

ECHOES

**The Newsletter of the Escambia County
Historical Society**

August 2005 - Vol. 32, No. 8

Editor, Ranelia Holley



Fig. 1. Ground breaking for the campus and buildings of Jefferson Davis State Junior College.

At the Ceremony (all are not in the picture) were Broox Garrett, Mayor P.T. May, Flomaton Mayor Judge Purefoy, Probate Judge Reo Kirkland, Phillip Hamm, Pollard Mayor Curtis Findlay, Dr. Rudolph Davison, Jack Hines, County School Board Superintendent Harry Weaver, Escambia County Representative Malcolm Edwards, Tom Neal, Ernest Jackson, and College President Woodfin Patterson. Photo courtesy of Ada Adams, secretary to the College President, who is preparing a history of the college as part of the college's celebration of its fortieth anniversary this fall.

The August Meeting

Tuesday. August 23, 2005, at 3:00 p. m. in the meeting room of the Thomas E. McMillan Museum on the JDCC campus.

The Program: "The Early Days of JDCC"

Guest speakers will be two of the earliest JDCC faculty, **Jan Redditt** and **Joe Weaver**. Ann Biggs-Williams has sent us the following information about our speakers.

Jan Redditt:

As the first librarian of the college, Jan Redditt was hired in 1965 before the first classes ever began. Miss Redditt, who is now retired and lives in Gulf Breeze, Florida, was also a founding member of the Escambia County Historical Society.

Joe Weaver:

According to a brief history entitled, "Jefferson Davis State Junior College, Brewton, Alabama 1965-76" by Marie M. Pate, written December 1977, Joe Weaver was originally both Dean of Students and the Business Manager. Mr. Weaver is now retired and lives in Brewton.

The First President of the College and the First Locations:

According to Mrs. Pate's history, Mr. Woodfin Patterson, the first president of the then, Jefferson Davis State Junior College (now Jefferson Davis Community College) set up temporarily at Brewton City Hall. From February to May of 1965, Mr. Patterson was involved with research which led to the employment of 7 full-time instructors, 3 part-time instructors, a librarian, and a maintenance man.

An office was then set up at the old Brewton United Methodist Church parsonage. A temporary library was setup on the stage of the Fellowship Hall of the First United Methodist Church of Brewton and classes began September 30. 1965.

Upcoming Programs

September 27: Eddie Nall, "The Bank of Brewton--Alabama's Oldest Bank"

October 25: Robert Thrower, "Southeastern Indian Culture"

November: No Meeting

New JDCC Museum Coordinator

Society Member Jerry Simmons has been appointed Museum Coordinator to replace Carol Madden. We will miss Carol and the wonderful job she did as the first Museum Coordinator but look forward to having Jerry, an excellent choice, in the position.

Display on Preserving and Restoring Cemeteries

Sherry S, Johnston, society member and curator of the Lucy C. Warren Heritage Section of the Evergreen Public Library, writes of the a current display in the library on "Preserving & Restoring Cemeteries: What You Should Know!" She is requesting additions from the public, such as photographs, stories, folklore, shared tales, meanings of the stone carvings (where you can find them), etc.

Art Display in Museum

Sue Laing, Art Instructor at JDCC, has sent us this note about the display in the Museum

We are currently displaying the work of one of our former students, Frances Sellers. Frances has had a varied life and her vibrant watercolors and abstract drawings show her progression as an artist.

Catawba Springs and Foshee

Ann Biggs Williams has called our attention to two articles about Escambia County that appeared this month in the Mobile Register. The article about Catawba Springs, "Couple Feels Blessed" is based on an interview with former society member Clara Jackson and her husband. The one about Foshee begins with the title "One Time Bustling Boomtown Grown over by

Dense Forest.” Copies of both of the articles can be found in the Alabama Room.

Fort Mims Commemoration and Restoration

Ann Biggs-Williams has sent us this information from an article in the Baldwin Times for August 4, 2005 entitled “Fort Mims Rises Again.”

Fort Mims Restoration Association(FMRA) members are finally achieving a long held dream of restoring part of this hastily constructed North Baldwin County fortification which was attacked and burned by Creek warriors in 1813.

A portion of the west wall of the facility is now being rebuilt through volunteer labor and a grant from the Baldwin County Commission. Historians relate that his "fort" or perhaps more appropriately named "Stockade" was attacked by warring "Red Stick" Indians on Aug. 30, 1813. In the attack the warriors killed hundreds of pioneers, slaves, and friendly Indians.

The long term goal of the FMRA has been to rebuild some or all of the fort. However, reconstruction of the fort has been frustrated by several problems. The Alabama Historical Commission had prohibited excavation in the area, there was a lack of funds, and the type of wall construction at the original fort was unclear.

Some researchers believed the walls were made of horizontal logs placed between vertical support poles while others think a "picket fence" type construction with vertical poles was used.

As a result of recent archeological digs conducted by Gregory Waselkov of the University of South Alabama, evidence was found that the fort walls were constructed of vertical poles.

After the archeological digs were finished, the Historical Commission approved reconstruction of the west wall with Waselkov monitoring the excavation for any 1813 artifacts.

On July 23, about 20 FMRA members and other volunteers started cutting and trimming the poles to be used for the western wall. On

the following Saturday, workers dug a 175 foot long trench and began to install the pointed poles. The FMRA hopes to complete the wall section before the scheduled Aug. 27-28 commemoration of the 1813 massacre.

The commemoration this year will include re-enactments of the battle on both Saturday and Sunday. Kicking off the weekend event will be a memorial service Saturday morning led by the Fort Mims Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution.

Various activities are scheduled between 8:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. each day. In addition to the re-enactments of the battle, past years events have included period arts and crafts, pony rides for children, settlers in period costumes, bluegrass bands, food vendors and more. Admission is \$3 for persons over the age of 6.

During the commemoration, limited power hookups for RVs will be available on a first come, first served basis. No waste dumps are available.

A detailed program schedule soon will be posted on the Fort Mims Web page at <<http://fortmims.home.att.net>>.

<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: \$15.00. Clip the following form and send to Treasurer: Peggy Bracken, 602 Edgewood Drive, Brewton, AL 36426.

Membership Renewal/Application Form

Name _____

First	Middle	Last
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Address _____

Street	City	State	Zip
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Phone _____

Email _____
