



*A Scene from Repton,
Alabama*

Volume 36, No. 7

July 2009

The July Program

**Scheduled for 3:00 P.M., Tuesday, July 28,
2009, in the T. E. McMillan Museum**

The Program

Our guest speaker Terri Carter, Mayor of Repton, will present a program on the **history of Repton and plans for its preservation.**

She wrote the following biography and introduction to the program.



*Our speaker, Terri Carter,
shown here with her husband
William Carter.*

Repton: It's the Place to Be!

"I am a 1983 high school graduate of Osceola High in Kissimmee, Florida. I attended Troy University where I met my dorm mate from Sunflower, Alabama, Shelia Gartman Finch. Little did I know that years later she would be convinced that she knew the perfect man for me!

"During a visit with her at Thanksgiving in 1993, she orchestrated a surprise introduction between me and William R. Carter III. She gave me only 5 minutes notice before he arrived and I was not happy about the situation and not

interested in meeting him.

"He had agreed to the meeting because Shelia's husband was a good customer and friend. Well, William walked in, I immediately forgot that I was upset with Shelia and I woke up married and living in Repton 2 1/2 years later.

"While William's childhood was spent between Monroeville & Repton riding

his pony Whirlaway, mine was spent, literally, inside Walt Disney World, "the happiest place on earth!"

"The Magic Kingdom was my weekly playground. I was 18 years old before I realized that everyone didn't go to Disney at least 3 times a week. And, only as an adult can I fully appreciate this childhood adventure that shaped my life and my attitude. So, it's no wonder that I think, 'anything is possible!'

"When I look at the little ghost Town of Repton, I see enormous Potential, Beauty & History! From day one of

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**Next month's program will be
presented by Dot Diamond of the
Jay Historical Society**

Dues

**Remember to check your records to see
if you have paid your membership dues.**

The Program (Continued)

my arrival, I have believed that this history should be preserved not only for our community but the enjoyment of all those passing through, thus, the Disney coming out in me.

“Repton sits strategically on US Hwy 84 and State Hwy 41, 10 miles

from Exit 77 on I-65 and has the railroad running straight through it. In its heyday, Repton boasted several banks, hotels, a livery stable, stores, etc. And, for a time, Repton had [one of] the only [2] board certified [surgeons and hospitals] between Pensacola & Selma and Mobile & Greenville.

“By preserving our history for all to enjoy, we hope to be able to stop at least 20 of those 6,000 vehicles that pass thru Repton daily. In striving to breathe new life into this once vivacious railroad town, my father-in-law, Bill Carter, has generously allowed us to share Carter Hospital and the memory of his parents, Dr. & Mrs. W.R. Carter, with everyone!

“When Dr. Carter closed the Hospital in the mid 1950’s, he simply shut the door and turned the key. Everything was left as it was. We recently opened the hospital to the public for tours and hope to continue doing so on special occasions.

“With excitement, we can say that Carter Hospital is just the beginning. We have many more Historical Gems that our community would love to share with the public.

“I am very thankful for all those interested in our history and for the hard work of the Repton Restoration Society whose mission is to restore, preserve and uphold for future generations, all that embodies the Spirit of Repton, its History and its Community!

“As you are probably trying to connect the title of this article to the content, allow me to explain. William & I have been compared to Albert &



Mural of Repton Store Fronts

Lisa from “Green Acres” on numerous occasions. Having pondered this thought with a smile, I realized that as Albert and Lisa discovered their Green Acres was the place to be, for me, “Repton IS the place to be!”

“In closing, I ask you to stay tuned and watch us evolve. You,

too, can be a part of this

evolution! And, please, Be our Guest! Visit us on the web at www.reptonalabama.com, or better yet, in person.”



Storefronts in Repton

Former School Building in Repton



Repton Jail Once Part of this

Just Briefly

By Jerry Simmons

The last few days have brought slightly cooler temperatures and with that change comes the hint of fall. Our seasons actually do change, even though not as much as farther north. If you don't like the weather today, just wait; tomorrow might just bring a new season (of sorts).

The men working on enlarging the parking lot in front of the Fine Arts Building for the last several weeks probably welcomed a reduction in temperature, even though it looks like their work is winding down.

Maybe by the time of the meeting July 28, the parking lot will be all done. If it is, most everyone will welcome the extra room to park their cars and those of us with aching knees and other joints will welcome the shorter walk to the Museum and Gallery Room.

I don't know about you, but it's been a busy, busy summer for me, and the next few weeks don't look as if there's any relief in sight. We are happy to be busy with things of historical significance, because I'm sure

you agree that the aims of the Escambia County Historical Society and the Thomas E. McMillan Museum all have to do with preserving the history of our region. If that isn't historically significant, then I guess I don't know what is.

When we save a photograph, a piece of writing or an artifact, it can prove to be historically significant to those who follow in our footsteps. If we didn't know what had transpired before we came along, we would be poorer for it.

So if you don't already think in terms of saving history, do so just as one might think in terms of saving the environment. It would be a pity for the world to be pristine and squeaky clean, if we didn't know about the way it was hundreds of years ago. That's our double-edged duty: to keep the environment clean and to preserve the history of the world, that it might not disappear.



Upcoming "Mondays at the Museum"



The Carter Hospital

For our program on July 28, 2009, the guest speaker will be Terri Carter who will present a program on the history of and plans for the preservation/restoration of Repton.

The Carter Hospital is one of the parts of Repton that have been preserved. See the article on the hospital in this issue of the Newsletter.

We will tour the hospital and then have lunch. More details about arrangements for the tour and lunch will be given at the July meeting.

**Tour of the
Carter
Hospital in
Repton
Monday,
August 3**

**A Visit to Historic
Pensacola Village
and two of Pensa-
cola's Museums
Friday, August
28, 2009**



**Symbol of Historic
Pensacola village**

ECHS will visit Historic Pensacola Village on Friday, August 28 at 10 a.m.

Details of the trip will be announced at the August ECHS meeting. We'll have a guided tour of the T.T. Wentworth, Jr. Florida State Museum and Christ Church Museum:



**The T. T. Wen-
tworth, Jr. Flor-
ida State Mu-
seum**

What You Can Do

Suggestions for Volunteering to Help ECHS

If you are not sure what you could do to help out with the ongoing work of ECHS, here are some suggestions. Some things already are being done, marked by an asterisk (*), but it's pretty certain help is welcomed with everything.

- Answer queries for out-of-town researchers
- Clip newspaper articles about Escambia County from state papers such as the Mobile Register and Montgomery Advertiser, as well as local papers such as the Atmore News, Atmore Advance, the Tri-City Ledger, and the Brewton Standard
- File in the Alabama Room
- *Fill book orders
- Inventory and catalog books, magazines and publications in the Alabama Room library
- Invite someone to a meeting – or to join the Society
- Make a donation for supplies for the Alabama Room
- Make a donation to the Society's Scholarship Fund
- Provide refreshments at a meeting
- Put the "ECHS Meets Here" sign out before meetings and take it in afterward
- *Send greeting cards for the Society
- Serve a liaison with area history teachers in local schools and colleges
- Serve as a greeter for members and visitors – give out name badges
- *Suggest or plan a field trip for the Society
- *Suggest or plan a program for a meeting
- Take photos at meetings
- Volunteer to chair the membership committee
- Volunteer to serve as the Escambia County representative for the Alabama Cemetery Preservation Alliance
- Work on Society web site
- Write an article for the Newsletter or Journal

Contact any of the officers and let them know what you'll help with!

The Carter Hospital in Repton

ECHS will visit the Hospital Monday, August 3

This will be the next “Mondays at the Museum” Excursion

Repton native, Dr. W. P. Carter, opened the hospital in 1925, using his father's home. Dr. Carter's son, Bill Carter, business owner in Monroeville and father-in-law of Repton's mayor Terri Carter, recalls that the house was used "as it was" until the thirties when it was remodeled.

The Hospital was said to have had "state-of-the-art" equipment for its time. The Carter Hospital and the hospital in Century were the only ones between Mobile and Selma for a time.

Bill Carter recalls that his mother did the cooking for the hospital and the trays of food would be taken across the lawn from his home to the nearby house, his grandfather's former home, now a hospital.

Dr. Carter was a board surgeon who did his undergraduate work and the first two years of medical school at the University of Alabama (Alabama only offered the first two years of medical school at this time). He finished his



The Carter Hospital

medical training at Emory University.

Terri Carter in her introduction to the July program for ECHS noted that the hospital remains as it was on the day that Dr. Carter closed the doors.

A newspaper article announcing that the hospital is now open for tours that the x-ray film at which Dr. Carter was

looking on the last day the hospital was open are still hanging where he left them (*Evergreen Courier*).

For the ECHS trip to the hospital on Monday, August 3, Mayor Carter has arranged for a special luncheon for us, to be prepared by "some of Repton's best cooks."

So, in addition to seeing a hospital that was a good representative of its time, we can look forward to a delicious lunch. Make plans to participate in this visit to a museum.

More details and arrangements will be discussed at the July meeting.



Dr. W. B Carter

**Bookcase
in the Hos-
pital with
Supplies**



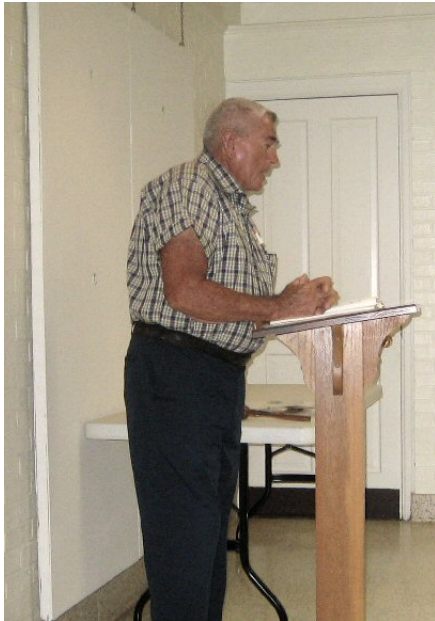
**Dr. Carter's
Telephone**



Snapshots



Fine Arts Building Parking Lot—almost finished
July 16, 2009



Jeff Ross
Speaking on Ellicott Line—June meeting

(right)
June
2009
meeting



Refreshments after June 2009 meeting



On the way to Jay
ECHS Field Trip July 2009
Katharyn Wilkinson met us in Jay so she's not in this picture

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The ECHS *Journal* Section

Walter and Bessie Bellingrath: His Business, Their Home, Her Garden

Compiled by Darryl Searcy

The pictures of Walter and Bessie Bellingrath courtesy of the Bellingrath Foundation.

Walter Bellingrath

Though a native of Atlanta, Walter Bellingrath was raised in the small town of Castleberry, Alabama, about 15 miles north of Brewton, where he got his start at the age of 17 with the Louisville and Nashville Railroad. His first job was as a station manager and his duties included sending and receiving telegraph messages. His old telegraph key sits on his desk in the Bellingrath Home as a reminder of those simple beginnings of one of the South's most generous benefactors.

In 1903, Walter and his older brother William heard about an opportunity to purchase the new franchise to sell bottled Coca-Cola in southern Alabama. After being turned down for the necessary loan by every bank in Montgomery, the two tried once more and were successful. The franchise territory stretched down to the Gulf Coast and when it was determined that they should split the territory, Walter took Mobile, since, as he later joked, he liked to fish.

The Mobile Coca-Cola Bottling Company became one of the most successful in the United States as time went on and Walter Bellingrath's business interests stretched to owning the National Mosaic Tile Company, serving on the board of the First National Bank, owning a warehousing company and he was an original founder of Waterman Steamship Company of Mobile.

His interest in his adopted hometown led to his



Walter Bellingrath



Bessie Bellingrath

long association with the Mobile Chamber of Commerce. On two different occasions it was Walter Bellingrath who wrote a personal check to cover that entity's annual financial shortfalls. He was a member of Central Presbyterian Church where he served as a deacon.

Walter married Bessie Mae Morse of Mobile in 1906. The couple had no children. After his wife's death in 1943, Bellingrath dedicated the rest of his life to working on the gardens she had worked so hard to create. "These Gardens were my wife's dream," he once said, "and I want to live to see that dream come true." To do this, his estate was converted over to the Bellingrath-Morse Foundation to oversee the operation of his beloved Gardens and to open his home to the public.

Shortly after his 80th birthday in 1955 Walter Bellingrath set up a foundation. Having had no children he was determined to find a way to protect his wife's dream for the enjoyment of the public. He transferred his assets into a non-profit trust with any profits not needed for the upkeep of the gardens and home to benefit Central Presbyterian Church, St. Francis Street Methodist Church and Southwestern College at Memphis (now known as Rhodes College), Huntington College in Montgomery and Stillman College in Tuscaloosa.

His choice of beneficiaries reflected his deep Presbyterian roots and honored his wife's family who were Methodists. The foundation was charged to maintain his beloved gardens and magnificent home "as a fitting memorial to my wife."

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Walter and Bessie Bellingrath: His Business, Their Home, Her Garden (continued)

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Bessie Bellingrath: Her Garden



Bessie Morse Bellingrath was one of nine children born to Sewell and Alice Morse of Mobile. Her father was skilled as a ship's carpenter and, although a native of Maine, he had adopted Mobile as home in 1853. Although Mrs. Bellingrath's early interest was in the arts, practicality led her to be a stenographer. Her last job was with the Mobile Coca-Cola Company. She married its owner, Walter Bellingrath, in November of 1906.

Mrs. Bellingrath's love of gardens developed quickly and the couple's South Ann Street home was long admired for its extensive gardens and became the basis for Mobile's famous Azalea Trail in 1929.

It was her idea to start planting azaleas at "Belle Camp" an otherwise rustic fishing camp, and her husband always credited her genius for the creation of Bellingrath Gardens

which opened to the public in the spring of 1932.

As the economic depression worsened, friends quietly kept Mrs. Bellingrath aware of families in need. She would appear checkbook in hand, begging for an azalea, camellia or whatever bloom she saw in the family yard. She would convince the stunned homeowner that Bellingrath Gardens had been unable to locate one and then offer hundreds of dollars in an era when the U.S. government declared that \$25 per week was a comfortable income. She told a flower shop owner that her crocheted afghans were the most

handsome she had seen and offered her \$100 each for a dozen, knowing the money would put the woman's niece in college, which it did.

Mrs. Bellingrath had a keen interest in antiques and collected from New Orleans to New York. Like azaleas, she was always ready to purchase an item brought to her porch in a car laden with children, paying top dollar for the family "treasure." Antique dealers along famed Royal Street in New Orleans had few customers during the Depression and they saved their best for the lady from Mobile who never quibbled over a price. One dealer once admitted that when Mrs. Bellingrath arrived, prices doubled, but she never complained. She knew that her purchase might be their only sale of the week.

According to Mrs. Bellingrath's nephew, Ernest Edgar, Jr., these purchases were always made by check. Each check was made payable to "cash" so

Mr. Bell was always in the dark about what an item cost!

Years later when Mr. Bellingrath was asked by garden visitors how much all of that beauty had cost, his response was the same: "I don't know and I hope I never find out."

Mrs. Bellingrath had a great interest in her nieces and nephews, taking delight in her grandnieces and nephews as they visited. When one nephew

admonished his young son for picking up one of his aunt's breakables she overruled him. "Let him enjoy it," she said. "If he breaks it, he breaks it. Don't worry about it."

Her household staff recalled her as always asking about their families and quietly handing out \$20 bills for small tasks completed. She offered to help one young butler buy a car so he would not have to share a ride to work and he was astounded when she paid for the car in full. When he asked how much should

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The ECHS *Journal* Section

Walter and Bessie Bellingrath: His Business, Their Home, Her Garden (continued)

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be taken from his weekly pay check, her response was swift: "That was a gift, not a loan." And as an afterthought, "Now not a word!"

After her sudden death in 1943 at the age of 64, the Catholic Bishop called to console Mr. Bellingrath and ask permission for a group of nuns to say a prayer as a way of thanks for all that she had done for them. As the couple had been Presbyterians this surprised Bellingrath who asked, "How?" Without his knowledge she had been sending flowers to the Catholic Providence Infirmary every week. The staff had been instructed to place fresh flowers in anyone's room who did not have flowers sent by family or friends.

In the Beginning; Bellingrath Gardens

Walter Bellingrath bought his fishing camp along Fowl River in 1917 at the advice of his physician, Dr. Paul McGehee. Dr. McGehee determined that Mr. Bellingrath was a workaholic and needed to "learn how to play." At that time the camp included two dilapidated shacks, no electricity or running water and Mr. Bellingrath loved it. He and his father-in-law fixed up the cabins and added screened porches while using the property for hunting and fishing. In the 1920s one of the shacks was removed to build a lodge with beamed ceilings, a large fireplace and screened porches overlooking Fowl River.

Bessie Bellingrath, the former stenographer, was well known for her love of gardens and the couple's South Ann Street home was admired for its extensive gardens. In fact, the Bellingraths often allowed garden admirers access to their driveway, which was known for numerous azalea and camel-



The Fishing Camp

lia blooms.

Mrs. Bellingrath soon realized available property for additional azaleas, camellias and other plants was diminishing on South Ann Street. But she knew that open acres of land on her husband's fishing camp would allow room for a variety of plants and Bessie soon gave the property a feminine touch.

Frequent travelers, the Bellingraths ventured on a European excursion in the summer of 1927. During their visit, they gained a deep appreciation for the beautiful English estates and European gardens. Upon their return, they hired prominent Mobile architect George B. Rogers to design a garden for the couple. Since there were no landscape architects in that era, the city's finest architect was chosen for the job.

Rogers used meandering paths and added a backdrop of tall camellias and azaleas, which he and Mrs. Bellingrath collected from across the Deep South. Water features of fountains and waterfalls were installed and framed with English flagstone walkways. The



Bellingrath Gardens Today

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Walter and Bessie Bellingrath: His Business, Their Home, Her Garden (continued)

(Continued from page 10)

stone had been obtained from old city sidewalks in Mobile where they had been in place since arriving as ballast in English sailing vessels collecting loads of cotton for the mills at Manchester.

During the spring of 1932, a national garden club meeting was being held in Mobile. On Sunday, April 7, 1932, the Bellingraths issued a general invitation to the public to view the Gardens between one and five that afternoon. Over 5,000 Mobilians jammed the roads to see what the Bellingraths called "Belle Camp," currently in the height of its azalea season. Mobile's police force was needed to direct traffic. The couple was stunned.

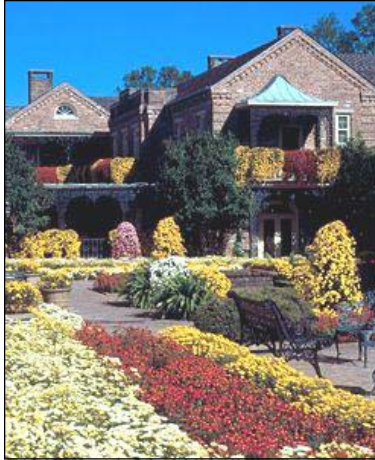
Overwhelmed by the response, the Bellingraths soon opened the Gardens to the public for spring appreciation and named the former fishing camp Bellingrath Gardens. Two years later in 1934, the couple decided to open the Gardens year-round. Mr. Bellingrath often said the Gardens were like a beautiful woman with a different dress for each week of the year.

Throughout the year, Bellingrath Gardens and Home features a wide variety of flowering plants throughout the 65 acre estate. From camellias in winter, azaleas in spring, roses in summer, chrysanthemums in autumn and poinsettias during the holidays, Bellingrath Gardens and Home is always beautiful, but never the same.

Walter Bellingrath: His Business

The father of Walter Bellingrath was a German immigrant, one of those thousands who fled the European autocracy of the 19th century, and who brought to the US their convictions of democracy, skills and willingness to work.

His mother was of the old Scotch-Irish stock of the South; she married Leonard Bellingrath at Fayetteville,



Bellingrath House and Garden

NC, before the Civil War. The German immigrant moved later to Atlanta, engaging in selling hardware and plumbing supplies, and later, around 1880, the family moved to Castleberry, AL (Conecuh County), establishing a turpentine business. (These facts are mentioned in The History of Conecuh County).

Young Walter went to public schools in Atlanta and Castleberry. When he was only 17 years old, he started to work for the Louisville and Nashville Railroad, first at Castleberry as the telegraph operator and then to Anniston, AL. He was only 28 years old when he entered the Wholesale Merchandise Brokerage business in Mont-

gomery; and only 34 years of age when in 1903 he and his brother, W.A. Bellingrath, acquired the franchise rights for a soft drink---Coca-Cola---for Montgomery, Mobile, Baldwin County, Thomasville, and Biloxi.

Mr. Bellingrath moved from Montgomery, Alabama to establish Mobile's Coca-Cola bottling franchise in 1903. Although that franchise dates to 1902, little had been done with it before Walter Bellingrath arrived in town.

Mobile in 1903 was a prosperous city. New construction downtown had brought the Bienville Hotel (1900), the Masonic Temple (1901) and the new City Bank Building was nearing completion on Royal Street under a new architect in town, George B. Rogers.

Mr. Bell (as he was affectionately known) located his one man operation on Water Street and hit the pavement trying to get restaurants, general stores and saloons to carry bottled Coca-Cola. There were numerous soft drinks on the market and what is now America's most popular soft drink was largely unknown outside larger metropolitan areas where soda fountains originally were the only source for the beverage.

Slowly but surely business picked up. At first Walter Bellingrath was a one man operation. He would sterilize the bottles and refill them using a foot-powered machine

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Walter and Bessie Bellingrath: His Business, Their Home, Her Garden (continued)

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to affix the metal crown caps. He would pack them in wooden cases and haul them in a mule drawn cart to their destination, pick up the empty bottles for refill and head back to Water Street. The hours were long and it was an uphill battle to get many retailers to even try a bottle.

By 1905 Mr. Bell set up an office in his bottling plant and hired a stenographer, Bessie Morse. They were married the following year. Mr. Bellingrath always credited her with his success in life while adding that God had been very good to him.

In 1910 a new Coca-Cola plant was constructed on the northeast corner of Royal and St. Anthony streets. The two story brick building had every modern convenience and newspaper ads invited all citizens to see the sanitary conditions where "the contents of a bottle of Coca-Cola never come in contact with human hands." This building had the distinction of being the first in the south constructed for the sole purpose of bottling Coca-Cola and related beverages.

World War I meant wartime shortages of sugar, a key ingredient in Coca-Cola syrup. Mr. Bellingrath had worked hard to get his customer base established only to have a short supply of his product. The stress took its toll on his health, and he went to see his physician, Dr. Paul

As the twenties arrived Coca-Cola sales skyrocketed. The sales of bottled Coca-Cola in the United States rose 65 per cent between 1923 and 1928, and have surpassed fountain sales ever since. Mr. Bell was one of the first bottlers to introduce the six-pack carton and his then revolutionary idea of heavy marketing in the winter to promote Coca-Cola as a year-round beverage was copied by other bottlers around the country.

Bellingrath Gardens and Home stands as a tribute to a remarkable couple whose fortunes changed Mobile for the better.

In 1938 a bronze plaque was secretly installed at the Gardens and when the couple returned from a New Orleans trip, they discovered hundreds of people waiting on them. That plaque, dedicated to the couple reads in part,

"Erected in grateful appreciation by their fellow citizens in recognition of Their faithful and untiring effort for the up-building of Mobile."

Today the only memory of the Bellingraths within the city of Mobile is the impressive lot at Magnolia Cemetery.

Mr. Bell's Coca-Cola plant was torn down for the new F.B.I. headquarters.

The handsome house at 60 South Ann Street, for which the couple had taken so much pride, was demolished for a church expansion.

Only the impressive carriage house survives, surrounded by a vacant lawn where thousands of Mobilians driving everything from Model-T's to Packards, once admired the blooms.

Sources

Bellingrath Garden and Home, a website

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Excerpt from Rev. B.F. Riley's *History of Conecuh Count*

Excerpt from *From Cabins to Mansions*, By Mary E. Brantley

Mr. Bell: A Life Story by Howard Barney

USA Tour Guide, "Bellingrath Gardens and Home"

The Museum Register of Alabama

Who's Who in Mobile and Baldwin Counties

Canebreak Genealogical Society

To the sources from which this article was compiled, we are grateful for permission to reprint the direct quotes and excerpts from biographical data previously developed. If any source has not been recognized, we sincerely apologize for the oversight.

The ECHS *Journal* Section

The L&N Connection—Repton and Pensacola

By Paul Merritt

The Railroad

In 1880, the L & N planned a line from Selma direct to Pensacola Junction (Flomaton). By 1881, the portion from Flomaton to Repton was completed and so was the section from Selma to Pineapple. Then all work stopped for nearly 19 years because of economic conditions.

In 1899, the 44 & 1/2 mile section between Pineapple and Repton was completed and it was no longer necessary to ship coal via Montgomery. Pensacola had by then become a busy coal exporting port.

When the Selma to Flomaton line opened in 1889, it was such big news that it made the *New York Times*, March 15, 1899:

“Birmingham, Ala., March 14—Recently the Louisville and Nashville Railroad began the construction of a forty-mile gap of road between Pineapple and Repton, Ala., which when completed will give it a direct line from Selma to Pensacola, Fla.

It was learned today that the same company has just put surveyors in the field between Selma and Yolande, at the terminus of the Brookwood branch of the Birmingham Mineral Road, which is controlled by the Louisville and Nashville, with a view of completing the new line to Birmingham, thus giving a straight route from Birmingham to Pensacola, via Selma and Repton.

This will open up a splendid new country, and also afford the Louisville and Nashville two lines to Pensacola, which it is evident will be needed in the near future to handle its rapidly growing export coal and iron shipments which go through Pensacola. It is understood that the building of the new line will be undertaken at once.”

By Paul Merritt

And then there was Muscogee Wharf

What became of all of that coal coming down through Repton to Pensacola?

Well, does anyone remember the coal-loading wharf in Pensacola? The rail locomotives would push rail cars of coal up a steep incline so that the cars were higher than the ships tied up along side of the wharf.

These coal-carrying cars were called gondolas. I seem to remember they pushed about six cars up at a time.

Once up on the high section of the wharf, a huge mechanized device would pick up each gondola of coal and tip it over dumping its contents into the ship below and then place the car back on the track.

I remember my uncle telling me how the locomotive engineers had to use a lot of judgment in building up speed to get the loaded cars to go up the ramp. But, they could not get to going too fast as there was danger of pushing the cars off into the bay.

The writer remembers as a boy fishing off this wharf and watching this operation. It was very loud and there were black clouds of coal dust shooting up into the sky. You could hear the thing all over Pensacola.

But there was no EPA back then. And yes, there were plenty of signs saying, “No Fishing!” and “Stay Off of the Wharf!”

But we were kids.

**THE NEWSLETTER FOR
THE ESCAMBIA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

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

Membership Renewal/Application Form

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ECHOES, The newsletter for the Escambia County Historical Society is published monthly except November. Editor, Ranella Merritt; Assistant Editor, Jerry Simmons. Comments are welcome. You may email the Society at escohis@escohis.org or call 251-809-1528.
Mailing address:
ECHOES
Escambia County Historical Society
PO Box 276
Brewton, AL 36427.