

The February Meeting

Tuesday, February 24, 2009, 3:00 p. m

At the Thomas E. McMillan Museum

Jefferson Davis Community College Campus

*******Don't Forget*******

Now is the time to Pay Dues for 2009

**The Program:
Catfights and
Coffins: Sto-
ries of Ala-
bama Court-
houses."**

**Guest Speaker:
Anne Herbert
Feathers**

Our speaker's presentation will recount some of the funny, bizarre, well known and not so well known stories about Alabama's court-houses.

Being the county seat was always something that the citizens of any town wanted and court-houses were some of the earliest public buildings. Those that have been preserved are quite often sources of pride for the town and the county when they are distinguished by beautiful architecture.

Many of these old buildings were a source of pride because they were a part of history but many have been torn down and



The First Courthouse Building in Brewton.

The building, now called Leigh Place, has been used as a private home and is now an office building. Leigh Place today is pictured at the left bottom of this page.

replaced with more modern structures.

Brewton lost its second courthouse building and Conecuh County had its antebellum courthouse building torn down in 2005. Both of these buildings are shown in postcard illustrations on the second page of this article.

Of course, since it was so important to a town's growth and prosper-

ity to be the county seat, there are stories of towns stealing courthouse records from another town to become the county seat.

Escambia County, of course, has one of those famous stories of the controversy over Pollard or Brewton being the county seat. We can depend on our speaker to cover this episode in her presentation.

(Continued on page 2)



Leigh Place

Volume 36, Number 2

February 2009

Inside This Issue

Meet Our Speaker	3
Just Briefly	3
News of Members & Announcements	4
Business Members	5
Train Stories	6

The March Meeting

March 24, 2009

Emillie Mims, recently appointed Probate Judge for Escambia County, will talk about what she has learned of history and politics in her new role.

The Program (Continued)

(continued from p. 1)

Baldwin County also has its story of stealing county records and the further distinction of having the story of the theft preserved in a famous illustration. In Bay Minette, Alabama, the post office has a mural called "Removal of the County Seat from Daphne to Bay Minette"



This mural which hangs in the post office in Bay Minette is one of a series of murals that were painted in post offices all over the United States as part of one of the New Deal's art projects.



Logging

This is a photograph of the Mural which was painted on the wall of the Brewton Post Office in 1939 by John Von Wicht. Of the 24 murals painted for the post offices in Alabama, this is the only one missing.

Jimmy Emerson on, who has done extensive research on all of the post office murals in Alabama, has contributed the following information about a photograph of the Brewton mural:

"This image is from the National Archives. According to a Brewton local, the mural was painted over between 1965-1968.

"However, according to Dallan Wordekemper, Federal Preservation Officer, USPS, the mural was removed by the GSA in 1965."

Seemingly, the painting was scraped off of the wall, not painted over.



The antebellum Conecuh County Courthouse in Evergreen, Alabama, which was torn down in 2005.



The second Escambia County Courthouse Building.

Meet Our Speaker for the February ECHS Program

Anne Herbert Feathers

Anne has sent us this brief introduction:

"Anne Herbert Feathers grew up (mostly) in Prattville but lived in several Alabama towns along the way, including Montgomery, Opp, Tuskegee, Decatur, Tuscaloosa, and now Greenville. Her roots here are deep: both sides of her family were in Alabama before statehood; her father's family came to Butler County in 1819.

"Anne has always been interested in history, especially Alabama history, and joined the Alabama Historical Association in the 1960's while living in Georgia. She and her husband, John, moved back to Alabama in 1997 and to Greenville in 1999. She became more active in AHA at that time and has served on its Board of Directors and Executive Committee.

"She is currently a member of the AHA Executive Committee as the immediate past president. Anne is a member of the First White House of the Confederacy Association, Father Ryan Chapter of UDC, Fort Dale Chapter of DAR, the Butler County Historical and Genealogical Society and other preservation and historical groups."

Just Briefly

With all the hubbub one hears every day about the economy and the stimulus bill passage, I have a bit of news for our members. Getting behind some cause you believe in is indeed worth the trouble. Sometimes it's no trouble at all.

Take for example, a stipulation in the stimulus bill that museums were to get nothing from the stimulus package. Sen. Tom Coburn (R-OK) had introduced an amendment to prohibit any funds in the economic stimulus bill from going to museums. The language of the amendment, (Amendment No. 175, as filed) was, "None of the amounts appropriated or otherwise made available by this Act may be used for any casino or other gambling establishment, aquarium, zoo, golf course, swimming pool, stadium, community park, museum, theater, arts center, or highway beautification project, including renovation, remodeling, construction, salaries, furniture, zero-gravity chairs, big screen televisions, beautification, rotating pastel lights, and dry heat saunas."

Now I agree with most of that. However, museums employ more than a half-million Americans, spend an estimated \$14.5 billion annually, and rank among the top three family vacation destinations. In fact, visitors to cultural and heritage destinations stay 53% longer and spend 36% more money than other kinds of tourists. Unfortunately, the economic downturn has forced museums as well as for-profit businesses to struggle just to maintain essential services.

Through the American Association of Museums' Advocacy group, I sent an email last week containing the

following to our Alabama Senators and our Congressman:

"Museums are also critical partners to school districts. Many work with school districts to both train educators and help teach the curriculum. Many offer after-school programs for at-risk youth. Zoos and aquariums have tremendous public benefit for environmental education and wildlife conservation.

"Please consider the economic impact that museums, zoos, and aquariums have on our community. They are in fact economic engines and a vital part of our nation's educational infrastructure, and will be critical in the economic recovery of cities and localities."

This morning I received an email from the AAM notifying me the amendment was changed to NOT exclude museums from any appropriations. The email stated, however, "It is ... disheartening that zoos and aquariums will be prohibited from competing for most economic stimulus funds made available through this bill. Zoos and aquariums [also] have tremendous public benefit for environmental education and wildlife conservation, and contribute greatly to our nation's economy by spurring tourism."

Anyway, when I took a moment to speak for our museums and apparently enough Americans did the same; something actually changed. I think we need to keep our eyes and ears open to things which affect our lives or our causes and act upon them if there is a way to do so.



News of Members and Annoucements

New Members

Welcome to new members Beth Bain, Barbara Page, Byron Findley, and Laura Jane Farah.

New Business Member

Also, welcome to the Murder Creek Choral Society, sponsored by Paul Sbelley. The logo, which we will publish each month is :



ECHS Members to Present Program to Mobile Genealogical Society

Jerry Simmons and Ann Biggs-Williams will present a March program to the MGS on genealogical resources in the Alabama Room as well as in Escambia County.

Trip to the State Archives and Museum

Jacque Stone, Susan Blair, Ann Biggs-Williams, and Jerry Simmons will be attending a program on Alabama History at the Archives and Museum in Montgomery with plans to tour the Archives after the meeting.

New Book for the Alabama Room

Anne Biggs Williams has donated the book Tracing Your Alabama Past by Robert Scott Davis..

A "Dig" to Locate Fort Crawford

Tom McMillan has recently met with Dr. Clouse of the University of Alabama who has made preparations for a dig to examine the image found several months ago using ground penetrating radar, hopefully to find the location of Fort Crawford.

Cemetery Preservation Workshop

The State of Alabama Historical Commission and the Alabama Cemetery Preservation Alliance, Inc. are sponsoring a one-day cemetery preservation workshop on February 27, 2009 from 9:00 am until 3:30 pm at the Pioneer Cemetery in Greenville.

The workshop will feature hands-on demonstrations on

how to properly clean and repair historic grave markers. Registration is not required and the event is free and open to all interested individuals.

For more information, please contact Lee Anne Wofford at (334) 230-2659 or <lawofford@preserveala.org>

Hank Williams Festival Planned

The Festival will be held Friday and Saturday, June 12-13, 2009 in Georgiana. For more information call 334-376-2396, Fax : 334-376-9850, E-mail to: <cityofgeorgiana@centurytel.net>.

Installation for Alabama Women's Hall of Fame

ECHS has received an invitation to the installation of Coretta Scott King into the Alabama Women's Hall of Fame at Judson College, Alumnae Auditorium in Marion, Alabama on Thursday, March 5, 2009.

The invitation is to the Luncheon, which is \$25.00, and acceptance is by r. s. v. p. only. Reply must be by February 27, 2009. The phone number is (334) 683-5156.

The address for the acceptance, if mailed, is:

Alabama Women's Hall of Fame
Judson college
302 Bibb Strett
Marion, Alabama 36756

The form to be mailed to attend the induction and the luncheon is given below and can be cut out and mailed to the address listed above:

Please reserve _____ places at \$25.00 each for the Alabama Women's Hall of Fame luncheon.
List all names included in reservation. _____

Make check payable to Alabama Women's Hall of Fame.
Enclosed \$ _____
Name _____
Address _____
City/State/Zip _____
Phone or Email _____
Can't attend, but I have enclosed a donation of \$ _____
Please reply by February 27, 2009.

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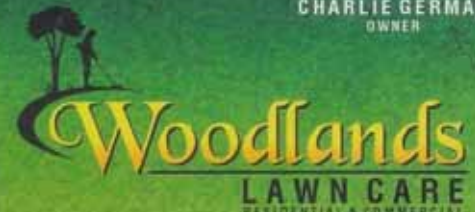
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The ECHS *Journal* Section

Train Stories

*This series of stories
prepared By Paul
Merritt*

Train Schedules and Stops

By Paul Merritt

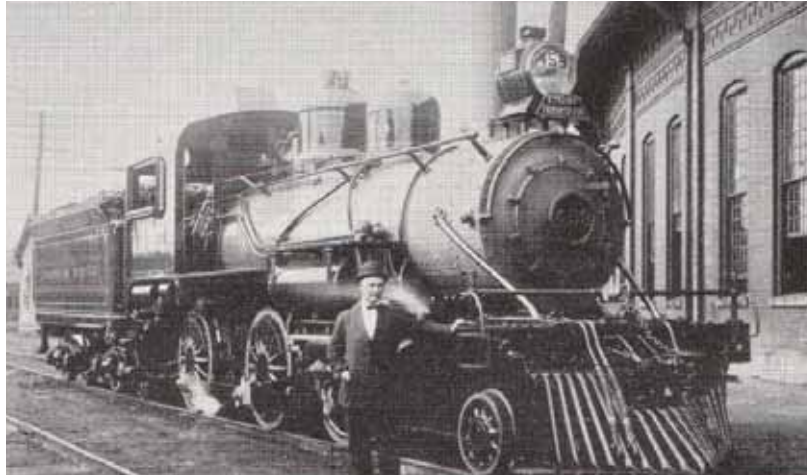
The train was a wonderful thing when it first came along. There were no paved roads and no automobiles, so getting from place to place was often difficult. Going by

train meant no horses to saddle or harness to a buggy, no mud holes to navigate, no rain to get you wet, and so on. You just bought a ticket, stepped up on the train and rode in relative comfort to your destination; often arriving right on time.

For instance, in 1896, you could catch the train in Brewton at 11:27 AM and be in Mobile by 2:10 PM. Or you could leave on the same train at 11:27 AM, change trains in Flomaton and arrive in Pensacola by 2:30. The trip to Pensacola took a bit longer since there was only one express a day from Flomaton to Pensacola and it left Flomaton at 3:55 AM. The regular train from Flomaton to Pensacola stopped in Bluff Springs, McDavid, Molino, Quintette, Cantonment, Gonzales and Pine Orchard, before finally pulling in to Pensacola.

How many of you know where Pine Orchard is or was? The writer does not know (about where Oakfield is now—Asst. Ed.)

If you took the express from Brewton to Mobile, you would stop in Pollard, Flomaton, Williams, Bay Minette and Tensas before arriving in Mobile. If you took the regular train, you would make additional stops in Canoe, Perdido, and Magazine Point. Well, we all know Williams is now called Atmore, but who knows where Magazine Point was - or is?



From the New York Times on September 21, 1912

Pensacola, Fla., Sept 20 One of the most daring robberies ever perpetrated is reported to have taken place between Pensacola and Flomaton Wednesday morning when \$70,000 was re-

moved from express packages containing \$75,000 and magazine paper substituted in broad daylight.

Detectives and Southern Express Company officials were rushed here Wednesday afternoon. They are working today on the case, but all are trying their best to keep it under cover, and it is impossible to ascertain how far the investigation has progressed, and if those responsible for the big loss have been located.

According to information available, the sum of \$70,000 is supposed to have left Pensacola on the 7 o'clock train Wednesday morning for Flomaton where it was to have been used by the Louisville & Nashville Railroad in paying off section hands and other employees in the Flomaton district.

The packages containing the money are reported to have been properly receipted for by express agents and messengers and by the L & N at Flomaton, but when the packages were opened, it is reported that that \$70,000 had been removed and magazine paper substituted.

Information available is to the effect that the seals did not appear to be broken, and how money disappeared seems to be a mystery.

The ECHS *Journal* Section

Train Stories (continued)

Mr. Morningstar prevails against the L&N Railroad

By Paul Merritt

On December 16, 1902, the Alabama Supreme Court reversed a Mobile County circuit court decision the matter of a Mr. Morningstar versus the L&N Railroad.

On the morning of May 20, 1900, Henry Morningstar bought a round trip ticket from Mobile to Pensacola and Mr. Morningstar took the morning train to Pensacola.

Then, on the evening of the same day, Mr. Morningstar arrived at the Pensacola train station before 11:20 PM. The train he was ticketed to catch at 11:20 PM but the train did not arrive until after midnight. Mr. Morningstar caught the belated train and rode as far as Flomaton where he was to change trains and go on to Mobile. However, the train he was to have taken to from Flomaton to Mobile had already departed.

Mr. Morningside then asked about the next train to Mobile and was directed to a rail passenger car on a siding and was told that the car would be attached later to a

train leaving Flomaton for Mobile at 5:00 AM. There were other passengers waiting on the same car so Mr. Morningstar felt he was in the right place. And indeed, the car was later attached to a Mobile bound train that left Flomaton at 5:00 AM as promised.

After the train had left Flomaton, the conductor came around to punch Mr. Morningstar's ticket. Looking at the ticket, the conductor informed Mr. Morningstar that his ticket was only good for May 20, and since it was by then May 21, the ticket was not valid. Mr. Morningstar explained the situation to the conductor, but the conductor would have no part of it. The conductor then "put his hands upon Mr. Morningstar's shoulders and forced him off the train at the next stop."

There is no information as to what the next stop was on that particular train but it was likely either Canoe or Williams Station.

There is no information the writer could find on how Mr. Morningside was rewarded for his inconvenience and embarrassment.



Burton Fields of Barnette Crossroads is shown on the right in this photograph. This picture of T. R. Miller Engine 101 was made in 1962. Man on the left unknown.

THE NEWSLETTER FOR
THE ESCAMBIA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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<u>Escambia Historical Society Cookbook</u>	\$10.00	\$ 5.00
<u>Wildflowers of The Escambia CD</u>	\$17.50	\$15.00
<u>History of Brewton and East Brewton (sc)</u>	\$50.00	\$45.00
<u>History of Brewton and East Brewton (hc)</u>	\$55.00	\$60.00
<u>Flomaton Centennial Scrapbook</u>	\$46.00	\$40.00

Clip the following form and send to ECHS
Treasurer, P.O. Box 276, Brewton, AL 36427.

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ECHOES, The newsletter for the Escambia County Historical Society, a 501 (c) (3) corporation, is published monthly except November. Comments are welcome. You may email the Society at escohis@escohis.org or call 251-867-7332, or 251-809-1528.

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