

The March Meeting Tuesday, March 26, 2013, 3:00 p. m. The Thomas E. McMillan Museum on the JDCC Campus

The Program

Nevin Heller, Former Owner of the Flomaton Antique Auction, and Present Owner Of Antiques Circa 19th Century, Will Speak about His Experiences Working with and Learning about Selling Antiques

Our Speaker Nevin Heller

Nevin's experience and activities in the antiques business include being the Manager, Vice-President, and President at Flomaton Antiques Auction from June 1975 - August 2011.

He is at this time the owner of Antiques Circa 19th Century (June 1986-the present), which sells 19th century antiques and collections from the southeastern United States.

In his positions with both Flomaton Antiques Auction and Antiques Circa 19th Century, he has brokered and served as a



Nevin Heller and Family

Left to Right: Austin Heller, Nevin Heller, Tammy Heller, and Ethan Oliver Heller.

purchase advisor for clients by focusing on liquidating estates and acquiring 19th century antiques for many large antebellum homes and fine private collections across the southeast.

As part of his current responsibilities, he

spends time traveling and purchasing antiques in the eastern United States and western Europe.

Nevin also helped establish the Flomaton Railroad Museum by working to create the collections and serving as President of the Museum from 2008-2011.



**Flomaton Welcome Center
&
Railroad Museum**

Volume 40, Number 3

March 2013

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The April ECHS Meeting

Our speaker for the April 23, 2013 meeting is Mr. Ed Smith. Mr. Smith is 92 and has a great memory. He will tell us what it was like growing up in Brewton and Escambia County in the 1920's and 30's. Ed's father was a plumbing contractor in Brewton. After the army, Ed got into the gas business and became president of the gas company that serves Monroe and Conecuh Counties. Come and enjoy Ed's memories of times long past.

ECHS Trip to North Baldwin County

March 13, 2013

After meeting at the McMillan Museum in Brewton, a group of fourteen ECHS members and guests left for Baldwin County. Our first stop would be at the Poarch Travel Center where Jeff Ross joined us. Riding with Ann Biggs-Williams, who was driving the lead vehicle, Jeff held an orange flag out the window when we passed an interesting site. Each vehicle had been given a sheet listing the various points of interest.

As we followed Jack Springs Road through the Poarch reservation, we passed the Old Indian School Building which is the location each fall for the Poarch Thanksgiving Pow Wow.



Dancer at Pow Wow

The picture at the left shows one of the dancers from a Pow Wow celebration. The *Mobile Press* article which published the picture commented on the spiritual symbols in the dances at the Pow Wow. For this one, Alex Alvarez of the Poarch Indians explains that this

dancer has eagle feathers in his hand which will “allow his prayers to rise as high as an eagle can fly to reach the heavenly deity” (picture by Calvin McGhee and text from < http://blog.al.com/living-press-ster/2011/11/religion_is_integral_to_lives.html>).

Continuing down Jack Springs Road, we turned onto Three Mile Road and Jeff waved the flag where the old Stage Coach Road crossed Three Mile Road (at approximately the point where Three Mile Road becomes Redtown Road). Another interesting fact is that this area is near the Head of the Perdido River (thus the name Hedapadeda, the name of a corporation of farms in the area).

Although we could not see it, we were close to the community of Jack Springs, said to be the oldest settlement in Escambia County. The spring for which the area was named was used by the Indians before the settlers discovered it. Some claim the water had healing powers. Certainly having a spring was an attraction for having a stage coach stop and eventually an inn at Jack Springs.

ECHOES for March 2005 has two articles on the community of Jack Springs, the history of the springs, the stage coach stop and what remains today. For those interested, that issue of ECHOES is

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The Hadley/Bryers Feud

The following story of the feud was taken from the Pensacola Gazette.

Dreadful Tragedy in Baldwin County, Alabama

Partial reports of a terrible occurrence near the line of the Mobile and Montgomery Railroad reached us by telegraph from the Junction on Tuesday morning. Yesterday we were called upon by Mr. W. J. Van Kirk of Millvue, a surveyor, who was on duty near the scene of the tragedy but not a witness to its occurrence. He visited the battleground, however, was present at the funeral of the victims, and gave us an intelligent report of the dreadful affair.

Greenberry Bryers and James Hadley, two men of considerable means and both large owners of stock, had

been at feud for some years in consequence of misunderstandings caused by the intermixing of their cattle which “used” the same range.

On Monday, Bryers, Sr., with his son, Larry, was plowing about 150 yards from the house, when Hadley, Sr., accompanied by a party of five others comprising his son, “Dink,” two other sons, and his sons-in-law, Bud Pritcher and Thomas Stewart, all armed with shotguns, rode up near the fence and said they had “come to settle the matter.”

Bryers and his son were unarmed, but the father, after some angry words had been exchanged, caught up a piece of pine root, a foot and a half long, and getting over the fence, his son following him, advanced toward the party. As he approached them, he was shot down

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ECHS Trip to North Baldwin County *(continued)*

(Continued from page 2)

available online at the ECHS website.

Three Mile Road became Redtown Road and we were, of course, near the community of Redtown. This is a community just north of Lottie. The website for the historic marker at Lottie mentions that the Carney Mill Company of Atmore had a mill and turpentine still at Redtown with several railroads which

carried the products to processing plants or mills.

The marker also names Redtown as a community predating Lottie, stating that at one time Redtown was a large settlement that had a school, a store, and a church. In the 1890 census, the Carney Mill at Redtown had a population of 100 (<http://www.lat34north.com/HistoricMarkersAL/MarkerDetail.cfm?KeyID=02-23&MarkerTitle=Lottie,%20Alabama>).

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The Hadley/Bryers Feud *(continued)*

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and instantly killed, and his son who ran to his father as he fell was instantly killed.

Joseph Bryers then came out of the house with a double barrel shotgun, but both barrels missed fire and he was shot dead. Meanwhile Dink Hadley rode toward the house, sprang from his horse and got behind a pine tree to await the coming of another son, John Bryers, who advanced from the house under fire with two guns. He dropped one of them and sprang to a post in the road which did not shelter more than a third of his person, and exchanged fires with Dink Hadley about thirty yards off, the rest of the attacking party meanwhile firing on him from a distance.

At his second fire Hadley fell, and attempted to reload, but seeing Bryers run back and get his other gun, he scrambled upon his horse and rejoined his party and rode away with them, John firing into them as they left and wounding old Hadley in the shoulder. Dink Hadley's wound was in the knee. John was wounded in the head, arm and foot, but not dangerously.

While the fight was going on near the house, Wylie, the youngest son of the Bryers family, ran to where his father and brother Larry had fallen and was shot down, the wound being in the thigh and dangerous. The summary of the affair is a father and two sons murdered and two sons wounded, on one side; and on the other, a father and one son wounded.

We are told that Mr. Bryers was much respected being a leading man in religious affairs in the neighborhood, and that Hadley had always been deemed a respectable person. The dead were buried on Tuesday, a large assemblage being present.

Tuesday a posse of men, provided with warrants for

the arrest of the murderers, went to the Hadley settlement but found their residences deserted. The locality of these occurrences is near the Florida line, four miles west of Perdido station, or about midway between the Junction and Tensas Bridge (From Roots Web <<http://archiver.rootsweb.ancestry.com/Th/read/ALBALDWI/2002-11/1037412250>>).

From Genealogy Trails – Baldwin County, we learn the following:

(1) James Hadley, James M. Hadley, Jesse Hadley, Thomas Stewart and Howell Pitcher were eventually tried in Baldwin County for the murder of Green B. Bryers. The verdict was that James Hadley and his two eldest sons, James M. Hadley and Jesse Hadley were found guilty of manslaughter with ten year prison terms assigned. The other defendants were found “not guilty.” The verdict was appealed to the Alabama Supreme Court, but was upheld by that court.

(2) Prior to the verdict from the Supreme Court, the whole James M. Hadley family moved to Texas, where they had relatives.

(3) When the verdict was delivered, James and his two sons, James Jr. and Jesse moved to Florida and changed their names to Lindsey (Thomas, Marion, and Jasper, respectively.).

(4) Elizabeth Bryers filed a civil suit for damages and won the largest settlement ever delivered at that time, but she never collected any money from the Hadleys (http://genealogytrails.com/ala/baldwin/bryers_hadley_feud.html).

Note: The weekly newspaper the Birmingham Iron Age was listed as a source for newspaper article with the date 1885.

ECHS Trip to North Baldwin County *(continued)*

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We continued on Seven Mile Road (which naturally is only three miles long) and passed the area of Seven Mile Spring, a boiling spring with quicksand. There is a story that a chest of gold sank in the area of the springs and supposedly is still there. The Hadley Cemetery is nearby.

The Hadley family and their history is very much a part of the area.

The Hadley boys were teenage post riders and there was a relay stop for the post riders at the spring. The Hadley/Bryers Feud (see the separate article beginning on page 2.), is a famous story in the area.

The ECHS Caravan then turned onto HWY 59. We were quite a sight with yellow tape fluttering from our outside mirrors to help us keep up with the vehicles in our group and the orange flag periodically waving out the window.

On our first pass through on HWY 59, we turned onto a dirt road of white sand framed with oak trees



**R. E. Driesbach and
Josephine Dreisbach.**

hung with moss. We were in the Little River Community.

We stopped at the David Moniac/Driesbach House which dates from c.1800: David Moniac, a nephew of William Weatherford, built the house. He was the first Indian to attend and graduate from West Point.

The Driesbach connection to the home comes through R. D. Driesbach who married a niece of William

Weatherford, Josephine Bonaparte Tate. Josephine was the daughter of David Tate, who was half brother to William Weatherford, Red Eagle.

R. D. Driesbach was a planter and a legislator. He is also known for his letters which contain valuable portraits of the people and places of Baldwin County in the 19th century.

While we were stopped, Jeff Ross came by each car and told us that there had been two race tracks in

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Wrought Iron Fence of Grave at The Hadley Cemetery



The fence encloses the graves of John Benjamin Hadley and his stillborn child. The beautiful wrought iron gate has two lambs at the bottom with a tree of life above and two doves in the tree. The present day John Hadley relates that his great-great grandfather and a grandson hauled the fence to the site in a horse-drawn wagon

Photo courtesy of John Dean (Information and photo from Seven Mile Springs Cemetery, Baldwin County, Alabama <<http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~hadleysociety/index405.html>>).

ECHS Trip to North Baldwin County

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this area, the route of the tracks marked by oak trees.

The love of racing and the business of breeding and training race horses was very much a part of the Weatherford-Moniac family.

When David Moniac settled at Little River, he raised race horses. Another member of this family who was interested in racing is Charles Weatherford (William Weatherford's father). Charles is said to have designed the first race track in Alabama. He lived at his race track, which was five miles up river (the Alabama River) from where Sehoy III, his wife, lived. Creek husbands and wives living separately was an accepted custom among Creek families.

William Weatherford inherited a love of horses and racing from his father. A genealogical site giving a biography of William, relates that he was a splendid rider: "Much of Weatherford's boyhood was spent with horses. He was a master at breaking unruly colts and racing them over the countryside. An Indian woman said that his skill, grace, and daring on horseback would cause women to 'quit hoe-



ECHS Members at the Grave Site of Sehoy III and William Weatherford (Red Eagle)



Montpelier Methodist Church

A clear but chilly day as we parked to visit the church. The wind is blowing the yellow streamers we put on our vehicles.

old church was built around 1895.

The building has the original stained glass windows, oil lamps, and pews. Now vacant and, unfortunately, with some missing window panes, the

ing corn, and smile and gaze upon him as he rode by'" (from the African-Native American Research Forum Archive

<<http://www.afriogeneas.com/forumearchive/index.cgi/md/read/id/2485/sbj/william-weatherford-1781-1824/>>).

The Moniac/Dreisbach house and the land around it are now owned by a hunting club.

Our next stop in the Little River area was the state park

which is the burial site of William and his mother. It is a very peaceful place with beautiful moss hung trees.

This park is also the place where Weatherford and his fellow Creek warriors gathered the night before the attack on Fort Mims.

From the park, we looped back to HWY 59 to visit the Montpelier area, now called Blacksher.

Our first stop was the Montpelier Methodist Church, shown above. This beautiful

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ECHS Trip to North Baldwin County

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**Carved
Railing
Around the
Pulpit**

building basically needs some TLC,

The Earle family, who own the plantation on which it is located and have maintained it, have recently donated the church to Baldwin County. It is to be moved to Stockton to the Bicentennial Park



**Interior of Church
showing original pews.**

being developed there, where it will be restored and used for special events.

Next, we visited the site of a military camp established after the Fort Mims massacre, Fort Montpelier or Montpelier Cantonment. It was one of two military camps established in the area after



**Original Oil
Lamps**

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Andrew's Resignation and Rachel's "Howling Wilderness"

The following is taken from an article in the Mobile Press Register for Saturday, Oct. 19, 1987:

Blacksher: Serene Town Once Rachel Jackson's "Howling Wilderness"

Before his presidency, Andrew Jackson and his wife Rachel stayed at Montpelier for five weeks in 1821 while awaiting the arrival of Col. Forbes from Havana. It was from there he resigned May 31, 1821 as governor of Florida.

Jackson stated to his troops stationed at Montpelier: "This day, officer and soldiers, closes my military functions and consequently, dissolves the military connection between you and myself, as the commander of the Southern Division of the army of the United States."

Unfortunately, Jackson had to quell rumors of desertion in a note attached to his resignation. His note said, "I sincerely regret the cause which has given rise to these remarks, but the reputation of those officers, in common with whom I have encountered so many dangers, is dear to me, and I can not remain silent when I perceive an unjust attempt to tarnish their well-earned fame, let the motives which dictated the objectionable passage in the order be what they may."



**Portrait of Rachel
Jackson**

Apparently, Montpelier was not the serene place that Blacksher is today, according to Jackson's remarks and the letters written by Rachel Jackson during her stay here. The area was referred to as Blacksher rather than Montpelier after the Blacksher brothers opened a post office

"Oh I feel as if I was in a vast howling wilderness, far from my friends in the Lord, my home and country. The Sabbath entirely neglected and profaned. The regiment at Mount P. (Montpelier), where we stayed five

weeks, was no better than the Spaniards at this place.

"I was twice at the memorable Fort Mims, Fort Montgomery, near the Alabama. Stayed two nights with Mrs. Mims; she is an intelligent woman in worldly affairs. Every step I have traveled on land is a bed of white sand; no other timber than longleaf pine on the rivers, the live-oak and magnolia.

"The most odiferous flower grows on them I ever saw. Believe me; this country has been greatly overrated. The land produces nothing but sweet potatoes and yams. One acre of our fine Tennessee land is worth a thousand," Mrs. Jackson wrote June 21, 1821 to Mrs. Eliza Kingsley in Nashville.

ECHS Trip to North Baldwin County *(continued)*

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the Fort Mims attack, the other being Fort Montgomery.

A thriving community developed around the military camp. The website Gazetteer of Montpeliers and Montpelliers in the United States comments that Montpelier was known as the social place of its time 150 years ago” (<http://www.allthemontpeliers.org/country11.asp>).

This camp or military base was located on what is today the beautiful pastureland of a plantation. For our visit, we drove through the front gate of the white fence lining the property, down a short, straight tree-lined drive to the home and were greeted by a caretaker.

The plantation is in hilly country and the wind was blowing across the open fields. We did not stay out of our cars for very long. There are no outward signs of a military camp from long ago here, just lovely fields with the woods in the distance. The home on the property is a private residence and was not open.

We were joined at this point by Claudia Slaughter Campbell and her sister, Marilyn Slaughter Davidson. They would be our guides for the visit to the Montgomery Hill Baptist Church and to Fort Mims.

Montpelier is also famous for the visit of Rachel and Andrew Jackson during 1821. The couple were in the area for several weeks, while Jackson waited for his replacement who would take over command of the Southern Division of the Army of the United States. Some sources say Rachel was in the area for three months and Jackson only for five weeks.

While at Montpelier, Andrew Jackson resigned his office as governor of Florida as well as his military command. Rachel, in a letter to a friend back in Tennessee, wrote of her very unflattering view of the area (see the separate article on Rachel and Andrew in Baldwin County beginning on page 6).

Across the highway from the Montpelier Cantonment is the David Tate Plantation with the Frank Earle home. Although a large home with white col-

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The Last Will and Testament of Sehoy III/Margaret Tate, Mother of Red Eagle

Submitted by: Mr. George Brown

Recorded in Will Book A. Pages 116 thru 119, Bay Minette, Alabama, Baldwin County, Year of 1850.

In the name of God, Amen.

1. Margaret Tate, of the County of Baldwin and the State of Alabama, being sound in mind but not in body and feeling the uncertainty of life, do hereby, revoking all others, make this my last will and testament.

Imprimis. I commend my soul to God, trusting in the merits of my Savior for my salvation in the world to come.

2nd. I commend my body to Christian burial.

3rd. To the heirs of my beloved daughter Mary D. Saunders, I give and bequeath one negro man, Sam, one negro woman Marial, one negro girl, Amy, one

negro boy Sam, one negro boy Daniel, one negro girl Petty, one negro boy Harry, and all my swamp cattle to her heirs forever, and it is hereby understood and intended that the aforesaid Mary D. Saunders shall have the right and privilege of using and enjoying all the immunities, appurtenances, advantages and privileges which are and may arise from said property so long as she may live.

4th. To my beloved daughter, Margaret Staples and her heirs, I give and bequeath one negro man named Mob, one negro girl named Silva, and child, and it is hereby understood that the aforesaid Margaret Staples is to take the above named negroes at a fair value to satisfy a note that Mr. James Staples holds against me. After the note is satisfied, that balance is to go as part of her share of my Estate. I also give and be-

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ECHS Trip to North Baldwin County *(continued)*

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umns was built on the Tate Plantation, it burned in 1880. Another home was built in 1884, and is still standing.

A Mobile Press article notes that the Earle Plantation was one of the first to rebound after the battle of Fort Mims. The Earle family also benefited from the visit of Andrew Jackson and Rachel in that Jackson granted a considerable tract of land to them for the services rendered by the Earle family (http://blog.al.com/pr-community-news/2013/01/dars_tours_the_historic_montpelier.html).

The owners of the plantations called Montpelier and Tate are connected by family history. The Brad-

leys, who own Montpelier, are related to the Earles of the Tate Plantation side, through the marriage of a Bradley to a daughter of the Earle family. The Bradleys built a home across the highway from the Earle home (the Tate plantation). The home where the Jacksons stayed is no longer standing, but was on the Montpelier side of the highway.

We left Montpelier/Blacksher and headed back down Hwy 59 to the Tensaw area and the Montgomery Hill Baptist Church. Built around 1854, it is the oldest standing church in Baldwin County. Claudia Campbell and Marilyn Davidson had the church ready for us with lights on and heaters going. They gave us a history of the church and passed

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The Last Will and Testament of Sehoy III/Margaret Tate, Mother of Red Eagle *(continued)*

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queath one negro woman named Betsy and her child named Jonah, one negro boy named Tine, one negro boy named Tobe, one negro girl named Melissa, and her two children, one negro man named Ned, one negro boy named Harry, one negro girl named Patience to her and her heirs forever.

5th. To the children of my beloved son William T. Powell, I give and bequeath one negro man named William one negro man named Aaron one negro man named Cuff, one negro boy named Stephen, one negro woman Elouisa and her four children Siky, Daphne, Chloe and Tab, one negro woman named Pop.

My plantation situated and described as follows, the SE fraction quarter of S 19 in T 4 and R 3E, containing one hundred and fifty acres and sixty-five hundredths of an acre, the W1/2 of the NW quarter of S 19 in T 4 of R e3E containing eighty acres. The E subdivision of the W fraction of the N1/2, West of the Alabama River of S 19 in T 4, of R 3E containing one hundred and fifty-two acres. One wagon, one ox cart and four oxen, all of my hogs, all

of the farming utensils, five of my best mules, eighty acres of pine land situated and described as follows: T 4, R 3E, the NE1/4 of the SW1/4 of the NE 1/4 of S 34, four large steers suitable for oxen, all of the corn and fodder now on my plantation, and it is hereby understood and intended that the aforesaid William T. Powell shall have the right and privilege of using and enjoying all the immunities, appurtenances, advantages and privileges which are and may arise from said property so long as he may live, but he, the said William T. Powell, shall not sell, give, grant or convey or dispose of any of said property under any pretence whatever.

6th. To my beloved daughter Josephine B. Dreisbach and her heirs, I give bequeath one negro man named Dick, one negro woman Bella, and her four children named Pheabe, Handy, Dick and Mary, one negro boy named Harry, one negro boy named Lige, one negro girl named Rose, one negro woman named Amy and her three children named Tena, Milly, and Fanny, one negro woman named flora, one old negro man named Johan; it is my wish that old negro man named Jonah, shall do no hard work.

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ECHS Trip to North Baldwin County *(continued)*

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around books recording the cemetery listings.

The blue-green shutters on the windows were closed to protect the interior which still has its original pews, chandelier, and even a slave gallery. The curved stairway to the gallery in the vestibule, although of beautiful wood, looked steep. The slaves did attend were baptized in the church.

We made one more visit before lunch. We were given a tour of the oldest free standing house in Baldwin County. .

After this tour, we were back on Hwy 59 and on our way to Stockton and the Stagecoach Café. We enjoyed our meal of down home cooking and were able to visit with each other as we were at one big table.

After lunch, we left Stockton and went back up the highway



Montgomery Hill Baptist Church



Claudia Campbell and Marilyn Davidson in the pulpit of Montgomery Hill Baptist Church describing its history.

to the Fort Mims Park (that is back to the Tensaw area). Located not far from the Alabama River, the road to the park leads through a neighborhood of small cabins, houses, and house trailers.

.Dotted with the expected oak trees with Spanish moss, there are sections of stockade walls and materials for the eventual building of a block house on the Fort's grounds. It has a marker with information about the massacre.

We were able to wander over the grounds and read the markers recounting the attack. A peaceful place, the fort really comes alive when there are reenactments of the massacre. Then the site is filled with campfires and gun smoke with reenactors portraying settlers, soldiers, and Indian warriors.

After a full day of visiting a

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The Last Will and Testament of Sehoy III/Margaret Tate, Mother of Red Eagle *(continued)*

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I wish my daughter Josephine to have my watch and all of my household furniture, my carriage and old horse to her and her heirs forever.

7th. To my beloved Granddaughter Mary Staples, I give and bequeath, one negro woman named Clander and three of her children named Alec, Philip and Dilsay, to her and her heirs forever.

8th. To my beloved Granddaughter Josephine Staples, I give and bequeath one negro boy named

Ore to her and her heirs forever.

9th. To my beloved Grandson Robert Powell, I give and bequeath one Roan Mare to him and his heirs forever.

10th. It is my request that Handy and his wife Pheobe shall be set at liberty; I do not wish them to be slaves after my death. I wish them moved over to the place I purchased from Thomas Saunders; I do not wish that place self under any consideration whatever. I wish him to have four cows and calves

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ECHS Trip to North Baldwin County *(continued)*

(Continued from page 9)



The Three Ladies from Brooklyn Having Fun at the Stagecoach Cafe

county with a remarkable history, we headed home from Fort Mims. Ann Biggs-Williams, tour arranger, and, along with Jeff Ross, tour guide, took the group in her car down to the Alabama River, to, as she says, a particularly beautiful spot, which is the site of the first public school in Baldwin County and in Alabama. It was built in 1799 by the Tensaw community .

Our one visit to Baldwin County was not enough. We will have to return.



Re-enactor Portraying a Creek Warrior

The Last Will and Testament of Sehoy III/Margaret Tate, Mother of Red Eagle *(continued)*

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and two steers he is breaking for oxen at this time. I wish my son or Mr. Dreisbach to act as his agent during life.

11th. And it hereby understood and intended that my daughter Mary D. Saundes have the right and privilege of using and cultivating one hundred acres of my plantation land which I have given to my son, William T. Powell, the land which I wish her to have the right of using and cultivating lies above the Gin house. After the death of the said Mary D. Saunders, the land shall revert to the children of my son William T. Powell.

12th. And I also give and bequeath to the said Mary D. Saunders thirty head of sheep.

13th. I request that my stock of cattle, one wagon and what mules may be left, after my son gets his number out, to be sold to the highest bidder, the proceeds of which I wish applied to the payments of my debts and amount that may be left from the above sale after my debts are paid, I wish to be given to Mrs. Rosanah Shomo.

14th. I do hereby appoint my son-in-law, J. D. Dreisbach my Executor and Administrator to settle up my estate.

15th. It is my wish that my old negro woman Siky shall remain with my daughter Josephine during her life.

In testimony whereof, I this day set my hand and seal this the twenty-eight day of November, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and fifty.

WITNESS: J. W. SHOMO
J. D. WEATHERFORD

Margaret X TATE
Her Mark

Note: This will was proven before Patrick Byrne, Judge of the Probate Court of Baldwin County and admitted to probate 27th March, A. D. 1851.

News and Announcements

City of Brewton Applying for National Endowment for the Arts "Our Town Grant"

Connie Baggett, familiar to readers of the Mobile Press/Register over the years as the author of articles on Alabama places and people discovered on "the road less traveled," has taken a position with the City of Brewton as the new Director of Program Management.

Working with Dr. Beth Billy of JDCC, Connie is interested in obtaining a grant from the National Endowment of the Arts through the Our Town Grants. Connie and Beth are focusing their grant proposal on obtaining and creating a collection of oral history about Brewton and Escambia County.

Ms Baggett will speak to ECHS members at the March Meeting on their plans. They hope to engage volunteers from ECHS to help with the project. The materials would be stored in the Alabama Room.

The Our Town Grants are given for the purpose of transforming "communities into more lively, beautiful and engaged places with arts at their core," The only community in Alabama that has received a grant at this time is Huntsville.

Alabama Historical Association Annual Meeting April 11-13 in Eufaula

The complete schedule for this meeting is in the Spring 2013 issue of the Alabama Historical Association Newsletter. There is the complete schedule of programs and speakers, the history of Eufaula, of the area and many of the individual sites and meetings places.

Eufaula is noted for its extraordinary collection of beautiful homes with many cited as the best examples of specific architectural styles in the United States. There will be tours of some of these homes as well as of the historic city cemetery and of nearby Fort Mitchell.

The newsletter includes a collection of beautiful photographs, both current and historic, of the attractions in Eufaula. The newsletter can be viewed at http://www.archives.alabama.gov/aha/aha_spring_2013.pdf.

Some of Eufaula's Beautiful Houses



Not Receiving Your Newsletter?
If you have this problem, please contact Jerry Simmons. You can notify the society and Jerry by email at [<escohis@escohis.org>](mailto:escohis@escohis.org) or by phone at 251-809-1528.

Snapshots from the ECHS February Meeting and the Trip to North Baldwin County (continued)



Our Business Members

**Remember to support
our Business Members**

Herrington's
The FLORIST, Inc.
"Where Flowers Are Special"
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Brewton, AL 36426
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(800) 235-0824
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131 Saint Joseph Avenue
Brewton, Alabama
251-867-9962
Lhouseprinting@gmail.com

William Smith 251.238.3966
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QualityLawnsBrewton@yahoo.com

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- Rates based on length of time and type of collateral

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- Fixed rates up to 15 years
- Adjustable rates up to 30 years
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History of the Flomaton Antique Auction

By Nevin Heller

The following history of the Flomaton Auction appears on the web page Flomaton Antique Auction: Fine American Antiques (Since 1967) at <http://www.flomatonantiqueauction.com/>.

The web page gives notice that the monthly auctions are currently suspended.

Action at Flomaton Antique Auction

Who will give me... '65... '66... 19... 1967... September of that year, to be exact, was the first production of Flomaton Antique Auction. In a building that was located where the cash registers of Piggly Wiggly currently stand, was where on a Friday evening Mr. Herbert Heller, along with his wife, Dorothy, rang up their first total of \$1465.00.

Going back before the beginnings of the auction company, Herbert Heller, with his wife, moved to this small town of Flomaton, Alabama in 1961 to pastor a Mennonite church in the community. Having moved here from Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, Herbert was aware of the fine antiques made in America and especially those produced in the population and manufacturing centers of the North-eastern area of the country.

After a phone call from a third cousin, Dave Lehman, Herbert accepted his proposal; if Herbert would set up an auction company, Dave, being a fulltime buyer/picker would supply the merchandise.

In 1967 Flomaton Antique Auction began having bi-weekly auctions on Friday evenings. By the third auction, Chiquita's Department Store building was chosen to be the site of the early auctions.

In 1972, a new block building with ample parking was built to accommodate the auction company.

Both of these buildings are located one mile south of the Alabama/Florida state line, along Highway 29 and currently accommodate Wallace Paint and Body Shop.

Then in 1977, Mr. Heller purchased the Jackson Theatre building in downtown Flomaton giving additional space of 6,000 square feet, along with the adjacent parking lot. In 1981 a showroom was added across the back of the building. Then an additional warehouse was built in 1987 bringing the total

square footage to around eleven thousand. In 2002, the town created a parking lot to the south of the building, giving plenty of parking nearby.

About a year after the first auction, the decision was made to open a satellite business in Lyman, nine miles north of Gulfport, Mississippi. Several auctions were held at this location and were supplied by Dave and Bill

Hughes. The strong gusts of Hurricane Camille destroyed the building and ended this function of the antique business. Thereafter, some customers from that area were pulled in and did come to Flomaton for their purchases.

The 70's saw the end of biweekly auctions and the beginning of monthly Saturday "day" sales. These auctions had more items being sold and a small 8" by 5" catalog was produced with around 200 items advertised. In 1971, a New Year's Day sale was begun which developed into the largest annual auction day for the company, some years having as many as 600 in attendance and included a record breaking sale of \$700,000.00.

The average attendance over the years was around one to three hundred patrons for each auction. During the 70's each of the Heller's six children performed some chore around the operation while also



Jackson Theatre

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becoming acquainted with an entrepreneur's life and gaining knowledge of the quality antiques that they handled for years as they grew up.

In 1980, their son Nevin entered the operations. It was during this time that a truck was purchased for buying trips to Pennsylvania, with Dave Lehman continuing to be a buyer till he passed away in 1982. By this time, many local estates and collections as well as complete antique shops were becoming a fascinating source of merchandise to sell, such as the Zeigler family home in Central Alabama.

In the early 1980's Tom and Julianne Gardiner, after retiring from The Brewton Standard, became involved with Nevin in buying trips to the Northeast. In 1983, both sons, Nevin and Lamar, became partners in the business. In 1981 a satellite auction was opened in Opelousas and later Plaquemine, Louisiana, holding quarterly auctions there until 1984.

The early 80's saw single day Saturday auctions being held every three to four weeks, with promotions of illustrated black and white catalogs. In 1989 Lamar left the business for a more "lucrative" job in computer program design and management. In 1990, with the company going from thirteen single day sales to six bi-monthly two-day auctions there was an increase to over 1.5 million dollars in sales.

With suppliers/buyers in Pennsylvania, New York, and Massachusetts, the focus was on finer American antiques from 1780 to the Civil War era. In 1993, daughter Sharon joined the business becoming a partner four years later. In early 1996, Herbert and son, Nevin made their first trip to England that developed into the sale of items from there for the next four years. There was a successful mix of European items to sell alongside of the American antiques that their clientele was purchasing.



Open Air Photography

In January of 2001, Herbert and Dorothy made the decision to retire and by April of that year the business was incorporated and their son, Nevin Heller took over operations. During that year, the catalogs were changed to full color and a website was developed.

At the beginning of 2003, after thirty years of mailing over seven thousand of our sixteen to twenty page catalogs

across the country, they were changed to a four-page color brochure and customers were directed to the fully cataloged website with between one and two thousand photographs. Our last May 2005 auction had one million hits on the website the two weeks prior to the sale.

In August 2004 we began posting the full auction on Ebay/Live Auctioneers, making it possible to interactively bid against someone in the audience while sitting in your living room. This was in addition to the phone call and absentee bidding that the customers had been doing for many years. During the first year on Ebay, we sold \$140,000 of merchandise thru that venue.

Our total yearly sales held at under two million dollars. We changed our auction schedule and had them every month on the first weekend – Friday evening auctions on the even months and Saturday day auctions on the odd months.

The Saturday auctions had the same fine American antiques that we offered for many years, items and their accessories dating from the late 1700's to the 1880's. In the Friday auctions, we branched out to the ever-popular Oak and Colonial Revival periods of the late 1800's and up to the mid 1900's.

The customer base was largely from the Southeastern United States, with the largest percentage being dealers buying for their antique shops or a client. There have been also considerable amounts of items

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going into the Northeast and West Coast areas. Some of our best customers over the years have been – Bob Snow (Rosie ‘O Gradies), Cook Cleland/Pensacola, Dacy Espy/Jackson, Doc Murray/Mobile, Richard Avery/Marion, Wesley Cooper/Natchez, MS, Joyce Bellows/Thomasville, GA and a multitude of others that could be mentioned.

Another memorable purchaser was Arlin Dease, who restored Nottoway Plantation Home south of Baton Rouge, Louisiana. It is the largest of all southern antebellum homes with 64 rooms and a total of 53,000 square feet of living area. We sold approximately eighty percent of the furnishings currently in this fine home, called “White Castle,” while it was being restored during the early 1980’s. Another customer has built a large contemporary underground home covered by the plains of Texas, filling it mostly with items bought in Flomaton.

Some of the most exciting stories are of the merchandise itself, one being President Zachary Taylor’s canopy bed selling to a Taylor descendant who owns the largest farm east of the Mississippi River. She purchased the bed for thirty thousand dollars with plans for a museum to be done somewhere on her twelve thousand acre Virginia farm.

Another memory was of a consignment of deaccessioned items from the Alabama Museum of Art of many guns, and in-



Nottoway Plantation



Bedroom at Nottoway Plantation

cluded a hat used by a member of the 123rd Tennessee Confederate Regiment that sold for 16,000 dollars. This rare Ranger type hat was sold immediately to someone spending \$7,000 on its restoration. Now some 15 years later it is on the

market – any buyers...for \$52,000?

Another item we received a call on was about an item from a house trailer in the Montgomery area; an 1860 rosewood étagère that was sold for \$34,000. About four years later, I received a call on my cell phone with an offer to pay \$75,000 for that same étagère. The offer was turned down, along with the quote “my wife would kill me if I sold that.” This same Chicago area couple sits on Victorian sofas

purchased in Flomaton over the course of several years, for the handsome sum of ten thousand dollars each.

Another customer from Nashville, Tennessee, purchased his bedroom furniture at one of our auctions, paying \$52,000 for

almost a roomful of furniture. One other interesting story of local interest is of a cast iron boar that had been sitting in a Brewton area yard. It had a provenance including the famed Flagler Mansion collection and the crest of a Florida Indian mound. It went to an excited buyer from Ireland for \$13,000.

Many of our customers are filling their antebellum homes, live-in museums and bed and breakfast inns with these fine period antiques. One currently being filled is an exquisite 1860 home with six large

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classical fluted columns across the front. The panorama from the rear of the house includes a view across eleven miles of beautiful central Alabama hills.

Alabama, by the way, has more antebellum homes than any other state, due to easy street access during the early and mid 1800's. Streets??...did I say streets?...they actually were the waterways. These were the highways of the 1800's; with Alabama topping the list of navigable waterways in the United States, it made the development of plantations and farms achievable.

While stories of fine furniture and collections such

as these are exciting and interesting, they involve more dollars than the average person has for furnishing their home. We sell many fine quality items at a nominal amount for the modern home and for the price-conscious buyer. These are good usable items for today's home that are sensible investments, while at the same time purchasing and using the items means they are being preserved for future generations. I will end with the qualifications that should be considered when purchasing an investment quality or fine antique item – 1) quality, 2) condition, 3) maker, 4) provenance and 5) age.

Red Eagle's Grave Site Is Deeded to Baldwin County

This article by Kay Nuzum was originally published in the Baldwin Times for Thursday, November 23, 1972 and then printed in the Baldwin County Historical Society Quarterly, Vol. V, No. 3, April 1978, pp. 80-81.

Call him what you will—Red Eagle, Indian Chief, William Weatherford; Lomachatte, as the Creek Indians did, or just plain Billy—the famous Indian Chief's resting place now belongs to Baldwin County. Last Friday at 10:00 in the morning, Mrs. Christine N. Dreisbach generously and graciously presented a deed to an acre of land surrounding Red Eagle's grave to Baldwin County, along with an easement through her property to the Dixie Landing Road in North Baldwin County.

On behalf of the Baldwin County Commission, Commissioner John McMillan, Jr. accepted the deed to the property prepared by Mrs. Dreisbach's attorney, John Chason. Mrs. Dreisbach's brother, D.



Panel at the entrance to the grave site of Red Eagle and Sehoy giving brief biography of Red Eagle.

C. Norris, and her great grandson, David Clifford Chavis, were also present at the ceremony.

It is also interesting to note here that Mrs. Dreisbach's husband's uncle, J. D. Dreisbach, was the first Superintendent of Baldwin County schools. He served from 1876 to 1893.

The grave site had been cleared by workers of the Emergency Employment Act under the direction of George Brown, Baldwin County Coordinator for Development.

Needless to say, the Baldwin County Historical Commission and the Baldwin County Historical Society, as well as all Baldwin Countians who have been assigned to survey historical sites, buildings, and objects, and all who are interested in the history of our county are delighted with the acquisition of Red Eagle's grave site. The present marker was placed on the grave of the famous Indian leader next to his mothers' (Sehoy's) grave in 1828 by the Baldwin County Historical Society.

ECHOES
THE NEWSLETTER FOR
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