



WALTON RELATIONS

Volume 1, Issue 1

Walton County Genealogy Society

October 2009

Second Anniversary

In September 2007, **Julia (Judy) Cadenhead** was the guest speaker for a program about genealogy at the Walton County Heritage Museum. Judy brought a wealth of experience and enthusiasm to the topic, and she kindly provided attendees with charts and tools for their research.

Judy's presentation inspired the attendees to meet the next month, October 2007, to form the Walton County Genealogy Society. **Wayne Sconiers** agreed to serve as President, **Carolyn Pitman-Brown** as Secretary, and **Suedelle Wilkerson** as Treasurer. The Society has been meeting regularly ever since and has pulled together a wide variety of resources available for use by the public at the Museum.

In November 2007, the Walton County Heritage Association "adopted" the Genealogy Society as part of its organization. Everyone who belongs to the Heritage Association is automatically a member of the Genealogy Society and the Museum. The Genealogy Society meets on the second Saturday of each month at 10:00 A.M. at the Museum.

Magnolia Cemetery

The next meeting of the Genealogy Society will be **Saturday, October 10, at 10:00 at the Museum**. We will discuss our new project, surveying Magnolia Cemetery in DeFuniak Springs, and (weather permitting) we will go out to the cemetery to plan the project.



Entrance to Magnolia Cemetery, October 2007

Magnolia Cemetery was founded in 1884. **Mickey Strickland** discovered that it was referred to as the "village cemetery" in the *DeFuniak Herald* and the *Breeze* in 1910 and 1911. If you know when it was named "Magnolia," please let us know. For more about the cemetery project, please see Page 2.

Magnolia Cemetery Project

By Wayne Sconiers, President, WCGS

This project will provide researchers and family members with information about the gravestones at Magnolia Cemetery in an easy to understand format. We will record the location of each gravestone and all information on it, including name, date born, date died, date married, who married, family members, etc., as well as any symbols and phrases on the stone.

The Magnolia Cemetery Project will be accomplished in small steps, as if it were a collection of small cemeteries. The cemetery will be broken up as it is laid out, by subdivision, block, and lot. Each photo will be organized and reviewed before going to the next section.

Background

Magnolia Cemetery is part of Section 23 in Township 3, North of Range 19 West, in Walton County, Florida. It is located west of DeFuniak Springs, north of Highway 90. It is spread across 4 subdivisions, 1527, 1528, 1537, and 1538 according to the map of subdivisions drawn by Wm. Dreyer and consists of many blocks according to the map of the vicinity of DeFuniak Springs drawn by W. J. Van Kirk. A copy of this is in the office of the Clerk of Courts. The four corners of these subdivisions meet at 7th Street and Park Avenue.

The city grave plots were sold and listed by subdivision, block, and lot. Each lot contains 12 proposed gravesites; however, some have more graves. Each gravesite or plot can contain one person or up to 4 urns. The newest sections are divided differently, sold by individual graves (plots) but also listed as lots, but containing a smaller number of graves (plots).

Magnolia Cemetery is the final resting place for many of the people we associate with the early days of DeFuniak Springs, including Wallace Bruce and Gov. Sidney Johnston Catts.

The Final Product

We will create a CD-ROM of the project, which will include:

- A map and key for quick location of each grave. The map will be in JPEG format.
- A surname alphabetical listing for easy

lookup along with a link to the associated photo. Each listing will also contain the associated subdivision, block, and lot. That listing will be in RTF (rich text format) that can be read by any word processor.

- A listing indexed by subdivision, block, and lot, listing all those who are interred together and tying that information to the associated photo. That listing will be in RTF.
- A collection of high-resolution photos of each gravestone that will allow users to zoom in on the details of each stone. Each photo will have a unique number to correspond with the subdivision, block, lot, and grave. The lot or partial lot will also have a photo that will help identify associated family members who are buried nearby. The photos will be in JPEG format.

As you can imagine, this project is a large undertaking but, if we get enough volunteers, we can produce a product that will be helpful to genealogists and family members for generations to come.

If you would like to assist with this project, please come to our meeting on October 10. If you are not willing or able to assist with the fieldwork, there are others ways you can help. We would also be interested to know what other cemeteries you would like to have inventoried in the future.

In Memoriam

The Genealogy Society lost a great friend in August upon the passing of **Leola Lyall**. Leola and her husband **Michael** were enthusiastic members and made generous donations, including a bookshelf unit that was once in the old Freeport library. Michael custom-built the bookshelf unit we use for our genealogical materials in the Museum. Wayne Sconiers stated, "I will certainly miss her. She had a love of genealogy and was always so eager. Our hearts go out to Mike and let's keep him in our prayers. I know Leola will be offering me tips from above. She is meeting all of her ancestors."

Resources

In each issue of “Walton Relations” we will list some resources for you to try. Some will be familiar to you, but we hope some will be new.

1. Interview Family Members: Talk to not only your parents, if living, but also aunts, uncles, and distant cousins. Start by preparing a quick family tree going back just two generations and start making calls or sending mail or emails. Here are some of the basic things you will want to know:

- Complete names (married and maiden names)
- Addresses throughout their lives
- Birth records
- Military service (when and where)
- Marriage records (even attendants, if possible)
- Property records (state and county)
- Burial records (where)
- Old pictures, especially if they have names and dates

2. Family Bibles: In the past, families kept their Bibles forever, often keeping records of family members, births, marriages, and deaths on pages within the bible.

3. Old Family Letters: In this computer age, we have lost the art of letter writing, but older generations tended to preserve letters of importance. These letters can oftentimes be of great value in tracing your ancestry. They may contain important dates, facts, and places that will be of help. Check return addresses and postmarks for information.

4. Legal Documents: Such documents include deeds (property addresses), wills (names of kin you may not have known), marriage licenses (note the witnesses), birth certificates, voter registrations, adoption records, and even judgments.

Pedigree Charts

A pedigree chart lists basic information about your known ancestors and serves as a roadmap for your ancestral search. If you do not have a pedigree chart, contact us and we will be pleased to furnish you with one.

Here are a few important things to remember when filling out your pedigree chart:

- Start with your name in line No. 1.
- Fill in all of the males on even numbers and all of the females on odd numbers.
- When adding females, always use maiden names.
- When writing dates, use the form 05 JAN 1945, not 1/05/45 or 05/1/45. The reason for this is because different cultures code dates in different ways. For example, in the United States, we use the form mm/dd/yyyy, but in Canada, the UK, and other parts of Europe, they use the form dd/mm/yyyy. Using the standard genealogy form will allow your dates to be understood by all.
- Complete places with as much information as possible even if it seems redundant. For example, when writing a place, use township, county or province, country or state, such as “Freeport, Walton, Florida.”
- If you do not know the county or town, leave the commas with blank information, such as “____, Walton, Florida.” No information is better than wrong information. You do not want to lead others down wrong branches of their family trees.

About the Masthead Photo

The photograph of the Chautauqua Building on Lake DeFuniak is on exhibit at the Museum. Many have speculated the man might be Wallace Bruce, but we are not certain.

On the Bookshelf

Here is a partial listing of resources available for use at the Museum:



Copies of Chautauqua Programs for 1898, 1899, 1900, 1908, 1916

Florida Index of Toponyms (place names)

Encyclopedia of Florida Sheriffs, 1821 – 2008, Volumes I and II,

compiled and edited by Victor R. Silvestri

Ancestry's Red Book: American State, County & Town Sources

The Handybook for Genealogists, 9th Edition

Queries

There is a notebook on the bookshelf that invites Museum visitors to tell us who they are researching. Here are some of the entries:

- Bossom
- Burgess, Hiram (about 1880)
- Burgess, Thomas C.
- Garrett
- Jones, John Dallas
- Kirkland, Armstead
- McFadden, William J.
- Miller, Sarah (children of)
- Moore, Lovel (born 1795, need parents)
- Padgett, Elijah S. (children of)

Cemeteries

We have a notebook of cemetery inventories, dated on or prior to 1995. Some of the cemeteries are from surrounding counties.

- Black Creek
- Caney Creek Baptist
- Cluster Springs
- Crowder
- Darlington Memorial
- Eight Mile
- Flowersview
- Gaskin First Baptist
- Gaskin Pentecostal
- Glendale Presbyterian
- Limestone Baptist
- Limestone Community
- McDuffie
- New Harmony
- New Hope
- Piney Grove
- Pleasant Grove Baptist
- Ray
- Sandy Creek

The **Walton County Heritage Museum** is open for research and enjoyment Wednesday through Saturday from 11:00 AM – 4:00 PM. The Museum is located in the Historic District at 1140 Circle Drive, DeFuniak Springs, FL 32435. 850-951-2127.



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“Walton Relations” is a publication of the Walton County Genealogy Society. Wayne Sconiers, President. Distribution is encouraged! For more information or to submit an article, please email its editor, Diane Merkel, at WaltonCountyHeritage@cox.net or call 850-897-4505.