



# WALTON

## RELATIONS & HISTORY

Volume 15, Issue 6

Walton County Heritage Association

May 2024







# WALTON COUNTY HERITAGE ASSOCIATION, INC.

## OFFICE LOCATION

Walton County Heritage Museum, (Old Train Depot)

Hours: Open Tuesday – Saturday, 1:00 – 4:00 PM

### Postal Address

Walton County Heritage Association, Inc.  
1140 Circle Drive, DeFuniak Springs, Florida 32435  
Phone: 850-401-2060

Website: <http://www.waltoncountyheritage.org/#>

Email: [heritagemuseum@brighthouse.com](mailto:heritagemuseum@brighthouse.com)

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Vice President: Carolyn Brown

Treasurer: Sam Carnley

Secretary: Susan Horaist

### Public Relations

Vacant

### Museum Docent Coordinator

Carolyne Brown

### Genealogy Society

President: Wayne Sconiers, [waynesconiers@embarqmail.com](mailto:waynesconiers@embarqmail.com)

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Cover Design: Sam Carnley

## Newsletter Cover Collage Photos

Clockwise from top left:

1. **Darlington, Florida, early 1900s, Courtesy of Baker Block Museum, photographer unknown. Edited by Sam Carnley.**
2. *Henderson-Mathis turpentine still in Glendale or Gaskin.* 1904. Black & white photoprint, 4 x 6 in. State Archives of Florida, Florida Memory. <<https://www.floridamemory.com/items/show/42107>>, accessed 28 June 2017 by Sam Carnley.
3. **William Lewis (Luke) Hurst Family, Fleming Creek/Clear Springs area, north Walton County, ca 1894, from “The Heritage of Walton County, Florida,” p. 190.**
4. **Old Paxton High School, “1961-62 Paxtonian” Year Book, photographer unknown. Edited by Sam Carnley**
5. Walton County Heritage Museum, photo and editing by Sam Carnley.
6. Gladys D. Milton (1924-1999), Midwife, Flowersview/Paxton, photo by her daughter, Maria Milton. Also in “**The Heritage of Walton County, Florida,**” p. 249, and the **September 2018 Newsletter** at <http://www.waltoncountyheritage.org/GenSoc/NL2018Sep.pdf> Edited by Sam Carnley.
7. Lake Jackson, South Side, in Paxton City Limits, photo and editing by Sam Carnley.
8. Paxton Water Tower, Paxton, Florida, photo and editing by Sam Carnley.
9. Old Freeport School, constructed ca 1908, burned 1943. Photo from “**The Heritage of Walton County, Florida,**” p. 45. **Photographer unknown. Edited by Sam Carnley.**
10. *Floralta Saw Mill Company's engine number 3 - Paxton, Florida.* 1907. Black & white photonegative, 4 x 5 in. State Archives of Florida, Florida Memory. Photographer unknown. <<https://www.floridamemory.com/items/show/146972>>, accessed 7 September 2019 and edited by Sam Carnley. [Built in 1873 and Originally owned by New York, Ontario and Western Railroad Company as engine number 60; then owned by Southern Iron and Equipment Company as engine number 568 in 1907; then owned by Floralta Saw Mill Company as engine number 3 on March 3, 1907; returned to Southern Iron and Equipment Company and number changed to 915 on March 13, 1913; then owned by Louisiana Saw Mill Company as engine 50 in May, 1913.]

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**The Walton County Heritage Association, Inc.** is a 501 (C) 3 Florida Not for Profit Corporation Recognized by the IRS as a Public Charity Organization for Tax Deductible Donations.

The Walton County Heritage Association was organized for four main purposes:

- To promote the preservation and restoration of buildings and other landmarks of historical interest within Walton County;
- To maintain the Walton County Heritage Museum to preserve the heritage of Walton County for the education and enjoyment of current and future generations by collecting, preserving, and exhibiting artifacts and information from the time of its original inhabitants to the present;
- To foster and enhance the development, education, and sense of history which is unique to Walton County; and
- To secure cooperation and unity of action between individual citizens, businesses, and other groups as may be necessary to fulfill these purposes.

The Association depends upon the support of its members and the business community to accomplish its goals. Annual dues are \$25 for individuals, \$40 for families and varying amounts for donors as shown on attached Annual Donor/Member Application for 2024. Donor logos are also shown on the attached Donor page in the monthly newsletter.

**Annual Member/Sponsor Application 2024; See attached.**

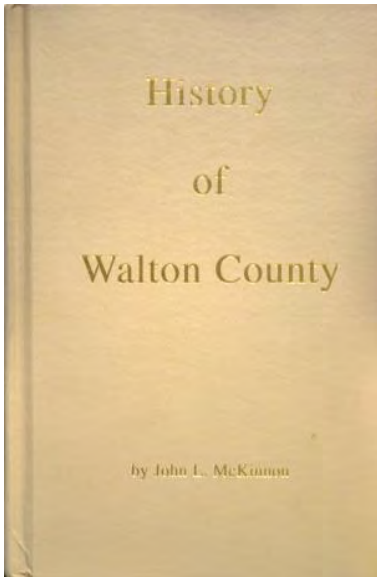
**Member Benefits:**

- Automatic membership in the **Walton County Heritage Museum** and the **Walton County Genealogy Society**.
- Invitations to Quarterly Members Meetings
- **Discounts** on Special Events
- **The Museum Research Center:** Members get free copies of documents and use of the Genealogy Society computer when the Museum is open.
- **The Museum Gift Shop:** Members receive discounts on books, special publications, postcards, photographs, CDs, DVDs, videos, and gift items.
- Free **subscriptions** to the WCHA Newsletter.

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[www.WaltonCountyHeritage.org](http://www.WaltonCountyHeritage.org). *Walton Relations & History* is a publication of the Walton County Heritage Association, Inc., Sam Carnley, editor. Distribution is encouraged! For more information or to submit an article, please email its editor at [kienles810@gmail.com](mailto:kienles810@gmail.com) or phone at 850-209-3778.

# From the Museum Gift Shop

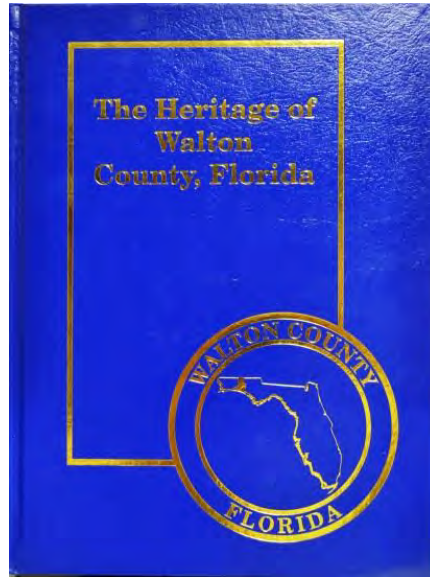
## Our most popular books



**History of Walton County**

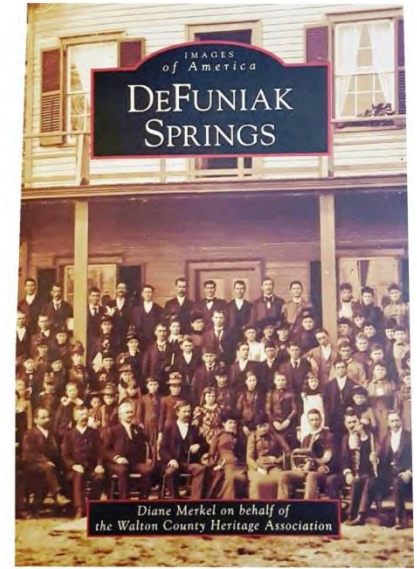
by John L. McKinnon. The Museum has sold out of this book and it is out of print, but it is available at these links;

<https://dlg.galileo.usg.edu/georgiabooks/pdfs/gb0503.pdf>, and <https://www.alibris.com/booksearch?mtype=B&keyword=history+of+walton+county&hs.x=0&hs.y=0>



**The Heritage of Walton County, Florida. Item code B13.**

Price: (Reduced) \$40.00  
 Tax: 2.80  
 Shipping: 8.00  
 Total by mail **\$50.80**



**Images of America, DeFuniak Springs. Item code B06.**

By Diane Merkel. Price, including tax, **\$23.53.**

## MAIL ORDER FORM

Walton County Heritage Association  
 1140 Circle Drive  
 DeFuniak Springs, FL 32435

Customer Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Ph./Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Qty	Description	Item Code	Price Each*	Amount
	The Heritage of Walton County, Florida	B13	50.80	
	Images of America, DeFuniak Springs.	B06	31.53	

\*Price includes tax at 7% and shipping of \$8.00 per item.

Total                     

Sorry, credit cards not accepted. Please send check or money orders only. Do not mail cash. Please allow two weeks for delivery.



# Walton County Heritage Association, Inc.

1140 Circle Drive, DeFuniak Springs, Florida, 32435, Ph. 850-401-2060

Website: <http://www.waltoncountyheritage.org>

Email: [HeritageMuseum@bighthouse.com](mailto:HeritageMuseum@bighthouse.com)

## ANNUAL MEMBER/SPONSOR APPLICATION 2024

Name:

Individual/Family \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsor/Business/Company \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Member/Sponsor Category:

Individual \$25.00,  Family \$40.00,  Sponsor \$100.00,  Silver Sponsor \$500.00,  Gold Sponsor \$1,000.00,  Platinum Sponsor \$2,000.00,  Additional Gift \$ \_\_\_\_\_ \* Total Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_ \*Gift earmarked for: \_\_\_\_\_

### Our Mission

The Walton County Heritage Association is a nonprofit organization that was organized for four main purposes:

1. To promote the preservation and restoration of buildings and other landmarks of historical interest within Walton County;
2. To maintain the Walton County Heritage Museum to preserve the heritage of Walton County for the education and enjoyment of current and future generations by collecting, preserving, and exhibiting artifacts and information from the time of its original inhabitants to the present;
3. To foster and enhance the development, education, and sense of history which is unique to Walton County; and
4. To secure cooperation and unity of action between individual citizens, businesses, and other groups as may be necessary to fulfill these purposes.

\* Additional gift of over \$2,000.00 (any amount in excess of that number) would be greatly appreciated. You may earmark this gift for a specific expense/purchase of gift items for our museum.

- All donor categories are entitled to membership in the museum and Genealogy Society and 10% discount on museum gift shop purchases.
- For all levels of Sponsorship, the Walton County Heritage Association, Inc. will acknowledge sponsors on our website, in our newsletter and on a permanent plaque in the Museum. Sponsorships are on an annual basis from January to December. This is an acknowledgement of your gift only and does NOT constitute advertisement or the promotion of any individual, business or organization by the WCHA.

Please mail your check and this form to:  
WALTON COUNTY HERITAGE ASSOCIATION, INC. 1140 Circle Drive, DeFuniak Springs, FL 32435.  
**THANK YOU!!!**

The Walton County Heritage Association, Inc., is a 501(C)(3) charitable organization as defined by the IRS Code. Gifts may be tax deductible as defined by the Federal Income Tax Regulations. To request a receipt for your tax-deductible membership in the WCHA, or donation, please contact us.

A COPY OF THE OFFICIAL REGISTRATION AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE DIVISION OF CONSUMER SERVICES BY CALLING TOLL-FREE (800-435-7352) WITHIN THE STATE. REGISTRATION DOES NOT IMPLY ENDORSEMENT, APPROVAL, OR RECOMMENDATION BY THE STATE. REF: WALTON COUNTY HERITAGE ASSOCIATION, INC., DTN3054584, CH52108.



## OUR SPONSORS for 2024

We dedicate this page to our sponsors in recognition of their generous support of our mission.

### SPONSORS (\$100-\$499.00)

David Bludworth-\$100.00  
Grace L. Marse-\$100.00  
Ken & Gator Little-\$100.00  
Sally Merrifield-\$100.00  
Sam and Nell Carnley-\$100.00  
Marie G. Hinson-\$100.00

### SILVER SPONSORS (\$500 to \$999.00)

(None at present time)

### GOLD SPONSORS (\$1,000 to \$1,999)

(None at present)

### PLATINUM SPONSORS (\$2,000 and up)

#### City of DeFuniak Springs



In the past the city has generously supported us with cash donations of \$2,000.00 annually, but due to changing budget priorities, was unable to do so in recent years. We wish to recognize the city's generosity however, for its **in-kind** donation of the RR depot which serves as the Walton County Heritage Association, Inc., Museum and administrative facility. The city provides maintenance and up-keep on the facility, and payment of electrical, water and waste disposal services as well. The value of this facility to us is far in excess of \$2,000.00 annually, for which we are deeply appreciative. Thank you, City of DeFuniak Springs.

## **A Note From the Editor**

Our New Walton County History project is going more slowly than we anticipated. Consequently we do not have another chapter ready for this newsletter. As we did last month, we selected a family history article from “The Heritage of Walton County, Florida,” for your reading pleasure in this edition. It is a story on the Daniel Neel Family who were Walton County pioneers, found on pages 259-260 of the Heritage Book. Unfortunately, the submitter is not identified and cannot be credited for the story. If the author will let me know who he or she is, I will gladly publish the appropriate credit in a future newsletter. As always, in the interest of making our articles as factual as we can to the extent of our knowledge, please let us know of any errors, mistakes, etc. you find in them. Thank you.

Sam Carnley

## **From WCHA President, Marie Hinson**

Although January was our official membership renewal month, we are still accepting your applications. We encourage you to continue your generous support of the Walton County Heritage Association, Inc. as in the past. Please see our Annual Member/Sponsor Application for 2024 elsewhere in this newsletter for renewal options. Whatever level of member or sponsorship you choose is very much appreciated and we thank you.

## **Daniel Neel (Neill) - Walton County, Florida Pioneer, 1813 - 4 Oct 1900 and Related Families**

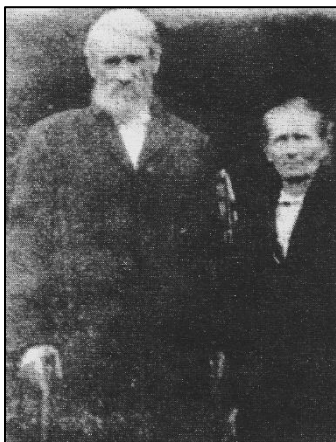
Submitted  
by  
Unidentified

Transcribed and Edited  
By  
Sam Carnley

A pioneer and founding Father of Walton County, Daniel can be found in some of the earliest recorded documents of the county prior to Florida becoming a state in 1845. He can also be found in the book, "Florida Pioneers and Their Descendants, Vol. 1", compiled by Anne Wood Taylor and offered by the Florida State Genealogy Society.

Born in 1813 in Georgia and d. 4 October, 1900<sup>1</sup>, no record can be found to establish definite documentation of his parents, although it is believed that his Father was one John Neill (Neel) from North Carolina, who can also be found in this county as early as 1830. Daniel also is believed to have had a brother, William, as well as several sisters.

Daniel married first to Elizabeth Byrd, born about 1816 in Alabama, died 29 March 1884<sup>2</sup>. They were married on the 30th day of May in 1839 in Pike County, Alabama.<sup>3</sup> There is some speculation that Elizabeth may have been of Creek Indian descent but as of this writing, no definite link has been found to prove this. Maybe it's the romantic in me but, given the time line and the fact that Pike County was at one time Creek Indian Territory, I have a strong suspicion that Daniel, during his military service to fight the Indians, met, fell in love and wed her to save her from the infamous "Trail of Tears" where so many Native Americans lost their



Francis Marion Neel and Lillian  
Eva Andrews

lives. It is my goal in this genealogy quest, to prove out my theory. To them were born 7 children, to wit: Sarah Jane, born 15 March 1842 and died 27 April 1921, married Morgan Frances Butts; Sarah Ann, born about 1844, married John Ward; Christian E., born 1847, died 1929; Martha C., born about 1850; Eliza, born 3 June 1851, died 23 June 1936, married Matthew C. Clark; Mary E., born about 1852, married Thomas Berry Moore; Francis Marion Neel (the only son) born 1 April 1853, died 17 September 1924, married Lillian Eva Andrews.

After the death of Elizabeth, Daniel married one Nancy Anderson, who was much younger than he. No children were born of this marriage. In her Widows Claim for Service Pension, after Daniel's death, Nancy states that at the age of 23 or 24, Daniel stood about 5 feet 10 inches tall, had blue eyes, black hair and was light in complexion. She gives their date of marriage as Sep. 23th, 1884.

This service pension was for Daniel's service in the Creek Indian Wars. His Indian War Service Pension (survivor's pension) dated August 5, 1892 states that Daniel is a resident of Union, Walton County, Florida. He enlisted as a private in the Company commanded by Captain A. S. Justice in the regiment of Cavalry in the war with the Creek Indians. He enlisted in Dale County, Alabama on or about the 1st day of April, 1837 for six months and was honorably discharged in Dale County, Alabama in October, 1837. He states that in addition, he also served in the same war in 1836 and was

honorably discharged from this service also. He received land bounty warrants numbers 44801 & 59477. He states that he resided in Walton County, Florida throughout his service.

Daniel was a farmer by trade and did rather well for himself and his very large family. Daniel and Elizabeth, along with many members of this family, are buried in Sandy Creek Church Cemetery, which is located just outside of Walton, in Holmes County. A grandson of Daniel's, John A. Neel, served as pastor of this church for a time. This family has a long, illustrious history in and around Walton County and many of his descendants are still in the area.

My direct lineage is through daughter, Eliza, born 3 June 1851, died 23 June 1936, and married Matthew C. Clark, born about 1843, I believe in Dale County, Alabama. Matthew was orphaned as a young boy and he was taken in and raised by one Eli Wright. No record of Matthew's birth parents has been found to date. It is also believed that he had a half-brother, George W. Stanley, who was also raised by Eli. Matthew died September 29, 1925 when his bed caught fire from a pipe he was smoking, he died later due to injuries received in the fire. Matthew and Eliza were married either in late 1884 or early 1885. Matthew, like Daniel, was also a farmer by trade.

To Matthew and Eliza were born six children, of which three were sons; Willie, Dan and George. Willie was the oldest of the children, he shows as being 9 months old on the 1885 State census. For reasons unknown to anyone in the family, all three of these sons died at early ages and they are buried in the same plot with Eliza and Matthew in Sandy Creek Cemetery. One of the pictures that I have submitted, taken about 1913, shows Matthew and Eliza in an oxen drawn cart in front of the train depot in DeFuniak Springs.

If you look closely at the window on the left, you will see two small boys peering out at the photographer.

These are two of the boys but no one knows for sure which two.



Mathew and Elizabeth Neel Clark, Train Depot, DeFuniak Springs, Walton County, Florida. Date: about 1913.

They also

had three daughters; Mary Elizabeth, born 10 Oct. 1892, married Fernand G. Letellier; Ida Victoria, born 10 Oct. 1895, married Henry Cleveland Slay; and Margaret Lee, my Grandmother, born 10 Sep. 1898, married William Hubert Rowland.

Mary Elizabeth, "Aunt Lizzie", never had any children. Ida Victoria, "Aunt Ida", and Henry Cleveland, "Uncle Cleve", had three children. The eldest son, Willard Bonita, was in World War II, when the ship, "USS Juneau," was sunk during the battle of Guadalcanal on November 13, 1942. His name can be found on the memorial in front of the Court House in DeFuniak Springs.

The Neel family tree and all its branches played vital roles in the creation and the making of Walton County and no matter where my own life takes me, I will forever be proud to call it home!

<sup>1</sup> Daniel Neel death, 4 October, 1900, <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/72081970/daniel-neel>

<sup>2</sup> "United States, Cemetery Abstracts, 1949-1969," database, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS4F-X3P7-2?cc=2579610>: 7 September 2019), > image 1 of 1; The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Family History Library, Salt Lake City, Utah.

<sup>3</sup> "Alabama County Marriages, 1809-1950", FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:VRJB-3PY>: Tue Mar 05 00:12:48 UTC 2024), Entry for

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Daniel Neill and Elisabeth Byrd, 30 May 1839.