



Escambia Echoes



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The Escambia County Historical Society

MARCH 1981

NOTICE OF MEETING

The monthly meeting of the Escambia County Historical Society will be held on Tuesday, March 24, at 7:00 PM at the Thomas E. McMillan Museum on the campus of Jefferson Davis State Junior College in Brewton, Alabama.

The program will be "An Evening with some of the First Ladies, from Martha Washington to Bess Truman", a narrative sketch of some of America's most beloved and important presidential wives.

TREASURER'S REPORT

There is presently \$934.07 in the ECHS general budget account.

MAY PILGRIMAGE?

It has been a long time since we have ventured from Brewton on a pilgrimage, and, in early May, Pensacola will be offering a golden opportunity for such a trip. On the weekends of May 2-3 and 9-10 the city of Pensacola will be sponsoring the Galvez Celebration, a bicentennial effort in remembrance of the Spanish takeover of Pensacola from the British in 1781. Perhaps the best day to go would be Saturday, May 9, when there will be a street fair, historical tours, open-air dramatic presentations, and evening parades and a performance (8:45 PM) of the Pensacola Symphony Orchestra.

This will be further discussed at the next general meeting, at which time a full schedule of events will be made available. Please give it some thought: the celebration promises to be recreational and educational, and the time of year should provide ideal weather conditions.

LAST DUES REMINDER

If we have not received your \$6.00 ECHS annual dues by the end of March, we will have to cease your mailings. We regret this, but postage rates are rising rapidly and publication costs are likewise a burden; please send your dues check--if you have not already sent it--to:

Treasurer/Escambia County Historical Society/P.O. Box 276/Brewton, AL
36426

ALABAMA HISTORY ROOM DONATIONS

From David L. Sanders, of Mobile, Alabama: Conecuh County Cemeteries, Volume I, xerography. This volume will be of great value to genealogical researchers, being one of but three copies produced.

From Ed Leigh McMillan II, Brewton, Alabama: a compilation of Atlanta newspapers interpreting social, political, economic, and military events in the South during the 1860-1865 period. An excellent source for the Southern view of the Civil War.

From Carolyn L. Emerich, Brewton, Alabama: A collection of historical and genealogical journals, files, quarterlies, and other publications supplementing existing Alabama History Room references. Subject topics from local to regional in scope.

MUSEUM NEWS

The Tensaw Country Archaeological Project is, and has been for several weeks, in its field survey and excavation phase. Museum Curator John Powell reports the discovery of many fine artifacts which will ultimately be placed on exhibit in the Thomas E. McMillan Museum, although public relations releases about the project's field operations will be curtailed at the present to prevent unauthorized intrusions upon the sites involved from occurring. Those efforts in Baldwin and Escambia Counties will occupy the museum's time for several months as artifacts are studied, catalogued, preserved, and reported upon.

Several donations have been accessioned into the museum's collections:

From Hank Locklin, of McLellan, Florida: An 1832 patent sausage grinder, a collection of blacksmithing accessories, a sugar cane stripper, and a wagon-mounted pattern of cotton scales. Also, for the use of art and European History students, a 16th century hand-crafted desk made by an English monk while in confinement.

From Dr. Robert Low of Brewton: A collection of medical tools and one human skeleton used in the old Brewton hospital.

From Johnny Byrd, Esq., of Brewton: A ca. 1880 rolling block rifle, single shot, cadet pattern.

MEMORIALS

The Memorial Fund now shows a balance of \$2,014.78. March memorials are:

In Loving Memory of Mrs. Lily Coker, by John David Finlay and Mrs. John David Finlay; and

In Loving memory of Mr. Worth P. Smith, by Miss Rita Jane Boykin and Mr. A. H. Elliott.

ROBERT (BOB) SEALE (February Memorial)

Mr. Robert (Bob) Seale was a native of Conecuh County, Alabama. He lived with his parents near the city of Evergreen, Alabama. Seale worked in Brewton at the Robbins and McGowin Department Store for about 60 years, commuting to Brewton each day and caring for his parents as they grew old. When his parents

Robert Seale, continued

died, Bob moved to Brewton, where he stayed at the home of Mr. and Mrs. N.R. (Bob) Finlay on Belleville Avenue.

Bob never married. His favorite pastimes were hunting and fishing, which he did at his favorite place, Big L Pond near Castleberry.

The owners of lots built homes around the lake (Big L Pond), organized a club, and promoted social activities throughout the year. Mr. Seale did not build on his lot, preferring to stay in the old camp house. He was nearing eighty years of age at the time that, out of love and appreciation, he gave his lot to Mary and Bob Finlay, where they immediately built a vacation home.

Seale worked at Robbins and McGowin until his failing health forced him to move to Milton, Florida to live with the widower of Seale's neice, the Rev. VanLandingham. Later, Bob lived with a nephew and the nephew's wife.

Bob Seale died at the age of 91 on January 27, 1981. He was buried at Weatherington Cemetery, near his old home near Evergreen.

Seale is survived by three nephews, Charles, John, and Frank Van Landingham.

MALCOLM McMILLAN

Malcolm McMillan was born December 27, 1890 to Edward Sylvester and Katie Leigh McMillan in Brewton, Alabama. Spending his youth in Brewton, he graduated from the Brewton Collegiate Institute and attended the University of Alabama.

After college, Malcolm returned to Brewton and began his business career with Robbins and McGowin Department Store, which was owned by his stepfather, Mr. J.E. Finlay. He served as a clerk in the Navy during World War I. On completing his enlistment, McMillan returned again to Brewton and was elected vice president of Robbins and McGowin. He was an active member of the First Methodist Church, the Norris Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons, the American Legion, and he was also active in school and community affairs.

Mr. McMillan served on the Boards of Directors of the Citizens-Farmers and Merchants Band and the Neal Lumber Company, Blountstown, Florida; he was a co-trustee of the D.W. McMillan Trust and The McMillan Foundation until his death.

His friendly personality won him many friends throughout the state.

McMillan enjoyed all types of hunting, but fox hunting was one of his favorite pasttimes; he served as a judge with the National Fox Hunters Association in addition to being an active participant in many hunts.

On June 17, 1925, McMillan married the former Margaret Hamilton Smith, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. G.W.L. Smith of Brewton. One child was born to this union, Margaret Hamilton McMillan, who married Congressman Kenneth Roberts. This couple had two children: Margaret Hamilton Roberts (presently residing in Brewton) and Allison McMillan Roberts Sinrod of Rockville, Maryland.

Malcolm McMillan passed away on October 25, 1966.

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Please be reminded that we are seeking memorials and memorial statements for future researchers and for the purpose of ultimate publication. The form to be used in these statements is to be found in the January issue of the ECHS newsletter, Escambia Echoes. Providing memorials and memorial statements is a truly worthwhile way to remember loved ones as well as to insure that future generations will be able to find information about the people being remembered.

Emily Finlay, Memorial Chairman

HISTORICAL TIDBITS

Annie C. Waters

Yellow Fever insects are called Stegoeyomea fasciata. In Milton, the postmaster opened a mail bag and he yelled, "Catch it! It's one of those darned stegomatrix fasculabusses and if she bites you it is a case of Yellow Fever for sure!" One man saw a bug fly into a small tree; they cut it down and everyone got a club and killed every bug they could find. Suddenly one man took off in a trot. Then a man said, "He is dead, I smell him and he smells awful." The stegomatrix was dead and everyone started for home; when they passed the house of the man who had hurried away his clothing was hanging on the fence. It was expected that all Pensacola mail bags would be barred from the Milton post office until after frost. -- -1905 Pine Belt News.

A young lady came into Robbins and McGowins and asked Randolph Luttrell-- "It is my desire to obtain a pair of circular elastic appendages capable of being contracted and expanded by means of oscillating burnished steel appliances that sparkle like particles of gold leaf set with Alaska diamonds and which are utilized for keeping in position the habilament of the lower extremity which delicacy forbids me to mention." Randolph is still wondering what she wanted. -- -1905 Pine Belt News.

A preacher's mistakes are either forgotten or excused, a lawyer's killed by his stenographer, a baker's eaten, a coal dealer's burned and a doctor's buried but the editor's are always bobbing up. ----Editor, 1902 Pine Belt News.

PRESERVATION RECIPES

By John Powell

For the care and preservation of old, dry leather (shoes, bags, horse equipage, etc.)--- Go to your friendly, neighborhood drug store and buy one pound of Anhydrous Lanolin. Then go and buy one pint of Neatsfoot oil from a hardware store or shopping center. Place these two together in their entirety in a pan and heat on a stove until they liquefy together. Stir until well mixed. Apply to affected leather while warm, wait overnight, apply a second coat, and wipe off excess with a dry, lint-free rag. This will soften and preserve leather of antiquity, and it will also work well in the rejuvenation of well-worn shoes. It's also good for "breaking in" your child's baseball glove; this is an excellent leather preservative, used by libraries for leather bindings and by museums for taking care of leather objects.

-----HAPPY St. PATRICK'S DAY!