

News from the Port

Davenport Historical Society, Inc. Meetings are Open to the Public



Volume 3, Issue 3

Autumn Quarterly 2020



Letter from the Editor

By HRR

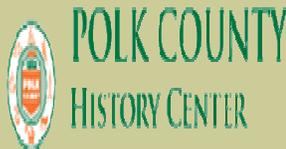
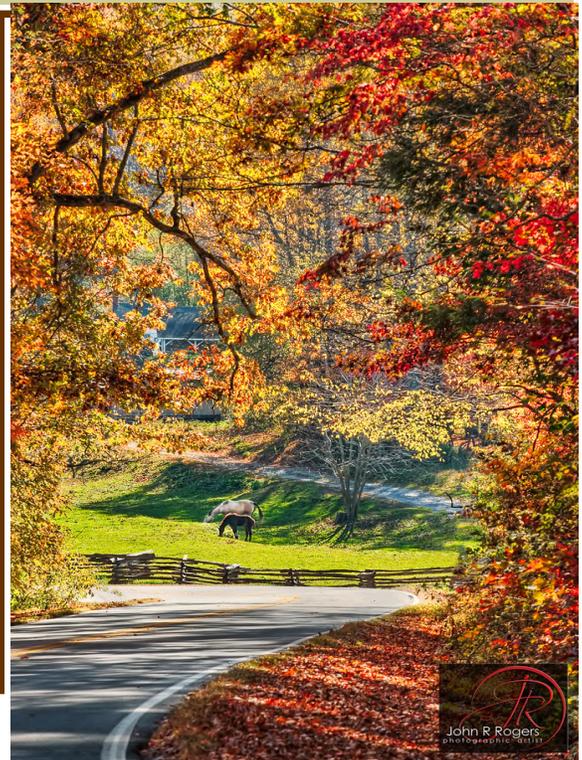


Perhaps the topic for autumn 2020 should be as written by Etienne de Grellet, a Quaker Missionary.

"I shall pass this way but once; any good that I can do or any kindness I can show to any human being; let me do it now. Let me not defer nor neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again."

This has always been one of my favorite quotes and as we travel this un-traveled path of 2020 let us remind ourselves this is even more reason for us to pass on our history .

For we shall not pass this way again and we must share what has happened and what we have learned from it , so that future generations will have a compass when trying times come again and they will. *HRR*



Vice President's Notes

Greetings Everyone,
Davenport Elementary opened in Aug. The campus is beautiful and is such an asset to the City. We finally have our school back. DHS welcomed the faculty and staff with goody bags and food before the official opening. We also want to thank our sponsors for their generous donations which made this possible. We are excited to see what the future holds for our school and city.
A big thank you goes to our members and volunteers for their help in deliveries and organizing this great event. Hope everyone is safe and taking care of themselves. Hope to see everyone soon.
Deborah Burress, VP

President's Message By: Kathy B. Linder

Hello Members:
Oct. 1, 2020 starts the new year for the Davenport Historical Society. Please renew your membership dues or if you wish to become a new member mail to DHS, PO Box 774, Davenport 33836.

We are looking for artifacts related to the original Davenport Elementary School. The artifacts will be donated to DHS to be used as a rotating display of old school days at DES. When donating artifacts please include who is contributing and a contact phone number.

Please drop artifact (s) at Linda's Hair Center in the Mart. Call 863-422-7179 after 9/22, 2020.



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If you missed Judith Thompson's first book you have another opportunity to read her second edition. For Sale at Linda's Hair Salon

Following the Heritage Trail

By Judith Torgersen Thompson

THE MYSTERY OF THE HIDDEN TREASURE IN THE OLD CITY JAIL.

Written as Fiction by J.T. Holms (aka) J.T.Thompson

The sky was dark with thunderheads ready to pour down buckets of rain. The heat was oppressive as Watson, my assistant sleuth, and I walked down the cracked concrete steps to the dungeon, the nickname for the old jail under the original fire station. Suddenly the clouds split open and we were soaked to the skin. A clerk opened the intimidating, heavily reinforced iron door and ushered us inside where we were greeted by darkness and a musky smell. My eyes strained to see, so I paused a few minutes to allow my eyes to adjust. I heard the clerk promise to come back. The door slammed shut.



At one time there had been a window with iron bars. Now, the window was covered with wood. But a glimmer of light showed through. We saw shelves with boxes of documents. I had heard a rumor that there was hidden treasure in the dungeon. Maybe the secret to the mystery was in one of the boxes. Watson had brought a cell phone, so we had a light. We made a quick survey of the contents of the boxes and found them to be old city documents but nothing about a treasure. Between the rows of shelves, we could see messages on the walls written by former inmates. Even though they had been covered with paint, there were many that had been carved into the concrete walls. Maybe the writing on the wall would lead us to the

treasure. Too quickly the clerk returned and said it was time to leave. Watson and I were ready to resume our search for clues the following day. We interviewed Nell Judy Johnson, who was the daughter of Police Chief Bethel Judy and his wife Lillie. He was the police chief from 1956 until 1969 and lived in the apartment two floors above the jail. Mrs. Johnson told us how her family stayed on duty to take care of the inmates and phones calls afterhours and weekends. Even Nell and her brother, Roger, helped by answering the phone and other small jobs. Her mother, Lillie, prepared food every day for those in jail and served their food on trays. Chief Judy helped some of the inmates pay off their fines by allowing them to do community service work. By cooking and selling dinners and having yard

sales, the policemen and other residents, helped acquire playground equipment for Wilson Park.

Other policemen also helped the inmates and community. One policeman who stood out was Walter Henderson, the first African American policeman. He helped many people by listening to their situation and offering advice.

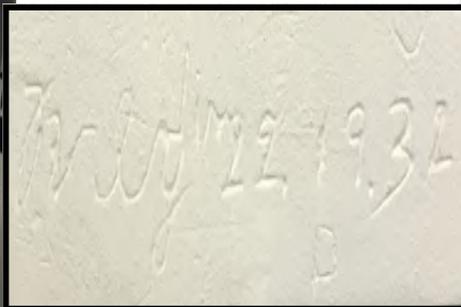
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Chief Judy sitting outside the old jail. (Jail is below railing). Stairs to apartment upstairs, over fire station 1950's.,



Below Writing on Jail wall. July 22, 1932



Left photo: Roger, Lillie and Bethel Judy in apartment upstairs.

Right photo: Lillie Judy at Davenport Pool.

Mrs. Judy also managed the Davenport public pool during summer.



Heritage Trail Continued J. T. Holms



Member Invitation

Watson suggested we go back inside the jail and read what was written on the wall. The writings were dated from 1932 to 1961. The dungeon had not been used as a jail since the 1960's. Here are some of the messages we could read:

"Davenport, N.J.", "O., May 1st, 1939", "J., Jan. 6", "U. 1961", "R. Can't wait for lunch", "J. What's for supper", and "H. I hope I get an extra helping of mash taters". I think we found a clue, Harriet, I mean Watson. It sounds like there really was treasure in the old city jail. Those treasures were the employees of Davenport who cared about all the people, even the prisoners, and provided a system that allowed the inmates to work off their fines by helping to keep the city clean and beautiful.



FESTIVAL OF TREES 2020

The Davenport Historical Society, Inc. Will again be decorating the Gazebo and their tree for 2020.

DHS organized the first Festival of Trees and we are looking forward to working with Davenport Parks and Recreation to make 2020 even better.

Please contact Linda Tyler , Marqueen Jordan or Kathy Linder to volunteer to fluff garlands, wreaths, trim DHS tree and hang decorations on the Gazebo and entrance to Wilson Park.

Event is December 8, 2020

CUT AND MAIL with your check.....



Membership Invitation:

The Davenport Historical Society, Inc. purpose is to preserve the city's history and share this heritage by contributing to the records of the state of Florida and the United States of America in an effort that will embrace our past while working toward a brighter future for all of Davenport's citizens.

Please join us. Meetings are held the second Monday of each month at 6:30 pm at different historic locations., except June, July & August unless otherwise stated. For location email:

jthompson.dhs@gmail.com

- 1. Become a member of DHS
 - \$10.00 Individual Membership
 - 18.00 Family Membership
 - 35.00 Business Membership
 - 75.00 Corporate Membership
 - \$100.00 Lifetime Individual Membership
- 2. Share artifacts or personal stories with DHS and Museum
- 3. Volunteer time to the DHS & Museum (select interest)

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

EMAIL _____

PHONE _____ CELL _____

Please complete & mail to:
Davenport Historical Society, Inc.
% Kathy Linder P.O. Box 774
Davenport, FL 33836
DHS is a 501 c (3) non profit organization



P.O. BOX 774
DAVENPORT, FL 33836

**MEETINGS
CANCELED
OR
POSTPONED
UNTIL
FUTHER
NOTICE
DUE TO
COVID-19**

TO:

Davenport Historic District.....National Registry.....

**ALL DHS MEETINGS AND EVENTS CANCELED
OR POSTPONED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE**



**WELCOME DAVENPORT
ELEMENTARY
OPENED AUG. 24, 2020
For more information visit:
des.polkschoolsfl.com**

Meetings:
Second Monday
Each month at
6:30pm
Davenport
Commission
Chamber

Quarterly Meetings with
Special Programs.

No Meetings:
June, July, August

Websites:

- Quiltsandtea.com
- Mydavenport.org
- Polkhistorycenter.org
- des.polkschoolsfl.com

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Harriet Rust
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National Registry Historic Map

