

Dudley Farm Journal

Dudley Farm a National Historic Landmark

Volume 27, Issue 6

November - December 2023

The 34th Annual Fall Farm and Cane Day Festival

Join us on Saturday, December 2nd, to celebrate Miss Myrtle (1901-1996) Dudley's birthday with fun for young, old and everyone in between. There will be lots of interesting and educational demonstrations such as: Blacksmithing, Woodworking, Quilting, Corn Grinding to make grits and meal, Spinning wheel skills, old timey games and toys, old time music and so much more at Ms. Myrtle's historic homestead, this authentic 1880's farm. See farm animals, admire the gardens and find something at the Commissary, the old store, to take home. All this is happening from 9 to 3 at 18736 West Newberry Rd. Newberry. Admission is \$8. per vehicle.



Our biggest event, see how we grind sugar cane to juice then boil it into the exceptional Cane Syrup offered at the Commissary.



Authentic Southern Sugar Cane Syrup
Yummy!



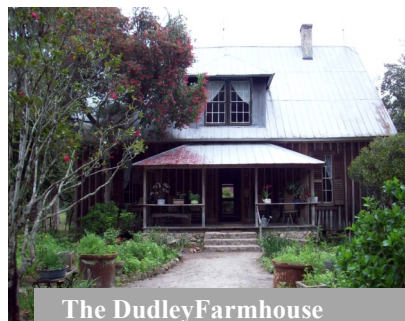
Old time Music throughout the Farm
and Park



Jacob working in the Blacksmith's shop



Corn Grinding



The Dudley Farmhouse



Cracker horses



Bardrock Chickens

**WE ARE GRATEFUL TO THESE GENEROUS CANE DAY SUPPORTS:
Florida USA Credit Union and Publix supermarket**

The Twilight Walk into the Past was a resounding success ~ Thank You!

Thanks to our hard working and creative Park Service Specialist, Sandra Cashes. She was the planner, stage arranger, dialog writer and tough but fun director of the entire event. She handles stress remarkably well.

Thanks to all those who volunteered to play characters from the past. These generous actors were truly exceptional in their roles.

Thanks to the tour guides for leading groups of twenty first century visitors into interesting glimpses of the year 1894.

Thanks to those called “sweepers”, whose job it was to sweep stragglers forward so they wouldn’t miss anything.

There were even more volunteers who played integral parts in the success of the production: the ladies at the ticket table and those on the porch with snacks for visitors. Musicians, whose music added to the atmosphere of the evening both at the Visitors Center (staging area) and at the farm. Store keepers who readily welcomed visitors, told them the story of this Commissary and introduced them to what is offered in the old store. Volunteers manning the Friends of Dudley Farm membership booth introduced visitors to our Citizens Support Org., explaining the many ways in which the CSO supports our park. We are always encouraging membership.

We send a great big **THANK YOU** to all the wonderful volunteers, those seen, those behind the scene and those mentioned above!

A few pictures from the “Ghost Walk”



Comments of an attendee to the Twilight Walk

Upon arrival we saw a sign in reference to purchase tickets on line, which we were aware of so we enquired at the table for new arrivals.

The evening had been scheduled for six groups of ten persons. The leader of each group (tour) hoped to assure that all in their group could get close enough to the focus of the talk or reenactment to hear clearly. We were told that a maximum of two persons could be added per tour, that would cause us to divide our group. In the few minutes of waiting more and more people were arriving, causing a change of plans, there were now 14 - 18 persons per tour. All who came were welcomed and attended the tours.

We were welcomed with lovely string music and singing as well as the fresh aroma of burning wood for warmth and comfort. We first went through the main building to see the remnants of the 1800's. The fabric and clothing they wore, the old letters written to family, the hand written titles of purchases of property, deeds and the like, a little of everything from the 1800's.

Next we went to the store and observed books, plants, fruit trees and native plants of the day (1800's) edible plants, weeds, etc. that you could culture and eat if necessary.

Our first stop on the tour was very exciting, we heard and saw a young pioneer family as they were traveling from Trenton to Gainesville to help their mother as their father had recently passed away. The people spoke in the dialect of those from this areas during the 1800's. Men spoke to their wives with titles, not their first names. Family members addressed each other as wife, husband, brother, etc. not by their names. Their lives were simple at their camp, they had two horses, a wagon, blankets, baskets, knife, lighter for fire, but their journey could be very treacherous if they did not carry enough food and water for their time in travel - it was very important to know where they were going and what they would encounter there as well as where they replenished supplies.

The store was very entertaining as well as the ladies in the kitchen who were eager to have more rights, to be independent and vote for themselves. The cattlemen's stories were very interesting as these were very different times from today.

We had four generations of our family walking together, we were all amazed at how things were accomplished back in the pioneer days. Seems that the days focus was on how and what to gather for food, what to grow for the season and if you had done enough work prior, to save for the necessities. Some meals could have been as simple as bread and coffee or a vegetable and deer, fowl, squirrel, rabbit, stored honey or some sort of wild plant life.

The sounds and smells of our walk brought us into the past as though we were living then. We so enjoyed the travel, dialect and journey of the Dudley Farm Ghost tour. Next year we will certainly be gathering more friends and family to join us on this exciting tour - every person enjoyed it!
~ Leslie Pruitt

A Volunteer's Comments on their Walk in the Past Experience.

Recently Dudley Farm Historic State Park offered to the public a very successful and unique event called "A Walk into the Past". My wife, Mary, and I had the pleasure and opportunity to participate as volunteer musicians. First of all let me extend congratulations to Sandra Cashes for her leadership in this event. She did a wonderful job. She asked Mary and me to provide musical entertainment to the paid guests and the volunteers at the Visitors Center as they waited for their tour group to walk into the past. Here are some comments on our experience.



We set up our popup cover under the trees across from the bathrooms. Sandra set up chairs around us for anyone to sit in while we played tunes. We were not trying to be reenactors but rather entertainers. So, we could talk to the visitors about the event, about the 19th century period music we played and answer any questions they asked about Dudley Farm.

We played music from 6pm to after 9pm Saturday and Sunday. The time flew by. We enjoyed meeting new people and old friends. I, retired teacher that I am, enjoyed explaining the historical context to the songs we sang and played. For instance, one song entitled "Worried Man Blues" has been traced back to the middle of the nineteenth century. It has no known composer but rather just grew up out of the reconstruction period following the end of the Civil War. The verses seemed to describe the plight of recently freed black men

as itinerant unemployed workers and their treatment by local law enforcement. That is at least one interpretation of the lyrics. Most American traditional music has similar historical context.

We had a steady flow of visitors who, hopefully, enjoying our music. Add to that the cookies and lemonade provided on the back porch and you have the recipe for a very welcoming and relaxing beginning to a unique and special experience at the farm.

Les Caraher

OUR VISION STATEMENT

Dudley Farm Historic State Park preserved for the appreciation of future generations.

OUR BUSY EVENT SEASON AT A GLANCE

December 2nd – Cane Day ~ The Fall Farm Festival 9 to 3

December 30th - Bird watching We'll be getting started at 8:00am with Alachua Audubon Society members, Ted and Mary Ellen.

January 13th – Kids Day: About Milk, 10 to 2 learning all about milk

January 27th – Music by Moonlight, 5:30 to 7:30 an evening event

February 10th – Kids Day: Take a Spin, 10 to 2 learning all about cotton

February 24th – Stories by Moonlight, 5:30 to 7:30 an evening event

March 2nd – Plowing Up the Past, 10 to 3 Tractors and more.

March 23rd – Heritage Skills Day, 9 to 3 all sorts of old time skills

April 13th – Partake of the Past; 9 to 3
Girl Scouts ~ as girls living in the 1880's. Their work & play.

Saturday's farmstead tours: December 30th, March 30th, April 27th.



Kids Days >
Always fun!
Always interesting!
Always educational!



SANDRA'S TID BITS

Hello Once Again! It is that time of the year! Do we know what time that is? Not Turkey Day.... And not Christmas time holidays...

It is Cane time! The time when we harvest the cane. Strip, cut and squeeze the sugary juice from the cane to make a wonderful elixir called cane syrup! It is that time of the year.

That time that comes after the pecans and black walnuts have fallen. Just as the winter garden is being set with collard and turnip greens. Time to make the golden, honey-like nectar. The sweetness that brings together the men and women with craftsman like skills. The skills that it takes to boil that brown cane juice the correct amount of time. The skills it takes to skim the impurities of the top of the boiling mass to make a syrup that is

steeped in long standing traditions of many kinds.

Here is a little scientific tidbit for all: Sugarcane cultivation requires a tropical or subtropical climate, with a minimum of 60 cm (24 in) of annual moisture. It is one of the most efficient photo synthesizers in the plant kingdom. It is a C4 plant, able to convert up to 1% of incident solar energy into biomass. In primary growing regions across the tropics and subtropics, sugarcane crops can produce over 15 kg/m2 of cane.

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sugarcane>

Our very own event then demonstrates the techniques used to turn the cane juice into syrup. Join us on December 2nd at our Fall Harvest and Cane Festival! We will be doing a boil to make the sweetest cane syrup in Florida!

The Saturday farmstead tours continue ~ December 30th, March 30th, April 27th.

Visit and discover this impressive, post Civil War to the 1940's, authentic working farm founded by P.B.H. Dudley, Sr.

Miss Myrtle Dudley donated this treasure, her homestead, to the Florida Park Service to preserve for future generations to learn about the life of those who preceded them.

Miss Myrtle Dudley - 1891 to 1996.

This is a one-of-a-kind, authentic 1880's working Florida farm, not a re-created farmstead.

Through ingenuity, integrity and hard work this area became known as the Dudley community. It was the center and crossroads connecting Newberry, Archer, Jonesville and Gainesville. This was an active community and, here on the Dudley farm, was the general store and post office. The sugar cane complex, with its press/grinder and double vat boiler, was used by many of the neighbors throughout each year. Every autumn, after harvest, cane syrup was made, it was a festive time for the entire community.



The eighteen structures are all original and are a very well preserved example of a mid 19th and 20th century Cracker farm. You'll see the Cracker cattle herd in the pasture and the Cracker horses grazing in their field. The chickens and turkeys are poultry breeds common of the Dudley era. There are figs and bananas. Citrus, peach, pecan and black walnut trees planted by the Dudley's date back to 1840's and the 1890's, they are still producing.

On these tours you will follow a park staff or docent in period clothing as they talk about the homestead, it's buildings, farm animals, gardens and local history. **10 am. 18730 W. Newberry Rd, (352) 472-1142, admission to the park is \$5/per vehicle.**

Tidbits from the Farm

Val Leitner proposed we once again celebrate Thanksgiving at the Dudley kitchen, as some of us did last year. In attendance was Val Leitner, Sandra Cashes, Tom Fasulo, John and Jill Dunnan and Jacob Mehegan. Everyone contributed their favorite dish to the extensive menu. It was a yummy Thanksgiving meal, a good time was had by all!

The first **Sugar Cane boil** was November 18th. Approximately 120 bottles were produced. The next 'cooken' will be on Cane Day. Come watch how it's done. =====>



Volunteer, Lee Etchell, has done amazing work in the farmhouse gardens. Weeds have been eliminated! The old flower beds look wonderful! Momma Dudley would be so pleased to see her gardens looking, again, just like she kept them. **Thank you Lee!**

Dayle Kendrick has been hard at work the last few years repairing and replacing worn out wooden items and structures throughout the farm and Visitors Center.



He has led the way in rebuilding fences and gates, both huge and small. Reframing the farmhouse windows was another big job. Working on the chicken coops too, and building a new door for the coop. He has been assisted in many of these efforts by his 'right hand man', **Frank**.

Their latest project and **his last at our park** is rebuilding the brooder house for the Rhode Island Red's.

We're going to miss him and his leadership pertaining to what needs to be done and the best way to do it.



Dayle and Frank

Thank you Dayle!

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

Our Mission is to enhance the visitors experience through supporting preservation and through education at Dudley Farm, a one of a kind 1880's farm.

**The Friends of Dudley Farm
Citizens Support Org.**

Board of Directors

President: Emelie Matthews
Vicc President: Gayle Ambrose
Secretary: Archie Matthews
Treasurer: Joseph Malphurs
Past President: Art Wade

Board Members

Cydney Wade; Lorraine McDowell;
Susan McNulty; Norm Tankersley;
Gloria Hughes

Committee Persons

Membership: Cydney & Art Wade
Commissary CEO: Norm Tankersley
Correspondence: Emelie Mathews
Website: Irma Riley, Cyd & Art Wade
Publicity: Irma Riley
Collections Committee:
Chris Smith and Pat Fitzpatrick
Entrance Sign: Lorraine McDowell
& Gloria Hughes
Journal: Gloria Hughes
Journal Proofreader: Pat Svorinich

Park Service Specialist

Sandra Cashes ~ 352-258-6648
Park Office ~ 352-472-1142

The Board of Directors meet on the third Monday of each month at the Visitors Center from 2:00 to 4:00pm. All CSO members are encouraged to attend and participate in these important meetings. Hopefully you will join us next month!

To all Friends of Dudley Farm members

*** IMPORTANT ANOUNCEMENT ***

The Annual Meeting

of the Friends of Dudley Farm's Citizen Support Organization

will be held on Sunday, December 17th, at 4:00

in the Visitors Center of the park.

Elections are held at this meeting.

Please consider running for office as a member of the Board of Directors of our CSO.

Nominations, of individuals interested in becoming a member of the Board, will be accepted, discussed and voted on.

Kindly, send names of nominees to:

President, Emelie Matthews at Emeliedudley@zoho.com or
Secretary, Archie Matthews at ArchieMatthews@gmail.com or
mail to them at 11321 NW 292nd Street, Alachua, Florida 32615

All members are intitled to a vote, in person.

Any member, in good standing, can be elected to serve on the Board of our CSO.

There are present Board members who will 'time out' of office. Vacant positions will need to be filled.

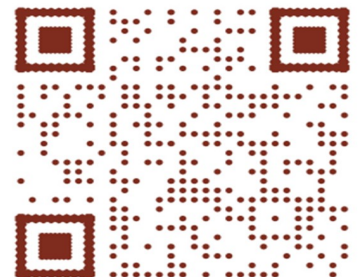
Board committee reports will be presented at this meeting.

**We sincerely hope that you, as a member of this corporation, will make
an effort to attend this important meeting.**

On the right, please see our QR code. Scanning this "Quick Response" code will take you directly to the Friends of Dudley Farm website at the membership / donation page.

While there, you can easily renew your membership or, if you're not yet a member, you can join our vital Citizens Support Organization.

All you need is a smart phone and internet connection. We hope that you will use this new technology, it's easy and efficient.



**THE FRIENDS OF DUDLEY FARM CITIZENS SUPPORT ORG.
MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES**

Student - yearly - \$10. Individual - yearly - \$20. Organization - yearly - \$80. Corporate - yearly - \$200.
Family (same address) yearly - \$30. Life Individual - \$350. Life Couple - \$550.

Yearly membership runs from January 1st to December 31st.

Use the QR above or

Submit membership dues to "The Friends of Dudley Farm", at 18730 W. Newberry Road. Newberry, Fl. 23669

We are the Dudley Farm Citizens Support Organization

Visit us at www.FriendsofDudleyFarm.org

Like us on Facebook.



This Issue’s Featured Plant ~ The Angle’s Trumpet

It is mainly a woody tree or shrub, featured with pendulous flowers. The large, fragrant flowers inspire the common name angel's trumpet. Angles trumpet is a showy and unique addition to any garden and is prized for its flowers which have a trumpet shape and a variety of colors including yellow, orange, white, pink, or red.

Not edible! All parts of angel’s trumpet are poisonous when ingested.

You will find this plant, offered for sale, at the Commissary come Spring.

News from the Domestic Skills Group

These wonderfully talented ladies have been busy creating hand crafted items in the same manner as those of the Dudley era. Their workmanship is unmatched.

Stop by for a visit each Wednesday morning, you’ll be cheerily greeted, invited to participate and informed about their group and all about Dudley Farm.


The lovely quilt that they are working on will be finished soon. Another charming quilt is already finished and ready for Cane Day, it will be presented to one lucky person via a ticket drawing. It is a priceless quilt, that so many hands have lovingly and painstakingly worked on all year.

So, with the hope of being the owner of a beautiful quilt you are encouraged to purchase a \$2.00 ticket when at the park.



We are looking for / in need of:

If there is anyone who has sign lettering that they are no longer using, we are in need of additional and replacement letters for the entrance sign at the park. The gals who keep the sign messages current have had to become very creative re-inventing needed letters from those available. There have been times when doing that has caused hysterical laughter, other times utter frustration. Never give up, is their motto!

The size and type of these letters: ADM Changeable rigid plastic panel, 11 7'8 high with 10" black letters. The Font is "Pronto AD" The CSO is great at supplying whatever is needed at the park but, I thought, by chance, someone just might have such letters that they no longer have need for and would like to see them put to good use again. Thanks! 

The holidays are right around the corner and this is the last Journal of 2023, time flies by entirely to quick!

Throughout the upcoming holidays and the new year ahead we wish health, happiness, comfort and love to all of our members and everyone reading this Journal.

Here are some thoughts with the holidays and year end in mind:

“The best and most beautiful things cannot be seen or even touched. They must be felt with the heart.” ~ Helen Keller


The Way to a Happy New Year

To leave the old with a burst of song; To recall the right and forgive the wrong; To forget the things that bind you fast to the vain regrets of the year that’s past; To have the strength to let go your hold of the not worth while of the days grown old; To dare go forth with a purpose true, to the unknown task of the year that’s new; To help your brother along the road to do his work and lift his load; To add your gift to the world’s good cheer; To have and to give a Happy New Year. ~ Author Unknow

Friends of Dudley Farm
18730 W. Newberry Rd.
Newberry, Florida 32669



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