



# THE DEPOT MUSEUM

## & HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF AVON PARK

### "Your Ticket to the Past"

January 2024 Edition

## Annual Meeting & Banquet

Tuesday, February 20 at the Hotel Jacaranda

This year's program offers an opportunity to learn more about the programs at Highlands County's Archbold Biological Station. Across nearly 20,000 acres, throughout the Headwaters of the Everglades, and beyond, the Archbold Biological Station studies and protects ecosystems found nowhere else on Earth.



Learn how Hicoria, though not found on any current Highlands County map, played a large role in the development and history of our area. During the 1920's and 30's a large sawmill run by W.C. Sherman company logged over 100,000 acres of Highlands County with

a base in what is now Avon Park, and later in Hicoria. This massive project brought a labor force of hundreds of people to a County with a then population of barely 9,000.

Join Archbold Librarian and Archivist Joseph Gentili to discuss Hicoria, the Sherman Mill, and the historical legacy of logging and turpentine production.

### Tickets are available at the Depot Museum

**\$30 per person    \$50 for couples    Seating begins at 5:30pm**

The evening's program will begin with the popular Hotel Jacaranda buffet. Brief announcements and acknowledgements will be followed by the installation of Board Members and the keynote address.

The keynote speaker **Joe Gentili**, Librarian and Archivist for Archbold Biological Station, has a Master of Library Science degree from the University of South Florida, and a Bachelor of Arts in History from SUNY Binghamton in New York. Joe serves as a commissioner on the Highlands County Historic Preservation Commission, as well as being active in the Society of Florida Archivists.



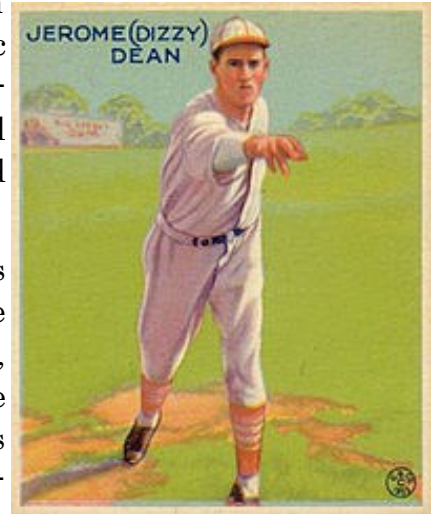
## VINTAGE BASEBALL GAME POSTPONED TO FEBRUARY 3RD

Due to recent heavy rains, Head Field was “unplayable” on the originally scheduled date. The game has been recheduled to 2 pm on February 3, at the Head Field, 800 Winthrop Lane in Avon Park. There will be local celebrities dressed as players from



the 1930s in a recreation of an historic game played between the St Louis Cardinals and the House of David baseball team. The event will be recorded and turned into a “silent” film for posterity.

Baseball fans are encouraged to dress up for the 1930s era and can participate in traditional games like hoop rolling, three legged race and egg race. There will be prizes for the best costumes, plus old fashioned food, music and decorations. Attendance is free, but donations to the Baseball Museum will be accepted.



Dizzy Dean was the pitcher for the Cardinals in that game



*Visit the Depot Museum & Make  
a Vintage Valentine on February 9th*



In America in the 1930's, mechanical valentines, also known as sentimental movables, trick valentines, or novel valentines, became popular as people stopped buying the earlier Victorian valentines. Often these mechanicals would have moveable parts and stands.

The sailor boy at left is just one of the designs you can make at the Valentine work shop on February 9th through out the day at the Museum. Come to the dining car and create a bit of nostalgia suitable for sharing with a special valentine.



Be sure to check out the Museum Gift Shop for a variety of gift ideas  
In addition to the fabulous display of vintage jewelry, notecards featuring  
historical photographs are now on available.

# ❖ UP-COMING PROGRAMMING ❖

Our Historical Society is partnering with the Heartland Cultural Alliance, the Hotel Jacaranda and Florida Humanities to again present a series of entertaining history based talks. The talks will be held in the Avon Park Community Center at 3 pm and are being offered to the community at no charge.



**January 28th** by Magdalena LaMarre

## ***Southern Road to Freedom:***

### ***Florida's Underground Railroad***

The nation's first Underground Railroad was established in Florida in the late 1600's, serving as a beacon of freedom for runaway slaves from the American South. Existing before the better-known Northern Underground Railroad, enslaved Africans escaped and earned asylum in Spanish Florida. This presentation

focuses on Florida's early history as a Spanish territory, the escape routes used by runaway slaves, and the black communities they established before the abolition of slavery in the United States.

**February 25th** by Dr. Cori Convertito ***Henry Flagler: Florida Visionary***

Henry Flagler was a self-made millionaire and industrialist who co-founded the Standard Oil Company. In time, the Flagler name would be more associated with the development of Florida and the construction of its railroads. He invested over \$50 million in the state, most of the funds going towards the east coast of Florida through luxury resort hotels and the Florida East Coast Railway. This presentation showcases Henry Flagler's history and vision for the state and his contributions to the east coast of Florida.

**April 24th** by Betty Jean Steinhauer ***Scribbling Women in Florida:***



This program includes a dozen women authors who "ran south in agitation" to Florida, starting in the Reconstruction era through the late 1900's. We follow Harriet Beecher Stowe (shown here), Constance Fenimore Woolson, Sarah Orne Jewett, Laura Ingalls Wilder, Marjory Stoneman Douglas, Zora Neale Hurston, Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings, Edna St. Vincent Millay, Rose Wilder Lane, Elizabeth Bishop, Anne Morrow Lindbergh, and Rachel Carson, as they explore the Land of Flowers.



# ❖ MUSEUM HAPPENINGS ❖

Museum Avenue will host the Art and Culture Fusion Fest on Saturday, January 27th from 10 am to 3 pm

Craft, Art, and Food truck vendors will fill the Community Center parking lot. A variety of musical entertainment will go on all day. There is something of interest for all ages, including a Kids' Zone offering face painting and balloon art.

The Depot Museum has new exhibits on display. Fruit cobbler topped with vanilla ice cream will be served up in the dining car.

2024 is the 75th Anniversary of the discovery of Brown 'n' Serve Rolls. Visitors to the dining car will also be able to see a demonstration of the use of the bread maker that is part of the Brown 'n' Serve exhibit.



The demonstration is set for 10:30 am. The entire process will take about three hours. Samples of the finished product will be served when the bread comes from the oven.

**AVON PARK FUSIONFEST 2024 JANUARY 27TH**

PRESENTED BY: THE PIPAL GROUP, AVON PARK CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND BACKDRAFT PROMOTIONS

**7AM FITNESS4YOU 5K COLOR RUN**  
Come run with us through Historic Downtown Avon Park where you will be showered with culture and color on every corner.

**10AM-3PM Fusion Fest Art & Culture Festival**  
Eat, Shop, and Explore the Arts and Culture at the street festival nestled in the art district of Historic Avon Park located on Museum Avenue. Food Trucks, Vendors, Entertainment, Kids Activities, Museum Tours, Art Exhibits and More!

**6PM FUSION FEAST**  
Join us for an evening of great food from around the globe and a great time with Howl at the Moon. Dueling Pianos, there will be a Silent Auction, Cash Bar, and Dancing.. it will be a Howlin' good time!

Register to Run, Be A Vendor or Buy Fusion Feast Tickets = [www.apccfl.org](http://www.apccfl.org)

Logos: Avon Park (Growing Business since 1904), BACKDRAFT PROMOTIONS (BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT & MARKETING), The Pipal Group (Your Full Service Real Estate Company), HEARTLAND CULTURAL ALLIANCE (Heartland Cultural Alliance, Highlands County, Florida), CITY OF AVON PARK (EST. 1904)

## **Your help is needed to encourage the Florida Legislature to fund the Humanities budget for the next fiscal year.**

Below is a sample letter that you may use to contact our Highlands & Hardee County representatives. The easiest way is to email Representative Kaylee Tuck, Senator Erin Grall, and/or Senator Ben Albritton. If you would like a letter emailed to you that you can send on, please email your request to [nfisk1949@gmail.com](mailto:nfisk1949@gmail.com). The body of letter below may be photocopied. You will add the name of the legislator you are writing to and your signature if you wish to send the letter through the mail.

Address letters: Senator Erin Grall	or	The Honorable Kaylee Tuck	or	Senator Ben Albritton
305 Senate Building		District Office, Suite B		318 Senate Building
404 S. Monroe Street		205 S. Commerce Ave.		404 S. Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL, 32399		Sebring, FL, 33870		Tallahassee, FL, 32399

Dear

I'm writing to you as a constituent and member of the Historical Society of Avon Park, a recommended grantee vested in the appropriations for an Arts and Culture grant through the Department of State in the 2025 state budget.

Our application is for \$200,000 and is included in the line item for Cultural Facilities along with 37 others. These grants are funded by non-recurring revenue, written in statute (not LFIRs) and require that applicants match funds and submit expenditure reports as well as a final report demonstrating impact.

I am asking you to encourage your colleagues serving on the Infrastructure and Tourism Appropriations Subcommittee and Appropriations Committee to fully fund lines 625, 182, 38 and 19. The funding request for this legislative session totals \$77,343,303 (for 864 programs and projects), less than 1% of the state's budget, but reaches audiences greater than the state population. Line 38 - Cultural Facilities must be funded at \$13,317,214 to fully fund our facilities grant.

Please encourage the highest and best outcome for Florida's Arts and Culture Grants throughout the legislature session. Your past and continued support is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

***Our legislators need to know that the museum expansion project is important to our community. Visitors from across our state and beyond are attracted to Avon Park by the Depot Museum and the Peter Powell Roberts museum. While in our area visitors enjoy our local restaurants, buy gas and shop - true benefits to our local economy. Please make your voice heard. You can go to [flsenate.gov](http://flsenate.gov) to find Senators, Grall and Albritton to send an email. Similarly, Rep. Kaylee Tuck can receive emails by going to [myfloridahouse.gov](http://myfloridahouse.gov)***

These businesses and organizations  
support your museum!!

Please show your appreciation with your  
patronage when a service is needed.

**Thank you to our Corporate members**

Alan Jay Automotive    Avon Park Rotary    Bagwell Lumber

Barben Fruit Company    Bill Owens Auto Sales    Bug-Runner Pest Service

C. Elton Crews, Inc.    Cool & Cobb Engineering    Forrest Hilton, CPA

Emily Jones, Realtor at Remax    GeoDev Financial Services    Gordon Gastor

Heartland Cultural Alliance    Heartland National Bank    Hicks Oil Co.

Jahna Concrete, Inc    Laye's Tire Service    Long's Air Conditioning

Maxwell Grove Service    Palmer Electric Services    Pro Weld

Ridge Florist    River Greens Golf Course    S.Y. Hart & Sons Groves

Dr. Ron Sevigny    Sherco, Inc.    Dora Smith Realty    Souther Signs

Stephen/Nelson Funeral Services    The Hotel Jacaranda    Turner Furniture

Drs. Richard & Betsy Wood    Worden Realty

Please consider a gift to the Historical Society in lieu of flowers  
to honor the passing of a loved one

*Names of those honored are recorded on a plaque in the Museum*



## *Thank you to those members who have renewed their membership for 2024.*

And a very special thank you to those folks who contributed to the dining car windows restoration. A report on the progress of that project will be announced soon. The work was delayed when a set of the seals needed to complete the job was not included in the items that were shipped. Special seals are required for the installation of the railroad grade glass.



The Museum and Dining Car were especially festive for Christmas thanks to the artist talents of Jane Avery, Carol Breckenridge, Merrie-Ann Santore and Elaine Levey. The holiday decorations were enjoyed by four groups who booked luncheons, as well as, those who attended the Museum Open House in December and came to the dining car for refreshments.



Bob and Cindy Collins graciously made their 1927 Ford Roadster available for the Avon Park Christmas Parade and agreed to chauffeur. Society Board members Jane Avery and Nancy Fisk agreed to ride in the rumble seat BEFORE they realized what an adventure it would be to get into it.



The procedure was videoed and it is our fervent hope that it never ends up on YouTube! Once we were seated, however, it turned out to be a wonderful experience.

The parade was amazing. We were greeted by so many smiling faces and folks calling out "Merry Christmas" as we proceeded along

the parade route. Luckily for us, Rick Helms had a step ladder waiting at the end of the parade so we were able to disembark without incident - "and to all, a good night!"



## Historical Society of Avon Park

3 N. Museum Avenue, Avon Park, FL, 33825

Phone: 863-453-3525

Email: [avonparkdepotmuseum@gmail.com](mailto:avonparkdepotmuseum@gmail.com)

Website: [www.avonparkhistoricalsociety.com](http://www.avonparkhistoricalsociety.com)



### BOARD MEMBERS

Nancy Fisk, President

Ricky Helms, Vice President

Beth Helms, Recording Secretary

Jane Avery, Treasurer

Roberta Flowers Grace Hudson

Marva Turner Robert Cook

Doc Sevigney Judy Laycock

Kamla Long Eileen Sachsenmaier

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Elaine Levey, Curator

Dave Sanford, Maintenance

Nancy Fisk, Newsletter Editor

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### MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

Deborah Crews Nancy Fisk

### MUSEUM HOURS

Wednesday, Thursday, Friday

10 am to 3 pm

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### CALENDAR of EVENTS

**January 27**

**Art & Culture Fusion Fest**

**January 28**

**Humanities Lecture**

**February, 3**

**Vintage Baseball Game**

**February, 20**

**Annual Banquet**