

ESCAMBIA ECHOES

The Newsletter of the Escambia County Historical Society

June 2002 - Vol. 29, No. 6

Editor, Ranella Holley

The Next Meeting

Date: Tuesday, June 25, 2002; **Time:** 3:00 p.m.; **Location:** *Note the change in location of the meeting for June. The meeting will be held in the Lobby of the **Woodfin Patterson Auditorium** on the **JDCC Campus**. This is a change of location because the usual meeting room in the Museum will be used for voting; **Program:** "Show and Tell." Bring an item that is part of family or area history to use for "Show and Tell."

The May Meeting

Members and guests enjoyed hearing Mr. **William "Bill" Carroll** recount his experiences as part of the invasion forces that swept through **France** and **Belgium** to **Germany** in 1942. He was a part of the triumphant celebrations in **Paris** and the grim experiences in the **Battle of the Bulge**. Best known for his visit as an **army scout** to the Belgium city of **Peruwelz**, **Mr. Carroll** was twice wounded during this European campaign. After retirement from the army, he worked as an administrator for the library system for the **University of Minnesota**. He also served as the **Mayor of Hilltop Minnesota** and finally retired back to **Brewton**.

The **Society** presented a **certificate of appreciation**, a year's **membership** in the **Society**, and a copy of the **History of Escambia County** to Mr. Carroll.

In other business, the society voted not to have a booth at the **Blueberry Festival** this year. There was agreement that the society did not benefit by participating in this event last year.

Peggy Bracken in her **Treasurer's Report** announced that the May balance for the society was **\$3,275.82**. She reported that we have some **ninety** "new" and "renewed" members of the Society. **Peggy** was commended for her work in giving accurate and detailed information to the Society.

Society President **Darryl Searcy** appointed **Lila Greenberg** to be in charge of deciding on an **appropriate book**, which the Society could donate to the **Brewton Public Library** in honor of the **young woman from East Brewton** who was killed in the **Pentagon on September 11**. He also requested that **Lila** investigate the possibility of the Society sponsoring a **reception** to honor this young woman.

Queries

The Society has received a query from **Amberlea Moody** concerning her great-grandfather, **A. Martie Grey**, who lived in **Flomaton** in **1924**. A **logging inspector**, he was killed in a **logging accident** around **1935**, actual time could vary between five to ten years of that date. **Mr. Grey** and a young woman named **Mary Virginia Higdon** had a child, **born in 1905** in Birmingham. This child, the **grandfather of Amberlea Moody**, who sent the query, is ill and Amberlea Moody is making the query for **medical reasons**. Amberlea knows that **Mary Virginia Higdon** was living in **Brewton** in **1924**.

In another query, Society member **Denise Jernigan** would appreciate help in obtaining information on the **Frase/r** and **Lindsey** families from **Pollard**. From **her grandmother**, a **Lindsey**, Denise knows that her great grandmother was **Magcie Lee Lindsey**, the daughter of **Mace Lindsey** (father). She does not know the name of the **wife of Mace Lindsey**, the **mother of Magcie Lee Lindsey**. Concerning the **Frase/r** family, Denise gives the names of **Jasper (or J. E.) Fraser** and his wife **Marthie Siggers or Seegers**, as the starting point for research. **Denise** is not from the **Brewton area** and would appreciate information on her query or the help of a **Society member** who would be willing to do research on the two families.

Finally, Society member, **Marilyn Weston** is interested in information on the **McCurdy Cemetery** in **Flomaton**. Marilyn's late husband, **Mark B. Weston, Jr.** grew up southwest Alabama (**Flomaton** and **Theodore**), and lived in **Mobile** for many years. His great grandparents, **Lucretia Ann Elizabeth Fountain** and **Henry Clay McCoy**, are said to be buried in the **McCurdy Cemetery**. **Marilyn** has not been able to find any reference to this cemetery that would help her locate it or confirm that her **great grandparents** are buried there.

Anyone who has **information** concerning these **queries** or who would be interested in doing the **research** in materials in the Alabama Room on these questions can contact the Society at the email address: [<ranny1@earthlink.net>](mailto:ranny1@earthlink.net); the phone number: **251-809-1612**; or the mailing address: **Escambia Historical Society, P. O. Box 276, Brewton, AL 36427**.

Welcome to New Members

We welcome new members **Marilyn Weston** and **William Carroll**. A resident of **Picayune, Mississippi**, Marilyn reports that she is trying to put the **family history** of herself and her late husband, **Mark B. Weston**, together for the benefit of their grown children. She is an active member of

the newly created (two-years old) **Pearl River County Genealogy Club**, and served as their first-year **president**.

James W. "Bill" Carroll of **Brewton** was the guest speaker for the May meeting.

A **correction** for erroneous information that appeared in the **May Newsletter** concerning **Alma Hall** and **Annie Smith**. It is **Alma Hall** who has promised to present a program to the Society sometime this year. Examples of **Alma's** talent as an artist can be found in the illustrations throughout her recently published, delightful book, **Rabbit Stew and Pee Buckets**. For more information on her **book**, see the **review** in this **Newsletter**.

News About Members

Willellen Elliot is on a two-week trip to **Italy**. If she returns in time, she should have some interesting "Show and Tell" for the next meeting.

Summer Hours for the Alabama Room

The **JDCC Library** and thus the **Alabama Room** will be **closed July 4th - 5th** (Independence Day) and **August 12th - 16th** (Semester Break). **Regular Hours for the Library** for this summer are: **Mon-Thurs 7:30 AM-7:00 PM; Friday: 7:30 AM- 12:00 PM**

Rabbit Stew and Pee Buckets - Written and Illustrated by Alma Lou Hall, Memory Street Publishers, Range, Alabama, 2002

Alma Hall's recently published book about her experiences growing up on a **farm in southwest Alabama** (including material up to the present time) would be a good summer read for anyone. Written in her easy-to-read **manuscript**, each page is filled with whimsical and appropriate **illustrations** to accompany the text. One of the first illustrations, that for the section entitled "**Yesteryears**," shows a food stand advertising **Possum Biscuits and Sassaphras Tea** for sale. **Two possum** hang by their tails on wooden hooks on the side of the stand, a **woman** in an **old-fashioned bonnet** holds a biscuit for sale, and a **banner** hangs down the side of the stand.

Throughout the book, Alma shows her love for her family and her **delight in living in the country**. One passage describes the morning light as "**pure magic**. It turns everything on the farm the color of a **deep ripe peach blush**." The individual chapters describe the mixture of activities, both **work and play**, which were part of life on a farm in the twenties. She has chapters on "**The Rolling Store**," "**Saturday Night Baths**," a

“Quilting Bee,” a “Taffy Candy Pull,” “Planting and Harvesting Cotton,” and many more. She has also included in the book instructions for making **lye soap** and **homemade starch** out of flour, as well as many of her mother’s and family’s **recipes**, including those for **Blackberry Custard, Old Time Tea Cakes, Rabbit Stew, Fried Squirrel and Gravy, and Fried Corn.**

One of my favorite chapters is **“Me and My Asafetida Bag.”** Alma recalls that her **Aunt Dora**, “a little spinster lady” who helped Alma’s mother with the children (there were **eight girls**) and the housework, made her wear **Long-Johns** (knit underwear), and **bloomers** made out of **flowered feed sacks** or **bleached flour sacks** (while other girls at school were wearing **silk underwear** and **silk stockings**). Also, **Aunt Dora** insisted that **Alma** wear an **Asafetida bag**, which was supposed to ward off **“colds, measles, whooping cough and many more diseases.”** Alma remembers that she could **disguise the Asafetida bag**, tied by a string around her neck, under her high-necked dresses but **could not disguise the pungent smell.**

When the **string on the bag broke** one day and the bag fell to the ground, Alma was so **embarrassed** that she began the practice of taking off the **bloomers and asafetida bag** on her way to school, hiding them under a tree, and putting them on again on her way home. Eventually, she had to **confess all** to her Aunt Dora. Alma does admit that she **did not suffer any serious illnesses** during her childhood and wonders if **Aunt Dora was right about the underwear and Asafetida.**

Alma also admits that **her bloomers** did not create the embarrassment that another young girl suffered. Her bloomers, made out of feed sacks, had printed on the rear, **“25 pounds of A. C. Robins very Best.”** **A. C. Robins** was the name of the **general store owner.**

For further information about the book, contact **Alma Lou Hall, 41 Hammerville Rd., Brewton, AL 36426.**

News from the Past

From the **Pine Belt News**. February 27. 1894

- The **employees of the L. & N Railroad** were delighted that the **pay-car** had come on the previous Thursday.
- The **editor** of the paper approved of the **young men of Brewton**, **“temperate** in their habits and a **more gentlemanly set** could not be found.”
- A company called **“California on Wheels”** had been in town for one day and had **“managed to dispose of a large quantity of their fine wines** at good prices, **contrary to law.”**

From the Atmore Spectrum for October 16, 1903

- Mr. **J. W Ward** of **Canoe** brought a **bale of cotton** to town but said he would “take it back home and **wait for a rise.**”
- **J. A. and J. L Godwin** of **Oak Grove** reported a heavy rain in their area but the “dust was not laid in **Atmore.**”
- Mr. **J. M. Franklin** of **Bay Minette** accepted a position as **assistant depot agent** in **Atmore**. He and his family would live in the **Morgan residence** opposite the **post office**.
- In a conference the previous Sunday night, the **Atmore Baptist Church** withdrew from the **Elim Association** in order to join the **Escambia Association**, which convened the next Friday with the **North Brewton Church**.
- Miss **Jessie Lowery**, daughter of **J. T. Lowery**, won the prize for raising the most money in the **mission contest** of the Methodist Church. She collected **\$3.70** out of a total of **\$14.00**.
- **School** had opened on the previous Monday in the **Gordon building**. There were **one hundred and five pupils**.

From the Atmore Spectrum for October 2, 1903

- In reply to a comment in the Montgomery Advertiser as to what adjective it should use in describing **Atmore**, the Spectrum noted that if the Advertiser wanted to hit the nail on the head with one word, it suggested “**peerless**” as the proper adjective.”
- In a column giving the news from **Mortimer**, the columnist, using the penname “Goldenrod,” noted that **Green and McCullough’s Gin** was running regularly, and could not gin the cotton as fast as it came in.
- The ladies of **Flomaton** were organizing for an “**old folks’ concert,**” for the benefit of the **new church**.

Books for Sale

A History of Escambia County

Headstones and Heritage

Escambia Historical Society Cookbook

Mailed

\$55.00

\$40.00

\$10.00

Regular Price

\$50.00

\$35.00

\$ 5.00

Get in Touch with Us

Address: Escambia County Historical Society, P. O. Box 276, Brewton, AL 36427; **Phone:** 251-809-1612; **Email:** Ranny1@earthlink.net

**Membership: \$10.00. Clip the following form and send to Treasurer:
Peggy Bracken, 602 Edgewood Drive, Brewton, AL 36426.**

Membership Renewal/Application Form				
Name	_____			
	First	Middle	Last	
Address	_____			
	Street	City	State	Zip
Phone	_____			
Email	_____			