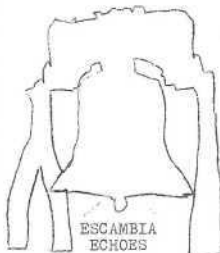


1776 - 1976



Newsletter, May 10, 1976

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The Escambia County Historical Society

P.O.Box 276

Brewton, Alabama 36426

Mrs. Carolyn Pugh McLendon,
Editor

Annual Dues - \$6.00

NOTICE OF MEETING: May 18, 1976, Tuesday, 7:30 p.m. (note change of time to 7:30)

PLACE - Brewton Public Library

PROGRAM - Bicentennial Bell Show & Tell

MASTER OF CEREMONIES - HARRY W. WEAVER

Harry W. Weaver, our county Superintendent of Education and former Vice President of this society, will be Master of Ceremonies and will give a brief history of the Liberty Bell and of several bells of local historical significance, after which he will preside over the members' BELL SHOW & TELL session. Bring your old school bells, plantation bells, cow bells, sheep bells, dinner bells, Chinese bells, camel bells, china bells, souvenir bells, and if its too large to bring, bring a picture of it or just tell us about it. This meeting is going to be a real bell-ringer! When you sign the register, register your bell also so we will have a record of it. We have had good attendance at our meetings year round, let's keep it up. Come and bring a friend.

NEW MEMBERS: Mr. James N. Tedder, 900 W. Douglas Avenue, Oxnard, Calif. 93030; Mrs. Alice Weaver, 903 Lovelace Avenue, Brewton, Ala., and Mrs. Catherine Hyde, 212 Churchill Street, East Brewton, Ala. Total now 304!

MORE AWARDS! We are proud to announce that two more of our members are to receive Awards of Merit from the Alabama Historical Commission, W. Warner Floyd, Executive Director. We are making arrangements to have these awards presented at our June bicentennial party to Atmore historian, J. Floyd Currie, our immediate past President and Chairman of the Atmore Bicentennial Council, and to Mrs. M. G. (Annie C.) Waters, who has written many documented papers for our publications and has recorded a wealth of historical data from her research. Congratulations to these most worthy members!

BICENTENNIAL MARTHA AND GEORGE WASHINGTON PARTY - Be getting your 1776 costumes ready because plans are well under way for an enjoyable evening complete with musical entertainment on Tuesday, June 15, at the recreation hall of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas E. McMillan, 105 McLellan Street, Brewton. Mrs. Theron (Dumas) Jennings Chairman, has appointed Mrs. J.R. (Harriett) Miller to plan the food and Miss Rita Jane Boykin and Mrs.

Jack (Doris) Bruner to plan the entertainment. This party will be for members and their spouses only. Many have asked if a costume is required--the answer is no, as we would never want to work a hardship on anyone and we always want as many members as possible to participate.

Acknowledgments -

Brewton Junior High School, Leon Enzor, Principal, four (4) large pictures which were given to the school by the Fifth Grade Class of 1928, Miss Clarabel McKinnon, Teacher. The students had signed their names on the backs of each of the pictures. The pictures are: A bust of George Washington; Washington Crossing the Delaware; a scene of the nation's Capitol building, and a young girl in pink sitting on a bench.

Duncan Merriwether of Chester Springs, Pa. - History of Chattahoochee County, Georgia, printed in 1933. Many people came to this area by way of the Old Federal Road thru Georgia.

We appreciate these additions to our library collections.

Remember these dates -

May 16, 7:00 p.m. First Baptist Church, bicentennial cantata, John W. Peterson's "I Love America" under direction of Leon Enzor, Minister of Music.

May 20 and 21 - Jefferson Davis Junior College Auditorium, Rodgers and Hammerstein's "OKLAHOMA."

FLOMATON...PRODUCER OF HEROES

The Birmingham News-Age-Herald,

March 11, 1928, Sunday

By: James M. Glenn

ESCAMBIA COUNTY BOASTS OF ONLY ALABAMIAN WITH CONGRESSIONAL MEDAL

This writer has visited Flomaton many times, having many friends there, and it is growing very rapidly. It has one of the most comfortable railway stations in the state, with rocking chairs on the south porch, and the writer has never yet seen a day, or a night, so warm that a nice breeze was not blowing through the station, as the gulf breezes sweep the country. The beautiful railway park on the southern side of the station extends to within a few feet of the Florida line, and the flowing artesian well in the park has a decided sulphur taste.

Within a few feet of that park, but now removed further back, stood the house, partly in Alabama and partly in Florida, in which was born a man who gained distinction in two armies. His name is Whitby, and being of an adventurous nature, he joined the French Foreign Legion before the United States entered the World War. He was in the fearful carnage which virtually annihilated those shock troops, among whom he was, and if memory serves correctly, out of many thousands of them only six individuals were left. He is entitled to wear the ribbons which betoken several high honors he received from the French government, although speaking of them modestly, if asked about them. When the United States entered the war he joined his country's forces, and after being gassed was sent home. He was at Pensacola when Liberty Bonds were being sold, and was brought from Pensacola to speak at Century, Fla.--two miles south of Flomaton--in behalf of those bonds, during that war, and the writer heard him speak. He is said to have returned to Europe before the war ended. He now

lives in Pensacola, either connected with the naval service or expecting to reenlist.

The "Lost Battalion" - Those men know absolutely nothing whatever about this being written, but as much has been written about Whittlesey's "Lost Battalion," cut off by the Germans and relieved by supplies and ammunition brought by airplanes until they were rescued, how many Alabamians know that another Flomaton youth, Lieut. James McCurdy, had a part in that relief? So he did, and one can find him today in the hardware store of his father, J. D. McCurdy, there. He was an observer in the air service. More than once he was in planes shot down by the Germans, and was shot in the neck in a way which came very near being fatal. On account of the strict censorship maintained while the war was in progress, his parents at home knew nothing of his part in helping that lost battalion until they received a government citation telling them of it.

Most Alabamians have heard of Sidney Ernest Manning, and if memory serves correctly, he is the only Alabamian who received the congressional medal of honor, but how many know that he was a Flomaton young man, or that his home was about five miles north of Flomaton. The term is used with highest respect, but he was "only a country boy," and had not had many educational advantages, but when it came to "true grit," he showed to the Germans and to the world that "the gallberry country," as it is often called, could furnish to the world a man who was much honored at Montgomery when he returned, and who is said to have been commended personally by Gen. Pershing. Yet so modest was his demeanor that many visitors to Flomaton who have seen him, in his overalls or other working clothes, did not for a moment suspect his identity. Others might be mentioned, but let not the railway, or highway, traveler forget these things when he passes through Flomaton.

"Maxwell Field" - About a dozen miles westward, in the same county of Escambia, in the cemetery of the Robinsonville Baptist Church, about five miles northeast of Atmore, sleeps the young man--William C. Maxwell--for whom the government air service "Maxwell Field," at Montgomery, is named. He was killed in the air service in the Philippines, and came to his death because of his heroic conduct. He was alighting there, near Manila, in his airship, before a large crowd of persons, when a number of children in the excitement rushed into what would have been his path. He saw that some of them would be killed, so he swerved his plane to one side, crashed into a pole and thus died that others might live.

Stuart's Name For It - Some years ago Dr. George R. Stuart, the noted Birmingham pastor, and who will be remembered by so many thousands of The News readers, came down to Brewton to lecture, and as we two walked one afternoon by the historic "Murder Creek," and the writer spoke to him about some of the historic interest belonging to both "Murder" and "Burnt Corn" Creeks, which unite at Brewton, the writer called his attention to the fact that this is often called "the gallberry country," from the bitter berries found on the swamp growth of that name. It was in the Springtime, and the yellow jessamine vines were in bloom. His attention was called to them, as the delicate vines clambered in the exquisite beauty of their yellow blossoms upon the shrubs and the trees. He was a native of Tennessee, and had never before seen what the writer considers to be the most beautiful of all our wild flowers, and as he looked upon them, he said: "This ought not to be called the gallberry country, it ought to be called the land of the yellow jessamine." He carried some of the beautiful blossoms to his hotel room and that night he mentioned them in his lecture.