

THE GSOC NEWSLETTER

THE GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF OKALOOSA COUNTY, FLORIDA
FEBRUARY 17, 2017

Happy Birthday to Us!

As is our tradition, we will celebrate the organization of the GSOC at our meeting in February, the anniversary month of our founding. This is a copy of the article from our local paper which announced this.

41 Years Ago ...

Name and Officers Chosen By Genealogical Society

Playground Daily News,
Sunday Morning, February 29, 1976

Mrs. H.W. **McCall** was unanimously elected president to head an initial slate of officers and members to fill executive positions in the newly formed Genealogical Society, Tuesday.

The Genealogical Society of Okaloosa County, Florida, the name by which the group shall be known, was adopted by society members.

Other officers are: vice- president, Charles R. **Million**, Ocean City; recording secretary, Mrs. Floyd **Bryant**, Niceville; corresponding secretary, Mrs. Brenda J. **Lewis**, Niceville; treasurer &, membership chairwoman, Mrs. Max O. **Usrey**, Cinco Bayou; librarian, Mrs. Grant L. **Adams**, Wright; assistant librarian, Mrs. Martha G. **Michel**, Fort Walton Beach; society genealogist, Mrs. Elsie. M. **Dawson**, Fort Walton Beach; editor, Mrs. Sharon **Jasper**, Eglin AFB; assistant editor, Mrs. Charles **Healy**, Eglin AFB; publicity & historian, Wiley Benjamin **Hill**, Jr., Wright

Other charter members of the society are Mrs. Paul W. **Brock**, Fort Walton Beach; Richard G. **Schillinger**, Valparaiso; MSgt. John **DeBlois**, Valparaiso; Mrs. Henry D. **Fisher**, Wright; Mr. Floyd **Bryant**, Jr., Niceville; Arthur C. **Wagner**, Niceville; Mrs. Sandra **Gilliland**, Shalimar; William S. **Borders**, Fort Walton Beach; and Mrs. Anne **Bettis**, Fort Walton Beach.

In other business, yearly dues for both individuals and full family membership were set at \$6, prorated from the time of joining the society.

Selection of a permanent meeting place and library location is still under consideration.

Bishop Paul W. **Brock**, of the Fort Walton Ward of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints briefly spoke to the society and offered use of the church facility.

The GSOC Program for February

Finding and Proving Your Colonial Ancestor by Sarah Cash Roach

Fort Walton Beach Library, 10:30 AM, Feb. 25, 2017

The program for our February meeting will be presented by Sarah Cash Roach. She will discuss how to find and prove our colonial ancestors, using the lineage society-approved genealogical proof standard. Colonial ancestors are often hard to find, since before 1790 there were no census records, and before 1776, there was no United States of America.

Mrs. Roach was born and grew up in Chattanooga, TN. She earned Bachelor of Science degrees in History and Math at the Middle Tennessee State University, and retired in 2002 after 21 years of service with the Tennessee Valley Authority as an Executive Manager, Shared Resources.

She currently teaches genealogy classes from beginning through advanced in Tennessee, Georgia, Alabama, Texas, and Kentucky. She's successfully researched and completed membership applications for over 200 new National Society DAR members. In her spare time, she researches her own family and enjoys wood carving and wood turning.

She and her husband of 34 years, David Glen Roach, have two four-legged children.

Mrs. Roach is a member and/or officer in 14 lineage societies. She is a DAR certified genealogist and is the National Society DAR Lineage Research Vice Chair – Native American Genealogy.

Time to Renew Your Membership for 2017

GSOC memberships should be renewed now for the 2017 calendar year. There is a **revised** membership form in this newsletter (and also on our web site.)

The volunteer section of the form has been updated and the GSOC Board encourages **everyone** to select one or more areas to help the society next year. If there are no changes to the ancestor research section at the bottom of the form please put "no changes". Otherwise, add additional ancestors.

You can mail the membership form and check or you can bring the form and money/check to the next meeting. Dues must be paid by the end of March 2017 or you will be dropped.



AFGHAN RAFFLE

For benefit of the Genealogical Society of
Okaloosa County

Beautiful handmade afghan (shown folded in half)

Measures approximately 41" wide and 86" long

Tickets are \$1.00 each or 6 for \$5.00

Do not have to be present to win

Drawing at March 25th meeting of Society

BE PART OF OUR MAY 2017 PROGRAM!

In May the GSOC is planning to have (at our regular meeting) a **Show, Share, and Tell**. Any members who wish to participate should notify Margaret Harris as soon as possible so that she can know how much time to allow each participant. Some suggestions on the types of presentation you might want to consider are:

1. Show a relic, heirloom, or artifact that belonged to your ancestor; tell how it was acquired and a little bit about the person and their family who had it.
2. Show an original painting, sculpting, musical composition, or poem, that you or your family member created, in honor of your family tree or an ancestor.
3. Tell a family story. (Brief and interesting bit of family lore or tradition that was passed down to you)
4. Show an unusual photograph(s) (unusual could be funny, strange, or brilliant, such as a four or five generations in one photo). Please use a digitized photograph that we can show on the projector OR enlarge the photo if you can.

If you want to share a longer story, a book, or genealogy chart, please make copies (handouts) or post a link where folks can view online. We would want to pass some objects around or set up a display where folks can view them. A great source for ideas is the Pinterest web site. (Enter the search term "Genealogy" or "Family History".)

WE ARE THE STORYTELLERS

Author Unknown

We are the chosen.

In each family there is one who seems called to find the ancestors. To put flesh on their bones and make them live again, to tell the family story and to feel that somehow they know and approve.

Doing genealogy is not a cold gathering of facts but, instead, breathing life into all who have gone before. We are the story tellers of the tribe. All tribes have one. We have been called, as it were, by our genes.

Those who have gone before cry out to us: Tell our story. So, we do. In finding them, we somehow find ourselves.

How many graves have I stood before now and cried? I have lost count. How many times have I told the ancestors, "You have a wonderful family; you would be proud of us." How many times have I walked up to a grave and felt somehow there was love there for me? I cannot say.

It goes beyond just documenting facts. It goes to who am I and why do I do the things I do.

It goes to seeing a cemetery about to be lost forever to weeds and indifference and saying I can't let this happen. The bones here are bones of my bone and flesh of my flesh. It goes to doing something about it.

It goes to pride in what our ancestors were able to accomplish. How they contributed to what we are today. It goes to respecting their hardships and losses, their never giving in or giving up, their resoluteness to go on and build a life for their family.

It goes to deep pride that the fathers fought and some died to make and keep us a Nation. It goes to a deep and immense understanding that they were doing it for us.

It is of equal pride and love that our mothers struggled to give us birth, without them we could not exist, and so we love each one, as far back as we can reach. That we might be born who we are. That we might remember them. So we do.

With love and caring and scribing each fact of their existence, because we are they and they are the sum of who we are. So, as a scribe called, I tell the story of my family. It is up to that one called in the next generation to answer the call and take my place in the long line of family storytellers.

That is why I do my family genealogy, and that is what calls those young and old to step up and restore the memory or greet those whom we had never known before.

Lakewood: The Highest Point in Florida

Northwest Florida Daily News, 18 November 1991
Tom Huyck, Daily News Staff Writer

It is home to the highest point in Florida. It's the birthplace of two prominent Americans. And its timber was among the finest in the world.

So why don't more people know about Lakewood?

"I don't know," says Margaret Britton Richbourg, whose father and uncle founded the town, "but the end of the story has not been told yet."

Lakewood is an unincorporated hamlet in northwest Walton County near the Alabama border. Were it not for large signs on County Road 187 denoting Lakewood's prime significance "Florida's Highest Point, 345 Feet Above Sea Level" most motorists wouldn't know enough to stop there.



Locals know the landmark as Britton Hill. However, visitors who come expecting to see a Matterhorn-like peak are usually surprised. The official high-spot is more of a plateau, about 900 feet by 400 feet, with a vista extending a couple of miles to the next hill. But there is so much more to Lakewood than its elevation, argues Richbourg.

For example, how many people know that Bill White successor to A. Bartlett Giamatti, president of the National Baseball League was born and raised in Lakewood? "He was always a good boy," Richbourg said of the former St. Louis Cardinals star and 18-year National League broadcaster.

And what about Jacqueline Cochran, the internationally acclaimed female aviator and founder of her own perfume company, whose labels include Nina Ricci and Pierre Cardin? She was born and raised in Lakewood.

Wait, there's more. The floors of New York's Grand Central Station, the Waldorf Astoria Hotel, Bancroft Hall in Annapolis, Md., the Hudson Terminal and the New Orleans Courthouse are all made out of rift-sawn longleaf

yellow pine from Lakewood. "And they're all still in existence," Richbourg says proudly.

It was back in 1900 when William "Will" Henry Britton, a timber baron from North Carolina, bought the Lake Lumber Co. in Florala, Ala. Will was Richbourg's uncle. Will moved the mill business three miles east. He named the site Lakewood. And in 1904, his brother Thomas Jones Britton (Margaret's father), and several other partners established the Britton Lumber Co.

It was a glorious period for the town, perhaps never to be matched again. There were 101 buildings, planted trees, streets laid out in orderly fashion and housing for over 400 bustling workers. A two-story Victorian hotel, a mercantile store, a commissary and a train depot, which still stands, were the center of commercial activity.

The area was served by the Louisville-Nashville and Central of Georgia railroads. About 40 miles of track snaked through the woods to Mossy Head and Freeport, the staging points for shipments to Belgium and other worldly destinations.

Will Britton was noted for both his business dealings and his philanthropy. He provided much to Florala, including land for schools, the Bank of Florala, the opera house, the Colonial Hotel on nearby Lake Jackson, and the Chautauqa House in DeFuniak Springs.

By 1907, the Britton Timber Co. had acquired an additional 21,000 acres of timber from Alabama to Crestview. Two years later, Will Britton died of complications from appendicitis. His death was the first in a series of events that led to the slow decline of the company and eventually Lakewood itself.

Lakewood native George W. Senn remembers the mill burning down in 1923 or 1924. As a young school boy in Florala, he and a friend ran all the way to Lakewood to observe an ominous glow, which turned out to be the burning mill.

"In those days, you burned wood in the locomotive and the sparks would go everywhere, and there were dry leaves everywhere," Richbourg said, "and sparks would land up in the gutters ... so at least three times the whole place burned down."

As if fires weren't enough, the Great Depression in 1929 and over-forestation sealed Lakewood's doom.

Richbourg's brother Thomas Jones Britton Jr., known by locals as "Little Tom" ran the pepper pot (or pepper box) mill. The operation was much smaller than the original Britton Timber Co. Only 25 to 30 employees worked there.

"They were pretty good people," Senn recalled. "They tried to help everyone when the big mill burned down."

Senn started work at the mill in 1935. His wage was \$1.25 a day and he remembers how much it meant to him when he got a 25-cent a day raise.

"You worked for what you ate," he said. "They took out for rent and the commissary. Every once and a while, you would feel a dollar or two."

By the early 1940s, Lakewood had faded into the rest of the countryside. It took the vision and sweat of Hazel Slaughter Britton, Richbourg's mother, to revive the town.

Back in 1956, an obscure geodetic survey team brought news that portended great things for Lakewood.

"I think it was at (Congressman) Bob Sikes' instigation that the survey was performed," Richbourg said. "Bob called it 'Florida's Mountain,' but it would never catch on."

Lakewood and not Lake Wales, Laurel Hill or Crestview as argued by some was indeed the highest point in the state of Florida, the survey reported.

With the news in hand, Hazel Britton embarked on an economic development crusade to revive Lakewood to its former grandeur. She was the catalyst leading to the creation of a historical exhibit in the post office, and the conversion of Lakewood's church turned schoolhouse into a museum.

Britton was postmaster of Lakewood until she died in 1976. The post office closed shortly thereafter. She held onto her post as long as she could to sustain the identity of the town, according to her daughter. "So many little towns like that crumbled into the earth," Richbourg said. "And Mama just hated to see it die; she wanted it to come alive."

Consecutive homecoming festivals at Lakewood were staged in 1978 and 1979. Over 750 people appeared the first year and 1,000 the second year. Lakewood alumni from as far away as Arizona and Missouri showed up. Richbourg wrote invitations to White and Cochran to attend, but she received no responses.

Within several years, the homecomings ceased. Richbourg blamed the demise on a reporter from the Associated Press, who wrote a story in 1982 making light of Lakewood's "Midget Mountain" and about visitors who showed up there with mountain climbing gear. She adds: "That's the one [story] that really killed us."

But in 1984, the state Legislature approved a \$17,000 matching grant for Walton County to establish a park and monument. The Richbourgs in turn donated 17.38 acres of land.

Now a tranquil nature trail winds through the heavily wooded parcel. A monument and a picnic area are also located there. The rest of the project particularly the museum "is in limbo right now," Richbourg said.

She still envisions greatness for Lakewood. Richbourg talks longingly of "a blacksmith shop, a cane grinding mill, a

barn and harness shop, a gunsmith shop, a bicycle shop, and I wanted a studio for weaving and pottery, leather and all this."

And there have been other angles considered to spark Lakewood's resurgence. Oil companies have surveyed the area for black crude; and 600-foot deep artesian wells producing "99.98 percent pure water" are another possibility," says Margaret's husband, William Denva Richbourg.

A Hungarian "gypsy" woman from St. Petersburg once read a story about Lakewood. It reminded her of her motherland. Several years later, she showed up with her family ready to homestead there.

Richbourg, unable to accommodate them, was flattered but had to turn the woman away.

For others interested in seeking out Lakewood, look on the map -- an official state map. Richbourg avows that "Lakewood is still to be kept on the official state map of Florida."



The above map is from 1917. Lakewood is at the top center of the map, just below Florala.

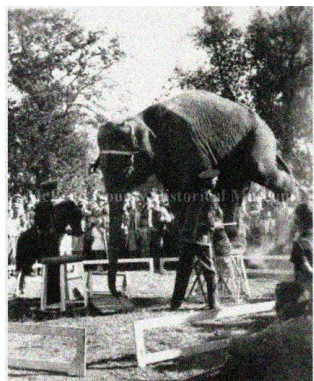
Photo is from the *Florida Memories* site.



Exploits of Maxine the Elephant

by Dean DeBolt

Maxine the elephant was born in India in 1921, was shipped to New York, where she was sold by the wild animal importer Ellis S. Josephs in 1928 to W. C. Richards of Pensacola. At the time she was seven years old and weighed a mere 820 pounds. She was loaded on the Steamer Cherokee and shipped to Jacksonville, Florida and from there, transported to Pensacola, Florida.



Maxine performing with trainer Blackie with the Jay Gould Circus. (photo from McLeod County Historical Society and Museum).

As she grew up, she was taught many tricks and her first performance was before the Richards Brothers circus. During her lifetime, she performed in numerous circuses such as the Miller Brothers and Ketrow Brothers Circus, and others throughout the United States, Mexico, and Canada usually returning back to Pensacola after her stints with circuses.

One of her best tricks was walking a six-inch plank with a woman held in her mouth; this entailed a turn at the end of the plank plus the walk back. She was a very gentle

elephant and loved humans.

She is credited with saving at least three lives during her lifetime. Once in northern Tennessee the truck in which she was being transported fell 50 feet into a river. Maxine battered her way out of the rear compartment, swam up to the cab and burst open the door. She carried the half-drowned driver up to the bank, surprising a party of picnickers.

Once at a tourist camp barn, a keeper fell asleep with a cigarette in hand. Pretty soon a pile of hay nearby was in flames. Maxine picked up the keeper and tossed him 20 feet out of danger, broke her own chain, and beat it for safety.

The third rescue occurred on circus grounds and concerned a four-year old girl. Excited by fire trucks speeding past the grounds, the child ran from her parents into the line of elephants. Maxine lifted her ten feet in the air with her trunk, preventing her from being crushed by the other elephants.

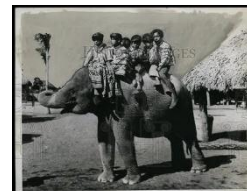
While there are many stories about Maxine, 1933 was apparently a busy year. On March 20, the truck transporting Maxine from San Antonio, Texas back to Pensacola broke down in Gulfport. Maxine got off the truck and lumbered down the Mississippi delta where she spotted Peter Thierry who was inspecting screens near Henderson point. She wandered over to see what he was doing. Startled, he looked up to see a 2,500 elephant and did what anyone would do. He yelled "Shoo!" As the paper noted, Maxine, untutored in the rudiments of

etiquette, ignored the rebuff. "Shoo" said Peter again, more loudly. But while one 'shoo' was alright, two were not. Maxine picked him up in her trunk and tossed him 40 feet away. Peter suffered only a bruise and her keeper came up shortly and led Maxine back to the repaired truck.



But once the truck made it to Biloxi, it was raining and the truck skidded at an intersection throwing Maxine against the side, breaking out the body of the truck. As the Macon newspaper reported, it took a day to repair the truck and many in Biloxi were startled to see an elephant by the side of the road. The paper reported that this was her first visit to Biloxi and Maxine stated that if the weather were better and there were more peanuts available, she'd like to stay longer.

In Pensacola, during the winter months, she stayed with Richards at his Pinehurst tourist camp, and during the summers dazzled circus audiences as the "finest single performing elephant in the United States." As World War II cadets crowded Pensacola for training, the aviation cadets at Saufley "adopted" her and every morning as their bus came down the road to Saufley Field, they said if she threw her trunk in the air, the pilots often got up checks on their flights, but if she turned her back on them, the cadets were almost sure to receive down checks. The cadets became good friends with Maxine and she often performed for them on Sunday afternoons.



Her keepers and trainers said she was known in Texas as the "high school" elephant, often performing at high schools as a means to promote the circus being in town.

Sadly, she died of a heart attack on February 16, 1943 at the age of 24 years old, her final weight being 6,000 pounds. Her owner purchased a grave for the elephant on a grassy knoll off Pinehurst road, two miles from the camp. The newspaper noted that he intended to fence it in later and erect a tombstone engraved with Maxine's age and date of death. It is not known if this occurred or still exists.

In 1945, Maxine was immortalized by a cute fictional story about her "Maxine and the Pretty Bauble" which appeared in the November 17, 1945 issue of Saturday Evening Post. The story was written by Elizabeth Dean of Pensacola, Florida; her husband was Navy Commander Abbott M. Dean who was then assigned to Pearl Harbor.

"Cadets Mourn Death of Maxine the Elephant," Pensacola Journal, February 17, 1943.

"Painter Learns Never to Shoo Lady Elephants," Gulfport Daily Herald, March 20, 1933.

"Elephant in Accident as Truck Skids," Macon Telegraph, March 22, 1933.

Photos: McLeod County Historical Society and Museum, Hutchinson, Minnesota; elephant with kids (Maxine the elephant, Osceola Seminole Indian Village, 1934).

Saturday Evening Post, November 17, 1945, pp. 4, 24, 54, 56, 58-60.

James Hartley Beal

1861-1945

Few men have achieved recognition in as many careers as James Hartley Beal: pharmacist, chemist, lawyer, educator and scientist.

Born in New Philadelphia, Ohio in 1861, Dr. Beal inherited a great love of plants, which developed into an interest in their medicinal value. As a young boy, he collected and sold medicinal plants to a local pharmacist, leading to employment in a local drug store. He studied Chemistry and Latin at Buchtel College, receiving a BS in Science in 1884. He then studied law at the Cincinnati Law School, graduating in 1886.

In September 1886 he married Fannie Snyder Young from Urichsville, OR. They had two children, the oldest being Nannie Esther, who married William P. Starkey in 1909.



Dr. Beal served as a member of the Ohio Legislature in 1901, and was an influence in the drafting of the Federal Food and Drug Act. He was founder and first president of the American Druggist Insurance Company. He served as president of several pharmaceutical organizations, and held professorships in Chemistry and Pharmacology at several universities.

During these busy years, Dr. Beal's love of nature found expression in his

hobby of collecting land and marine shells. In March 1888 while cruising in the Florida Keys, he began his extensive shell collection, which was housed for many years in the building known in Fort Walton as "The Summerhouse." This collection numbered in the thousands, containing examples of the finest and rarest shells anywhere in the world. The collection is currently housed at The University of Florida.

The grandchildren of Dr. Beal visited him in Camp Walton during the 1920's and 30's, accompanying him on excursions through wilds of flamingo, shell-hunter's coves, and swampland.

Five of his grandchildren- William Starkey, Fran Starkey McCartney, Maggie Starkey and Esther Starkey- migrated to Florida themselves and all settled in Fort Walton eventually.

They shared memories of adventures and the unforgettable personality of their grandfather who moved to Fort Walton in 1928, spending winter at Merritt Island and summers on Santa Rosa Sound.

Dr. Beal, whose name is found on many local landmarks in Fort Walton today, (Beal Parkway, Brooks-Beal Center, Beal Cemetery) was a crusty individual who sat on his back porch reading and smoking a cigar on many summer mornings in Camp Walton.

His philanthropic contributions to Fort Walton are many. Quoting from the Town Council minutes of 1944, "Dr Beal" made extensive investments in houses, lands and property. He gave gifts to the city Woman's Club building, Community church, and land for the Union cemetery. He donated land for a city park, city water tank, pumping station, city hall, fire department, and garbage department. He also provided financial aid for the construction of sidewalks, and aided in the purchase of the water well by allowing a generous amount of time to pay back low-cost loans."

The descendants of Dr. Beal have also made contributions to Fort Walton Beach. Grandson Jim Starkey built and operated the Starkey Hotel Court; his wife Alice operated one of the first Day Care Centers and later founded

and headed the Okaloosa Child Care Services program. A childcare center operated by this program is named in her honor and she was inducted into the Okaloosa County Women's Hall of Fame in 1990. Great-granddaughter Peggy Starkey Rice is co-owner of the Magnolia Grill, a local restaurant with a decidedly historical decor featuring photos of early Camp Walton days and memorabilia from the early 1900's.



Extracted from *The Heritage of Okaloosa County, Florida*, Volume I, 2004, Okaloosa County Heritage Book Committee and Heritage Publishing Consultants, Inc. Submitted by: Peggy Starkey Rice, Fort Walton Beach, FL.

James Hartley Beal was educated at the public schools, Scio College, the University of Michigan and the Cincinnati Law School. In 1889, Beal organized the Scio College of Pharmacy, and was its dean from the start.

From 1902 to 1904, he represented Harrison County in the Ohio House of Representatives and authored the Beal Local Option Law. In 1902 to 1904, Beal was acting president of Scio College, professor of theory and practice of pharmacy at the Pittsburg College of Pharmacy, and editor of the *Midland Druggist* of Columbus, Ohio.

In 1904 to 1905, Beal was president of the American Pharmacists Association. He authored *Chemical and Pharmaceutical Arithmetic*, *Prescription Practice and General Dispensing*, *Pharmaceutical Interrogations*, *The Era Course in Pharmacy* and others. Beal was awarded the first [Remington Medal](#) in 1919 for distinguished service to American pharmacy. He was chairman of the board of trustees of the U. S. Pharmacopeia from 1910-1940. Beal died in 1945 The Beal Award was first given in 2000 for distinguished volunteer service to the U. S. Pharmacopeia, and was named for Beal and his son.

Wikipedia

We Remember....

Eymard Robert Basch, Jr. "Bob"

May 18, 1944 - January 27, 2017



With profound sadness the GSOC honors the memory of Bob Basch and remembers with appreciation his many contributions to our society and his friendship and humor.

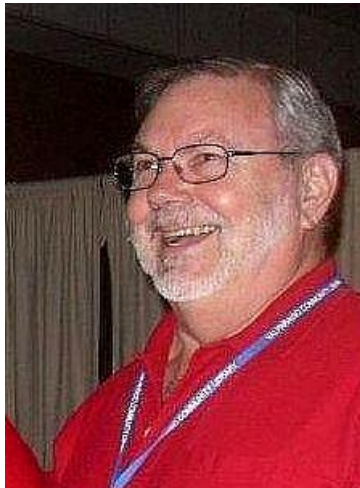
Bob served as our Treasurer for a number of recent years, finally passing on that torch just a couple of years ago. In addition to his formal offices, he was always willing to take charge or help with any of our activities.

As well as his faithful and accurate management of our finances, Bob also took charge of addressing and mailing the annual Journals for many years and had just completed a revision of the GSOC brochure.

Bob's friendliness and sense of humor were just two of the personal qualities which made him such a great asset to the society and such a good friend.

Bob and Sue were married on October 9, 1965. Our deepest sympathy goes out to Sue and to Bob's family and friends.

Bob will be sorely missed.



Eymard "Bob" Basch Jr. age 72 suddenly passed away Friday, January 27, 2017 in Niceville surrounded by family. Bob was born 1944 in Los Angeles, California. He attended UCLA. In California he had worked for Menasco where he was involved in manufacturing the landing gear for the Space Shuttle Columbia. He retired from his "work-family" Physics International/Primex/General Dynamics after 31 years of proud service, related to ordnance used by our military.



Some of his accomplishments & affiliations included: Grand Knight in Knights of Columbus, Galpin Ford Mustang Club (president), Marriage Encounter, Red Cross Volunteer, Genealogical Society of Okaloosa County (treasurer). He also served the church in many capacities including as a Eucharistic minister and lector.

He was an avid season ticket holder for Niceville High School Football and enjoyed watching his granddaughters in the Eagle Pride Band. He even became an Auburn fan after Eli Stove's recruitment.

He loved cooking, spending time with family and taking his grandchildren to historic sites & museums. Some of his other hobbies & interests included; wine, history, genealogy, trivia, military aircraft & ordnance, space program, muscle cars, automotive racing and reading.

He was preceded in death by his father Eymard Basch Sr. and stepfather William Elsberry.

To cherish his memories he leaves behind his wife of 51 years, Suzanne "Sue", son Eymard "Bobby" Basch III with his wife Kathy, daughter Charlene Figueroa with her husband David, mother Mercedes Elsberry, brothers Patrick Basch & John "Jack" Elsberry, sister Marge Lanham, treasured grandchildren William Basch, Elise Figueroa, Tiffany Basch & Luke Basch, many nieces & nephews and other family members, as well as "adopted" family & friends. His smiles, humor & great hugs will be missed by all of us.

A Funeral Mass for Bob was held at Holy Name of Jesus Catholic Church, Niceville, Florida on Friday, February 10, 2017 at 3PM. A reception in celebration of his life was held in the Parish Life Center immediately following the Mass.

Bob's obituary was published in Northwest Florida Daily News, February 8 and 9, 2017

Events and Information of GSOC Interest

GSOC INFORMATION

Officers for 2017

President, Jon Sheperd
1st Vice President (Programs), Margaret Harris
2nd Vice President (Membership), Jerry Rush
Treasurer, Phil Hoge
Recording Secretary, Kathie Sheperd
Corresponding Secretary, Val Moreland

Immediate Past President, Sue Basch
Journal Editor, TBD
Genealogist, Margaret Harris
Publicity Chairperson, Val Moreland
Newsletter Editor, Jim Young
Webmaster, Jim Young

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Newsletter Editor: youngjmy@cox.net

Membership

Annual membership dues are \$24 for an individual and \$35 for an individual and spouse at the same address.

You can obtain a revised membership form from our web site or use the copy that is included in this newsletter.

The Newsletter

The GSOC Newsletter is now published on or before the third Friday of each month.

Suggestions for articles are welcome. The editor, Jim Young, can be contacted by phone at (850) 862-8642 or by email at youngjmy@cox.net. Letters to the editor are welcome and may be published.

The Journal

The GSOC Journal, *A Journal of Northwest Florida*, is published once each year. **The 2016 issue, was published and distributed in October 2016 and has been mailed to all GSOC members.** The theme of the 2016 issue is the Vietnam War. If you are a member and didn't receive your copy, please contact us.

The Web Site

<http://www.rootsweb.com/~flocgs>

The site is updated frequently and contains information about future GSOC meetings, minutes of past meetings, copies of the newsletters, articles and items of genealogical and historical interest, and much more.

GSOC on Facebook

<http://www.facebook.com/okaloosagsoc>

The shortcut address to the official **page** of the Genealogical Society of Okaloosa County is shown above; or you can go to your Facebook account and search for **Genealogical Society of Okaloosa County**. This page will provide the latest information about our future meetings and other news that is important to members or prospective members.

There is also a Facebook **group**. It is useful for exchanging information about your research and getting help with questions you may have about the Society or resources available to you. You can find it by going to your Facebook account and searching for **Friends of the GSOC**.

The GSOC Books

The five GSOC cemetery, marriage, and funeral books are all out of print, but are now available on the GSOC web site for reading on line and for downloading as searchable PDF files at no charge.

Please note that all these GSOC books are copyrighted by The Genealogical Society of Okaloosa County and may be only used for personal use. Reproduction is prohibited without the permission of the GSOC.

Go to the web site, scroll down and click on the **GSOC Books** link, click on the name of the book to access, and read it on line. Save it to your computer to download it.

Because of the size of these books, it may take them a few minutes to display (depending on the speed of your internet connection.)

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MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 28, 2017 GSOC MEETING

Fort Walton Beach Library

President Jon Sheperd welcomed members and guests to the January Meeting. This date marks our first meeting in this new location. (It was noted that several people commented how they liked the room.)

Jon introduced the new Board members: Margaret Harris, 1st VP for Programs; Jerry Rush, 2nd VP for Membership; Phil Hoge, Treasurer; Jim Young, Newsletter Editor and Special Advisor; Kathie Sheperd, Recording Secretary; Val Moreland Corresponding Secretary; and Sue Basch, Immediate Past President.

Sue was not present because her husband and our fellow GSOC brother, Bob Basch, tragically passed away suddenly on Jan 27th. Bob was a valuable member of the GSOC—most recently serving as our treasurer 2 years ago and this year, Bob updated and published the new GSOC brochures. We will all miss his easygoing and friendly manner. Jon sent an email to the members through Val yesterday with this sad news.

OLD BUSINESS:

Minutes: There were no changes to the December meeting minutes. They were approved by acclamation.

NEW BUSINESS:

Door Prizes: No door prize was available this month.

New GSOC Brochure: Bob Basch helped revise our brochure and recently had them printed. Take extra ones if you have friends who may be interested in the society.

Afghan Raffle: Cissy Larson donated a lovely afghan to the Society so we could raise money by raffling it off. Cost of tickets: \$1 each or 6 tickets for \$5. Sue Basch was going to be in charge of this fundraiser but in lieu of her loss, Jon is looking for someone else to step up and take her place. Members can also sign out tickets and sell to friends. Fliers were present for members to pick up. Please see Phil after the meeting to purchase or sign out tickets.

Volunteers: Jon made an appeal for volunteers from the membership. It takes a number of people to make the organization worthy; and the Board has revised the list of serving opportunities. Two critical needs now are for the Journal Editor and Newsletter Editor! Jim Young's final newsletter will be in June; so a replacement is needed soon so he can help train them. If you volunteered on the Membership Form, thank you! If not, please fill out the new volunteer form available by the door.

Workshops and Seminars: We hope to host these on a quarterly basis. We are looking for people to lead these as well as being helpers when they occur. Once again, volunteer through the Membership or Volunteer Form.

Fieldtrips: The Board is looking at educational opportunities in our area. These will not replace our GSOC meetings, but will be an additional offering.

GSOC Records or Publications: If members have any or know where our additional GSOC files, records, or publications are, please contact Jon Sheperd. We plan to store them at the library in a lockable cabinet.

Facebook: Jim Young created a new official Facebook page for the GSOC titled "Genealogical Society of Okaloosa County". We also have a "Friends of the GSOC" (not spelled out) Facebook group. We invite you to check them out.

Lunch at a local restaurant: We will have our normal (Dutch-treat) lunch opportunity after the meeting. There were 2 locations to choose from: Destin History and Fishing Museum where they are having a Gumbo contest and a silent auction to raise money; and the Fokker's Pub, FWB. The Board is compiling a list of restaurants.

Announcements: The Northwest Florida Genealogical Society and DNA Hunters are holding 2 workshops in February. Feb 18 will have a "Genetic Genealogy" for beginner level, and the time is 1:00-5:00 pm. Mar 4: "Digging Deeper into DNA Testing" for beginners and intermediate level people. It will be held from 10:15 to 3:00. Cost is \$25 for both sessions or individually (same cost). Contact point is Mary Eberle at 608-206-0641. Location: 5740 N. 9th Ave, Pensacola. Jon asked Margaret to send this information via email to all members.

REPORTS:

1st VP Margaret Harris: Margaret informed the group of the upcoming guest speakers. In February, our program speaker Sarah Roach will talk about how to do research on our colonial ancestors. In March, we will learn about how to use land records to further genealogical research and in April, Burt Morgan will give a presentation pertinent to Okaloosa County. Watch for further information in the newsletters.

2nd VP Jerry Rush: We had 66 members at the end of the year and 1 withdrawal. Membership dues are owed by the end of March. Dues are \$24 for a single membership and \$35 for a family membership.

Treasurer Phil Hoge: Phil reported that there is \$2,026.02 in the GSOC treasury. This includes the ending balance from last year (\$1561.91), plus membership dues and a \$200 refund from our deposit at the Boathouse Landing.

Recording Secretary Kathie Sheperd: Nothing to report

Corresponding Secretary and Publicity Val Moreland: The picture of our 2017 Board members was published in The Daily News and the Bay Beacon. The Crestview paper called Val and asked if any of those Board members lived in the north part of the county. No one knew if they had published the photo. Val is trying to reach out to winter Snow Birds vacationing here.

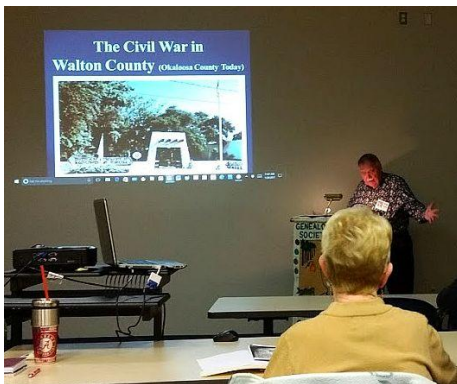
Genealogist, Margaret Harris: No new inquiries. Margaret reported that email inquiries have all but evaporated. We still have an email address: gsocokaloosa@yahoo.com.

Newsletter, Jim Young: Nothing to report.

GUEST SPEAKER:

Margaret introduced H.C. "Hank" Klein as our guest speaker. Hank's wife hails from the Destin pioneer families of Marler and Shirah and she is related through them to Leonard Destin, the founder of Destin. He has done extensive research on her family lines as well as researching Destin Florida history. His love of history has enabled him to write 2 books about Destin historical figures: *Destin Pioneer Settlers, A Land History of Destin Florida from 1819-1940* and *Destin's Founding Father, The Untold Story of Leonard Destin*. In 2011-2012, Hank helped Tony Mennillo by doing research for his book about our area. Hank has also written a monthly "History Mystery" column in the Destin Log newspaper since 2013. Hank and his wife spend most of their time living in Little Rock AR where he is a docent at the President Clinton Library and the Clinton Library Archives. He has also volunteered as a docent in the Arkansas Governor's Mansion.

The topic of today's program is *THE CIVIL WAR IN WALTON COUNTY (OKALOOSA COUNTY TODAY)*



The Walton Guard formed from men of Walton County, parts of which became present-day Okaloosa County/Fort Walton Beach. During the Civil War, the mission of the Walton Guard was to guard the "Narrows", a strip of waterway at the

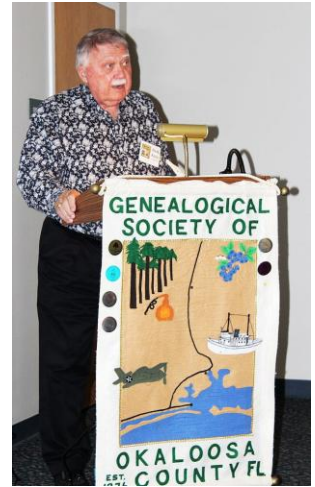
east end of Santa Rosa Sound. This was at the beginning of the Civil War, after Florida voted 62 to 7 to succeed from the Union. The Walton Guard camp was built on the site of the old Indian mound, known today as the Indian Temple Mound. Higher in elevation 150 years ago, it gave the Walton Guard an advantage in looking for enemy formations or ships.

The Walton Guard was never involved in a major battle, but they were engaged in a number of skirmishes. President Lincoln gave orders to blockade the southern harbors in an effort to stop commerce, including the East Pass. The Union Army anchored the U.S.S. Water Witch and the U.S.S. Wyandotte at the mouth of the pass to halt commerce in our area. The efforts of the Walton Guard were improved when they received a second cannon. One of those same cannons is currently displayed in front of the Indian Temple Mound.

The Walton Guard was composed of 60 men. The Walton Guard had one thing in common with the historical pirates from our area; both groups elected their own leader from the ranks of the men. The leader of the Walton Guard was 28 year-old Captain William McPherson, who was elected in April 1861.

William McPherson was highly educated and his family was well to do as evidenced by a live-in music teacher, and 2 servants. His father, Neil, had received 79 acres through the Cash Sales Act of 1820. Before that, Neil had served in the Creek War of 1813-14 and the Seminole War in Walton County (1830s). Neil was a practicing lawyer and a Mason and was very well connected in the community.

William McPherson was an oldest son and followed in his father's footsteps. The 1860 census shows him as a lawyer, and son of a lawyer. He was well traveled and educated, having been in the first graduating class of Knox Hill Academy in Walton County. He also graduated from Oglethorpe College in Georgia (1956) and then graduated from Cumberland University law School in Tennessee with a law degree 2 years later. He was a census taker for the 1860 census. Due to these fine attributes, it would have been no surprise for him to be elected as Captain of the Walton Guard.



McPherson and the Walton Guards later became a part of the 1st Florida Infantry Regiment and they fought in Kentucky. McPherson was captured by Union soldiers in a Bardstown KY battle on October 8th, 1862. Five weeks later, McPherson was included in an exchange of prisoners and later rejoined the Confederate Army on May 12, 1863 at Marianna FL. He became the Post Adjutant for Company A, 5th FL Cav. and was severely wounded during battle at Marianna FL. When the war ended, William McPherson surrendered to the Union Army (May 10, 1865) and was paroled on May 25th.

After the war, McPherson established a law practice in Marianna and married, but his young wife (and child) died in childbirth. He never remarried. Shortly after, McPherson relocated to southern California and became a politician. In 1868 he was the city attorney for the City of Los Angeles and he served on 3 committees. The 1870 census showed him living with 3 other young lawyers in Los Angeles. After leaving his political career, McPherson set up a law office at 55 Temple Street. He authored 2 books in 1873 & 1874. Then 2 years later, a newspaper story reported that he had broken a leg and another story reported that he was able to get about on a sprained ankle. During 1876, McPherson applied for 2 judge positions (police judge and city judge) but won neither position. That was the last recorded information on William McPherson. There is no further mention of him.

In conclusion, Hank found William McPherson to be a fascinating character. Whether he took off and lived a quiet life somewhere is unknown. In 1911, John McKinnon researched McPherson and he too, was unable to prove what happened to McPherson after 1876.

At the end of his presentation, Hank introduced the 2 books he had written and had available for purchase: *Destin Pioneer Settlers, A Land History of Destin Florida from 1819-1940* and *Destin's Founding Father, The Untold Story of Leonard Destin*.

CLOSING:

Jon thanked Hank for his interesting presentation and announced the next meeting on February 25th, at 10:30 a.m., Fort Walton Beach Library.

Kathie Sheperd, Recording Secretary, GSOC

EVERY MEMBER INVOLVEMENT

Genealogical Society of Okaloosa County Florida

P. O. Box 1175

Fort Walton Beach Florida 32549-1175

Please put an "X" next to any area below in GSOC in which you are interested, have expertise in, and/or are willing to serve this organization. Bring form to next meeting or forward your input to Phil Hoge at prhogg@aol.com.

Name _____ **Telephone** _____

email _____

Journal Editor _____

Webmaster _____

Journal Staff Member _____

Nomination committee _____

Write articles for Journal _____

Workshop leader _____

Newsletter Editor _____

Workshop volunteer _____

Write articles for Newsletter _____

Special event organizer _____

Give Genealogy Presentation _____

Special event volunteer _____

Librarian _____

Serve on Short-term committee _____

Publicity _____

Christmas Party Organizer _____

CD Sales _____

Organize Field Trip _____

Many Thanks...We Need You!

GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF OKALOOSA COUNTY
P.O. Box 1175, Fort Walton Beach, FL 32549-1175
<http://www.rootsweb.com/~flocgs> E-mail: gsocokaloosa@yahoo.com

I hereby apply for membership **or the renewal** of my membership in the Genealogical Society of Okaloosa County

ANNUAL DUES (Membership Year 1 Jan-31 Dec)
Individual \$24.00 Family \$35.00 (For Individual & spouse at the same address)
Please PRINT or TYPE all information:

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Preferred Telephone (Home/Cell): _____

E-Mail: _____ **Date:** _____

Can your information be shared with other members?

Name: Yes ___ No ___ **Address:** Yes ___ No ___ **Phone:** Yes ___ No ___ **Email:** Yes ___ No ___

Please circle your level of experience: Beginner Intermediate Advanced Family Genealogist Professional

Please indicate areas of GSOC in which you can serve or contribute

Newsletter Editor ___ Write Newsletter Articles ___ Webmaster ___
 Journal Editor ___ Journal Staff Member ___ Write Articles for Journal ___
 Serve on Short-term Committee ___ Nomination Committee ___ Organize Field Trips ___
 Christmas Party Organizer ___ Give Genealogy Presentation ___
 Workshop Leader ___ Workshop Volunteer ___ Special Event Organizer ___ Special Event Volunteer ___
 Librarian ___ Publicity ___ CD Sales ___

Research: Name of families and states you are researching

Surname	State or Area

Surname	State or Area

PLEASE MAIL THIS FORM ALONG WITH YOUR CHECK TO THE GSOC POST OFFICE ADDRESS ABOVE
(OR BRING THE FORM AND YOUR CHECK TO THE NEXT MEETING OF THE SOCIETY)