# WALTON RELATIONS & HISTORY

## Volume 9, Issue 4 Walton County Heritage Association

**March 2018** 

#### WPA County Histories, Walton County Seat <u>Transcript by the WPA, 1939</u> Edited by Sam Carnley

During the great depression, the WPA (Works Progress Administration) created the Historical Records survey. Its purpose was to make a countyby-county survey of local governmental documents available in courthouses around each state, and also provide employment for historians, lawyers, teachers and other professionals who had lost their jobs due to the depression. The survey for Florida was titled "Inventory of County Archives of Florida" and included histories for every county. Presented below is the part of the history for Walton County on its county seat. Over the years there has been much discussion about where the original county seat was. This article puts that argument to rest by providing a complete history of the subject.

#### **Walton County Seat**

With the creative act of 1824 the "Big Spring on the Choctawhatchee river" was designated the temporary county seat of Walton county. (*Terr. Acts.* 1824-25, p. 252.) The following year this was repealed and an act was passed which specified the house of William Bailey, at the head of Alaqua Creek, as the provisional county site. (*Terr. Acts*, 1825, p. 83.) In February, 1833, with the revocation of the previous Act, it was provided that an election be held in the county in May to determine a permanent county seat.

# **Upcoming Reunions**

CARNLEY - 10 AM-2PM, Saturday, 7 April 2018, at Christina Park Screened Pavilion, 625 West CR 540-A, Lakeland, Florida. Contact Sam Carnley, wsamuelcarnley@gmail.com, or 850-209-3778.
PALMER (PARMER) - 10 AM-2PM, 28 April (4th Saturday), 2018, Paxton Agricultural Complex, 22036 U. S. 331 North, Paxton, Florida. Contact: Ogie Palmer Posey, 850-981-3457, e-mail: poseypoint@gmail.com

For a complete listing see the <u>Reunions</u> page at the following link:

http://www.waltoncountyheritage.org/genealogy.htm

#### <u>Query from Hank Klein</u>

Michael Gimaldi and his brother built a large house on what was called Yellow Bluff. He and his wife platted Miramar Beach, Florida. Michel Grimaldi died in 1968, but his daughter Barbara Grimaldi continued to develop Miramar Beach. She just went to a nursing home in November 2017. Would the Museum [or anyone receiving the newsletter] happen to have a picture of the Yellow Bluff (Michael Grimaldi) home?

Thanks, Hank Cell: <u>501/256-7474</u> <u>klein@aristotle.net</u>

#### Walton County Heritage Museum Open Tuesday – Saturday, 1:00 – 4:00 PM 1140 Circle Drive, De Funiak Springs, FL 32435 850-951-2127 http://www.waltoncountyheritage.org/

(Cont'd on page 2)

#### WPA County Histories, Walton County Seat **Transcript by the WPA, 1939** Edited by Sam Carnley

(Cont'd from page 1)

A further provision named Alagua, and Sandy Creek Settlement near Campbell's pond, as the places for the ballot to decide. David Evans, Isaac M. Hunter, Neil McPherson, Esg., Jacob Pyburn and Richmond McDavid, were appointed commissioners to select the "most convenient situation in the settlement which shall be elected for the county site---" and they were authorized to contract for a courthouse at the chosen place, for a sum not exceeding two hundred dollars. (*Terr. Acts*, 1833, p. 54.)

The enactment of 1833 was repealed the succeeding year when provision was made for the county court, "while in session", to either appoint commissioners to select the permanent county seat, or to order an election by popular vote. (Terr. Acts, 1834, p. 42.) In December 1845, Eucheeanna was declared the temporary county seat, (Acts, 1845, ch. 41, sec. 1.) and this was restated in July of that year. (Acts, 1845, ch. 4, sec. 3.) An amendment to this act, January 1849, nominated Walton [sic] [?] as the place for holding court, (Acts, 1848-49, ch. 251, sec. 1) and a still further act, repealing previous laws that had made Eucheeanna the county site, called for an election, in March of that year, of five commissioners to select the county site. (Acts, 1848-49, ch. 285, secs. 1-2.)

At the close of two years, however, it was provided that Eucheeanna remain the county seat until a permanent place was selected and suitable buildings erected. (Acts, 1850-51, ch. 392, sec. 1.) The first Monday in October, 1853, was the definite date established for an election of a permanent county seat, and this act repealed all prior laws conflicting with the new act. (Acts and Resolutions, 1852-53, secs. 1-3, 6.) Eucheeanna was apparently the chosen place and remained so until some time in 1885, when the courthouse and all early records were burned. A special election was held here in February, 1886, to change the county site and out of 570 votes, DeFuniak Springs received 317. (Minutes of County Commissioners, vol. 1, pp. 1, 11.) At this place, C. C. Banfill furnished a house for the county officers for a year, and in 1887 contract for a courthouse was let. A new courthouse was built in 1926. (*Ibid.*, vol. 1, pp. 14, 35; vol. 7, p. 205.)

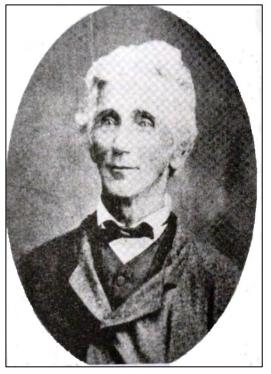
(Source: WPA County Histories, Walton County, County Seat, Florida Memories, State Library and Archives of Florida, https://www.floridamemory.com/items/show/321167?id=6, downloaded by Sam Carnley, 3-14-2018.)

### **Reverend John Newton**

By Marla Drake Dooley and Bob Newton (Selections From the "Heritage of Walton County, Florida") Transcribed and edited by Sam Carnley

John Newton was born April 22, 1814 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Of Scottish descent, he attended Amherst College and taught school in North Carolina before migrating to Pensacola, Florida, where, in 1848 he met members of the McKinnon family. Learning that he was a school teacher in search of employment, they invited him to accompany them to their homes in Walton County. He accepted the invitation and traveled with them aboard the schooner "Henrietta" to Freeport. From there he was taken to the Eucheeanna home of Colonel McKinnon who was so impressed with him that he took him to the Valley Church and introduced him to the elders. Newton later recalled of that meeting:

> ... There were quite a number of old Scotch elders and others in their substantial homespun jeans, suits of blue and dark brown; some sitting on the long door-steps basking in the sunshine, while others stood around them under and leaning against the great oaks that stood in front of the church. The Col. introduced me to all of them, telling them where I was from and how I came. I received a handshake welcome that I rarely met with in any other country.



**Reverend John Newton** (Source: "The Heritage of Walton County, Florida")

A meeting was held the next day to hash out the particulars of

Newton's employment as a teacher and the plans for a new school building. Knox Hill in the center of the Valley and one of the most elevated places in the county with an all-around view was selected as the location. The new, two story building had blackboards set in the walls, and large maps of both hemispheres hung upon the walls in the back of the building.

The school grew until there were about 100 students. The larger students were put upstairs on their good behavior; the younger ones were kept below under the watchful eye of the teacher. When there was trouble above, the troublemakers were brought down and given seats in the front of the lower room.

This new school, completed in 1849, was built by the parents, relatives, and friends of the students to be served. Although the Presbyterian Church was the School board, Methodists, Baptists, and Roman Catholics attended from places as far away as Pensacola and the neighboring states. The state and Federal governments neither helped nor hindered the school. No union or ACLU was breathing down its neck, proving once again that educated, intelligent, and dedicated teachers coupled with motivated parents make successful schools, not money and the fads of the day.

In 1858 at about age 34, Newton married Margaret Campbell, granddaughter of Daniel Campbell, one of the early settlers. Their first child, Angus Campbell, was born in 1859 and died about five months later. In 1863 they had a daughter, Mary Christine, who died in 1937. Esther Newton, who married Gustav Axelson, was born in 1861 and died in 1931 [in Pensacola]. Ten years into their marriage,

Newton's wife Margaret died in 1868 and was laid to rest in the Euchee Valley [Presbyterian Church] Cemetery.

He was not a physically large man, but he was a person who stuck by his guns and his convictions. He put a piano in the school to teach the young ladies how to play. He also encouraged them to become more used to fashionable but simple attire. His motto was "You must learn and obey." In 1854 when the trustees of his school told him to restrict the use of some of the books he had for his library because they thought the books had abolitionist leanings and were favorable to economic principles with which they disagreed, Newton said he would use the books in his school as he wished or leave the school. The equally stubborn Scots wouldn't back down and Newton resigned and left for California. He later returned to Florida and taught in Marianna and Orange Hill. By 1859 he was back in Eucheeanna, had taken a wife, fathered his first child and he and the trustees had moved the old Knox Hill Academy and started over again.

[It is generally believed] that Knox Hill Academy and other schools Newton founded and taught graduated well-educated students who did well in law, government, medicine and education. In 1853 he was one of four Floridians in the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Although his application only claimed 'ESPECIAL INTEREST' in five fields, he was accepted in the nine fields recognized by the Association at that time. Every time he changed schools, parents changed their children to go to his schools. [An early believer in continuing professional education,] he continued his in Atlanta and Michigan and became an ordained minister as well as a teacher. [One of the places where he served as minister was the Euchee Valley Presbyterian Church, whose elders were among the first to welcome him on his arrival in the county.]

Unfortunately, much of the good work in the county he had done in educating the young men of the area was wasted by the carnage and deaths resulting from the War Between the States. He did not believe in slavery but that did not deter him from marrying two women who were the daughters and granddaughters of two of the county's major slave holders. He didn't favor secession either and in this he was in step with the rest of the county which voted against it. [His rationale for tolerating both] slavery and secession apparently was that he was a part of the community he lived in. However, he didn't trim his sails to meet popular opinion and the more thoughtful residents of the area -- who were also the major slave holders -- respected his opinions and supported him as a teacher. Reverend Robert Quarterman Baker, a Confederate veteran from Georgia who served until the end of the war, was a staunch friend and admirer whose daughter married Newton's son.

Newton taught during the first three years of the war, but as more of his best students were killed, his first child [having] died in 1860 when only a year old, and feelings about the war running higher and higher, he resigned again and went to California a second time. [Apparently, he made a side trip to the mid-west during this absence from the county because the birth place of his second daughter, Mary Christine, born in 1863, was Illinois.]

[He did not remain out of county for long though.] By 1866 he was back teaching again in Marianna, two years before his first wife, Margaret died. In 1867 he resumed teaching at Knox Hill. He also felt it his duty to minister to the spiritual and educational needs of the freed slaves. In 1868 he left again-this time for Missouri. In 1870 he returned, and married his sister-in-law Mary Catherine, [she was listed as a member of Newton's household under her maiden name of Campbell on the 1870 U. S. census of Walton County] after which he moved to Camp Walton in Santa Rosa County, where he established a school and a church. [On 10 October 1871, he established the community's first post office and was appointed postmaster. He named the post office Mary Esther after his two daughters which also became the name of the town that grew up around it.] It is where his son, John Daniel Campbell was born the following November 20th and his second wife died the day after she bore the child and was buried at the Euchee Valley Presbyterian Church Cemetery.

[As of the U. S. census of 1880 (Figure 1) and the Florida State census of 1885, (Figure 2) Newton and his two daughters were living in Santa Rosa County. Curiously, his son, John Daniel Campbell did not appear in his household in either of those censuses, both of which gave the birth place of his daughter Mary Christine as Illinois.]

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Ester Newton	Daughter	F	19	Florida, United States
Mary C Newton	Daughter	F	17	Illinois, United States

#### **Citing this Record**

"United States Census, 1880," database with images, *FamilySearch* (https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:MNZC-3HG : 29 July 2017), Mary C Newton in household of John Newton, Precinct 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11, Santa Rosa, Florida, United States; citing enumeration district ED 138, sheet 220D, NARA microfilm publication T9 (Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, n.d.), roll 0132; FHL microfilm 1,254,132. Downloaded by Sam Carnley, 3-10-2018.

**Figure 1. The John Newton Household** on the 1880 U. S. Census of Santa Rosa County, Florida.

Jno (John) Newton, 1885 Florida State Census ice Place: , Santa Rosa, Florida onths): ear (Estimated): 1814 ace: Pennsylvania Date: s Birthplace: Pennsylvania 's Birthplace: Pennsylvania Status: Married riginal): W Vhite le Type: Population mber: 30 umber: etter: D nship to Head of Household: Self Number: Number: 1 number: 888972 Folder Number: 4280075 Number: 00516 hold Role Scx Age Birthplace n, Jno Self M 71 Pa. D F 23 Fl. D <u>III</u>. 21 this Record State Census, 1885," database with amilySearch (https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:MNJ8-NY2 : 1 April 2016), ton, Santa Rosa, Florida; citing p., sheet letter D, number, line 30, NARA microfilm on M845 (Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, n.d.); FHL 1888,972. Downloaded by Sam Carnley, 3-10-2018.

**Figure 2. The John Newton Household** on the 1885 Florida state Census of Santa Rosa County.

His oldest daughter, Esther, married Gustav Axelson at her father's home in Santa Rosa on 17 January 1883. [Her father probably performed the ceremony. The year of the marriage is questionable because Esther was still a member of her father's household on the 1885 Florida State census.] Gustav was born April 10, 1858 in East Bay, Santa Rosa County, son of Frederick A. Axelson (1825 Sweden-

1883) and Margaret Hunter (1825 Scotland-1887). The Axelson family owned a shipyard at Miller Point in Santa Rosa County. Gustav and Esther Axelson made their home in Pensacola on Florida Blanca Street. He was captain of "Donna Christine," a three-mast schooner, in the early nineties. In December of 1910, Gustav was aboard his ship "Dois" off Belize, Honduras, when he fell overboard during a storm and lost at sea. [Esther, who never remarried, continued living in her home at 318 South Florida Blanca Street in Pensacola until her death in 1931.]

In 1885, John Newton was asked by the founders of the Florida Chautauqua to take an active role in its creation. He declined with thanks because of his age and his work -- teacher, preacher and postmaster. He and his daughter [Mary Christine, who never married,] remained in Mary Esther until 1889 when they moved to Pensacola [to live with Esther and Gustav Axelson.] Newton lived there until his death in 1893. [According to his death certificate, he died of endocarditis, which "generally occurs when bacteria, fungi or other germs from another part of your body, such as your mouth, spread through your bloodstream and attach to damaged areas in your heart." The place of

death was identified as "cor. (corner) Zaragosa & F. Blanca St., which was the address of the Axelson home. His remains were "Shpd. to DeFuniak Sprgs" (Figure 3)] and he was buried in the Eucheeanna Presbyterian Cemetery with his son, wives, daughters, grandson, and one great grandchild.

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**Figure 3. John Newton's Death Certificate** "(Source: Florida Death Index, 1877-1998," database, *FamilySearch*(https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:VVZ H-NQW : 25 December 2014), John Newton, 1893; from "Florida Death Index, 1877-1998," index, *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com : 2004); citing vol., certificate number, Florida Department of Health, Office of Vital Records, Jacksonville. Downloaded by Sam Carnley, 3-10-2018.)

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(NARA)				
Affiliate Publicatio		r: T6	25	
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Christina Axelson	Daughter	F		Florida
J N Axelson	Son	Μ	23	Florida
	Sister	F	35	Illinois
Mary C Newton				

**Figure 4. The Esther Axelson Household** on the 1920 U. S. Census of Escambia County, Florida.

[As of the 1920 U. S. census of Escambia

County, Mary Christine was listed in the household headed by her widowed sister, Esther Axelson. Mary's place of birth on that census was also Illinois (Figure 4). When Esther died in 1931, her home went to her children. They allowed Mary to continue living there until her death on 22 July 1937, as evidenced by her residence of 318 S. Fla. Blanca St. listed on her death certificate. It identified her as Miss Mary Christine Newton, single white female. Her age was listed as 73 years, 10 months and 10 days. Parents - John Newton and Margaret Campbell. Cause of death was Chronic Cardiac Valvular Disease (Figure 5). Her remains were returned to the Euchee Valley Presbyterian Church Cemetery for burial with other members of her family.]

[The Gustav Axelson House is now an historic land mark in Pensacola (Figure 6). Evidence that it was the place of John Newton's death is provided by a photo of the house with street signs in front reading "Zaragosa St. and Florida Blanca St," as stated on his death certificate.]

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**Figure 6.** The Gustav Axelson House, at 318 S. Florida Blanca St., (Corner of Zaragosa St. & F. Blanca St.) Pensacola, Fl., where John Newton and his daughters, Esther Newton Axelson and Mary Christine Newton lived at the time of their deaths. (Source: Historic American Buildings Survey, Creator. *Gustave Axelson House, 318 South Florida Blanca Street, Pensacola, Escambia County, FL*. Documentation Compiled After. Photograph. Retrieved from the Library of Congress, <www.loc.gov/item/fl0006/>. Downloaded by Sam Carnley 3-10-2018.)

#### (Source: "Florida Deaths, 1877-1939," database, *FamilySearch*(https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:FPWR-8GP : 9 March 2018), John Newton in entry for Mary Christine Newton, 22 Jul 1937; citing Pensacola, Escambia, Florida, reference 12227; FHL microfilm 2,135,949. Downloaded by Sam Carnley 3-10-2018.)

Figure 5. Mary Christine Newton's Death Certificate,

**John Newton Family** Find A Grave Website Memorials Euchee Valley Cemetery

#### John Newton

Birth: 22 Apr 1814 Death: 25 Nov 1893 (aged 79) Burial: Euchee Valley Cemetery, Eucheeanna, Walton County, Florida, USA Memorial #: 33328422 Created by: David Woody (46846767) Added: 28 Jan 2009 URL: https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/33328422/john-newton Citation: Find A Grave, database and images (https://www.findagrave.com : accessed 11 March 2018), memorial page for John Newton (22 Apr 1814–25 Nov 1893), Find A Grave Memorial no. 33328422, citing Euchee Valley Cemetery, Eucheeanna, Walton County, Florida, USA ; Maintained by David Woody (contributor 46846767) .

#### Margaret Campbell Newton (First Wife)

Birth: 28 Sep 1848 [**Birth year incorrect. S/B 1834 per photo of headstone**] Death: 9 Sep 1868 (aged 19) [She would have been aged 34 based on birth year of 1834] Burial: Euchee Valley Cemetery, Eucheeanna, Walton County, Florida, USA Memorial #: 33328423 Created by: David Woody (46846767) Added: 28 Jan 2009 URL: https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/33328423/margaret-newton Citation: Find A Grave, database and images (https://www.findagrave.com : accessed 11 M

Citation: Find A Grave, database and images (https://www.findagrave.com : accessed 11 March 2018), memorial page for Margaret Campbell Newton (28 Sep 1848–9 Sep 1868), Find A Grave Memorial no. 33328423, citing Euchee Valley Cemetery, Eucheeanna, Walton County, Florida, USA ; Maintained by David Woody (contributor 46846767).

#### Angus Campbell Newton (First Child)

Birth: 3 Oct 1859 Death: 20 Mar 1860 (aged 5 months) Burial: Euchee Valley Cemetery, Eucheeanna, Walton County, Florida, USA Memorial #: 30239891 Created by: Ann Ward (47055608) Added: 1 Oct 2008 URL: https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/30239891/angus-campbell-newton Citation: Find A Grave, database and images (https://www.findagrave.com : accessed 11 March 2018), memorial page for Angus Campbell Newton (3 Oct 1859–20 Mar 1860), Find A Grave Memorial no. 30239891, citing Euchee Valley Cemetery, Eucheeanna, Walton County, Florida, USA ; Maintained by Ann Ward (contributor 47055608) .

#### Esther Newton Axelson (Second Child)

Birth: 12 Jul 1861 Death: 11 Nov 1931 (aged 70) Burial: Euchee Valley Cemetery, Eucheeanna, Walton County, Florida, USA Memorial #: 33327507 Added: 28 Jan 2009 URL: https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/33327507/esther-axelson Citation: Find A Grave, database and images (https://www.findagrave.com : accessed 11 March 2018), memorial page for Esther Newton Axelson (12 Jul 1861–11 Nov 1931), Find A Grave Memorial no. 33327507, citing Euchee Valley Cemetery, Eucheeanna, Walton County, Florida, USA ; Maintained by David Woody (contributor 46846767) .

#### Mary Christine Newton (Third Child)

Birth: 12 Sep 1863 Death: 22 Jul 1937 (aged 73) Burial: Euchee Valley Cemetery, Eucheeanna, Walton County, Florida, USA Memorial #: 33328426 Created by: David Woody (46846767) Added: 28 Jan 2009 URL: https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/33328426/mary-christine-newton Citation: Find A Grave, database and images (https://www.findagrave.com : accessed 11 March 2018), memorial page for Mary Christine Newton (12 Sep 1863–22 Jul 1937), Find A Grave Memorial no. 33328426, citing Euchee Valley Cemetery, Eucheeanna, Walton County, Florida, USA ; Maintained by David Woody (contributor 46846767) .

#### Mary Catherine Campbell Newton (Second Wife, and sister of first wife)

Birth: 13 Nov 1842 Death: 21 Nov 1871 (aged 29) Burial: Euchee Valley Cemetery, Eucheeanna, Walton County, Florida, USA Memorial #: 33328425 Created by: David Woody (46846767) Added: 28 Jan 2009 URL: https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/33328425/mary-catherine-newton Citation: Find A Grave, database and images (https://www.findagrave.com : accessed 11 March 2018), memorial page for Mary Catherine Campbell

Citation: Find A Grave, database and images (https://www.findagrave.com : accessed 11 March 2018), memorial page for Mary Catherine Campbell Newton (13 Nov 1842–21 Nov 1871), Find A Grave Memorial no. 33328425, citing Euchee Valley Cemetery, Eucheeanna, Walton County, Florida, USA ; Maintained by David Woody (contributor 46846767) .

#### John Daniel Campbell Newton (Fourth child, first with with second wife)

Birth: 20 Nov 1871

Death: 2 Jan 1919 (aged 47) Burial: Euchee Valley Cemetery, Eucheeanna, Walton County, Florida, USA

Memorial #: 33328421 Bio: 1919 J D C Newton, died at Pensacola Thursday morning. Services at Valley Church on Friday afternoon, the remains brought from Pensacola to Argyle and from there taken to the cemetery. Mr Newton was a nephew of Judge Daniel Campbell and a cousin to Mrs C B McKinnon, Judge A G Campbell, Mrs John McKinnon, Miss Emma Campbell, Mr Bowers and Mr Ralph Campbell. He was raised in the Eucheeana Valley, his father being Rev. John Newton. Mr Newton was 45 was survived by his wife Miss Maria Baker, daughter of Rev R L Baker and young son Robert, 2 sisters Mrs G Axelson and Miss Christian Newton, aunt, Mrs Harrison, and uncle, Judge Daniel Campbell.

Created by: David Woody (46846767)

Added: 28 Jan 2009

URL: https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/33328421/john-daniel\_campbell-newton

Citation: Find A Grave, database and images (https://www.findagrave.com : accessed 11 March 2018), memorial page for John Daniel Campbell Newton (20 Nov 1871–2 Jan 1919), Find A Grave Memorial no. 33328421, citing Euchee Valley Cemetery, Eucheeanna, Walton County, Florida, USA ; Maintained by David Woody (contributor 46846767).

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Walton County Heritage Association

Membership in the Walton County Heritage Association includes Membership in the Museum and Genealogy Society

2018

# PLEASE COMPLETE THIS FORM as we are updating our records

# Membership Benefits:

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Members get free copies of documents and use of the Genealogy Society computer when Museum is open to the public.

#### The Museum Gift Shop:

Members receive 10% discounts on books, special publications, postcards, photographs, CDs, DVD's Videos and Gift items.

Membership is on a calendar year basis. Those paying in November or December will be members during those months as well as the next calendar year.

Walton County Heritage Association annual dues: Single - \$25.00 Family - \$40

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