



WEST GADSDEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.

NEWSLETTER

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Like us on Facebook

West Gadsden Historical Society, a small, volunteer, local non-profit with a 501(c)(3) designation, depends solely on the generosity of our members, local businesses and all others interested in the preservation of Gadsden County's history to help us remain financially strong. As always, your donations and membership dues are tax deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law. Your consideration and help will truly be appreciated!

Vol. 10, No. 4

December 2015

Wishing You a Wonderful Holiday Season!

PAST EVENTS

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 14
Annual Meeting

What an awesome event we enjoyed this year! As usual, the pilau was perfectly prepared by Scott Clark and Lamar Clark with expert taste testing by Scott's wife Shirley! Their help in the ultimate success of a delicious meal is always appreciated by all in the community. Our silent auction was also a success. Many went home with one-of-a-kind treasures. Keep a vigilant lookout for items to include in next year's auction, and remember your gifts and donations are tax deductible. If you forgot to get your copy of our new CD – [A Collection of Old Railroad Songs and Local Memories of the ANRR](#), featuring *The St. Joe Line*, order your's today. Also, thanks to George Johnson and his family for performing during this event.

On a personal note, we were honored to speak with Ben Hardaway III and receive his approval for John Allen Smith, Jr. to read an excerpt from his book *Never Outfoxed – The Hunting Life of Benjamin H. Hardaway III*. A story from the book recalls a memory of a cattle drive of a load of Texas cattle delivered

to Greensboro via the Apalachicola Northern Railroad. The cattle were then driven, on horseback, from the Greensboro depot to the Hardaway Farm located in Hardaway, Florida. At the time, Ben Hardaway III was a young boy of 10 or 11. Now at 96 years of age, it was a thrill to hear his insight into the Hardaway family, his memories of Gadsden County and of the community which came to be known by the same name.

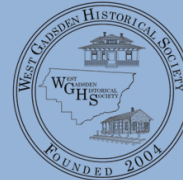
We do not know if the picture shown below is that of the cattle driven from the Greensboro Depot to the Hardaway Farm, but we do know that this was taken in Gadsden County. Maybe that is Ben Hardaway III hanging on the fence. It is fun to dream!



Cattle in Gadsden County. 19--.
Black & white photoprint, State Archives of Florida, Florida Memory. 28920

A Collection of Railroad Songs and Local Memories of the ANRR

Featuring the newly composed recording of *The St. Joe Line*
by George E. Johnson



The Apalachicola Northern Railroad (ANRR) was constructed through western Gadsden County in 1907. This collection of recordings was gathered by West Gadsden Historical Society a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation for educational purposes.

Order Your Copy Today
Anyone From Western Gadsden
County Would Enjoy this Gift

West Gadsden Historical Society is honored to present this collection of narrative tracks, old railway song recordings and an original song and recording *The St. Joe Line* by Gadsden County's own George E. Johnson. Narrative tracks were performed and recorded by local WGHS members and recall memories of the Apalachicola Northern Railroad (ANRR). The ANRR is a short line railway constructed in 1907 from River Junction to Apalachicola Florida, then extended to Port St. Joe in 1910. The railroad changed the face of Western Gadsden County.

Track 1 – Jane Wagner Clark, Introduction of the Apalachicola Northern Railroad and Gadsden County, Florida
Track 2 – Gandy Dancers (Folkstreams recorded in 1991 by folklorist Maddie Holtzberg)
Track 3 – Sections and Section Houses, Mack Eubanks
Track 4 - Memories of Thomas Ralph McPhaul, Read by Lamar A. Clark
Track 5 – Freight Train, Elizabeth Cotton (Folkways Records, 1963)

Track 6 – 1918 Gadsden County Article - Tornado Did Great Damage at Greensboro, Gary Bryant

Track 7 – Train 45, The New Lost City Ramblers (Folkways Records, 1963)

Track 8 – Memories of ANRR, Byron Clark

Track 9 – The St. Joe Line, written and performed by George E. Johnson

Track 10 – Driving the ANRR Locomotive, Mulder Brown

Track 11 - Blue Railroad Train, Delmore Brothers (from Bluebird Records, recorded December 1933)

Track 12 – Hardaway Cattle Drive, Benjamin H. Hardaway III from his book *Never Outfoxed*, read by John Allen Smith, Jr.

Track 13 – Little Red Caboose Behind the Train, The Pickard Family, 1929

This collection of recordings has been gathered by West Gadsden Historical Society for your enjoyment and must be procured with a minimum donation to the Society of \$20. Reproducing and distributing any portion of this collection is prohibited. Narrative tracks and *The St. Joe Line* by George E. Johnson are the sole property of WGHS; other music tracks are remastered recordings from the Smithsonian Folkways Collection, Folkstreams.com or original recordings, and are used here by a 501(c)(3) organization, a tax-exempt nonprofit organization in the United States doing business as West Gadsden Historical Society, Inc. This CD or any portion or part may not be procured by purchase, but is given as a gift for educational purposes with a minimum donation of \$20 to WGHS.



Sunday, January 24

Dale Cox - Daniel Boone & His Walk through North Florida

Dale Cox, noted historian of all things Southern, will present a program on Daniel

Boone's walk across Florida. It is a little known fact that in 1765 (250 years ago), the famed American explorer and pioneer, passed through our area of Florida on his long walk across Florida. Boone and his fellow travelers came south through Georgia to St. Augustine. From there, with Boone leading the way, the men set out on a more than 400 mile journey to Pensacola through the vast Florida wilderness. They were following a trail called the Pensacola-St. Augustine Road. Join us while we journey along with Dale as he provides further details of Daniel Boone's walk through North Florida.



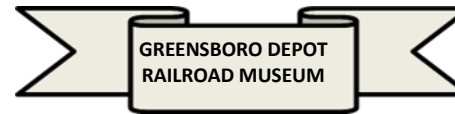
WGHS is definitely making progress with further renovation of the Dezell House. With the \$38,600 received from our approved grant from the Florida Bureau of Historic Preservation, we have hired MLD Architects of Tallahassee, and are rapidly progressing with the preparation of construction plans and specifications. Contractor bids for this project are expected in January, and will include the renovation of the restroom, replacement of the T-111 lower exterior siding, and the replacement of the handicapped ramp located at the rear entrance.

Additionally, we have secured the cypress shingles from Tauten Saw Mill in Wewahitchka. With the help of Pete Schmidt in Blountstown, the shingles have been kiln dried. The Tautens and Pete Schmidt provided the shingles at a massively reduced rate to help aid in insuring that the exterior of the Dezell House is kept authentic to the period. We truly appreciate their help.

Keep a keen lookout for the transformation of YOUR Dezell House!

If you would like to volunteer your time in helping with this project, please give us a call. Work days will be coordinated as the

project moves forward. All hands are appreciated and will be put to good use packing items currently on display in the room adjacent to the restroom, placing plastic over the wood flooring, and covering doorways into adjacent rooms to minimize dust created by the construction.



We encourage you to visit the Greensboro Depot Railroad Museum whether it is your first visit or if you are a returning visitor. We have recently received additional railroad artifacts all of which are related to the Apalachicola Northern Railroad. These items are in addition to the huge display of our ANRR collection in the Billy Howell room. If you have any railroad items you would like to have displayed within the museum, please let us know. Our visitors always enjoy seeing new or changing exhibits.



Start shopping and giving now!

Connect today to West Gadsden Historical Society AmazonSmile account at: <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/20-1294840>

In our fast paced lives, many of us now shop on line and what better way to get the best price for an item than using Amazon.com? Amazon now offers their AmazonSmile program that is a simple and automatic way for you to support your favorite charitable organization, WGHS, every time you shop, at no cost to you. When you shop at

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So start shopping and giving now!

Connect today to West Gadsden Historical Society AmazonSmile account at:

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**MEMBERSHIP
DUES**

Please remember that annual membership fees are due in January. It is only through your continued support and active involvement with WGHS that we can provide this Newsletter, bi-monthly history lessons, and literally “keep our doors open”. We appreciate you, our members, for remaining dedicated to preserving the history of Gadsden County. WGHS continues to be the only historical society that represents Gadsden County and the rural area we all enjoy today. During this past year, we have expanded our outreach and exposure through our web page and social media. Our 10 year journey has been a wonderful trip. Help us to continue this historical expedition by remembering your dues, becoming a Donor or by giving Memorials and Honorariums to acknowledge your loved ones. THANK YOU again for your support!

Yearly Dues

Each Individual	\$25.00
Business	\$250.00

One Time "Lifetime" Membership Dues

Each Individual	\$500.00
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DONATION LEVELS

Heritage Circle	\$25,000 - and above
Legacy Builders	\$15,000 to \$24,999
Patrons	\$10,000 to \$14,999
Founders	\$5,000 to \$9,999
Explorers	\$2,500 to \$4,999
Trailblazers	\$1,000 to \$2,499
Homesteaders	\$500 to \$999
Settlers	\$250 to \$499
Pioneers	\$100 to \$249
Friends	up to \$99

**FEATURE
ARTICLE**

With WGHS’s recent contact with Ben Hardaway III, of Columbus, Ga., (by way of Hardaway, Gadsden County, Florida), it

seems apropos to include a quick history of one of the prominent projects completed by the Hardaway Contracting Company in Gadsden County. The construction of the Jackson Bluff Dam on the Ochlockonee River was indeed a feat given the construction equipment available at that time. The following article was found as published by the St. Petersburg Times in 1927.

St. Petersburg Times September 29, 1927
GREAT LAKE TO BE CREATED BY POWER PROJECT – Damming of River to Make Large Body of Water, Covers 13,000 Acres

Another great lake in Florida, land of lakes, covering 13,000 acres and 15 miles long, will be created in the construction of the huge hydroelectric plant being built on the Ocklacknee (sic) river, not far from Tallahassee and on the route of the West Coast Highway from Mobile and Pensacola to St. Petersburg, by the West Florida Power Co., according to information given Wednesday from the state capital.

This project when completed will be given (sic – will give) the Ocklocknee (sic) river and West Florida area covered by the Florida Power corporation, including St. Petersburg, the largest hydroelectric plant in the state.

The project involves the construction of a concrete dam and spillway 26 feet high across the river, from the northern end of which will be constructed an earth dyke for a distance of one mile. This dyke will be of a triangular cross section with a height varying from 30 to 40 feet.

The power house will be of concrete and brick construction. It will be located at the south end of the spillway dam. This station will be equipped with three vertical generators capable of a combined output of 12,000 kilowatts. In addition to the usual electrical controls, switchboards and motors will be installed in this main building. A substation of adequate capacity will be located adjacent to the main generating station, from which point the high tension

lines will be carried to various sections of West Florida, affording an additional source of reliable electric current to supplement the system of service which the Florida Power corporation has successfully built during the past few years. The headquarters for the Florida Power corporation, of which the West Florida Power company is subsidiary, are in the Power & Light building, St. Petersburg.

Raises Level of River

When the vast territory of 13,000 acres is flooded to form the body of impounded water, this will raise the Ocklocknee (sic) river from its present level of 35 feet above sea level to 70 feet. For the last four months forces numbering 200 men have been engaged in the preliminary work of placing machinery, cofferdams and all other equipment for the handling of approximately 350,000 cubic yards of material for the dyke. As a safeguard, an additional line of Wakefield piling is being driven along the center line of the dykes, to provide against any possible excess pressure in the future.

The pond area is being cleared of all merchantable timber, and the sawmills located nearby are turning out 100,000 feet of lumber for commercial trade each day. The entire project is being carried on by the General Engineering and Management corporation of the West Florida Power Co. The actual construction of the dam comes under the contract with the Hardaway Contracting Co of Columbus, Ga. The engineering and design in connection with the project is under the guidance of Mees & Mees, Inc., of Charlotte, N. C.

**Hardaway
Family Genealogy**

About 1685, a ship owned by Joseph Thomas, a Quaker of Philadelphia, sailed from England to America. On board of that ship was a little kidnapped boy, who was dressed in green silk velvet trimmed with gilt; the boy seemed tenderly nurtured, and was too



Gunter, Herman, Hydro-electric plant - Jackson Bluff. 1929. Black & white photonegative. State Archives of Florida, Florida Memory. 125104



Martens, James Hart Curry. East end of dam - Jackson Bluff, Leon County. 1929. Black & white photonegative, 4 x 5 in. State Archives of Florida, Florida Memory. 125131



The Benjamin Hurt Hardaway, Jr. home in Hardaway, Gadsden County, Florida. From Collection of Byron Clark family

young to give his name. Joseph Thomas bestowed upon the boy the name of Thomas Hardaway. Mr. Thomas made affidavit of the facts, and left the suit of clothes, with the affidavit, in custody of the clerk of the court.

Joseph Thomas educated Thomas Hardaway and raised him with his family. Thomas Hardaway married Jane Drewry, of Drewry's Bluff, Virginia, and settled at Osbornis, Chesterfield County, Va.

It is said that from Thomas Hardaway and his wife, Jane Drewry, all of the Hardaways in America are descended.

Tradition says the name was originally MacBeth, and they claim descent from that royal family. The boy was kidnapped, and held for a ransom, but his captors, perhaps getting in a close place, had put him in the hold of the outgoing ship to get rid of him. In that day of slow travel and sparse mail, it is little wonder that the boy was not recovered, but made his home in the new world.

Thomas Hardaway died in 1745.

If we forward many generations, the 7th Grandson of Thomas was Robert Archelaus Hardaway. Robert A. Hardaway was born in Morgan County, Ga., February 2, 1829; died in Columbus, Ga., 1899. He was graduated at Emory College, Oxford, Ga. He was adjutant of the Fiftieth Battalion of Infantry Volunteers in the war with Mexico in 1847 and 1848, Alabama Volunteers. He was chief engineer and superintendent of the Mobile & Girard Railroad up to 1857. In 1862, he was captain of artillery in the Army of Virginia; was major and lieutenant colonel commanding a battalion of light artillery in the Second Corps (Jackson's) of Lee's Army, and surrendered at Appomattox Courthouse April 9, 1865.

He was chief engineer and superintendent of East Alabama Railroad 1870 and 1871; was professor of engineering and commandant of the Agricultural and Mechanical College of Alabama from 1873 to 1882; was division engineer of Mexican Central Railroad in

1883. He was professor of civil engineering at the University of Alabama, 1884 to 1897. In 1857, Robert married Rebecca Hurt, of Columbus, Ga. They reared two sons, Robert Early and Benjamin Hurt, both civil engineers.

Benjamin Hurt Hardaway was born February 19, 1866, in Bullock County, Alabama. He married Rebecca Money, September 14, 1888, of Mississippi. Two children: Rebecca Money and Benjamin Hurt. Benjamin Hurt Hardaway, Sr. attended the Alabama Polytechnic Institute. After receiving a Bachelor and Masters in Civil Engineering, he taught mathematics at the University of Alabama and was City Engineer of Tuscaloosa, Alabama. He became the Resident Engineer of the Savannah, Americus and Montgomery Railroad, later known as Seaboard Air Line Railroad (SALRR). In 1911, he organized Hardaway Contracting Co. Among the notable bridges built by Hardaway Contracting, Co. were the SALRR & U.A. Highway 84 bridges across Chattahoochee River at Atlanta, SALRR and Highway Bridge in Bainbridge, Ga. and the bridge at Apalachicola, FL. for ANRR. It was during this time that he constructed and developed the Hardaway Plantation in Gadsden County.

Benjamin Hurt Hardaway Jr. was born December 20, 1891. On August 17, 1917 he married Louise Buttolph. Three children were born: Benjamin Hurt, Sarah Peabody and Rebecca Money. Benjamin Hurt Hardaway Jr. attended Virginia Military Institute and received a Bachelor's in Civil Engineering. After serving in WWI, he became Vice-President of Hardaway Contracting Company. He assumed the position of President at his father's death in 1929. From the [History of Columbus Georgia 1828-1928](#), is found the following: Benjamin H. Hardaway, Jr. is known throughout the south as a businessman of the highest type, he is courageous, efficient, industrious, and able to handle any transaction which is presented to him. His word can always be relied upon

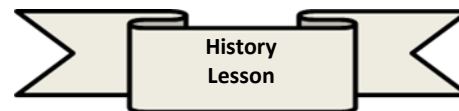
and his many friends are numbered by his acquaintances.

Genealogical information was gathered from: [Men of mark in Georgia](#), by William J. Northen, 1908 and Ancestry.com.

On a side note, the Agricultural and Mechanical College of Alabama became the first four-year coeducational school in the state. In 1899, the college was renamed the Alabama Polytechnic Institute. The college continued expanding, and in 1960, its name was officially changed to Auburn University. Also, Hardaway Hall on the campus of the University of Alabama was built in 1936, and named after the University's first full-time engineering professor, Col. Robert A. Hardaway. This space provided labs and classrooms for the mechanical and civil engineering programs.

In Florida, Hardaway was originally referred to as the community of Blue Springs. Once the Hardaway family purchased and developed their 5000 acre plantation, the area became known as Hardaway. At the end of WWII, many returning soldiers and their relatives gradually moved away from the community to more populated areas to find permanent work and raise their families.

While the Hardaway family continues, even to this day, to retain the original property where their home was built in Gadsden County, the bulk of their land holdings were sold to the St. Joe Paper Company in the early 1950's. The tremendous acreage was planted in pines and the rest of the story is now history.



Like so many things that have changed the face of Gadsden County, so did the addition of electricity. Many small towns had their own generator and power plants installed that supplied power to local businesses and residents. During the 1920's and 30's, investor-owned power companies would not

build power lines into rural and sparsely populated areas because it was not profitable or economically feasible to do so. President Franklin D. Roosevelt saw the need to bring electricity to these areas and established the Rural Electrification Administration (REA) on May 11, 1935. This administration was, and is a branch of the U.S. Department of Agriculture and helped communities form electric cooperatives while providing low interest loans to finance the building of electric lines and other equipment.

The Gadsden County Times
February 8, 1917
Havana

Soon we will be lit up like a real city; the contractors are pushing the work of installing an electric light and water system and it will not be long until we are enjoying these added blessings.

November 7, 1929
Quincy

Someone was heard to remark at the recent chamber of commerce meeting held here that they didn't know Greensboro had electric lights. The light plant has been in service since summer, and the power is being used for grinding cane, running a planning mill and in many ways.

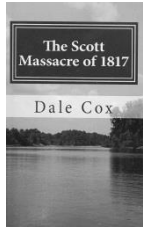
Supreme Court of Florida 124 Fla. 827 (Fla. 1936)

Town of River Junction has owned and operated an electric light and power system originally constructed in 1923.

Talquin Electric Website

Talquin Electric Cooperative, Inc. was formed in June of 1940 by a group of 200 rural residents who banded together to form the electric cooperative. They organized at a special meeting in Quincy called by Gadsden County Agent, H. E. Hudson, and Home Demonstration Agent, Miss Elise Laffitte. They were assisted by REA Financial Advisor, Harold Clark, who explained the procedures for organizing and funding a cooperative.

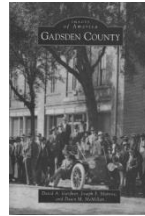
BOOKS & MERCHANDISE
All prices include 7.5% FL Sales Tax



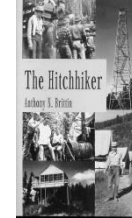
Scott Massacre
\$22.00



Gadsden Co. Early History
\$27.00



Images of Gadsden Co.
\$23.00



The Hitchhiker
\$23.00



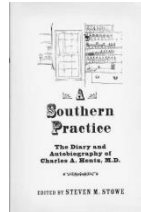
Note Cards



Greensboro Depot, Barns, Dezell House or Greensboro School. Sold in sets of 8 - \$10.00

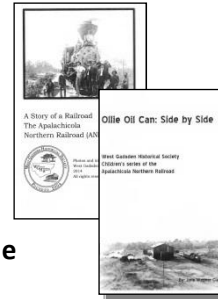


James Stewart Autobiography
\$27.00



Dr. Hentz Diaries
\$50.00

CHILDRENS BOOKS



A Story of a Railroad – The Apalachicola Northern Railroad

Ollie Oil Can: Side by Side Sold As a Set \$5.00



Gadsden: Florida County In Word And Picture – 1976, Miles Kenan Womack Jr. This book sells for \$150-\$185 on the internet; we have 3 copies available for \$100 each. Purchase yours today!

OUR DONORS
Other than Memberships, Memorials & Honorariums
Donors as of 12-09-14 – Present

MEMORIALS & HONORARIUMS
10/1/15 – 12/10/15

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Founders	5,000 to 9,999
Explorers	2,500 to 4,999
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Homesteaders	500 to 999
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Pioneers	100 to 249
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In memory of Patrick Fletcher

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Melvin & Louise Jones
Bascom & Betty Mahaffey (65th Anniversary)

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*Deceased

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Yearly memberships expire January 1

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