# EWSLETTER AND JOURNAL FOR

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# The April Meeting Tuesday, April 23, 2013, 3:00 p. m. The Thomas E. McMillan Museum on the JDCC Campus



Edward L. Smith

#### The Program: Memories of Times Long Past

Our speaker, Mr. Ed Smith of Evergreen, is actually a Brewton native. He will tell us what it was like growing up in Brewton and Escambia County in the 1920's and 30's.

Mr. Smith moved to Evergreen in the 1980's. He became part of the gas business and eventually was president of the gas company which serves

Monroe and Conecuh Counties.

#### The ECHS Historic Marker Dedication for the Lindsey-Fitzgerald House



ECHS dedicated its fourth historical marker for Escambia County on Good Friday, March 29, 2013 with the dedication of the marker for this home, which is located in Pollard. In the picture, the bronze marker is shown in front of the house with a black cover over it.

(Continued on page 2)

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Deer Range Train Station

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The May ECHS Meeting Tuesday, May 28, 2013

Rhett Johnson, wildlife biologist and forester, will speak about his work at the Solon Dixon Forestry Education Center and the Longleaf Alliance

#### The ECHS Historic Marker Dedication for the Lindsey-Fitzgerald House

(Continued)

(Continued from page 1)



At the left ECHS Vice-President Sally Finlay and ECHS Treasurer Susan Crawford just before they removed the cover from the marker. At the right, ECHS members Susan, Sally, and Clay Lisenby.



#### A History of the Lindsey-Fitzgerald House

The text on the marker reads:

Martin Lindsey bought the Pollard Mill later known as the Lindsey Mill Company. Several hundred employees worked at the Mill during the early 1900s, among them Joe Douglas, head of the woodlands, and Percy Watson, accounting. Mr. Lindsey handled the marketing.

He built this house with virgin yellow pine lumber (beadboard, tongue and groove ceilings and walls) produced and milled in Pollard circa 1890. He lived here until the family moved to Mobile.

Originally there were three additional rooms on the east wing. During WW II these were dismantled and the lumber sold because of a shortage of building materials. The architecture is in the Victorian style. The Queen Anne entry door is original.

W. J. "Willie" McLellan, Postmaster 1901-1930, lived here until his death. Mr. Jim Pringle bought the house and his sister, Mrs. Bessie Fitzgerald, and her family lived here through the war years.



The Marker



Pollard Post Office Picture Courtesy of Shown Scott

Mrs. Fitzgerald, known for her hospitality, allowed her neighbors the use of her cistern, the coldest artesian well water in town, to cool their milk and watermelons. In those days, everyone had a milk cow and a garden. This was prior to most families having ice boxes or refrigeration.

During the 1960s the Carey Lisenby family lived here. In the early 1990s the Finlay family acquired the house and began to restore it, receiving an award from the Escambia County Historical

Society in 1995. The jerk jaw roof on the west side of the house, the cupola, the porches (originally

wrapped around three sides of the house) and the sand

dollar (a symbol of a Christian home) were all indicative of the Victorian style. €

S-€

The Sand Dollar

#### **Snapshots from the Marker Dedication**



**ECHS Members at the Marker** 



Family Members with Connections to the House standing by the Marker, including ECHS Treasurer Susan, standing far right.





Above, ECHS members Barbara Page and Beth Bain walking from the Lindsey Fitzgerald House after the dedication. The Pollard Methodist Church can be seen in the background. The first ECHS Historical Marker was for the Pollard Methodist Church.

In the middle, above, Jacque Stone and June Martin.

To the right above Jacque and Charles Stone arriving for the dedication.

To the right, this picture of the Lindsay Fitzgerald House shows the cupola and above the two windows on the top floor, the sand dollar.



#### A Brief History of the Commercial Use of Natural Gas

Since the speaker for the April Meeting became the president of a company that provided natural gas to the Monroe and Conecuh Counties, a brief history of natural gas seems appropriate.

This Brief History is from the American Public Gas Association at <a href="http://www.apga.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=3329">http://www.apga.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=3329</a>.

Pictures are from the website Kid's Korner <a href="http://www.fplsafetyworld.com/?">http://www.fplsafetyworld.com/?</a> ver=kkblue&utilid=fplforkids&id=16196.

Although naturally occurring gas has been known since ancient times, its commercial use is relatively recent. In about 1000, B.C., the famous Oracle at Delphi, on Mount Parnassus in ancient Greece, was built where natural gas seeped from the ground in a flame. Around 500 B.C., the Chinese started using crude bamboo "pipelines" to transport gas that seeped to the surface and to use it to boil sea water to get drinkable water.

The first commercialized natural gas occurred in Britain. Around 1785, the British used natural gas produced from coal to light houses and streets. In 1816, Baltimore, Maryland used this type of manufactured natural gas to become

the first city in the United States to light its streets with gas.

Naturally occurring natural gas was discovered and identified in America as early as 1626, when French explorers discovered natives igniting gases that were seeping into and around Lake Erie.

In 1821, William Hart dug the first successful natural g as well in the U.S. in Fredonia, New York. Eventually, the Fre-

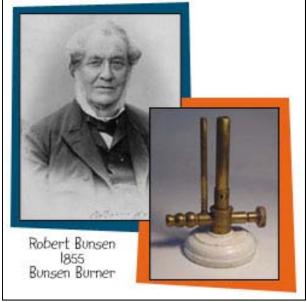
donia Gas Light Company was formed, becoming the

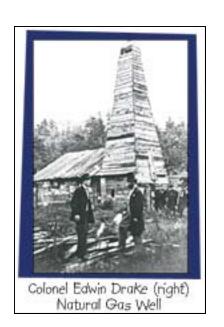
first American natural gas distribution company.

In 1836, the City of Philadelphia created the first municipally owned natural gas distribution company. Today, U.S. public gas systems number more than 900, and the Philadelphia Gas Works is the largest and longest operating public gas system in the U.S.

During most of the 19th century, natural gas was used almost exclusively as a source of light, but in 1885, Robert Bunsen's invention of what is now known as the Bunsen burner opened vast new opportunities to use natural gas.

Once effective pipelines began to be built in the 20th century, the use of natural gas expanded to home heating and cooking, appliances such as water heaters and oven ranges, manufacturing and processing plants, and boilers to generate electricity €





#### **News and Announcements**



Exhibition Opening: Friday, April 19th 5 pm – 7 pm

The Brewton commu-

nity has many talented "artists in residence." This exhibition is designed to showcase area artistic talent and to encourage community dialogue about visual art.

The artwork will be on view at the Thomas E. McMillan Museum on the JDCC Campus from April 19th – May 8th, 2013

**Drop off works** :: Friday, April 12th, from 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. @ Thomas E. McMillan Museum on JDCC campus.

**Pick up works** :: Wednesday, May 8th – from 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. @ Thomas E. McMillan Museum on JDCC campus.

\*\*\$10 Artist Entry Free Required. (Free for JDCC students.) Open to artists that are current Brewton area residents, Brewton natives or JDCC students that are at least 18 years old. Open to all media. Artists may submit up to 3 works. All work must be ready for hanging or presentation and easy to exhibit with clear instructions where necessary. Works will be accepted and displayed as space allows and at the discretion of JDCC, JDCC will not handle

For more information contact: Carrie Johnson, Art Instructor - 809-1617 or carrie.johnson@jdcc.edu

sale of works.

\*\*\*\*\*

#### Steadham Family Reunion

The descendants of John Victor and Mary Virginia Steadham will meet for their 56th Steadham family reunion at Steadham Memorial Chapel on Taylor Circle in McCullough, Alabama in Escambia County on Sunday, May 5.

The Steadham family can trace their Alabama roots to Edward(Ned) Steadham and Jesse Steadham, survivors of the 1813 massacre at Fort Mims. John Victor Steadham's wife, Mary Virginia McGhee was a Creek Indian princess.

The Chapel and cemetery will be open starting at 10 a.m. A brief business meeting followed by a memorial service will be held at 11 a.m. and family members will gather to share a potluck luncheon at noon. Family members are asked to bring a favorite potluck dish. Beverages will be provided.

For further information, please call 251-267-3442.

\*\*\*\*\*\*

West Florida Genealogical Society Meeting

Date: May 4, 2013 - Saturday

Place: West Florida Genealogy Library. 5740 N.

9th Ave, Pensacola, FL. 850-494-7373

Time: 10:00 AM - Meeting. Speaker: Dean DeBolt

Topic: "What's Old (New) at UWF?"

Dean DeBolt, University Librarian/Archivist at the University of West Florida will highlight some of the library 's collections and how to use the archives.

The collections consist of rare books, manuscripts, diaries, photographs, newspapers, computer and digital files, family and business papers, and other materials concerning the people and history of West Florida and is the largest research collection about the Gulf Coast in existence

Dean is a historian of the Florida Chautauqua (DeFuniak Springs) and has lectured at the New York Chautauqua, the Lakeside Chautauqua (Ohio), and the Monteagle Assembly (Tennessee).

His writings on the Florida Chautuauqua have appeared in the magazine of the Florida Humanities Council, and he has served as a Humanities Scholar, lecturing on the Chautauqua movement at libraries and organizations throughout Florida. Dean has an M.A. in History from the University of Illinois (Springfield) and a M.L.S. from the University of Illinois (Urbana).

# May 4, 2013

3rd Annual

# Sawmill Day

# **Car Show**

- live music.
- dancers
- History books, cookbooks. and more
- Tours of all three museums
- See progress on restoration of Old 100
- · Food, soft drinks

- Entertainment: . Crafts and displays: toys · Panhandle
  - **Cruisers Auto** Club
  - Protect your children and grandchildren: Century

Masonic Lodge sponsoring picture I.D.'s

Dash Plaques

All classes from **Model T to late** models, modified, restored and stock

> \$25.00 registration

Car Registration 8-11:00 a.m. Car Show Points counted at 1:00 p.m. Awards at 2 p.m.

> Antique Appraisals

\$5.00/item

Beginning at 2:30 p.m.



#### **Alger-Sullivan Historical Society** 610 4th St., Century, FL 32535 In the Historic District

For general information call 850-256-3980, 850-256-2029 or 850-516-4747

Vendors welcome (no charge for space—contact Jerry Fischer at 850-256-3980)

No alcohol will be allowed on show site. By your participation, you agree to abide by all show rules and understand that you are solely responsible for car and property. You agree to release from liability the Alger-Sullivan Historical Society, Inc., all sponsors and vendors from any and all claims of injury, damage to property or lost or stolen property arising from this event.

#### **Highlights of the Third Annual Sawmill** Day and Car Show include:

Live music, singers and dancers, tours of the three museums, a blacksmith shop, flintknappers, pottery making, whittling, all sorts of crafts; the Perdido Bay Tribe of the Southeastern Lower Muscogee Creek Indians and their traveling museum; the authentic restored Alger-Sullivan Lumber Company antique steam logging locomotive, Old 100; and displays of vendors

from across the region.

Don't miss the free picture ID and fingerprinting of your children and grandchildren! Don't miss the car show, because there'll be entries from all over the region, local and not so local!

You'll find great barbeque sandwiches and plates, with cold beverages. Maybe you have an antique you were wondering about. Bring it and have it appraised by two local antique experts, father and son, the Hellers!

## **Snapshots from the ECHS March Meeting**





Top and Left, Speaker Nevin Heller with a display of lamps.

Bottom Left, Connie Baggett discussing Brewton's plans to apply for a grant, seeking support of ECHS members for the project.

Top Right, advertisement from Brewton's Ritz Theatre for 1939 brought by Nevin Heller.

Bottom Right, the Hostesses, Jacque Stone and Sammy McGlothren.



## **Snapshots from the ECHS March Meeting** (Continued)



Top Left, Tom McMillan examining the chester drawer attributed to Ezra Plumb.

Middle left, Nevin Heller explaining how technology influenced the design of lamps.

Bottom left, Kathryn Wilkinson and Nevin.

Top Right, Tom at the lectern. Bottom Right, hostesses Jacque Stone and Sammy McGlothren.







# Ezra Plumb: A Chest of Drawers,100 Tools, and Three Houses



Above is a chest of drawers which Nevin Heller, the speaker for the March Meeting, brought to the meeting. It is attributed to Ezra Plumb, master carpenter and builder of the pre-civil-war era. Mr. Plumb built houses for wealthy plantation owners in Brooklyn, Brewton, Evergreen and other communities in Conecuh and Escambia counties.

Mr. Plum also designed and built houses for clients beyond just Conecuh and Escambia Counties. One of the surviving houses by him is Hawthorne House in Pineapple, Wilcox County, Alabama. The two other houses by Plumb are in Conecuh County.

The Thomas E. McMillan Museum has a special connection to Ezra Plumb for it has a display of this early master builder's tools. These tools were donated to the museum by descendants of Ezra Plumb. They found over 100 of them stored in a chest placed in a shed.

John Powell, curator of the museum at the time, cleaned and restored the tools and created a display about not only the Plumb tools but the story of the wealthy plantation owner in Conecuh County for whom Plumb built a home named Jay Villa.

This display with pictures of the house and the owner can be seen on the left in the photograph above. Unfortunately, this example of Ezra Plumb's work burned.

Nevin Heller, owner of the chest of drawers who specializes in nineteenth furniture, believes this piece of furniture would sell for at least \$30,000.

For more information on Ezra Plumb, see the September 25, 2012 issue of ECHOES which is on the ECHS web site.

# Ezra Plumb: A Chest of Drawers, 100 Tools, and Three Houses

(continued)



The Asa Johnston House, Conecuh County,
Alabama.

It is one of three houses designed and built by
Ezra Plumb that remain.



**Enhanced photo of the Asa Johnston House by Mark Tisdall.** 

From his website, Mark Tisdale, photographer, who was taken to see the house by a distant cousin who now owns it, comments: "Constructed in 1842 by Ezra Plumb, the house is architecturally significant as an excellent example of a mid-nineteenth century spraddle roof dogtrot form dwelling. It is the most intact example of its form documented in Conecuh County and it retains distinctive decorative details, including the only example of a vaulted dogtrot ceiling documented in Alabama."

Mr. Tisdall continues, "The house is also historically significant for its relationship with Asa Johnston. Johnston was among the early settlers of Conecuh County, arriving in 1818, the year the county was created, and becoming one of the area's wealthiest antebellum planters. The period of significance for the Asa Johnston Farmhouse corresponds to its date of construction in 1842" ("Rustic Alabama-Asa Johnston House" < <a href="http://www.marktisdalephotography.com/2012/02/">http://www.marktisdalephotography.com/2012/02/</a> rustic-alabama-asa-johnston-home/>.

Note: Dogtrot Houses are familiar to southerners as a popular form of building which consisted of an open breezeway (called a dogtrot)l with two major rooms on each and chimneys at the gabled end of each side.

The roof would span all the rooms and the open breezeway which served as a cool outdoor room or porch. Often these homes would have porches in front and back. When the roof comes down to the porch and then breaks off to then go at a different slant to cover the porch, it is called a spraddle roof.

The house is registered on state and national lists of historic places.

# Ezra Plumb: A Chest of Drawers, 100 Tools, and Three Houses

(continued)



The Caleb Johnston House

The Hawthorne House
The Ezra Plumb house still standing and
not in Conecuh County is in Pineapple, Wilcox County, Alabama, shown on the right.
Known as the Hawthorne House or the Col.
J. R. Hawthorne House, the two-story woodframe house was built in 1854 for wealthy
plantation owner Joseph Richard
Hawthorne. It is on the state and national
register of historic places.



Another Ezra Plumb house in Conecuh county is the Caleb Johnston House (shown on the top left). Built in the 1840's, it is listed on the state and national register of historic places.





To the Left, a view from the hall of a fireplace and mantel in the Hawthorne House, On top a view of the front of the house, and above, a view of the hall, front door, and staircase.

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## Madagascar Expedition First Day and Governor's Island

#### **By Darryl Searcy**

Darryl has just returned from another expedition to find plants that would be useful to the drug companies which have sponsored the trips.

When he finishes these excursions, he will have visited all of the world's rainforests.

Most of his exploration and research teams are Ph. D. candidates from various universities.

The expedition officially began March 22 and ended April 5.

Our crew members were:

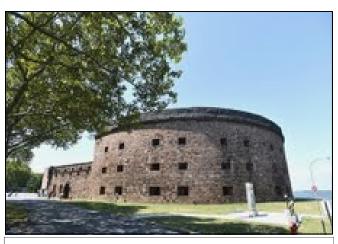
- Arnie Bell (helper) –
   Georgia Tech University (Atlanta)
- Jacques Doucet (helper) – Louisiana State University (Baton Rouge)
- Rick Crawley

   (assistant) Louisiana

   State University (Shreveport)
- Brian Randelson University of North Carolina (Chapel Hill)
- Samuel Davis University of North Carolina (Chapel Hill)
- Sean Richards University of Michigan (Ann Arbor)
- Harris Jamison University of Michigan (Ann Arbor)
- Bryan Heineman University of Chicago (Chicago)
- ◆ Stewart Basquette University of Chicago (Chicago)



Governor's Island, Fort Williams with View of Lower Manhattan in Background



**Governor's Island Castle** 

- ◆ Paul Massingill University of Texas (Austin) Michael Brown – University of Texas (Austin)
- ◆ Farley Bradshaw University of Arkansas (Little Rock)
- ◆ Nick Hoekstra University of Montana (Missoula)
- ◆ Dooby Shapiro University of Montana (Missoula)
- ◆ Zraphael Hermann University of Arizona (Tucson)
- Nicholas Alendoza University of Arizona (Tucson)
- ◆ Vance Kidashek Rocky Mountain Herbarium (Cheyenne)
- Earley Bradberry Rocky Mountain Herbarium (Cheyenne)

March 20, 2013 --At various times during the evening our crew arrived safely in New

York. By midnight everybody had checked into the Holiday Inn Express at Rockville Centre (Arnie Bell and I camped out in the lobby to greet and help with room assignments. Jacques Doucet was designated babysitter as two of our traveling companions were the small sons of himself and Arnie Bell.

March 21, 2013 -- A 7:00 AM breakfast buffet meeting was planned and everybody was on time (speakers were late). We met in the Jamaica Room (some not breakfast eager, but staggered in anyway, lack of sleep notwithstanding). I said a brief welcome and introduced Arnie, Jacques, and Rick

(Continued on page 14)

## Madagascar Expedition First Day and Governor's Island

(Continued)

(Continued from page 13)

Crawley. When the dishes had been cleared away we did the "Hello, I am" niceties and then listened to a pep talk/bon voyage from our sponsors. Not everyone was bright-eyed, but there was an air of eagerness to get started nevertheless. Relax a bit because for the next 21 days we might be lucky to catch a break for any kind of

civilized greeting. This was our "get acquainted" day and we planned to make the most of it.

When our business had finished with the breakfast meeting, everyone returned to assigned rooms to collect bags and check for other personal gear. These things were placed in a hotel courtesy van, which later moved all the baggage to the JFK Lufthansa terminal.

We boarded a small bus and headed toward Rockaway Park. At Rockaway we visited the site of a linear park that is being built atop the old Rockaway Beach Branch of the Long Island Rail Road. The pier had already been installed and it was from the pier that we stepped onto a covered boat that took us on a harbor tour from Jamaica Bay to Coney Island and the Upper Bay at Lower Manhattan. Surprisingly the waters were calm until we got into the East ing Ellis and Liberty islands. River currents. The air was fresh but a bright sun quickly warmed everything to a comfortable 45° before we reached our destination at Governors Island.

At dockside near the semi-circular Fort Williams (aka the Castle) we left the boat and shuffled about until a guide showed up to talk a little history of the island. It was a bit cool with a few patches of snow remaining, but for the next two hours we strolled from building to building hearing a lot about its his-



Statue of Liberty in Winter

torical significance.

When the tour had ended the temperature had warmed comfortably, giving us a moment to sit in the sun and reflect on the beautiful skyline of Manhattan, the Statue of Liberty and the giant gantries of New York harbor. Guys, now is the time to simply breathe deep and look less like zombies. The idea be-

hind this tour was to get to know our buddies and to unwind for a while before the real journey begins.

Jacques, Rick, Arnie, the two boys, and I more or less hung together, watching Zach and Antoine toss snowballs. If we saw a cluster of our people loitering we engaged them in conversation, or generally made a nuisance of ourselves in order to keep things fluid and the men on their feet as much as possible. It was imperative that we stay busy so when finally boarding the night flight to Rome they would fall out like flies from exhaustion.

For those of you who have not been to Governors Island, it lies just south of the bottom tip of Manhattan and about a quarter mile from Brooklyn's western shore. The island is a patch of land that covers some 172 acres, considerably larger than neighbor-

Much of Governors Island is landfill that started many years ago when New York was struggling for identity. Before being used as a dumpsite for broken concrete and other waste, the island was roughly half the size it is today.

Two centuries of various military uses only recently ended and at present Governors Island serves as valuable public space easily accessible to a city

(Continued on page 15)

### Madagascar Expedition First Day and Governor's Island

(Continued)

(Continued from page 14)

that desperately needs it. The island land-scape, although not open to the public year-round, is kept up regularly through the use of quick lawn grasses and winter rye.

From handout brochures prepared by
The Trust for
Governors Island, we
learned that Native
Americans called the

island Pagganck, meaning "Nut Island," after the plentiful trees that grew up there many years ago. In 1611, it was named Noten Eylant (again, "Nut Island") by a Dutch explorer. Two years later, the first black man to live in New York City, the Caribbean interpreter Jan Rodrigues, began spending summers there. Because the Dutch colony of New Netherland was founded on the island under principles of religious tolerance, some have argued that it deserves special recognition as a birthplace of the American way.

Subsequently, it housed Dutch soldiers and settlers until being ceded, with the rest of New York, to the English in 1664. By the close of that century, it had been set aside for English royal governors, and people began calling it Governors Island. From the Revolutionary War on, the island was used as a military base. For two centuries Governors Island remained in military hands.

In the early twentieth century, the island more than doubled in size as 105 acres of landfill from the Lexington Avenue subway were added on the southern end. The whole island became a major Army administrative center called Fort Columbus, com-



JFK Air Train

plete with barracks and stately officers' homes, which remain today.

Governors Island passed hands from the Army to the Coast Guard in 1966 and was used thereafter as a logistics facility, housing over 3,000 people. Secure and yet a stone's throw from the city, the island was used several times for diplomatic meetings, including President

Reagan's 1988 summit with Mikhail Gorbachev.

In 1995, the Coast Guard left, along with all the island's permanent residents. Twenty-two acres on the north end were designated a National Monument, including both Fort Jay and Castle Williams (footnote)\*. The rest, in 2003, was sold by the federal government to the people of New York State for \$1. This portion is administered by the Governors Island Preservation and Education Corporation, which is charged with overseeing the redevelopment of the island for public use. €

# **Plane Landing Was Not the Wright Brothers**

By Lydia Grimes

#### **17 December 2008**

In my collection of photographs, I have one that has been identified in several places as belonging to the Wright Brothers. That was a mistake and I want to see if I can correct it. I was going through the old 1976 volume of The Brewton Standard and I ran across an old write-up that confirms another note that I have. Although the airplane was very similar, it was not the plane that belonged to the Wrights.

"In a recent issue of <u>Escambia Echoes</u>, monthly publication of the Escambia County Historical Society, a narra-

tive by Mrs. Annie Waters records the first plane flight over Brewton.

Following publication of the details in Earl M.

McGowin of Chapman provided Mrs. Carolyn McLendon, editor of the monthly bulletin, a photograph of the biplane after it landed in Georgiana.

Mrs. McGowin, who was ten years old at the time,

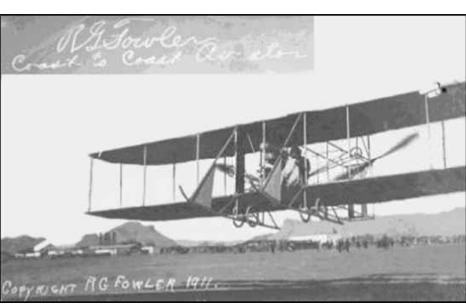
recalls that his uncle, William Foshee, paid the aviator \$50 to circle the mills of Chapman before landing in Georgiana on his flight from Evergreen. The mills were stopped to enable the workers to see the plane.

"He came in at a low altitude with the name 'Fowler California Flyer' written on the underside of the plane. After circling Chapman he landed in Mr. Boone's pasture in Georgiana,' recalls Mr. McGowin. €



**Bob Fowler** 

(Continued on page 17)



The Label on the top reads: R. G. Fowler Coast to Coast Aviator

## Plane Landing Was Not the Wright Brothers (Continued)

(Continued from page 16)

# Escambia's First Airplane by Mrs. Annie Waters

Thursday, January 11, 1912, was a cold day with overcast skies, but hundreds of Brewton area resi-

dents had gathered at a corn field on present day Douglas Avenue, bounded by Granberry Street on the south, Lovelace Avenue on the east and Underwood Street on the north.

They were expectantly awaiting the arrival of the famous aviator, Robert C. Fowler, and his Wright biplane, who was on a cross country flight from Los Angeles to New York City. They anxiously scanned the southern horizon for the 'man-bird' which was scheduled to arrive about noon. The enthusiasm of the crowd, especially the children, was hardly contained to keep them off the field that was being used as a landing strip.

A handsome price of \$100 had been made up for F Fowler by his advance team to induce him to land at Brewton for one hour, which was the only scheduled stop in Escambia County. As the day wore on and no plane ap-

peared, the crowd was becoming restless when word arrived that the biplane had sustained a serious accident and had been forced to land in Flomaton.

Delays along the route did not permit Fowler to leave Mobile until 3:30 p.m. on Thursday and he

arrived at Flomaton at 4:45 p.m. He had circled Flomaton and Century several times and then headed for Brewton when the accident occurred. The mishap slightly damaged the plane but Fowler was unhurt.

Many residents listened and watched for his arrival next day, but due to the accident and unfavorable weather conditions he did not arrive in Brewton until shortly before 3:00 Sunday afternoon.

Another large crowd had gathered at the field on Douglas Avenue where he was supposed to land but they were sorely disappointed when Fowler circled the field several times and then headed his plane toward Evergreen, where he was forced to land because of fuel shortage.

W.D. Sowell summed up Escambia County's first airplane visit by saying, 'The sight here (Brewton) was witnessed by hundreds of interested citizens from town and country. The scene was spectacular and thrilling. Many in the crowd had never seen an airship, and still more doubtless never dreamed that they would see a man traveling in the air, but if anyone had any doubts of the practicality of it they were certainly dispelled on this occasion. The machine glides through the air with the agility of the most graceful bird.'

occasion. The machine glides through the air with the agility of the most graceful bird.'

I hope you have enjoyed this little bit of the past. I want to do some more of these. By the way, I found articles on the Internet that said Fowler flew into Jacksonville, Fla. on Feb. 12, 1912, so he was able to make his flight as he intended. €



**Bob Fowler** 

# ECHOES THE NEWSLETTER FOR THE ESCAMBIA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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