

The March Meeting

Tuesday, March 22, 2011

3:00 p. m.

The Thomas E. McMillan Museum

The Program: Episodes of the Civil War in Southwest Alabama and Northwest Florida

Guest Speaker: Kevin McKinley

The Pollard Methodist Church Historical Plaque Dedication

On Sunday, March 6, 2011, ECHS honored the Pollard Methodist Church by the placement of an historical marker, which reads as follows:

A Civil War structure, this is the oldest church building remaining in Escambia County, Alabama. Confederate veterans related stories that mules and horses were sheltered inside the church during harsh winter months. Circuit riders served the church in the early days and in 1869, Robert F. Mountain was pastor. The bell was a gift from a riverboat captain named Kelley, in gratitude for the aid church members gave his crew and passengers when his vessel wrecked and burned on the nearby Conecuh River. Methodists were in this area as early as 1830. In 1984 Pollard hosted the Methodist bi-centennial celebration for Brewton, East Brewton, Cedar Hill Zion AME, Flomaton and Century, Fla.

Marker placed by the Escambia County Historical Society.

Those attending met first inside the church for a short program and then went outside to see the plaque uncovered and officially dedicated. Afterwards, those attending enjoyed refreshments in the church parsonage.

(continued on p.2)

Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| T. R. Miller Mill Co. Contribution & A Query | 4 |
| West Florida Genealogical Society & T. E. McMillan Exhibit | 5 |
| Snapshots & Minutes of the February Meeting | 6 |
| Cistern in the Park & Brewton's First Mayor? | 7 |
| Doris Bruner: A Tribute | 8 |
| Our Business Members | 10 |
| The Pollard Methodist Church | 11 |
| Brewton's Post Office Mural | 14 |
| Watch History | 15 |

The program for the meeting on April 26, 2011 is not yet determined

**Volunteers in the Alabama Room
Tuesdays & Thursdays at 10.00 a. m.
Join the volunteers who are working to organize
the Alabama Room Collection**

**Pollard Methodist
Church Parsonage**



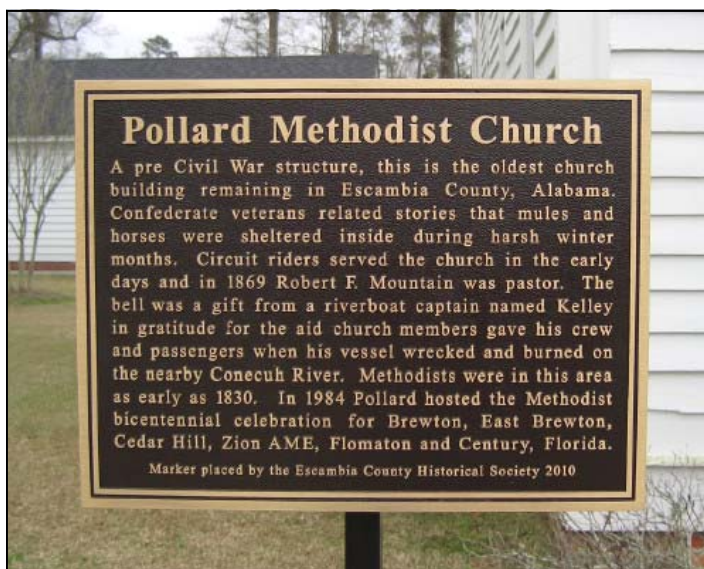
**Pollard Methodist
Church**

Volume 38, Number 3

March, 2011

The Pollard Methodist Church Historical Plaque Dedication

(continued from p. 1)



(continued on p. 3)

The Pollard Methodist Church Historical Plaque Dedication

(continued from p. 2)



T. R. Miller Mill Company's Contribution to Founding of WEBJ Radio Station

This note from William Emmett Brooks, Jr., of Gulf Breeze, Florida gives more background on the establishment of WEBJ radio station in Brewton:

The contribution of T. R. Miller Mill Co, as a corporation, and John Richard Miller, personally, to the creation and success of radio station WEBJ should be acknowledged publicly .

In a casual conversation after both of us returned after service in World War II, John Richard asked me, "Why don't you start a radio station for Brewton?"

I took the idea to my father, W. Emmett Brooks. He formed Brewton Broadcasting Co. as President, and was kind enough to make me Vice President and minority stock holder.

A consulting Radio Engineer was retained to find a site. He chose vacant land owned by the mill company not far from its Creosote Plant. To my knowledge, a nominal lease was negotiated and the

station was built in the flat between Murder Creek and a branch running into that stream.

Without the encouragement and direct help from T. R. Miller Mill Company, establishing WEBJ would have been more difficult.

One other note concerns the station's call sign. It contains both my father's and my initials. When he filed application with the Federal Communications Commission for license to operate, he did not specify a call sign. Some unknown FCC official sent back approval of the License for Radio Station WEBJ [for William E. Brooks, Jr.].

Thank you for your recent coverage.

Note: Mr. Brooks responded to the article on WEBJ in the January 2011 issue of ECHOES, not only with this information but by joining ECHS.

A Query

We received this query from Linda Crews who is searching for her great grandfather. We publish her email with permission:

I am trying to find information about my great-grandfather, **James F. "Jim" Parrish**, who died on August 21, 1921 in Whittey, Escambia County, Alabama.

Is there anyone in your organization that could help me find out information about the circumstances of his death and where he is buried? I have information from the website of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints that indicate the date and place of death mentioned above. The information also indicates he was widowed (he was not), born in Covington County, and his occupation was "money hunter."

The remaining family claims to not know any information about him, except that he was supposedly

killed/murdered. . .and maybe by a sheriff? Sounds like he was quite the scoundrel and maybe that is why no one in the family talked about him.

I wonder if there is any newspaper documentation and, if so, how could I find that information? I have already searched on-line with no success.

Any suggestions or help you could give me would be very much appreciated. I would be happy to make a donation to your organization in return for any information.

(Note: The immediate response to her said we rely on volunteers to do research. Any volunteers out there?)

West Florida Genealogical Society Offers Help With Family History

Saturday, April 2, 2011



**April 2, 2011 - Saturday -
Drop in for help with
your genealogy!**

**West Florida Genealogy
Library - 5740
North 9th Ave., Pensacola,
FL 10 AM- 2 PM**

In lieu of the regular April meeting, the West Florida Genealogical Society will hold a special event, Family History Assistance Day, a.k.a. "How to Find Out Who You are."

This will be a genealogy help day to assist people who have "brick walls" in their research or just need to know where to begin.

Seasoned genealogists will be on site to help with census research, birth, marriage and death records research, genealogy software, genealogy basics, online computer research and using the library's many and varied genealogy resources.

Reservations are not necessary, and there is no charge. Guests should bring whatever information they have in the form of Ancestor Charts, Family Group Sheets, or just on a piece of paper.

Contact:

- ◆ Bruce Rova <flrova@mchsi.com> 850-934-0139 or
- ◆ Cynthia Dean <cgdean@bellsouth.net> 850-432-7072

Thomas E. McMillan Museum Exhibit Celebrates Women's History Month

The Thomas E. McMillan Museum celebrates Women's History Month with a virtual exhibit titled "African American Women in History" through March 31.

The exhibit was created by former JDCC student, Dr. Paula McKenzie, now Associate Professor of Communications at Bethune-Cookman University.

The exhibit was created to honor the memory of Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune, founder of Bethune-

Cookman University located in Daytona Beach, Florida.

"Dr. Bethune had the vision to create a school that would provide educational opportunities for students of the future," says Dr. McKenzie.

The virtual exhibit features: Phyllis Wheatley, Sojourner Truth, Harriet Tubman, and Mary McLeod Bethune among others.

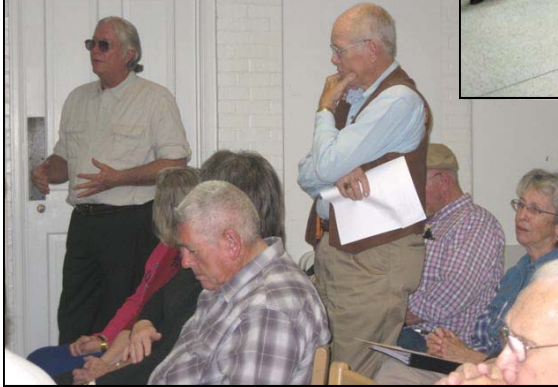


On the left, Dr. Mary Bethune, who founded Bethune Cookman University.

On the right, a picture of Eleanor Roosevelt visiting Bethune Cookman College.



Snapshots from the February Meeting



From the Minutes of the February 2011 Meeting

- ◆ Visitors recognized were Robert Lasher from Century and Bucky McCoy who is visiting in Atmore.
- ◆ The Atmore Historical Society will be taking a field trip to Moundville sometime in May. The contact person is Byard Swift.
- ◆ The Alger-Sullivan Society will have a yard sale on March 19, 2011 at the J. Houston Jones Historical Park in Century.
- ◆ Jacque Stone reported that she had attended a Flomaton High School Historical Society meeting recently. She was impressed with the students and suggested that ECHS consider offering an ECHS scholarship to one of those students.



- ◆ Susan Delenne has given a donation to ECHS in memory of Doris Bruner.
- ◆ Barbara Paige is doing research on Mt. Carmel. Anyone with information can contact Barbara through ECHS
- ◆ Volunteer days at the Alabama Room will now be on Tuesdays and/or Thursdays rather than Mondays.
- ◆ The general fund balance for January, 2011 was \$1915.23.
- ◆ The scheduled speaker, Dr. John Worth, was unable to attend but will present his program at a later meeting.

Cistern in the Park: A Query

The City of Brewton is seeking information about a cistern-like structure located in Burnt Corn Creek Park in downtown Brewton.

If you can help by providing any historical information on this structure, please contact Steve Yuhasz at 251-809-1760 at Brewton City Hall or Ann Biggs-Williams at 251-867-2445 or E-mail the Escambia County Historical Society at escohis@escohis.org



These pictures are views of the cistern, beginning with the front, on the left; the picture above, of the back (a pipe sticks out from the bricks in this view); and in the picture on the right, a view from the left side of the cistern.

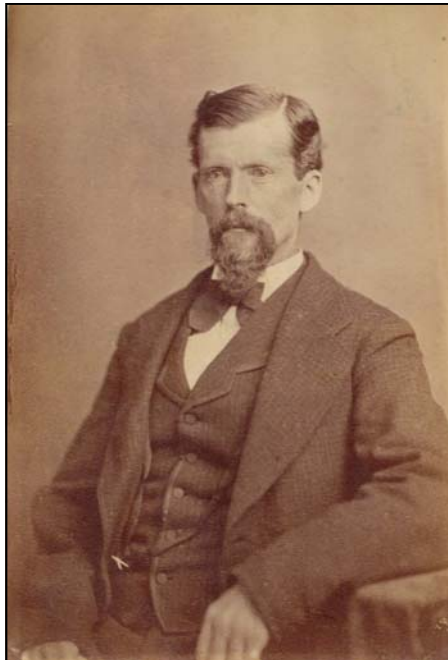


Brewton's First Mayor?

This picture was sent to us by member, Larry Massey of Virginia. Larry seems to come up with items relating to Escambia County even living so far away. We appreciate his donations to the Society and welcome almost anything folks will donate for the archives.

On the back of the picture was Mr. Titcomb's name and a notation "Teacher in Pollard." On the 1880 census he is listed on the Monroe County census as living in a boarding house with several other boarders and his occupation was listed as "schoolteacher."

In the History of Escambia County, Alabama, Mrs. Waters writes about Brewton, "The town



W. Y. Titcomb

had been incorporated in 1874 with W.Y. Titcomb as mayor, but the records of the incorporation had been destroyed in the Pollard courthouse fire." In 1882 the town was reincorporated as a result.

Therefore, logic helps us assume this Mr. Titcomb, whose photo was rescued by Larry Massey, may well have been Brewton's first mayor and the picture indeed has historical significance to Escambia County, just as Larry had suspected!

Doris Bruner: A Tribute

ECHS lost one of its charter members and trustees, Doris Bruner, this February.

Tributes to her note that Doris was instrumental in establishing ECHS, in publishing the newsletter when it was a quarterly publication, and instrumental in securing markers and recognizing important historical buildings through the county.

In her professional career, she was an Editor of the Brewton Standard and Tri-City Ledger for eight years and was in the newspaper business for over twenty years.

A Commendation presented to the state legislature stated that Doris “was known as a passionate and courageous newspaper woman who valued accuracy and attention to detail, and the importance of reporting local news.”

In the same document, she was commended not only for preserving, publicizing, and enriching the history and heritage of the Greater Brewton area, but for enthusiastically carrying out her many duties and responsibilities associated with serving the citizens of the area.

On a more personal note, two friends



Doris

of Doris remember her. Alice Somerville of Brewton attended school all twelve years with Doris. She recalled how smart Doris was and what a good time they had as classmates.

Wilellen Elliot of East Brewton, who is also a trustee, remarked that she and Doris became good friends and used to ride together to ECHS meetings.

Wilellen said Doris had a talent for writing and she enjoyed reading what she wrote. Doris told Wilellen that she used to cut stencils on a manual typewriter and run them off on an old mimeograph machine when she first started working with the Escambia County Historical Society.

Another friend commented, “Doris Bruner was a walking encyclopedia of local history. She left a great legacy in her family and in her writings. She will be greatly missed.”

(continued on p. 9)



Doris in her uniform. She served as a WAVE during World War II.



In the picture at the left, Doris (on the left) is pictured with Floyd Currie of Atmore (in the middle) and Annie Waters, author of the History of Escambia County, Alabama (on the right).

The picture on the right is of Doris and her granddaughter, Flannery Stanford, in period dress shown in the MacMillan Museum.

Flannery, who sent us both the photograph of Doris as a WAVE as well as this one of the two of them together, says of her grandmother, “She was a truly beautiful person and is greatly missed.”



Doris Bruner: A Tribute

(continued from p. 8)

The following tribute to Doris is by Ed Williams, Professor in the Department of Communication and Journalism at Auburn University, and a ECHS member.

Ed has just received the distinction of being named by the University of Alabama as the recipient of its "Outstanding Alumnus of the Year in Journalism" Award.

The award will be presented to him in April during UA's College of Communication and Information Sciences Honors Week activities.

The letter notifying Ed of this award noted, "Several people cited the impact you've had on journalism in the state and the region not only as a journalist yourself, but through your more than two decades training young journalists at the Plainsman."

Ed served for twenty-three years as faculty advisor for the Auburn Plainsman, the award winning campus newspaper.

He received his bachelor's and master's degrees in journalism from the University of Alabama

My first encounter with Doris Bruner, ironically, was at a meeting of the Escambia County Historical Society. I was a reporter for the Montgomery Advertiser, and I believe the year was 1977.

It was around Halloween in October, and the Historical Society's meeting topic that month was the sharing of ghost stories by the members. Doris told a story about the superstition of "seeing through a caul," a sort of mask or a veil. I drove from Montgomery to Brewton that October night, covered the meeting on the Jeff Davis campus, and wrote a column about the society members' Halloween stories.

I liked Doris immediately. Who would have known that two years later we would be working together at the Brewton Standard and become such close and dear friends?



Doris and Ed

I joined the Brewton Standard as editor in May 1979. Doris had been the editor of the Standard. It is common these days for women to serve as newspaper editors in Alabama, but in 1979 Doris was one of the few women editors in the state. Doris said she was tired of covering the city council and county commission meetings, fires, wrecks and court proceedings.

The agreement when I came to Brewton was that I would serve as editor, and she would be the community editor, covering the "people news," as she called it. She wrote about community happenings, births, weddings,

engagements, while I covered the so-called "hard news." I had bachelor's and master's degrees in journalism, but Doris Bruner taught me more about journalism than I ever learned in college.

It was an arrangement that suited both of us well, the splitting of the people news and hard news. I worked with Doris from 1979 to 1981 when I moved on to the Andalusia Star-News.

The two and a half years we spent together held some wonderful time, much laughter. Doris was fun and funny. I loved her stories about living in the Depression, in World War II, her days as a creative writing student at the University of Alabama.


Doris Bruner was a good, good friend. I valued Doris' friendship and the friendship of the Bruner family, Clark, Amy and Flannery.

I have been a professor of journalism at Auburn University for 28 years, and I continue to share stories with my journalism students of my days at the U with Doris Bruner. The lessons I learned from this fine woman serve me each day. She is alive in my memories, but I'll miss my good friend Doris. She was a one of a kind, unique, individual, and I loved her.

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The ECHS *Journal* Section

The Pollard Methodist Church

By Sally Finlay

Early History

The present building, one of beauty and architecture of a bygone era, has changed little over the years. The white clapboard, pre-Civil War structure, built of hand-hewn logs of virgin pine, is the oldest remaining church building in Escambia County, Alabama.

The windows are European stained glass, memorials to longtime dedicated members, and bear the family names of Jernigan, Kelly, Dixon, Finlay, Owens, and Walker. Early Church records show the names of Thomas, Jernigan, Kelly, Milton, Johnson, Leigh, Edwards, Barrow, McMillan, Finlay, Kennedy, Mayo, Pringle, Owens, Fuller, Geist, Dailey, Strudivant, McLellan, Scroggins, Avant, Williamson, and Wiggins.

The exact date the Church was organized is unknown. Records were destroyed by floods and fire, but early church history relates that Methodists were in this area as early as the 1830's and missionaries held "camp meetings" in the area and across the river, which locals attended.

Mrs. Laura Kelly Daily (1892-1979) church secretary for over fifty years and faithful member for seventy-five years related that her father, Joseph William Kelly, born February 3, 1846, told her that he attended the little church as a young boy. Circuit Riders served the church in the early days, but written records were destroyed during the Civil War.

It is believed the church was built in the mid



Pollard Methodist Church in the 1930's

1850's. Written records of former pastors have been maintained since 1860 when Robert F. Mountain was pastor and the church was in the Pensacola District.

Billy Jernigan, a member since childhood, is a descendant of William Jernigan who came to this area with Andrew Jackson in the early 1800's. This Church was part of the Methodist Episcopal congregation until the War Between the States, and like most Southern churches pulled away from northern association.

The Pollard Circuit and the United Methodist Church

The Pollard Circuit was part of the Methodist Episcopal South. In 1875 a circuit rider named William Hargrove Morris recorded in a leather bound, handwritten journal that there were 35 members in the Pollard Methodist Church and that the name of the circuit was Pollard.

The Pollard Circuit contained fourteen churches, among them: Powelton, formerly Sheppard's Chapel (Gonzales); Ferry Pass; Bluff Springs (Brynville); Whitting (Flomaton); Canoe; Oak Grove; Pine Grove; and others.

In 1939, Northern and Southern Methodist Churches reunited, and in 1968, the Methodist Conference joined with the Evangelical United Brethren to become the United Methodist Church. Some of the old song books that are 3" in height were printed

(Continued on page 12)

The ECHS *Journal* Section

The Pollard Methodist Church *(continued)*

(Continued from page 11)

“Pollard Methodist Episcopal,” and the membership record books show Methodist Episcopal South.

For the most part, the Pollard Church is close to John Wesley’s original style of worship, using the King James Version of the Bible, God’s Holy Word, as guidance and following Wesley’s belief that a personal relationship with our Savior and Lord is vital and that we should “learn and study God’s will then go out into the world to practice and live what you have learned.”

The Civil War Period

There are a number of interesting stories associated with the Pollard Methodist Church. Confederate veterans from Camp Pollard (Tattnall), several of whom were members of the church and served under General James Holt Clanton and Captain Norvelle Robertson Leigh’s command: Joseph Wm. Kelly Benjamin F Pringle, and John Alexander Helton, related that soldiers during the Civil War used the church as a shelter.

Mules and horses were stabled inside the church to hide them from the Union raiders. Supplies were scarce and mules and horses highly valued by the southern troops.

The gift of the church bell is another of the stories passed down through the years. Mr. Ed Leigh McMillan, who served as President of the Alabama Historical society and whose Mother, Kate Leigh



Pollard Methodist Church in 2009

McMillan Finlay, as a young girl joined the church, told me this story when I was about ten years old.

The Church Bell

The old bell was a gift to the people of Pollard from a Captain Kelley whose riverboat caught fire and wrecked along the banks of the nearby Conecuh River. The people of the town, many of whom were members of the little

Methodist Church, took the stranded passengers into their homes, providing lodging and meals until alternative transportation arrived.

Determining his vessel was beyond repair, the grateful Captain gave the bell as a token of friendship. The old bell has been used through the years to call worshippers to Sunday morning services, as a beacon to guide lost children and hunters out of the nearby swamps and woods, and a fire alarm to the Pollard K Bucket Brigade under the command of Marvin Kelly.

The Yellow Fever Epidemic

In the early 1880’s, Reverend Robert Paine Baker was pastor at Pollard and the Circuit was named the Pollard Circuit. At that time a new church in nearby Brewton was getting started. Some of the members were originally from the Pollard Church. Reverend Baker and the local church at Pollard gave much assistance.

When the Yellow Fever Epidemic broke out, our

(Continued on page 13)

The ECHS *Journal* Section

The Pollard Methodist Church

(Continued from page 12)

Pastor went to Brewton to help the folks there. While caring for them, he became ill with the virus and died. Through the years, Pollard has offered help to others and continues in its efforts.

Changes to the Church Interior

A few interior changes were made through the years. The two wood burning potbellied stoves were replaced with two large natural gas heaters which were later replaced by central cooling and heating (March 1969). Carpeting was added over the virgin pine flooring and replaced several times throughout the years.

The choir chairs, which are well over a century old, are usually arranged in the old European style facing away from the congregation. Lighting changed from candles and kerosene lamps to the Delco lighting and then to the present electrical style.

The carillon chimes were a gift from Mrs. Richard Finlay in 1972. They play familiar hymns like "Sweet Hour of Prayer" and "Amazing grace" at 10 A.M. and 5 P.M. daily.

In 1910, Pollard welcomed area circuit churches for a quarterly conference.



**Pollard Methodist Church Parsonage
March 2011**

in memory of Laura Kelly Daily, using the mid-1800's style architecture of the church. Some of the old windows from the church that had been saved were used in the building. Jimmy Carden and Lee Merritt were the builders.

Service to the Community

In 1974, the church entertained the Escambia County Historical Society here, with Major Curtis Finlay giving the welcome.

In 1984, the Pollard Church hosted all area Methodist churches including Brewton, East Brewton, Flomaton, Century, Cedar Hill, Douglas Chapel, Wallace, and the Zion AME (African Methodist Episcopal) Church to celebrate the Bicentennial of Methodism.



**Pollard Methodist Church
Sunday School Building
March 2011**

(Continued on page 14)

The ECHS *Journal* Section

The Pollard Methodist Church

(Continued from page 13)

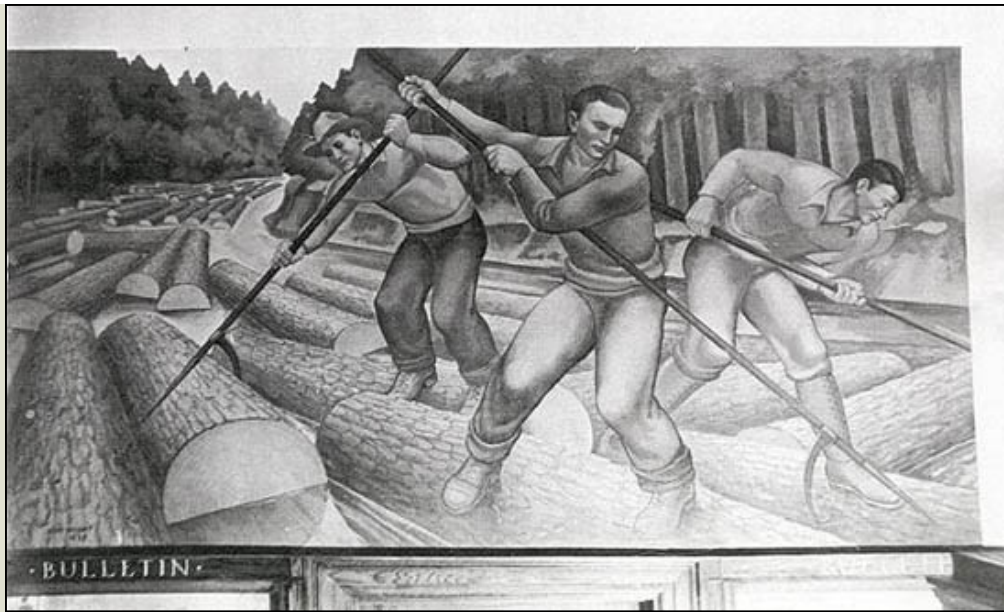
In 2004, the Escambia county Historical Society once again made a pilgrimage to Pollard and was welcomed here at the church by Sally Finlay, church historian, with Mayor Carolyn Lambert and Reverend Winston Jay.

In 2010, the Jay Historical Society of Santa Rosa County, Florida, and their President, Dr. Dorothy Diamond, visited the church and was welcomed by

Sally Finlay, Church Historian and a life member of the Escambia County Historical Society. Other Escambia county Historical Society members attending were Susan Crawford, Treasurer of the Society, and Ann Biggs-Williams, past President.

Through the years the Pollard Methodist Church continues in its service to the community. Sunday morning worship service is still at 9:15 A.M.

The Brewton Post Office Mural



The post office mural entitled “Logging,” by John Von Wicht (1939), pictured above, was painted for the Brewton Post Office and thought to be the only post office mural that was part of the WPA project in the state of Alabama that is missing. However, Jimmy Emerson, who has researched the state murals, has furnished us with the information that Brewton’s post office mural was funded by the Section of Fine Arts under the Treasury Department and not the WPA. This image of “Logging” is from the National Archives.

Tom McMillan furnishes these two accounts of why the mural has disappeared from the walls of the former Brewton Post Office (which today is the office of the Escambia County Board of Education): “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.”

This image of “Logging” from the National Archives is furnished by Jimmy Emerson.

The ECHS *Journal* Section

Watch History

This last installment in the series on “Watch History” by Darryl Searcy continues the section on the Railroad Timepiece.

The engineer is in charge of the locomotive, but he is responsible to the conductor for operating the train on time. At initial departure from all stops the engineer has to wait for clearance from the conductor before moving the train. Customarily before a run, the conductor and engineer compare their pocket watches before departure.

To ensure that no two trains occupy the same set of tracks in the wrong directions, it is imperative that the conductor keep the train on a precise schedule. To guarantee this, the accuracy of railroad watches is most important. Pocket watches - good railroad watches of high accuracy - are the badges of office for railroaders.

At one time, the pocket watch was the only device used to keep the trains on time. They were used for years and years with fairly good accuracy. And while there were no real standards set to guide the train personnel, the railroads tried desperately to ensure that at least the conductors had a reliable timepiece.

The passengers were in constant demand of the right time, so the conductor always made an impressive display as he extracted his timepiece to assure the passengers that the train was indeed on time. Many conductor timepieces were actually grandfathered into the system. When it was time for one individual to retire, it was his duty and privilege to pass his valuable timepiece on to his relief.

But it was not an easy tradition to keep because if one man had been using the pocket



**Waltham, 21 Jewel,
Approved Railroad
Watch**

watch for many years, he wasn't about to hand it over to a new recruit! But the railroads did the best they could under the circumstances and tried to roll with advancements as they happened.

Eventually, it was decided that the retiring conductor could keep his watch and the rail company issued a new timepiece to the new conductor. Thus, it became commonplace for a retiree from any business to brag that he “got a gold watch” when he retired.

Railroad watches were also status symbols. The conductor always stood at the top of the heap and his stature demanded a gold watch with gold chain. The train engineer followed with a bronze watch and chain, jokingly called a Casey Jones timepiece, and by regulation it was always highly polished. All other workers were relegated to carry an ordinary iron or stainless steel on a leather fob.

As traveling and trains increased at a rapid pace, so did the risks involved. So it was that in 1891 their luck ran out when a train crash in Kipton, Ohio changed things forever. Two trains collided killing several people. That was a fatal moment in history and a turning point that ignited the watch industry to set the high standards that are still in use today.

The crash of 1891 was the result of a four minute error!. Four minutes difference was the small window in time that took the lives of 11 people. Something had to be done -- a change was needed. A commission was immediately established to write a new set of rules. The goal was to set the guidelines and time standards across the trains and tracks regardless of rail

(Continued on page 16)

The ECHS *Journal* Section

Watch History

(Continued from page 15)

company, time zones, destinations, or load capacity. It would be precise.

The rules stated that the timepiece must be:

American made 18 or 16 size (using the Lancashire gauge - see inset)

Fitted with 17 or more jewels

Temperature compensated

Adjusted to 5 positions

Lever Set

Timed to +/- 30 sec/week

Fitted with a double roller, patented regulator, steel escape wheel

Have plain white dial with: black Arabic numerals, and each minute delineated

Open face

Configured with the winding stem at 12 O'clock

Little did they know that these standards, when put to use, would stand good for the next 100 years. Once the standards were laid out, all the big industrial watch companies like Illinois Watch Co., Elgin, Hamilton, and Bulova set the standards in motion and it would be the rule by which they would design and manufacture timepieces to this day.

The industrial watch had to take a beating! It couldn't slow down or speed up and the hands could not be rotated by accident. Those were some pretty heavy requirements -- and surprisingly, watch makers were geared to the task and, in the vernacular, wasted no time. The commission set the rules and the watch companies made the watches to perfection. It was a work of art.

Perfect watches resulted in great detail. These watches were crisp, clean, and elegant. They had



Watch in illustration fulfills the rules and shows the Montgomery Face.

easy to read faces called the "Montgomery Face." The "Montgomery" was the name given for white dials, black numerals and minutes numbered around the dial. The "Montgomery" is still one of the best looking faces ever made, and it continues in use today.

The standards called for jewels in the movement of these watches (17 jewel) because the jewels were harder than steel. Corundum (ruby, the second hardest gemstone following the diamond) would be the

gem of choice. Precious gems wouldn't erode with mechanical wear and tear or continuous friction. The jewels kept the working movements perfectly in sync.

The lever set was a safety latch that kept the hands from being accidentally bumped or moved. To set the time, you actually had to open the case, push the lever, and set the hands.

Everyone who worked with the railroad service had to have a certified railroad approved watch. All the employees, from conductors to train men, engineers, yard men, foreman, signal men, telephone and telegraph operators and train maintenance had to comply. New industry had to comply as well; bus companies, airlines, and ships.

The railroad employees had to submit their watches for examination and be ready to show their certificate at the beginning of each and every trip. The Railroad Commission meant business, and it created a motto that "When you're dealing in minutes, every second counts."

The train signal would blow at the top of every hour on the hour. Every employee was required to check their watch for accuracy and set its time to the "mark." If his watch time was off by more than 3 sec-

(Continued on page 17)

The ECHS *Journal* Section

Watch History

(Continued from page 16)

onds, he was required to immediately see the conductor and get it made right. It was a fine-tuned operation.

Those were the great days of steam locomotives and riding on the great endless railways, and they were proud of their record of being on time. To help these dedicated people to keep their record, a number of manufacturers continue to build and market pocket and wrist watches that are not only railroad approved but designed for today's world of high fashion.

Bulova's Marine Star is geared for deep water operations and companies like Seiko, Timex, and Pulsar have entered the high-speed rail world of Asia and Europe. Eagle's gold pocket watch with chain is not only attractive but geared to the pressures of high-flying commercial and military aircraft.

Indeed, every second counts.

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The Lancashire Gauge

The Lancashire gauge is one of the most common systems for measuring watch sizes. One of the strange things about the Lancashire system is the vast majority of explanations are wrong. They fail to take into account the change in the amount of "fall" ("fall" is the amount added to the bottom plate to form a flange to keep the watch from falling out of the case). It should be remembered that most of these explanations, tables and gauges were made after 1920, while most 17s, 18s and 20s watches were made well before then.

The Lancashire gauge is based on the dials being at least 1 inch in diameter, but an additional 5/30" was added for the "fall", except when the size is over 16s, in which case 6/30" was added for the "fall", but when the larger watch was designed around 1910 5/30" fall was added. So, a 0s watch would be $1" + 5/30" = 1.1667"$. Each step larger adds an additional 1/30 of an inch. A 16 watch would be $1" + 5/30" + 6/30" = 1.6"$ and an 18s watch would be $1" + 6/30" + 8/30" = 1.8"$.

There are actually a few more exceptions to the Lancashire gauge, or at least how watch companies used them. Sometimes they use an oversized dial and call the watch a different size, or the watch company will list the same watch as being two different sizes depending on which catalog you looked at.

Once watches got smaller than 1 inch, they used the notation of "00s" and "000s", but that quickly became awkward, so they changed to using "2/0s" and "3/0s" instead. This is why you will never see a watch size of 1/0s, and why a 3/0s watch is only 2 sizes smaller than a 0s watch. Wrist watches tend to range from 6s down to 26/0s for the smallest lady's wrist watches.

With this valuable information, one should be able to determine exactly the size timepiece that would best suit his or her taste and purpose.

ECHOES
THE NEWSLETTER FOR
THE ESCAMBIA COUNTY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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