

# Destin History & Fishing Museum

Here's What's Been

Happening At

**YOUR** Museum!

- **BOARD MEETINGS For 2015**: January 14, February 11, March 11, April 8, May 13, June 10, July 8, August 12, September 9, October 14, November 11, and December 9

## Museum Visitors

2006: 2,095  
 2007: 3,527  
 2008: 4,561  
 2009: 5,804  
 2010: 6,368  
 2011: 7,131  
 2012: 8,300  
 2013: 8,036  
 2014: 7,647

January to March 2015  
2,279 visitors

## Special Tours & Off Site Venues:

1/23/15-DeNure Tours  
 2/6/15-Destin Middle School Fishing Club  
 2/6/15- DeNure Tours  
 2/20/15-DeNure Tours  
 3/6/15-Kathy Blue gave presentation to Snowbird group at Village Baptist  
 3/13/15-DeNure Tours  
 3/26/15-City of Destin Spring Break Kids Camp

Volume 9 Issue 3

January to March 2015

## From the Staff

The proverbial "pot of gold" was found at the Destin History & Fishing Museum when GoSouthern.com donated \$10,000 to restore the Seine Boat "Primrose". In 1995, Hurricane Opal destroyed the "Primrose" shelter and it was left to the elements for 19 years.

Realizing the condition of the "Primrose", even though it was owned by the City, the Museum began to look for donators to provide for the restoration. It was either fix it or loose it. Our most valuable artifact needed help. Brothers Mike and Brad Shoults and their business partners Kerry and Kevin Veach presented the Museum with \$10,000 to cover the restoration of the "Primrose". In December 2014, Matt Ronk was hired and the work began.

Having been raised in Destin, the brothers realized the importance of the "Primrose" and the part it played in Destin's fishing history. It is wonderful when Destin's young people realize the importance of historic preservation and are willing to give the funds needed to make it happen.

Jean



## Calendar of Events

January 31

Annual Gumbo Contest & Silent Auction  
Destin Community Center

February 11

Museum Annual General Membership Meeting  
Museum

February 13

Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon  
AJ's Seafood Restaurant

February 24

Destin Chamber of Commerce & Sportsman Channel filmed at Museum  
For "Destin to Fish"

March 2

Beachcomber Music Awards  
AJ's Seafood Restaurant  
Museum Benefitted from guitar auction

April 7

Miss Destin Contestant's  
"Soda Party"

*Membership Drive...Is your membership current?  
 Not a member?...Please join the Destin History & Fishing Museum*

The DHFM Foundation sends huge thanks to our members that support us faithfully with their annual membership. You are valued and appreciated! Please remember to think of the museum when family and friends visit Destin or when you have a group function and would like to book a special tour.

A membership form is on the back of the newsletter and also available on our website. You many also choose to increase your donation on your way to becoming a museum Lifetime Member. It is even simpler with the payment plan!

Individual Winners:

1st Place:  
Britten Gisi

2nd Place:  
Jeannie Hanks

People's Choice:  
Elaine Rogers

**Gumbo Contest & Silent Auction**

***This fundraising event net  
\$ 12,767***

Restaurant Winners:

1st Place:  
Bubba Gump Shrimp Company

2nd Place:  
Dewey Destin's Harborside

People's Choice:  
Harry T's Restaurant

The Destin History & Fishing Museum held their annual Gumbo Contest & Silent Auction Saturday, January 31 at the Destin Community Center. Ticket holders enjoyed a Silent Auction of eighty packages, live music by FLASHFLOOD, and gumbo from local contestants including restaurant and individual divisions. There were ten restaurants and nineteen individuals registered in the event. The competition was very close and the winners were: Individual Category 1st Place: Britten Gisi, and Individual 2nd Place: Jeannie Hanks. Judging was equally close in the restaurant division. Restaurant Category 1st Place: Bubba Gump Shrimp Company and Restaurant Category 2nd Place: Dewey Destin's Harborside Restaurant. The People's Choice Restaurant Award voted on by the day's gumbo samplers was Harry T's Restaurant. The People's Choice Individual Award voted on by the day's gumbo samplers was Elaine Rogers. The Museum is very thankful to our business partners, The City of Destin and Copy Systems and most appreciative to all that supported this fundraising event by their donations or participation. Special thanks go to the celebrity judges: Rodney Braden/Destin City Council, Scottie Griffith/Sound Engineer HarborWalk Village, Trey Griffith/Chef at Chan's Wine World, Andy Hadaway/Specialty Woodworks, LLC, Nancy Johnson/Museum Volunteer, Bill McDonald/Boat Captain, Matt Ronk/Boat Captain, and Justin Stephens/Deputy Sheriff. Proceeds from this event will help pay the upkeep and expansion of museum programs and exhibits. With the help of nearly 50 museum volunteers the event was a wonderful success attended by nearly 600!





# Marler Postal Legacy



Many towns in the United States can boast a long postal history—but, not many can boast about one family handling the mail for 76 years! ***But Destin can with the Marler family.*** This building, the man that built it, and the family members that were to carry on that postal legacy for a small fishing village would hold a part of the unique history of Destin.

William T. Marler began handling Destin's mail in 1896, picking it up in Mary Ester by boat. Marler received permission from the Federal Government in 1899 to start a post office in Destin. Early Destin was called East Pass, which refers to the opening to the Gulf of Mexico. When the post office was established and a name was required, Marler completed the paperwork naming the town "Destin" after his good friend and first employer, Leonard Destin. Mail came to East Pass even though the application was not officially approved until 1904. Tilt Marler ( W.T.'s brother) was postmaster in 1902 according to the diary of Kate Nicholson Marler (wife of Charles Marler and sister-in-law to W.T.). Mail came by boat from "Camp Walton" to Marler's dock on the Bay and passed out in the parlor of his home. He built a little store between his home and dock where supplies were purchased and mail picked up. In 1934, W.T. Marler relocated the Post Office to a building he built on his property facing Calhoun Avenue. The Destin Bridge, begun in 1933, was completed in 1936. The location on the roadway was necessary so the mail could be delivered by automobile from Fort Walton. W.T. handmade the interior cabinets and counters in this building, including the one counter and one drawer originally made for use in his parlor and store. The small building became the social center of Destin. It was the place where the settlers went for good conversation and fellowship. This building served the residents for seventeen years until 1951. At that time, the Destin Post Office moved to a location in the heart of Destin on Highway 98. The building contained the Silver Sands Sundries & Restaurant, the United States Post Office and the Calhoun/Cox Real Estate Office. The next building that would house the postal department was built on the adjacent property located on Highway 98 in the mid 1960s. This self standing building would serve the community of Destin until the new state-of-the-art post office would be built on Main Street in Destin. Willie Mae Marler Taylor was a postal service worker from 1951 to 1980. Nellie Marler Baker was Acting Postmaster from 1945 to 1946 and was appointed the Postmaster 1946 to 1961. Lawrence E. Marler was appointed Acting Postmaster September 29, 1961 and William L. Marler was appointed Acting Postmaster October 30, 1961. Nellie Marler Baker served as a Postal Service Worker from 1970 to 1980. In March of 1962, Ross Clinton Marler became the Acting Postmaster in Destin succeeding his cousin Nellie. In April of 1963, Ross became the full-time Postmaster. He retired from the Post Office in June of 1972. Although the Marler Family Postal Legacy came to an end in 1972, the influence of these community leaders would carry on in the history and heritage of Destin. In 1981, a group known as the Old Destin Post Office Museum raised the needed funds to have the building moved to its present location and to restore the building inside and out. Artifacts were collected and prepared for display. The ODPOM was dedicated on November 11, 1983 and opened to the public with the purpose to preserve some of the "old Destin" atmosphere, customs and traditions. As part of the dedication, the first history of Destin, "and the Roots Run Deep" by Vivian Foster Mettee and Associates was introduced to the public. In addition, for the first time ever, a display of a great number of privately owned paintings by Captain John A. Destin were displayed. The ODPOM operated with volunteers, many of whom were members of the original pioneer families until 2000. In 2006, the ODPOM, Inc. was merged into the Destin History and Fishing Museum. The post office building is one of the very few remaining historic buildings in Destin. Filled with exhibits, the building is a part of the DHFM tour. ***This historic building, along with the seine boat Primrose, is being prepared to be moved to the Museum site. A dedication is being planned for Founder's Day on May 2 of this year.***





## Life of the “Primrose”

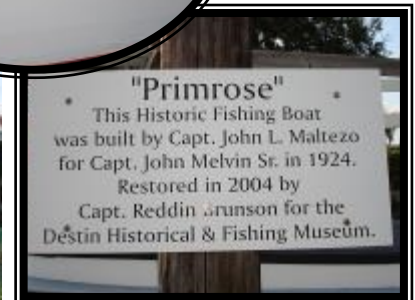
- ◆ 1922 –Captain John Melvin asks boat builder John George Maltezo to design a custom seine boat.
- ◆ 1925-The 36 ft. boat with a 7.5 ft. beam fitted with a 30 HP Palmer Marine engine.
- ◆ 1925-1968-Operated for 43 years by John W. Melvin, Sr. and his son John W. “Buck” Melvin, Jr.
- ◆ 1969-Raised from the Destin Harbor and put on display in its current location. Destin Woman’s Club planned restoration. Donated to the Community Center by Mary Melvin, wife of the late Capt. Melvin.
- ◆ 1995 Hurricane Opal damaged the “Primrose” shelter. A new one was badly needed for protection against the elements.
- ◆ July 29, 2004-Rededication of the Primrose after renovation by Capt. Reddin Brunson funded by Buddy Runnels. Work in partnership with the City of Destin.
- ◆ May 14, 2009-City of Destin had Keller-Williams Realty staff give a “face-lift” with repainting and Julia Paradiso provided a new canvas spray hood. This was a part of the company’s RED Day—Renew, Energize, Donate.

### *A Community Bans Together !*

- ◆ 2014/2015-Money is always tight at the Museum so we needed lots of support from “the village” to have the “Primrose” restoration done, a new “Primrose” shelter built, the Post Office wood rot fixed and painted, and the two historic artifacts moved. A few phone calls were made and all the materials were donated for a new “Primrose” shelter. Shoults & Veach Families and gosouthern.com donated \$10,000 to restore the Primrose. The restoration was completed by Matt Ronk. Experience from his work on wooden boats lent itself

to this project. The Museum, City of Destin, Jack Baker of DAG Architects, Charlie Smith & Baker Metal Works, Milton Truss, and Mike Buckingham working to create a new home site and shelter for the Primrose which will be relocated to the Museum site. Everything considered, it was a joint decision between the City and the Museum to relocate the “Primrose” and the Old Post Office building to the new location next to the Museum.

*Re-dedication and christening planned for Founder’s Day on May 2. Destin Chamber of Commerce, “Destin Forward” class is a partner in this celebration project.*



## PRIMROSE



# Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon

AJ's Seafood and Oyster Bar hosted a Volunteer Recognition Luncheon at the restaurant on February 13. During the luncheon, a special presentation was given to the Museum by Alan Laird. A check for \$15,777.00 representing the 2014 donations given to the museum through the parking concession held during the Seafood Festival, the AJ's Tin Cup Classic Golf Tournament, and the October Pumpkin Patch. The Destin History and Fishing Museum volunteers were treated to a wonderful lunch overlooking the picturesque Harbor. City Manager, Greg Kisela presented award certificates to volunteers in attendance. Diamond Volunteers with 1,000 + volunteer hours included: Dave Fraser, John Lefler, Carole Marler and Dave Steele. These volunteers received the Museum Diamond Volunteer certificate and their names included on a perpetual Diamond Volunteer plaque displayed in the Museum. Terry Long and Don Rogers received the Silver Presidential Volunteer Service Award and Museum Silver Volunteer Award for 300+ volunteer hours. Nancy Johnson and Claude Newland joined the ranks of the Bronze Presidential Volunteer Service Award and Museum Bronze Certificate for 100+ hours. Dan Epson & Harry T's, Scottie Griffith, Norm Hall, Patricia Hardiman, Denise Ingram, Alan Laird & AJ's, Judy Lefler, Kelly Marcus, Dan Martin, Tona Newland, Nancy Shoults, Lloyd Taylor, Connie Walter and Russell Wamble. The President's Awards included a certificate, a letter from the President and a lapel pin. Additional Certificates were presented to : Ann Boynton, Karen Burke, Beth Webb Cairo, Pam Creel, Darlene Fraser, Veritha Gatlin, Laura Hall, Terri Hensley, Rick Ivey, Jami Jones, Nancy Killebrew, Bill McDonald, Sheri McDonald, Nancy Robertson, Gayle Shelton, Erin Shoults, Trevor Sullivan, and Mary Ann Windes. The Museum appreciates the many volunteers that make a difference in their support and work.



*We Are Better At What We Do, Because of You!*



destinhistoryandfishingmuseum.org

### Destin History & Fishing Museum

#### Museum Board of Directors

**Executive Board** President: Dave Steele Vice President: Don Rogers

Secretary: Terry Long Treasurer: John Lefler

**General Board:** Richard Derek, Dan Empson, Norm Hall, Tina Harbuck, Terri Hensley, Dan Martin, Lloyd Taylor, Russell Wamble

**Executive Director** Jean Melvin **Associate Director** Kathy Marler Blue

**Museum Docents:** Dave Fraser and Carole Marler

**Newsletter Writer and Editor** Kathy Marler Blue



DHFM  
P.O. Box 548  
Destin, FL 32540-0548

**PLEASE MAIL YOUR DONATION TO:  
DESTIN HISTORY & FISHING MUSEUM  
108 STAHLMAN AVE.  
DESTIN, FL 32541**

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**TAX TIME IS COMING !!!  
LOOKING FOR A TAX DEDUCTION**

*Donation Tax Receipts are available for your donations to the Destin History & Fishing Museum.*

Tuesday - Saturday  
10am to 4pm

Admission: Adults: \$5  
Seniors & Military: \$4  
Students thru College: \$3  
Kids 6 & Under  
and Members : Free

**Newsletter Printed  
Courtesy of  
Xerox**

### Join or Renew Your Membership Today

Destin History and Fishing Museum is a non profit organization whose members are dedicated to preserving, documenting, and sharing the complete history of Destin. There are limitless ways you, your friends, and associates can be part of realizing these efforts. Now more than ever we can use your support. **Your donation or membership is tax deductible.** Please fill out the form below and mail it to the museum.

### Yes, I Give My Support!

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

Membership/Amount \$20 \_\_\_\_\_ \$ 50 \_\_\_\_\_ \$ 100 \_\_\_\_\_ \$250 \_\_\_\_\_ \$ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Check # \_\_\_\_\_ If you would like to pay by credit card please call the Museum and have your credit card ready.

Mail to: **Destin History and Fishing Museum P.O. Box 548 Destin, Florida 32540-0548**

Thank you. Without your faithful and generous donations and efforts, the museum would not exist today.