

About Us

The Santa Rosa Historical Society, Inc. was chartered in 1974 and is a tax-exempt, non-profit organization dedicated to the identification, documentation and preservation of Santa Rosa County, Florida's unique historical legacy.

We encourage you to share memories and artifacts, as well as, donating your time, talent and money to continue our service to the community. Membership meetings and newsletters will keep you informed of activities and events of the Society.

Ghost Walk

The Santa Rosa Historical Society's annual Ghosts of Milton Walking Tour (Ghost Walk) is held every October in historic Downtown Milton. As family-friendly event, this guided tour welcomes ghosts of Santa Rosa County's past for a night filled with entertainment and history. We welcome your help in hosting this event.

Event Planning - Display Construction - Ticket Sales
Tour Guides - Actors - Hospitality - Ushers
Carpentry - Painting - Costume Making

Volunteer

Several opportunities exist to volunteer with the Santa Rosa Historical Society. Although the Museum and Theater are closed, you can still provide assistance in one of the following areas where we need your help:

Collections & Acquisitions
Exhibit Planning
Event/ Program Planning
Fundraising & Membership
Public Relations & Marketing
Hospitality and Food Preparation
Other Special Interests & Skills

How can you help?

To volunteer, please call (850) 626-9830 or visit
www.SantaRosaHistoricalSociety.com

Santa Rosa Historical Society, Inc.
6866 Caroline Street
Milton, FL 32570
www.SantaRosaHistoricalSociety.com

Santa Rosa Historical Society

Membership Application



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Preserving the History of Santa Rosa County

The IMOGENE THEATER was built as a vaudeville theater in 1912 and opened under the name of the Milton Auditorium. The Imogene Theater is located in the Downtown Milton Historic District, which is on the National Register of Historic Places.

Upon its opening, the theater offered "moving pictures" three nights a week and vaudeville performances on Saturday nights. In 1920, the theater was renamed Imogene after the 11-year-old daughter of the owner, Clyde Gooch. The Imogene was a premiere facility in its heyday, boasting a Wurlitzer organ in the 1920s and the first air conditioning in Milton in the 1930s. The first floor of the building was used for the Milton Post Office until 1940 when a new federal building opened nearby. The theater closed in 1946 when the Milton Theater opened on Elmira Street.

A variety of businesses were housed in the building throughout the next three decades and the theater space on the second floor was used primarily for storage. The building was eventually abandoned and vacant by the time the Santa Rosa Historical Society purchased the building in 1985 to prevent its demolition. The restoration was completed in 1988.

Throughout the next twenty years, the Museum of Local History was housed on the first floor of the Imogene while the downstairs parlor and theater were rented out for special events including plays, concerts, weddings, parties, and meetings. On January 6, 2009, a fire in downtown Milton destroyed neighboring buildings and severely damaged the Imogene. The building has been closed since that time. With insurance claims and hopeful grant awards, the Society hopes to have the building reopened by 2011.

Expansion of facilities and activities are planned upon the Imogene's reopening. The restoration of the Imogene is dependant upon the dedication of the Society's members and through the financial generosity of people like you.

We welcome you to help us once again preserve this community landmark so that it serves many more generations of Santa Rosa County citizens.

The Imogene is located approximately 23 miles northeast of Pensacola.

The MILTON L&N DEPOT was built between 1907 and 1909 on the site of the original 1882 P&A depot. After the Depot closed in 1973 the Santa Rosa Historical Society purchased the building and partially restored it with a 1976 Bicentennial grant. The West Florida Railroad Museum, Inc. moved into the building in 1989 and completed the restoration.

The museum complex showcases railroad cars including L&N Dining Car 2722, Globe Coffee House, L&N Dining Car 2715, two former Pullman sleeper cars, L&N baggage-dormitory cars 1652 and 1653, L&N caboose 1148, Frisco caboose 1102, L&N box car 18050, and L&N flat car 21107. Outbuildings include a bridge tender's house from the Escambia Bay trestle and a section shed with motor car. The museum houses a wide variety of memorabilia from the L&N, Frisco, and other railroads.

The Depot is on the National Register of Historic Places and is owned by the Santa Rosa Historical Society. The Society leases the property to the West Florida Railroad Museum, Inc. The museum and model railroad gift shop are staffed by volunteers. The museum and gift shop are open every Friday and Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. and other times by appointment for group tours.

The ARCADIA MILL SITE in Milton represents the largest 19th century water-powered industrial complex in Northwest Florida. This site was the location of a multi-faceted operation that included a water-powered sawmill, a lumber mill with planning and lathing machines, gristmill, bucket and pail factory, shingle mill, cotton textile mill, and an experimental silk cultivation operation.

The Santa Rosa Historical Society, with support from the University of West Florida, acquired the site in the 1980s, later conducting historical and archaeological research to preserve, interpret and develop the site as an educational facility. The property was transferred to the University of West Florida in 2004. Arcadia is on the National Register of Historic Places.

Interperative trails and a site museum are open to the public during seasonal hours.

Become a member

Today's Date _____

Yes, I'd like to support the SANTA ROSA HISTORICAL SOCIETY by becoming a member!

Levels of Membership: _____ Individual/Family (\$25.00) _____ Life Membership (\$250.00) _____ Other _____
_____ Patron Membership (\$1,000.00+) *Patron members recognized with name plaque on display in Imogene Theatre.*

All members receive bi-monthly newsletters and invitations to special events including quarterly membership meetings.

Name(s): _____ Telephone: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

E-mail: _____

I'm interested in helping with events or serving on committees (check all that apply)

_____ Ghost Walk _____ Board Member _____ Committee Chair _____ Museum _____ Hospitality _____ Other _____

Make checks payable to "SRHS" and mail to: Santa Rosa Historical Society, Inc., 6866 Caroline Street, Milton, FL 32570