

ECHOES

The Newsletter of the Escambia County Historical Society
November, 2002 – Vol. 29, No. 11
Editor, Ranella Holley

The Next Meeting: A Christmas Luncheon:

Date: December 14, 2002

Time: 12:00 Noon

Place: The Ritz, which is on the Boardwalk in downtown Brewton; park in the back and come in through the double doors. There will be signs.

- **See the enclosed invitation for details and further information about the meeting.**

The October Meeting:

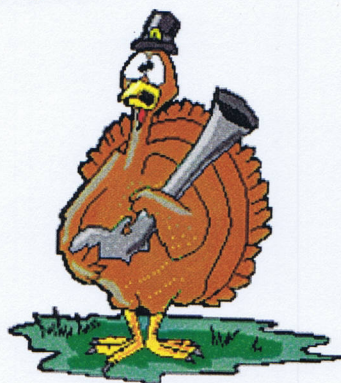
Fifteen members met at the small parking lot at the entrance to Burnt Corn Creek Park. Everyone received a cane pole to use during the walk and as a memento. President Darryl Searcy led the tour, giving information about the plants and animals in the park as well as the landmarks, including the Memorial Stone and Arterial Wells.

The Walk in the Park ended at the Creek bank where Peggy Bracken and Melissa Emmons provided a Halloween Picnic of lemonade, candies, and trail mix.

How Much Do You Know about the Thanksgiving Story?

“The Thanksgiving Quiz” and “The Thanksgiving Story” are reprinted by permission. Copyright 2002 by Jerry Wilson. Material also available on the Web at <www.wilstar.com>.

The Thanksgiving Quiz:



Put a check mark in the circle by the correct answer. Then, read the Thanksgiving story which contains the answers.

1. What year did the Pilgrims have their first Thanksgiving Feast?

- ☐ 1619
- ☐ 1620
- ☐ 1621
- ☐ 1935

2. What food was probably NOT on the Pilgrims' Thanksgiving menu?

- ☐ Potatoes
- ☐ Corn
- ☐ Fish
- ☐ Dried Fruit

3. The Horn of Plenty, or Cornucopia, which symbolizes abundance, originated in what country?

- ☐ Holland
- ☐ Greece
- ☐ America
- ☐ Turkey

4. In 1676, a day of thanksgiving was proclaimed to take place during what month?

- ☐ May
- ☐ June
- ☐ October
- ☐ November

5. What president didn't like the idea of having a national Thanksgiving Day?
- ☐ Washington
 - ☐ Nixon
 - ☐ Truman
 - ☐ Jefferson
6. Who is credited with leading the crusade to establish Thanksgiving Day?
- ☐ Sarah Jessica Parker
 - ☐ Sarah Lee
 - ☐ Sarah Josepha Hale
 - ☐ Sarah Ferguson
7. Which president first established the date of Thanksgiving as a national celebration?
- ☐ Jefferson
 - ☐ Adams
 - ☐ Lincoln
 - ☐ Wilson
8. Which president moved the date of Thanksgiving twice?
- ☐ Lincoln
 - ☐ T. Roosevelt
 - ☐ F. D. Roosevelt
 - ☐ Eisenhower
9. The reason Thanksgiving was moved up a week was...
- ☐ To fulfill a political promise
 - ☐ To ward off evil spirits
 - ☐ Due to public pressure
 - ☐ To lengthen the Christmas shopping season
10. Canada celebrates Thanksgiving on... *(The answer is not*

in the narrative.)

- 2nd Monday in October
- 2nd Thursday in November
- 3rd Thursday in November
- May 1



The Thanksgiving Story

The Pilgrims who sailed to this country aboard the *Mayflower* were originally members of the English Separatist Church (a Puritan sect). They had earlier fled their home in England and sailed to Holland (The Netherlands) to escape religious persecution. There, they enjoyed more religious tolerance, but they eventually became disenchanted with the Dutch way of life, thinking it ungodly. Seeking a better life, the Separatists negotiated with a London stock company to finance a pilgrimage to America. Most of those making the trip aboard the *Mayflower* were non-Separatists, but were hired to protect the company's interests. Only about one-third of the original colonists were Separatists.

The Pilgrims set ground at Plymouth Rock on December 11, 1620. Their first winter was devastating. At the beginning of the following fall, they had lost 46 of the original 102 who sailed on the *Mayflower*. But the harvest of 1621 was a bountiful one. And the remaining colonists decided to celebrate with a feast -- including 91 Indians who had helped the Pilgrims survive their first year. It is believed that the Pilgrims would not have



The feast was more of a traditional English harvest festival than a true "thanksgiving" observance. It lasted three days.

Governor William Bradford sent "four men fowling" after wild ducks and geese. It is not certain that wild turkey was part of their feast. However, it is certain that they had venison. The term "turkey" was used by the Pilgrims to mean any sort of wild fowl.

Another modern staple at almost every Thanksgiving table is pumpkin pie. But it is unlikely that the first feast included that treat. The supply of flour had been long diminished, so there was no bread or pastries of any kind. However, they did eat boiled pumpkin, and they produced a type of fried bread from their corn crop. There was also no milk, cider, potatoes, or butter. There was no domestic cattle for dairy products, and the newly-discovered potato was still considered by many Europeans to be poisonous. But the feast did include fish, berries, watercress, lobster, dried fruit, clams, venison, and plums.

This "thanksgiving" feast was not repeated the following year. But in 1623, during a severe drought, the pilgrims gathered in a prayer service, praying for rain. When a long, steady rain followed the very next day, Governor Bradford proclaimed another day of Thanksgiving, again inviting their Indian friends. It wasn't until June of 1676 that another Day of Thanksgiving was proclaimed.

On June 20, 1676, the governing council of Charlestown, Massachusetts, held a meeting to determine how best to express thanks for the good fortune that had seen their community securely established. By unanimous vote they instructed Edward Rawson, the clerk, to proclaim June 29 as a day of thanksgiving. It is notable that this thanksgiving

celebration probably did not include the Indians, as the celebration was meant partly to be in recognition of the colonists' recent victory over the "heathen natives."

October of 1777 marked the first time that all 13 colonies joined in a thanksgiving celebration. It also commemorated the patriotic victory over the British at Saratoga. But it was a one-time affair.

George Washington proclaimed a National Day of Thanksgiving in 1789, although some were opposed to it. There was discord among the colonies, many feeling the hardships of a few Pilgrims did not warrant a national holiday. And later, President Thomas Jefferson scoffed at the idea of having a day of thanksgiving.

It was Sarah Josepha Hale, a magazine editor, whose efforts eventually led to what we recognize as Thanksgiving. Hale wrote many editorials championing her cause in her *Boston Ladies' Magazine*, and later, in *Godey's Lady's Book*. Finally, after a 40-year campaign of writing editorials and letters to governors and presidents, Hale's obsession became a reality when, in 1863, President Lincoln proclaimed the *last* Thursday in November as a national day of Thanksgiving.

CORNUCOPIA, *korn-yoo-KO-pee-uh*

One of the most recognizable symbols of Thanksgiving is the cornucopia, also called horn of plenty. It is a decorative motif, originating in ancient Greece, that symbolizes abundance. The original cornucopia was a curved goat's horn filled to overflowing with fruit and grain. It symbolizes the horn possessed by Zeus's nurse, the Greek nymph Amalthaea, which could be filled with whatever the owner wished.

Books for Sale

	Mailed	Regular Price
<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:** Rannyl@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				