

MUSEUM NEWS



Cadillac Willy
Performing
During Fish Fry

Annual Fish Fry

The Annual Fish Fry was held on Saturday, February 27 raising nearly \$3,000 to help fund the oral history DVD & kiosk project. The huge success was largely due to Destin's community spirit shown through the abundant number of volunteers from the Destin Charter Boat Association, Rotary Club, Museum membership and community who helped out in all aspects of the event to the 275 who came and enjoyed the fish fry and visit to the Museum. Special praise to our Chef Lloyd Taylor and the band, "Cadillac Willy" for making the fish fry so successful. The generosity of Buffalo Rock Company, Winn Dixie, Emerald Bay Golf, and Southern Star Dolphin Cruises made the event a reality.



Patrick Wilson , Cadillac Willy



Lloyd Taylor, "Fish Fry King"



General Membership Meeting

The General Membership Meeting of the Museum was held Tuesday, February 9. Forty-six visitors toured during the day and evening. A brief history of Destin was presented by the Director, Jean Melvin. Museum President, Rick Lowry announced the projected developments in the Museum's future including grant possibilities. Visitors and members toured the Museum.

Officers:

President: Rick Lowry
President Elect 2011: Mike Long
VP: Fundraising Chair: Dave Steele
Treasurer: John Lefler
Secretary: Monica Autrey

Board Members:

Jack Baker
Richard Derek
Dan Empson
David Gates
Norm Hall
Lloyd Taylor

Captain Reddin "Salty" Brunson



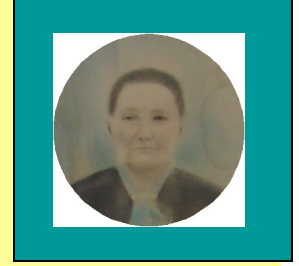
Capt. Salty, 96 year "young" Destin pioneer crafted two beautiful swing gliders and matching table. Originally intended for a raffle, a substantial donation was made so these wonderful items could be kept for the Museum. They will ultimately be located on a "patio" at the entrance.



Pioneers of Paradise

William Elisha Marler

Written by: Kathy Marler Blue



William Elisha Marler and Sarah Rotincia Lancaster are the founders of the Marler Family line in Florida. William was born in 1823 in Georgia. **On July 15, 1861 at the age of 38 William enlisted in the Confederate States Army Service at Columbus, Georgia as a part of Captain Ivey's Company.** He was admitted to Field Hospital #4 with chronic rheumatism and transferred to Farmville on March 19, 1862. June 27 and July 1 of 1862 he appeared on a list of killed and/or wounded. He was admitted to Field Hospital #9 on August 10, 1864. On August 25, 1864 he was admitted to Jackson Hospital in Richmond, Virginia. He appeared on active rolls for the months of September and October of 1864. He was furloughed to Americus, Georgia on September 8, 1864. It is questionable about the number of months he was supposed to have off, as records indicate one thing and his wife indicated another. On November 1, 1864 he appeared AWOL. Some records indicate that these poor dirt farmers would "go home to work the fields" and then go back to their units.

At the age of 42 on January 24, 1865 in Webster County, Georgia he married Sarah Rotincia Lancaster. Sarah was born March 24, 1845 in Webster County (Macon) Georgia. Her parents were William Lancaster and Tibatha McColister Lancaster. February 1, 1865 William again appeared AWOL. His regiment, Company G of the 20th Regiment of the Georgia Volunteer Infantry, of which he was a Private, surrendered at Appomattox on April 9, 1865. Records indicate he was not present with them. However, on April 30, 1865 he appeared on a list of captured and held in a prison hospital in Richmond, Virginia. Sarah stayed in the town and came to take care of him and tend to his wounds.

Their **first child, William Thomas Marler** was born in Georgia on January 26, 1866. In Americus, Georgia, on September 13, 1867 **their second child Emma Marler** was born. They came to Florida approximately 1871. They most likely came through the Yellow River and Euchee Valley area. Traveling with them was Sarah's sister Mary and brothers Joe and Lee Lancaster from Georgia. **Their third child, Joseph Elisha Marler** was born on May 19, 1871 in Florida. **Their fourth child, George S. Marler** was born in Florida on April 6, 1874. **Their fifth child, Samuel Tildon Marler**, was born at Knoxhill, Florida, on October 16, 1876. **Their sixth child, David H. Marler**, was born at East Pass, on October 17, 1878. The June 29, 1880 Walton County, Florida Census shows William, age 57 and Sarah, age 37 with six children, the last four born in Florida. It shows William T., age 15; Emma, age 13; Joseph, age 9; George, age 7; Samuel, age 4; and David, age 2. Since Joseph is the first child to be born in Florida that proves the family had to be living in Florida at least by 1871. The census also shows that William owned a grist mill in Boggy Bayou (Niceville). The site of the mill is on the property where the Jackson Guard is today. In 1879, when William Thomas, their oldest son was 13 years old, he began to work across the Choctawhatchee Bay at East Pass for Leonard Destin as a fisherman and rowing the fishing boats. William Elisha and Sarah and the rest of the family moved over to East Pass about 1880 farming watermelons and peanuts in the flatlands behind Wild Cat Hill. **Their seventh child, Fannie Rotincia Marler** was born March 4, 1881 at East Pass. **Their eighth child, Charles Absolom Marler** was born January 19, 1883 at East Pass. William Elisha Marler died at East Pass, Florida on April 4, 1884 at the age of 61.

After William's death, in her aging years, Sarah made efforts to receive a Pension Claim from the government. Some authorities questioned his records of service. Her Pension Claim paperwork stated that due to his health the 60 days medical leave had been extended another 60 days. She ultimately received a small pension as a surviving spouse of the Civil War. Sarah died in Destin June 26, 1932 at the age of 87.