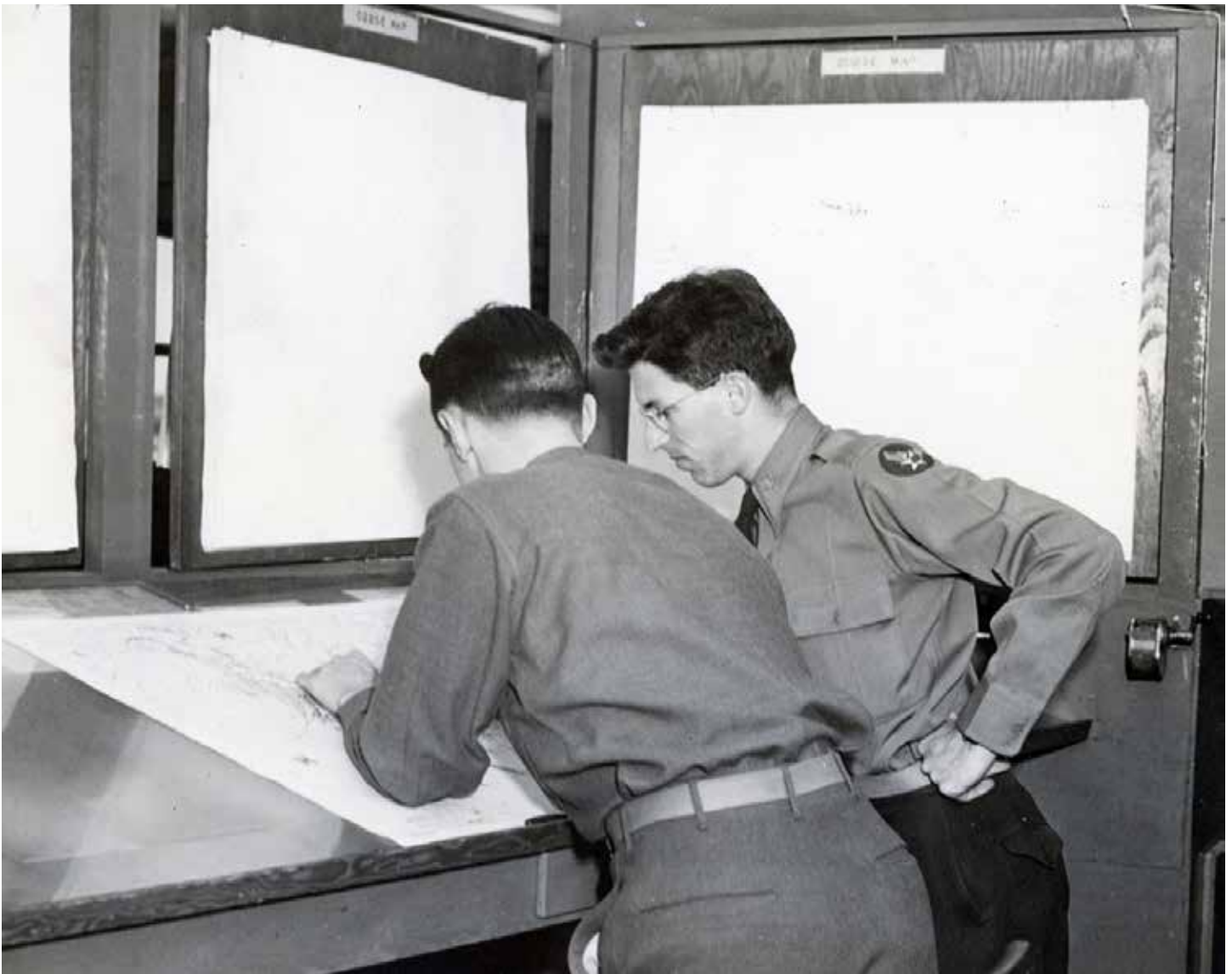
"application of differential ballistic winds to high level bombing" for the Army Air Forces's Special Board Project in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

"He was studying weather patterns and the prevailing winds," said his son-in-law, Handlee Vige. According to his daughter, Lynne McCracken Vige, her father didn't know why he was conducting the tests, but he later figured it out. "He knew something was up," she said, "but he didn't know why." It was either after the atomic bomb tests at the Trinity Site in New Mexico in 1945, or after the first bomb was released over Hiroshima, that he put two and two together, she said. His Albuquerque tests were to check how the winds aloft would carry radiation from the bomb tests, said Handlee.

Upon completion of his tests, McCracken's orders were to write up a full report and submit it to his higher headquarters at the Army Air Forces Weather Wing in Asheville, North Carolina.

Ed McCracken was a senior at Muskingum College in New Concord, Ohio, in 1942 during World War II. Advised by his older brother to enlist rather than wait to be drafted, he requested to join the Army Air Forces where, as an aviation meteorology cadet, he trained to be a weather forecaster. Upon his enlistment in October 1942, the AAF sent him to an eleven-month meteorology school at the University of Chicago where he completed not only the course, but also earned credits to complete his bachelor's degree from Muskingum College in math and science.

For McCracken, 1944 was a big year. Upon



1st Lieutenant Ed McCracken (right) reviews a weather map at Perry Army Airfield, Perry, Florida, in 1944.

completion of meteorology school in February, he was commissioned a second lieutenant February 28 and assigned to the 4th Weather Squadron at Perry Army Air Field in Perry, Florida. In June, he married his wife of 65 years, Ruth Wylie, in Tavares, Florida. Later that fall, he was assigned to the 71st Army Air Forces Base Unit as station weather office and promoted to first lieutenant.

It was in May of 1945 that he participated in weather pattern testing at Kirkland Army Air Field. Upon completion of that assignment, he returned to Perry. Later that month, a category 1 hurricane, known today as the “Outer Banks



Lieutenant Ed McCracken takes a weather measurement from the observation deck on the roof of the base operations building at Perry Army Air Field in 1943.



Second Lieutenant Ed and Ruth McCracken, June 25, 1944

Hurricane,” made landfall north of the Tampa Bay area. McCracken received a letter of appreciation from the community for his assistance with forecasting the storm.

Although the first atomic bomb test in New Mexico

occurred July 16, there was no news about the tremendous explosion, which was passed off as high explosives igniting. On August 6, the United States released the first atomic bomb over Hiroshima, Japan. President Harry S. Truman announced the devastating attack on Japan to the world. After the second bomb over Nagasaki, the Japanese surrendered in September, ending World War II.

McCracken was promoted to captain in June of 1946. He resigned his commission on July 27 at MacDill AAF in Tampa after serving nearly four

years in uniform.

Following his service, McCracken returned to school using the GI Bill to earn his master’s and doctorate from Ohio State University. He served as resident counselor at the University of Florida, was professor of education and psychology at the University of Mississippi, was the dean of students at Millsaps College in Jackson, Mississippi, and was director of research and development at Pensacola Junior College before accepting the job as president of the newly formed Okaloosa-Walton Junior College (now Northwest Florida State College) in 1964—after being asked to take the job three times. He remained as president of OWJC for 24 years before retiring in 1988.



Dr. Ed McCracken, 2009

Alamogordo Base Explosives Blast Jolts Wide Area

Windows at Gallup, 235 Miles Away Rattle; No Loss of Lives

By the Associated Press

Following a blast felt over hundreds of miles Monday morning, explosion of “a considerable amount of high explosive and pyrotechnics” in a remote area of the Alamogordo air base reservation was reported by Col. William O. Earreckson, commandant.

Although the blast rattled windows 235 miles away at Gallup in northwestern New Mexico, Col. Earreckson said there were no loss of life or injury to anyone.

“Property damage outside of the explosives magazine itself was negligible,” the commandant reported.

Variety of Reports

Reports from over the state listed the blast variously as an earthquake, meteor and air plane crash.

Members of the crew and passengers aboard a Santa Fe railway train near Mountainair thought they saw a bomber explode and burn in the sky.

So brilliant was the flash from the explosion Miss Georgia Green of Socorro, blind University of New Mexico student, exclaimed “What’s that.”

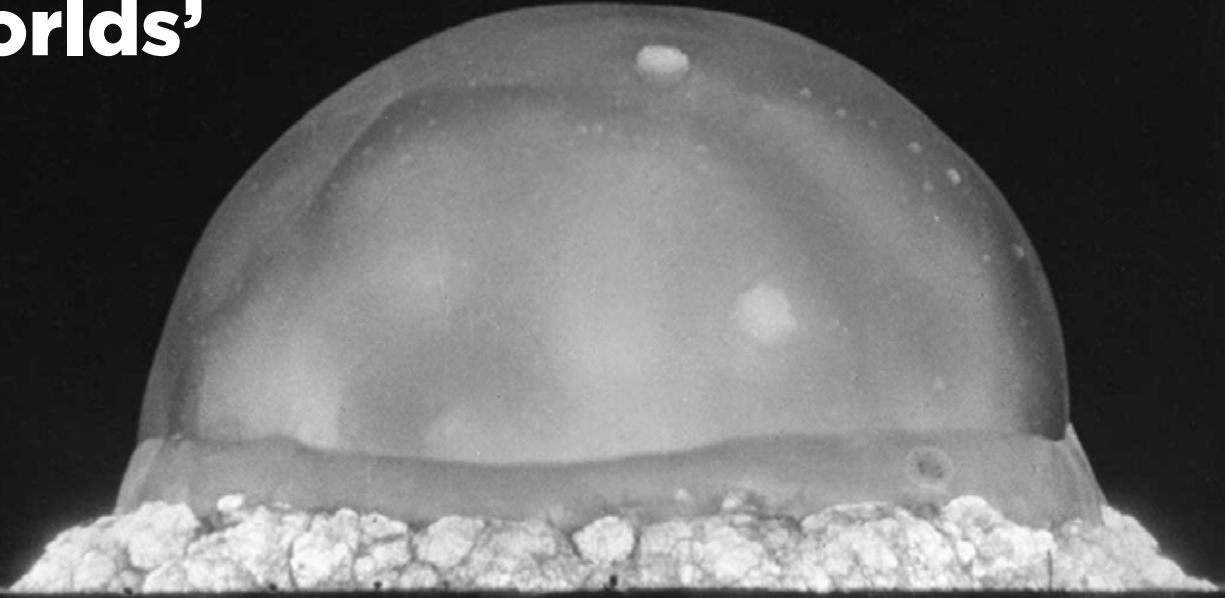
She was being driven to Albuquerque by her brother-in-law Joe Willis, Socorro theater operator.

Brightens Sky

The flash “lighted up the sky like the sun,” Willis said. “The light lasted several moments, followed by a large crimson light to the southeast. We drove down the road several minutes before we heard the explosion.”

Albuquerque Journal, July 17, 1945, page 1

The Trinity Test: ‘the Destroyer of Worlds’



The first atomic bomb at 1/40 of a second after initial explosion July 16, 1945, on the New Mexico desert. (*Department of Energy*)

The nuclear age began at precisely 5:29:45 a.m. mountain time on Monday, July 16, 1945. That’s when the first atomic bomb was detonated in the Jornada del Muerto desert in New Mexico. The “Trinity” test was the most violent man-made explosion in history to that date.

by the Department of Energy

Until the atomic bomb could be tested, doubt would remain about its effectiveness. The world had never seen a nuclear explosion before, and estimates varied widely on how much energy would be released. Some scientists at Los Alamos continued privately to have doubts that it would work at all.

There was only enough weapons-grade uranium available for one bomb, and confidence in the gun-type design was high, so on July 14, 1945, most of the uranium bomb (“Little Boy”) began its trip westward to the Pacific without its design having ever been fully tested. A test of the plutonium bomb seemed vital, however, both to confirm its novel implosion design and to gather data on nuclear explosions in general. Several plutonium bombs were now “in the pipeline” and would be available during the next few weeks and months. It was therefore decided to test one of these.

J. Robert Oppenheimer, director of the

Los Alamos Laboratory where the bomb was developed, chose to name this the “Trinity” test, a name inspired by the poems of John Donne. The site chosen was a remote corner on the Alamogordo Bombing Range known as the “Jornada del Muerto,” or “Journey of Death,” 210 miles south of Los Alamos. The biggest concern was control of the radioactivity the test device would release. Not entirely content to trust favorable meteorological conditions to carry the radioactivity into the upper atmosphere, the Army stood ready to evacuate the people in surrounding areas.

Before the test, scientists were well aware that the blast would create potential radiation hazards. In the case of an explosion, plutonium in the device would fission into other radionuclides. Neutrons would strike various elements on the ground and turn some into radioactive isotopes. This radioactive debris would be swept with fission products into a growing fireball and lifted high into the air. Once in the atmosphere, a cloud of intense

radioactivity would form. Immediate radiation from the explosion and residual radioactive debris initially caused little concern because of dilution in the air and the isolation of the site, but as the test drew closer planners realized, with some sense of urgency, that radioactive fallout over local towns posed a real hazard. Brigadier General Leslie R. Groves, Manhattan Project director and builder of the Pentagon, feared legal culpability if things got out of hand. As a result, Army intelligence agents located and mapped everyone within a forty-mile radius. Test planners set up an elaborate off-site monitoring system and prepared evacuation plans if exposure levels became too high.

On July 12, the plutonium core was taken to the test area. Non-nuclear components left for the test site at 12:01 a.m., Friday the 13th. During that day, final assembly of the “Gadget,” as it was nicknamed, took place. By 5 p.m. July 15, the device had been assembled and hoisted atop the 100-foot firing tower where it was pouring rain. Groves and Oppenheimer discussed what to do if the weather did not break in time for the scheduled 4 a.m. test. At 3:30 a.m. on July 16, Groves and Oppenheimer pushed the time back to 5:30 a.m. The rain stopped at 4 a.m. and the device was armed shortly after 5 a.m.

During the final seconds before the explosion, most observers laid down on the ground with their feet facing the Trinity site and simply waited. While Manhattan Project staff members watched anxiously, the device exploded over the New Mexico desert, vaporizing the tower and turning the asphalt around the base of the tower to green sand. Seconds after the explosion came a huge blast-wave and heat searing out across the desert. No one could see the radiation generated by the explosion, but they all knew it was there. As the orange-and-yellow fireball stretched up and spread, a second column, narrower than the first, rose and flattened into a mushroom shape, thus providing the atomic age with a visual image that has become imprinted on the human consciousness as a symbol of power and awesome destruction. The test had released

energy equivalent to 20,000 tons of TNT.

Soon shock and euphoria of the successfulness of the test by members of the Manhattan Project gave way to more sober reflections. Oppenheimer later recalled that the explosion had reminded him of a line from the Hindu holy text, the *Bhagavad-Gita*: “Now I am become Death, the destroyer of worlds.” The terrifying destructive power of atomic weapons and the uses to which they might be put were to haunt many of the Manhattan Project scientists for the remainder of their lives.

The test was more efficient than expected, and little fallout initially dropped on the test site beyond 1,200 yards of ground zero. Most radioactivity was contained within the dense white mushroom cloud that topped out at 25,000 feet. Within an hour, the cloud had largely dispersed toward the north-northeast, all the while dropping a trail of fission products. Offsite fallout was heavy. Several ranch families, missed by the Army survey, received significant exposures in the two weeks following Trinity. The families, nonetheless, evidenced little external injury.

Livestock were not as fortunate, suffering skin burns, bleeding, and loss of hair. Stafford Warren the Manhattan District’s chief medical officer, reported to Groves that “while no house area investigated received a dangerous amount, the dust outfall from the various portions of the cloud was potentially a very dangerous hazard over a band almost 30 miles wide extending almost 90 miles northeast of the site.” The Alamogordo site, Warren concluded, was “too small for a repetition of a similar test of this magnitude except under very special conditions.” For any future test, he proposed finding a larger site, “preferably with a radius of at least 150 miles without population.” The Trinity test had been, as Warren informed Groves, something of a near thing.

In a letter Groves jotted off to the War Department the next day with his “unofficial” accounting of the test, he said “I no longer consider the Pentagon a safe shelter from such a bomb.”

SHOP

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



**Metal farmer's market sign:
\$7.95**

This round tin market sign would compliment any kitchen or dining room.



Blue Heron print: \$14.95

This framed blue heron print was painted by local artist Owen Melody.



Metal cross can/bottle opener: \$3.95

This metal can and bottle opener that looks like the hilt of a medieval knight's sword was part of a three-piece mid-century bar tool set.



High-bouncing multicolored balls: \$1.50

Get five high-bouncing balls in various colors. Different color patterns in each package.



Tabletop Ninepins game: \$14.95

Ninepins, similar to bowling, except on a much smaller scale, was enjoyed throughout the North American colonies.



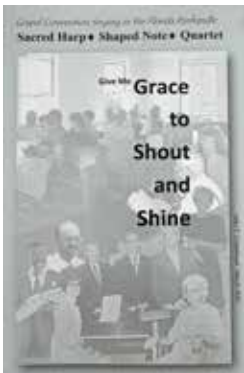
F-105 Wild Weasel pewter belt buckle: \$5

The Republic F-105 Thunderchief, nicknamed the Wild Weasel, was a Vietnam-era fighter jet flown by the U.S. Air Force. It flew from 1955 to 1984.

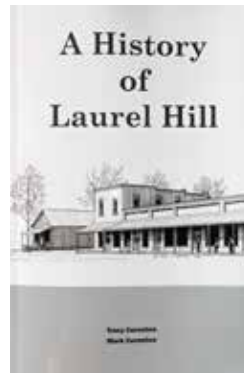
All this and much, much more is available in the **Baker Mercantile Gift Store**.

Okaloosa County History Series

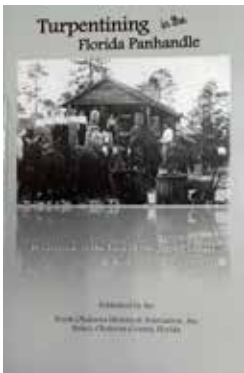
Available for sale in the **Baker Mercantile Gift Store**, on eBay, by email at bakermuseum@aol.com or by calling the Museum at 850-537-5714. **\$20 each.**



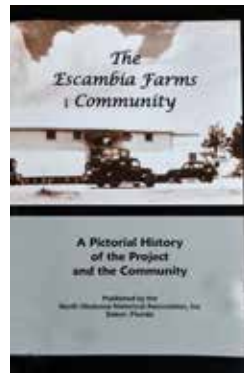
Give me the Grace to Shout and Shine, the newest book in the history series, focuses on the three most prominent gospel singing methods in the northwest Florida panhandle throughout the years: Sacred Harp, also known as fasola, five- or seven-shape note convention singing, and later, the gospel quartet.



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.



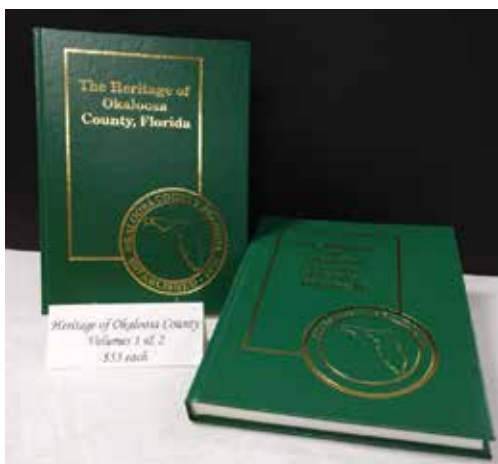
Present Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal program included aid to American migrant workers and tenant farmers. The Resettlement Administration created a planned farming community in the northwest corner of Okaloosa County in 1936 known as Escambia Farms. By 1939, the community had grown to 72 families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



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

16th Annual Baker Heritage Day Festival

Saturday, Nov. 18, 2023
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.
- The Museum handles all food other than baked goods, upon approval.

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____

Description of art or craft:

Have you participated before? Y N

Do you require electricity? Y N

Complete the form and return it no later than Nov. 3 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

16th Annual Baker Heritage Day Festival

Saturday, Nov. 18, 2023
9 a.m. to 3 p.m.



Demonstration Application

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____

Demonstration description:

Have you participated before? Y N

Complete the form and return it no later than Nov. 3 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.

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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
Mike Bush
Tracy Curenton
Doug Hibbing

Emeritus Members:

Judy Cadenhead
Phyllis Enzor
Jeanette Henderson

2023 Goals

- **Increase membership by 30% — goal reached**
- **Complete the historical marker application**
- **Finish the pavilion with flooring, lighting, and a stage — received \$5,000 grant**
- **Purchase needed equipment for digitalization — purchased copy stand**

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

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

- 9 Columbus Day
 - 11 Veteran's Day
 - 19 North Okaloosa Historical Association Board meeting, 6 p.m.
 - 16 North Okaloosa Historical Association Board meeting, 6 p.m.
 - 20 **Creepy Cabins**
6:30-8:30 p.m.
 - 18 **3rd Saturday Baker Heritage Day**
9 a.m.-3 p.m.
Museum is open
Museum will be closed Nov. 23-24 for Thanksgiving
 - 21 **3rd Saturday**
Museum is open from 10 a.m.-3:30 p.m.
Creepy Cabins
6:30-9 p.m.
Movie, refreshments, games, 6-9 p.m.
 - 21 North Okaloosa Historical Association Board meeting, 6 p.m.
 - 24 Christmas Eve
 - 25 Christmas
Museum will be closed Dec. 22 through Jan. 1 for the holidays
- Regular Museum hours:**
Tuesday-Friday, every 3rd Saturday, 10 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

Don't get caught napping!



Find that perfect Christmas gift at the Baker Mercantile Gift Shop

3rd Saturday



At the Baker Block Museum

Join us in 2024 for the following events

**February 17, 1 p.m., library
Tombstone Tales, presented by the
Florida Public Archaeology Network**

**March 16, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., park
Baker Arts Festival**

**July 20, 1 p.m., library
Archaeology of Northwest Florida,
presented by the Florida Public Ar-
chaeology Network**

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

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