

ECHOES

The Newsletter of the Escambia County
Historical Society
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Editor, Ranelia Holley



Fig. 1. Square Ground, Sacred Fire.

This Sculpture is the centerpiece of a Memorial Park dedicated to the Native Americans, the old tribes who were hunters and then farmers, who had settled in the Chattahoochee Valley but were eventually forced to give up their lands and remove to Oklahoma. The park is located in a beautiful setting south of Columbus, Georgia, and Phoenix City, Alabama on a hill overlooking the Chattahoochee River.

A plaque nearby explains the monument pictured above:

Every Indian settlement of substantial size was built around a centralized public plaza, or Square Ground, where residents and visitors met to discuss and settle the social, political, commercial, or legal issues facing the community. At its center was an open hearth on which burned a Sacred Fire, the catalyst for all community religious activity. Along the sides of the square were seats from which tribal officers and other citizens performed their civic and religious duties. This monument is a symbolic representation of a Square Ground and Sacred Fire.

The October Meeting

Date and Time: Tuesday, October 25 at 3:00 P.M.

Place: The Thomas E. McMillan Museum on the Jefferson Davis College campus.

The Program: Robert Thrower, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer of the Poarch Band of Creek Indians, will present a program on the history and culture of the Southeast Indians.

Upcoming Events

November: No meeting

December: Christmas Party – Time and Place to be announced.

January: Meeting and Election of Officers.

The Memorial Park and Its Story

The following pictures of plaques at the Memorial Park dedicated to the Native Americans of the Chattahoochee Valley are self explanatory. They are placed so that the visitor reads them as he/she walks up a path to the representation of the “Square Ground, Sacred Fire” at the top of the hill. They remind us of the history and culture of a people who lived in the area and developed their sacred cultures and traditions. There are no Native American groups left in the Chattahoochee Valley where the park is located. Descendants of the old tribes of the area now live in other parts of the southeast, such as the Poarch Band of Creek Indians who are represented by our speaker for the October Program.

ORIGINS

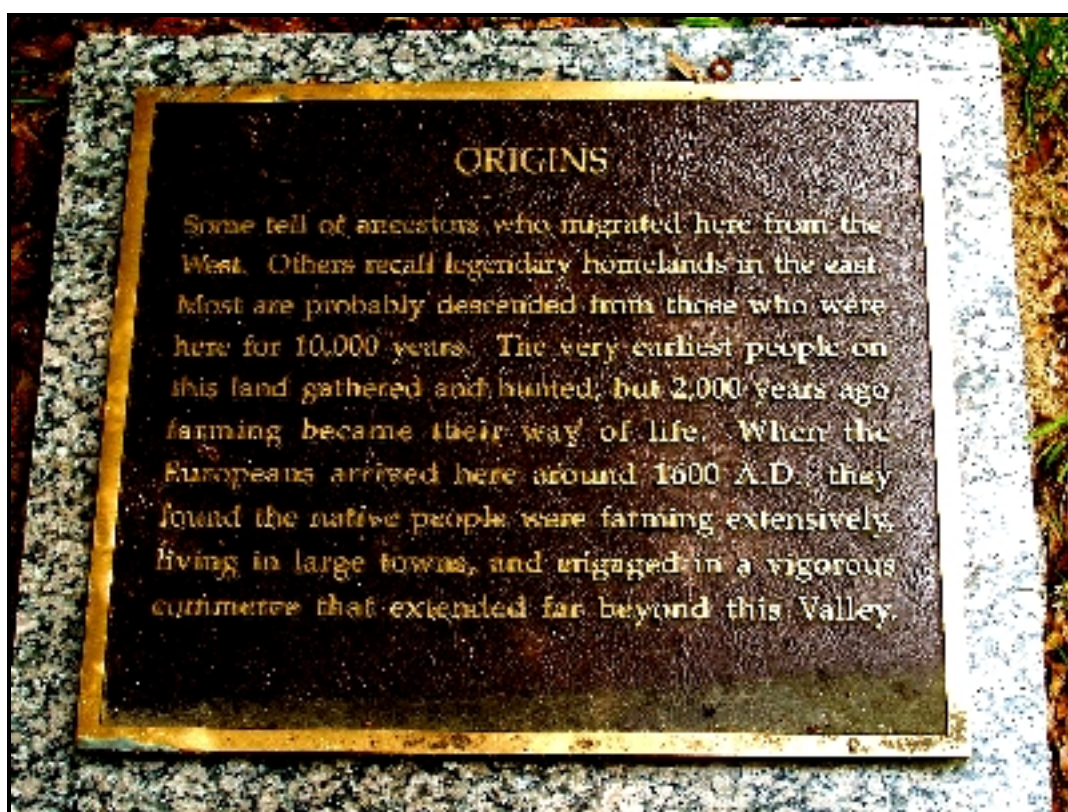


Fig. 2. One of the first Plaques a visitor will read at the Park.

REMOVAL



Fig. 4. This plaque explains the purpose for locating the park next to the site of the 19th century fort, Fort Mitchell (currently being restored).

THE FAMILIES



Fig. 5. Four Plaques are placed on the edge of the monument representing the sacred square and fire, alternating with four sets of stone seats (you can see the edge of one of these stands of seats in Fig. 1). This is one of the plaques listing family and individual names of those removed from the valley in the Trail of Tears.

LITTLE BROTHER TO WAR

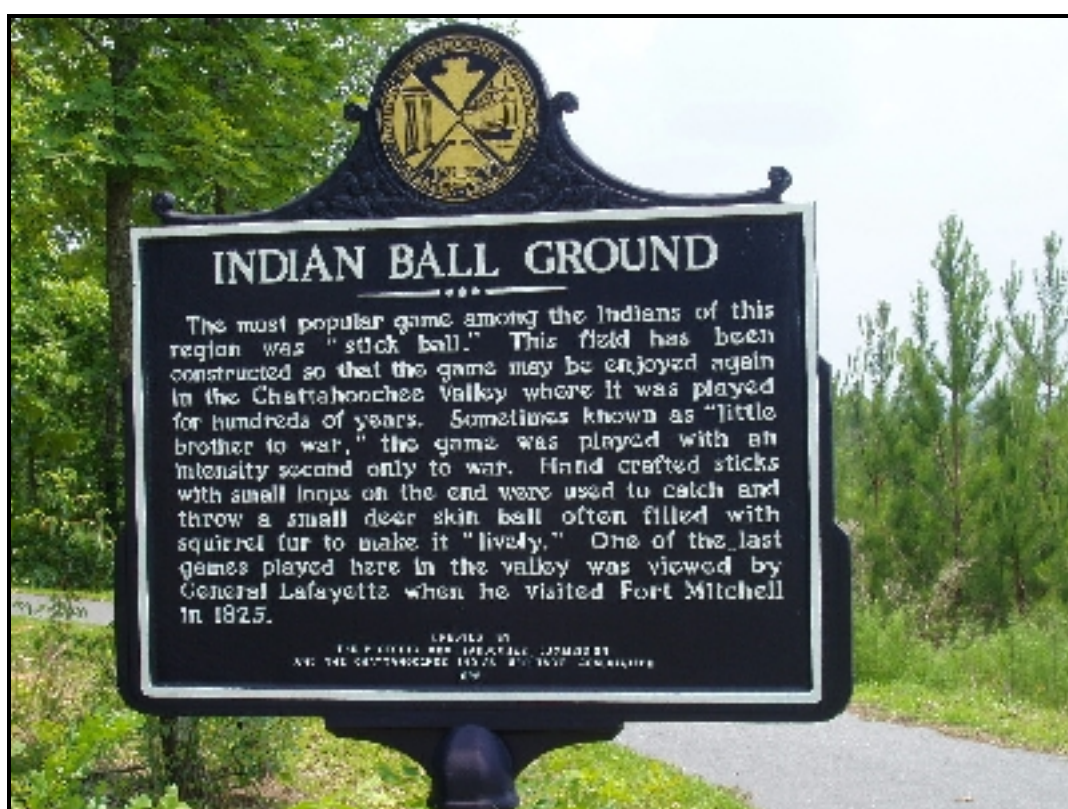


Fig. 6. Plaque explaining one of the ancient customs of the Native Americans of the Valley.

SURVIVORS

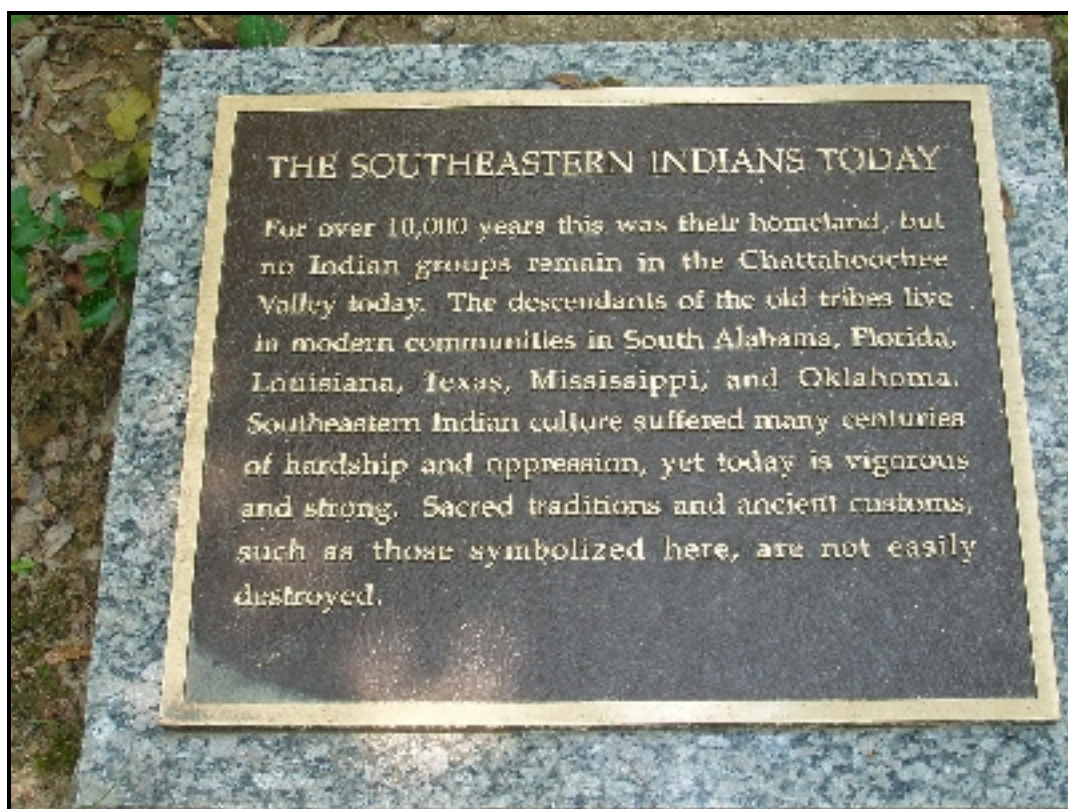


Fig.7. This plaque is located on the path leading to the top of the hill and the monument placed there.

Brewton's Historic Service Station

A correction: The service station was originally a Woco-Pep and later a Pure Oil Station, never a Shell Station.

Historical society members, Elizabeth Edwards and her husband Buddy, as well as one of our society trustees, Mary Catherine Luker, have provided the correction in the above statement as well as further information.

The station was built in the late 1930's or early 1940's by Charlie West. He and his wife Nannie ran the station. There were three stations built with this design at this time, one in Atmore, one in Jay, and one in Brewton. The station in Brewton had three pumps, two for gas and one for kerosene. Charlie West died in 1959. All the members of the West family have moved away.

Cemetery Preservation

We have a notice from Sherry Johnston, Genealogist/Historian Evergreen-Conecuh Co. Public Library, of this web site for the Alabama Cemetery Preservation Alliance (Sherry is also the Conecuh County Representative for the alliance):

<http://alabama-cemetery-preservation.com/ACR18/index.lasso>

Sherry's excellent newsletter can be found at:
Canebrake Genealogical & Historical Society

Email: canebrakesociety@yahoo.com

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/canebrakesocietygroup>

The Ward-Witherington Cemetery Dedication

Sherry has also provided us with this information concerning the upcoming Ward-Witherington Cemetery Dedication in Conecuh County for November 5th. She notes that both the Ward-Witherington Cemetery and the Witherington Family Cemetery have been named to the Alabama Historic Cemetery Register, and that along with that honor comes recognition for many of our rural cemeteries in AL.

Here is the information from Sherry for the events for Nov. 5, 2005:

The Alabama Cemetery Preservation Alliance, along with key members of historic groups are planning the program for Nov. 5th, 2005 in Conecuh County. We will be meeting at Bowles Assembly of God Church, located on Al Hwy 83 North at 10 am for the sign-in, and where the SAR troops will dress before going into the cemetery. Flag displays & Musket firings will be limited to Ward-Witherington Cemetery events up at the Fork Sepulga area. . . . there will be about 50 or so locals attending! There are 20 SAR troops/wives; 15-20 DAR, 1812 ladies; 12-15 Ward Family Members; 40-50 Witherington Family Members; Ball Family Members; and 50 local citizens expected at this monumental event There will be an Honor Guard, and bagpiper in attendance as well. For more information, contact me at (251) 578-2670 or Dan & Eugenia Brown at (251) 578-

A Cemetery Special

We have been given this information on a special on cemeteries to be aired on Alabama Public Television stations for Oct. 26 at 7 p.m. and Oct. 31 at 9 p.m.

“This celebration of cemeteries across America takes an unusual and informative look at graves, monuments, family plots, sculpture, and the way cemeteries interconnect with many aspects of modern American culture.”

<u>Books for Sale</u>	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:** 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	
Address				
	Street	City	State	Zip
Phone				
Email				

