

ECHOES

The Newsletter of the Escambia County Historical Society

September 2002 - Vol. 29, No. 9

Editor, Ranella Holley

The Next Meeting

Date: Tuesday, September 24, 2002; **Time:** 1:00 p.m.; **Location:** Members will meet at 1:00 at the **Thomas E. McMillan Museum** on the **JDCC Campus** and then caravan to the **NDI facilities** in the **Brewton Industrial Park**; **Program:** A Visit to **NDI**, Natural Decorations Incorporated. The **NDI** staff expects us to arrive at **NDI** at 1:30 and start the tour of their facilities between 1:30 and 2:00. We will be divided into small groups with the opportunity to ask questions both during and after the tour. Touring the facilities will take thirty to forty-five minutes. **Refreshments:** **NDI** will provide soft drinks at the end of the tour.

More About Carol and Joe Gordy

NDI owner, Chairman and CEO, is **Carol Gordy**, and the President and Director of Product Development, is her husband, **Joe Gordy**.

Carol Gordy was born in **Dublin, Texas** and grew up in **Albuquerque, New Mexico**. She attended **Universidad De Las Americas** in **Mexico City, Mexico** and the **University of New Mexico**. She bought her first retail flower shop in 1970 and then expanded to three locations. She was the first designer in the State of New Mexico to be accepted into the **American Institute of floral Design**.

She also pursued a career in exhibition design and commentating industry programs and conventions, appearing in conventions all over the United States and Canada. She was a member of the creative design staff of **Professional Floral Design** magazine and has had photographs of her works as well as articles on florist design and the industry published in several journals that focus on the wholesale and floral industry.

She married **Joe Gordy** in 1983 and moved from **Albuquerque** to **Alabama**. She joined **Natural Decorations, Inc. (NDI)** in 1986 as Director of Sales and Marketing and within a few years was named **President**. Now she is owner, Chairman and CEO.

Joe Gordy is known as one of the foremost floral design artists in the United States. His specialty is sculptured and traditional designs using fresh and fabric flowers.

After earning a Bachelor of Science Degree in **Horticulture** from **Mississippi State University**, he spent several years in the retail florist industry and then the commercial and residential interior planning and design field. He has designed for numerous national publications and catalogs, such as the **Florist Transworld Delivery Guide** and **Professional Florist and Flowers Magazine**.

Mr. Gordy appears on numerous **design panels** and **symposiums**. He has received many awards, including being selected to be one of three international **judges** for the **1993 Tournament of Roses Parade** in Pasadena, California. In **1984, 1985, and 1986**, he decorated the **White House for Christmas** and in **1986** he was a **designer** for the **Statue of Liberty Rededication Ceremony** in New York Harbor. In **1980**, he was inducted into the **American Institute of Floral Designers**, and has served on the Board of Directors and been President of that organization.

Joe and Carol live in **Brewton**. She enjoys **gardening** and **playing bridge**. He enjoys **traveling, gardening, and growing orchids**.

The August Meeting

President Darryl Searcy called the meeting to order and welcomed guests and members. **Peggy Bracken** gave the **Treasurer's Report** noting that the society had a balance of **\$3, 702. 55**. The beginning **balance** for **August** was **\$3, 653. 83**, with **receipts** of **\$110.00** for the **sale of two books** and **dues received** for one membership. **Expenses** of **\$61.28** included **\$25.00** returned to Sheridan Books, **\$24.00** for binding the book given in memory of Tamara Thurman, and **\$12.28** for postage and stamps. **Brooke Walker** read the **minutes** of the last meeting, which were approved as read.

Willellen Elliott, who has recently returned from a trip to Italy, gave **Darryl** a **present** purchased on her trip, a **chef's apron**. She noted that **Darryl** is always **giving presents to others** and should be the recipient of a **gift**.

Darryl announced that the Society had completed plans to assist in the ceremony at **Burnt Corn Creek Park** to honor **Tamara Thurman** and remember the others who died on September 11, 2001. Again he requested the **participation of members** in this event, asking that some members come early and help with **setting up refreshments**.

He announced that the **next meeting** would be a **visit to NDI**. **Final arrangements about time** had not been made so he requested the membership **look to the Newsletter for this information**.

Lynn Wixon introduced **guest speaker, Al Shotz**, ecologist/botanist with the **Alabama Natural Heritage Program**. He is one of seven staff

members with this program, which is located in **Montgomery**. Much of his job is to **locate and describe the habitat and occurrence of rare plants and animals in Alabama** in order to recommend means of **preserving them**. Through this kind of fieldwork, he makes **recommendations** concerning the plants and animals, which should be placed on or taken off the **endangered species list**.

The **Natural Heritage Program** shares its information with various agencies and organizations working for purposes of conservation and regional planning. **Mr. Shotz** showed the group slides of some of Alabama's rare and unique species. One of the interesting themes of his presentation was the fact that conservationists often recommend a "**controlled burn**" in an area in order to restore the environment and insure that a species will survive.

The **Society** presented him with a copy of Annie Waters' **History**, a **certificate of appreciation**, and a **year's membership** in the Society.

Willellen Elliott and Mary Catherine Luker served delicious refreshments.

Future Meetings

- **The October Meeting** – "**A Walk in Burnt Corn Creek Park.**"

The weather should be nice and the society can enjoy refreshments at the Creek side.

- There is **no meeting** in November
- **The December Meeting** – **A Christmas Party**. Plan to come to the **Thomas E. McMillan Museum** on the JDCC Campus to enjoy good fellowship, good food, and an entertaining program.

News from the Past

- From **The Facts of the Telephone Situation in Alabama** by **J. Epps Brown**, President, Southern Bell Telephone and Telegraph Co., **1920**
 - **Mr. Brown** reported that to furnish the service the public would need in the immediate future, there would have to be "**large additions** to the existing telephone facilities, costing millions of dollars."
 - The **company** currently had **3,000 unfilled applications** for **telephone service** in the state of Alabama.
 - The plans for **expanding service** would require **11,800 new telephone poles**.
 - His report stated that **1917** was the **best year** in the history of the company, with **net earnings** of **\$261, 603. 89**.

- In listing the problems associated with expanding service to meet demand, he noted that the **silk** which was used in vast quantity for **insulating wires** came from **Japan** and was in **short supply**.
- There were almost as many phones **disconnected** as **installed** as show by the figures for four years:

Year	Telephones Installed	Telephones Disconnected	Net Gain
1915	9,103	8, 514	589
1916	9, 645	7, 591	2,054
1917	8, 452	7, 111	1, 342
1918	7, 176	5, 737	1, 439

- The **average gain per year** during these four years was **1, 536**.

Fall Semester Hours for the Alabama Room

The JDCC Library and Alabama Room will be closed

- **September 2** for **Labor Day**
- **November 11** for **Veteran's Day**
- **November 25-29** for **Professional Development Days** and **Thanksgiving Holidays**
- **December 16-January 7** for **Christmas and New Year Holidays**.
- **The library will reopen on January 8, 2003.**
- **Contact the library to check on hours open by phone at 251-809-1584 or email <library@jdcc.edu>.**

Regular hours for the library and Alabama Room for the Fall Semester are Mon-Thurs: 7:30 AM–8:30 PM; Friday: 7:30 AM– 2:00 PM.

Query

Members **Geraldine Lee** and **Sarah Ashton Murphy** are interested in writing a **history** of **Mildred P. Kennedy**. Through the **children** of her **two marriages**, she has **descendents** with the following surnames: **Ashton**

Barron, Brewton, Coleman, Craker, Dixon, Downing, Godwin, Harold, Holley, Jernigan, Maddox, Malone, Mantel, Scott, Seller, and Snowden.

Geraldine and Sarah believe that telling **Mildred's** story is important because of the connections with all of these families who are a vital part of Brewton history.

Geraldine and Sarah know that **Mildred's first marriage** was to **Daniel Coleman** and that sometimes this **husband** has been **mistakenly** reported as **Jesse Coleman**, but that has been disproved. Her **second marriage** was to **James Snowden, sr.**

The **children of Mildred Kennedy and Daniel Coleman**, who were married on **March 13, 1835**, are: **Amanda**, who married **Elisha C Godwin**; **Martha A.**, who married **Edmund Troup Brewton**; **Henry C.**, who died **CSA**; **James William "Bill"**, who married **Jessie Ghent**; **Caroline**, who married **Bryant Downing**; and **Mary S.**, who married **John Haler Mantel II.**

The year after **Daniel Coleman's death**, **Mildred P. Kennedy Coleman** married **James Snowden, Sr. (1845)**. Their children are: **Elizabeth, "Lizzie,"** who married **Silas Gaines Maddox**; **Julia Ann**, who married **John Samuel Scott**; **Walker A.**, who married **Fannie Frank Walker**; **Charles H.**, who married **Hattie Cannon**; and **Thomas B.**, who married **Hattie B. Avant**.

Geraldine and Sarah wish to know if any of Mildred Kennedy's descendents have any **photographs** or any **other data** or **material** relating to her, which they would be willing to share (copies only).

Geraldine can be contacted at the email address
<EvHLee@aol.com>

<u>Books for Sale</u>	<u>Mailed</u>	<u>Regular Price</u>
<u>A History of Escambia County</u>	\$55.00	\$50.00
<u>Headstones and Heritage</u>	\$40.00	\$35.00
<u>Escambia Historical Society Cookbook</u>	\$10.00	\$ 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				