

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER
of
THE ESCAMBIA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
P.O.Box 276
Brewton, Alabama 36426

August 14, 1973

Mrs. Carolyn Pugh McLendon, Editor

NOTICE OF MEETING - The Program Committee takes pleasure in announcing that our guest speaker for the regular monthly meeting to be held on August 21, 1973, at 7:00 p.m. in the Jefferson Davis Junior College Student Center, will be Mr. Buddy Smith, State News Editor and columnist for the Mobile Register. As a result of the wide spread publicity Mr. Smith gave our quarterly publications in his History Review column, we have had many applications for membership. Mr. Smith, a recipient of a Distinguished Service Award for Historic Preservation from the Alabama Historical Commission, and an entertaining speaker, states that he will "shoot the bull a little and tell a little history." We are fortunate that Mr. Smith can be with us for this meeting and I am sure we will have a record attendance.

12 NEW MEMBERS THIS MONTH, TOTAL NOW 200 - Those applying for membership this month are as follows: Mrs. J. F. Peavy, Sr., Hollie W. Thrower, Atmore; Dr. Andrew J. McCreary, Dr. J.W. Douglas, Pensacola; Mrs. Marilyn D. Hahn, Birmingham; Billy L. Bell, Mobile; Mrs. Annie Laurie Lindsey, Montgomery; L. N. Findley, Jay; Robert Hunter Jones, Jr., Evergreen; Dr. Hugh I. Rodgers, Columbus, Ga.; John P. Brady, Coral Gables, Fla.; Mrs. J.W. (Allene Larkins) McCreary, Atlanta.

There is an interesting "race" going between Mrs. C.B. "Miss Rochelle" Garrett and Mr. Ed Leigh McMillan for enrollment of their family members in this Society. They each have nine enrolled at this time.

It is most encouraging to learn that so many of our members and friends are working on history items for the Society and/or trying to secure copies of documents for our records. This is the kind of spirit we need to keep our organization growing and fulfilling its purpose. We gratefully acknowledge this month of the following contributions:

1. Mrs. H.C. Rankin, list of Pastors and elders, Brewton Methodist Church, 1872 to date.
2. Mrs. Malcolm McMillan - list of organizers of Pollard Light Guard, July, 1888.
3. Miss Sallie Davison - "A Short Historic Sketch of Brewton" by Hon. James M. Davison, written in 1922.
4. Reginald McFarland - McConnico Cemetery, Monroe County, Sec. 7-6N-6E; Perdue Hill Cemetery, Sec. 1-6N-5E, and List of Genealogical Materials in the New Orleans Public Library.
5. Ben L. Martin (at the request of Worth P. Smith) - History of Keego Clay Products.
6. Mrs. Annie Waters - "Story of Escambia's Gopher Farm" operated by Robert Emmons; two items on Fort Crawford; several items on the Foshee area; History of 1883 Yellow Fever Epidemic and miscellaneous history notes.
7. Dr. A.J. McCreary - History of the McCreary Plantation at Teddy near McGowin Bridge on Highway 29. This booklet was published as a part of the T.T. Wentworth, Jr. Museum's

- Pensacola Picture Book Collection, Volume No.22, and may be purchased through the Museum, P.O.Box 806, Pensacola, Fla. 32502, for 25¢. There is a good deal of Escambia and Conecuh County history in this booklet.
8. Milo B. Howard, Jr., Director, Department of Archives and History - "Sketch of 38th Infantry Regiment organized May, 1862.
 9. Col. Jim Peavy, miscellaneous notes re Peavy and Carney families.

Notice was received this week that the PIKE PIONEER MUSEUM located on ten acres of beautiful wooded land on the four-lane Highway 231 just north of Troy, Ala. is open every day in the week from 10 A.M. until 5 P.M., and from 1 P.M. until 5 P.M. on Sunday. Admission is \$1 for adults, 50¢ for students, children under six free. Buildings at the museum include a log house, country store and tenant house as well as a large exhibition building. The log house, country store, and tenant house are actual restorations with authentic furnishings and appropriate out-buildings.

AIMS FOR THE QUARTERLY - Some of you have asked how the items published in the quarterly are chosen. For a while the earliest general Escambia County history information available will be used. Family histories will be added gradually as space allows. An index to the 1973 Volume I will be published at the end of the year.

CORRECTIONS! There were two inaccurate statements in the July newsletter. Please correct these on your copies if you are preserving them. Under History notes correct paragraph one to read: "Did you know that the first telegraph office in this area was at Wawbeek in the home of the sister of the Telegraph Company Superintendent. Judge Millard Filmore Brooks learned telegraphy there and later went to work for the railroad as a telegraph operation, until he became Clerk of the Circuit Court of Escambia County, Alabama. Delete the second paragraph entirely as a correct statement with regard to the naming of the town of Wallace was made in the April 6 newsletter.

WHAT IS C A S S A V A? Did you know that it had a part in the history of this area? Watch next month's newsletter for the answer.

HISTORY NOTES - collected by Mrs. Annie Waters

The electric motion picture business opened in Brewton on Friday, March 24, 1911. The proprietors had spent a large sum to insure a proper building and expected a good patronage. Miss Clara B. McKee submitted the winning name for the theater and was presented a \$5 gold piece by the manager. She had suggested the name "Vaudette Theatre." The theatre was located where Moorman Drug Store now stands; a real live pianist produced the music for the silent movies. (Miss McKee might still be able to tell how she selected that name.)

"A No. 1" tramp arrived in Brewton May 5, 1912. He wore overalls over his nice business suit and cleaned up immediately after stepping off a freight train. He made his living by selling two books that he had written. The "aristocratic tramp" had travelled approximately 500,000 miles. All those who saw him on the street mistook him for a business man.

HISTORY NOTES - continued

James Dunlavey born in 1834 was an early settler of the Brewton area and was called "the well digger" because he had the distinction of sinking the first flowing well. He was a happy Irishman who delighted in telling amusing anecdotes.

In January 1888 there was much excitement in and around the Standard Gauge office. The sheriff, with a posse of several hundred men guarding exists, rushed into the printing office to arrest the newly employed type-setter. They thought he was James Burrow, a noted desperado. He proved to be the former assistant foreman of the Birmingham Herald. There were many red faces in Brewton.

Harrepy Garrepy, a 19 year old youth, passed through Brewton on December 15, 1908. He was walking from Boston to San Francisco on a \$4,000 wager if he made the round trip in one and one-half years. He was a month and a half ahead of schedule. The native of New Haven, Conn. averaged 25 miles a day.

In 1911 George Miller, superintendent of the logging department of Cedar Creek Mill Company had an automobile fitted with flanged wheels to run on the company's railroad. "The twenty miles out from Brewton was made in twenty minutes--that's going some," stated the local newspaper.

The March 1912 term of county court was postponed a whole term on account of Judge Millard Brooks' appendix operation. However the Grand Jury met and made its report.

Capt. J. S. Travis of Evergreen commenced the study of law at the age of 60 and was admitted to the bar in less than one year. He visited his nephew John D. Travis of Brewton in May, 1912 at the age of 83.

In August 1912 Escambia County had seven banks which was probably a record for a population of only 18,000. They were: The Bank of Brewton, Farmers and Merchants Bank of Brewton, Citizens Bank of Brewton, Bank of Atmore, Peoples Bank and Trust Company of Atmore, Bank of Pollard, and the Bank of Flomaton.

In February 1908 the Citizens Bank of Brewton received some new \$10 and \$20 gold coins of unique design from the U.S. Treasury. This was the only bank in Alabama to receive this coin at the time as it was not in general circulation. The public was invited to visit the Bank and "let them show you the 'yaller' stuff"

THE PINE BELT NEWS, April 16, 1895 - "The boys have about decided on a site for the bicycle course, and they will soon begin putting it in shape for the great meet on July 4th. Tom Neal and Ned Finlay are paired for Flyers on that day."

THE PINE BELT NEWS, March 13, 1894 - Saturday morning we went up to the canning factory site, and found a force of hands at work nailing on rafters, superintended by contractor, E.J. Brewton. The building is being constructed of the best heart material to be had. It will be a one story house, 50x86 feet, with a storage room overhead, and conveniently arranged for handling fruits and vegetables to the best advantage. The contractors expect to have it completed inside of two weeks by which time the machinery is expected to arrive.