The March Meeting  
Tuesday, March 25, 2014, 3:00 p.m.  
The Thomas E. McMillan Museum

The Program:  
“The Elim Baptist Church“  
Ronnie Herrington will present a program on the church and two nearby cemeteries.

Elim Baptist Church

The following information about the founding of the church itself and the Elim Baptist Association comes from the “History of the Elim Baptist Church, Roberts, Alabama” by Nellie Mae Parker; The History of Escambia County, Alabama by Annie Waters; and “Elim Baptist Church,” The Heritage Book of Escambia County, Alabama, p.32.

The Elim Church was founded by John Parker, the great grandfather of Nellie Mae Parker, author of the church history mentioned in the introduction. In 1817, he had migrated into Alabama from Georgia, along with his brothers Samuel, Noah, and Peter.

In 1825, with the aid of his brothers and circuit rider Alexander Travis, Mr. Parker established the Elim Church, the oldest Baptist Church in Escambia County, Alabama.

According to the Heritage Book of Escambia County, the first services were held in a log cabin located some two and (Continued on page 2)

The April Meeting  
Tuesday, April 22, 2014  
3:00 p.m.  
in the  
Thomas E. McMillan Museum  
Program: Guest Speaker Chris Griffin will present the program.

Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Elim Baptist Association</th>
<th>2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elim Baptist Association Minutes</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>News and Announcements</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snapshots</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fort Mims Event</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our Business Partners</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alabama’s Log and Antebellum Wooden Churches</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Elim Baptist Church

(Continued from page 1)

one-half miles north of the present location of the church. The church was first known as the Siler (Silas) Creek Church because of the location near the Creek, but the name was changed to Elim Church in 1831/32. Elim was chosen because it is the name of the second place the Israelites camped after crossing the Red Sea. The Biblical Elim was said to have had “fountains of excellent water” and the Elim Church had an excellent spring.

After several years, the log cabin was replaced with a frame building which was constructed near the present day location of the church. According to Annie Waters in her History of Escambia County, Alabama, this building had a partition down the middle to separate the races and wooden shutters for light (p.348). Nellie Mae Parker writes that under the leadership of Pastor R. M. Murray this building was torn down and another one constructed in its place in the 1920’s.

The circuit rider and missionary Alexander Travis, was the first preacher at Elim. He was followed by Baptist Minister Noah Parker, one of the original founders of the church. Annie Waters reports that he “appears repeatedly in the minutes of the Bethlehem Association [Baptist organization of the time] from 1836 through 1861” and that he served the Association as a missionary for several years “at a salary of $400 per year” (Waters, History).

The Elim Baptist Association

An important event for the Elim Church was the formation in 1872 of the Elim Baptist Association. Nellie Mae Parker’s writes:

In the fall of 1872, Rev. J. L. Bryars, Rev. G. W. Miller, Rev. S. C. Johnson, and Rev. H. G. B. Ray, met at Elim Church and formed the Elim Baptist Association which was part of the old Bethlehem Association. The Association they formed took in all of Escambia County and Baldwin County in Alabama and Santo Rosa and Escambia County in Florida.

It flourished until 1909. The Pensacola Bay Association in Florida and the Escambia County Association in Alabama soon took its Members, and in 1909 [or 1914] it dissolved at Judson Church seven miles of Atmore.

The Elim Association held its sessions three days and the older members of the church can tell you about the great times they had at the association. The people went to the Association on horseback, in ox-wagons, buggies and walked.

Annie Waters points out that the Elim Baptist Association was established because the Bethlehem Association covered such a big territory. She writes, “Constituted in 1816 as the Beckbe, [it] extended from the Mississippi border to the eastern boundary of Conecuh County, and from the southern boundary of Lowndes County to the Gulf of Mexico. Messengers often had to travel on horseback, requiring a week each way” (History, p. 348). Bad roads and bad weather increased the time and difficulties of communication. She also notes that only a few of the Escambia County Alabama churches joined the Elim Association.

Most remained with the Bethlehem Association until the Conecuh Association was formed (Waters, History, p. 348).

James Lazarus Brayers

A well-known and respected Baptist minister in Escambia and Santa Rosa Counties, FL, as well as in Escambia and Baldwin Counties, AL, Rev. Bryars began preaching at age 24. Among the churches he organized in Escambia County, FL were Pleasant Hill Baptist Church (1856) and Oak Grove Baptist Church (1883).

In Escambia County, AL, he organized Sardis at Wawbeek (July 1865) and First Baptist Church in (Continued on page 3)
The Elim Baptist Association

(Continued from page 2)

Flomaton (1878). A Sunday afternoon preaching point begun in 1870 became First Baptist Church, Atmore in 1886. For many years, James Lazarus walked four and one-half miles from his Florida home to the Williams Station sawmill of John Roberts. His daughters swept the sawmill floor and James Lazarus stood pine blocks upon end and laid rough slabs across them to seat his faithful congregation.


The Elim Baptist Association Minutes from 1885

The Elim Baptist Association met pursuant to adjournment, with Pleasant Hill Church, at 11 o’clock, A.M., Oct. 3d, 1885.

The Annual Sermon was preached by Elder S. W. Jones, from 4 chapter and 2d verse of Malachi.

After a recess of one hour and a half, the body was called to order by Elder J.L. Bryars, the former Moderator. After stating that he could not act, on account of having to absent himself for a time, Bro. J.Z. Bryars was appointed Moderator pro tem., Bro. G.W. Curtis, Clerk, pro tem. Devotional exercises by Elder S.W. Jones.

The following brethren were appointed to read the letters from the churches: Elder J.T. Fillingim, Frank Barlow and Elder R. W. Brooks.

The letters were read and the names of delegates were enrolled as follows:

- Sardis - B. Miles, Sr., B. Miles, Jr., W.C. Pace and H.G.B. Ray.
- Bay Minette - Frank Barlow
- Milton - G.W. Curtis and W. Edwards
- Concord – Neal Campbell and Thomas M. Nelson.

From <http://files.usgwarchives.org/al/escambia/churches/elimbapt106gbb.txt>
Online Genealogy Research Help Available
In Alabama Room
Now Through May 2014
Thursdays 1:00-3:00 p.m.

The program will be a video of a webinar presented in February for Legacy Family Tree. Bonds have been used in a variety of circumstances throughout history and can provide information about family members and their community associates. Types of bonds covered include marriage, appearance, administrator, executor, guardian, appeal, special, peace, forthcoming, attachment and freedom.

Members and guests are welcome to attend. Refreshments available at 9:45. Meeting begins at 10:00.

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West Florida Genealogical Society Meeting
April 5, 2014

Place: West Florida Genealogy Library.
5740 N. 9th Ave, Pensacola, FL
850-494-7373
Time: 10:00 AM
Speaker: Webinar from Judy Russell
Topic: The Ties That Bond

********************

The Poarch Creek Indians and the University of South Alabama Launch Native American Studies Program

Missionaries from the Church of Jesus-Christ-of-Latter-Day-Saints will be available to give help in researching online individual family histories as well as teaching individuals how to navigate these online resources.

***********************

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(Continued on page 5)
News and Announcements

(Continued from page 4)

The Alabama Historical Association
Fall Pilgrimage in Columbiana and Shelby County

Courthouse in Columbiana

The Spring Meeting for the association is next month, April 10-12, 2014, but plans for the location of the Fall Pilgrimage are already announced.

Pictures and images are from the Facebook page for showing items in the collection the Columbiana Archives and Museum at <https://pt-br.facebook.com/schsociety/app_2309869772>.

Business Street in Columbiana with historic old courthouse in background.
www.facebook.com/shelbycountypilgrimage

Old Saluria Depot
From collection at the Columbiana Archives and Museum

Snapshots from the February 2014 Meeting

From Left to Right: ECHS President Sally Finlay welcoming visitors and members, Vice-president Carolyn Jennings introducing Darryl Searcy as the speaker, and Darryl presenting the program on his expedition to Cameroon.
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Fort Mims Event Commemorates 200th Anniversary of the War of 1812

By Ann Biggs-Williams

The Commemoration of the War of 1812 continued in the Tensaw Country in Northern Baldwin County this past Saturday, March 15, 2014.

Although the War of 1812 program at Ft. Mims was planned to continue on Sunday, March 16th, rain hampered plans for that day. Saturday, however, was beautiful.

Dr. Stephen McNair, Director of Historic Sites of the Alabama Historical Commission, was there to display artifacts from Fort Montgomery and Montpelier.

These artifacts were discovered by a team from Jefferson Davis State Junior College in the 1980-1981 led by John Powell, who was then the Curator of the Thomas E. McMillan Museum.

This poster board display of artifacts from Fort Montgomery was used at the event. The exhibit is part of the collection of the Thomas E. McMillan Museum.

Claudia Campbell, president of the Fort Mims Restoration Association, is shown here in costume at the Fort Mims commemoration of Fort Montgomery.

Claudia and her sister were our guides for the ECHS field trip to the Tensaw. The group visited the sites of Fort Montgomery, Cantonement Montpelier and Fort Mims.

Farris Powell and his daughter Angela.
Farris narrated the story of the fight at Bashi at the event.

From the historic Marker at the Choctaw Line:
“CHOCTAW CORNER, Established by Choctaw and Creek Indians about 1808 as the northern limit of boundary line between their lands. This line begins at the cut-off in South Clarke County, follows the watershed between Alabama and Tombigbee Rivers without crossing water. The disputed territory boundary was settled by two ball games, one between the warriors and one between the squaws of each tribe. The Choctaws won both games clearing forever their title to the lands.” Actual site of corner is 1.7 miles North, N.E.

Pictures courtesy of the Fort Mims Facebook page.
Alabama's Log and Antebellum Wooden Churches

By Kelly Kazek

Log and clapboard churches were among the most important buildings in the Alabama Territory in the early to mid-1800s. In addition to providing space for worshipping, they were often multi-purpose buildings used as schools and for community events. In the nearly 200 years since Alabama became a state in 1819, many of those buildings were lost to age, progress and the Civil War. But incredibly, Alabamians have preserved dozens of those early churches.

Endings of Religion in Alabama

Although there were plenty of outlaws among the pioneers settling the Alabama Territory, they were far outnumbered by law-abiding, church-going citizens. Early parishioners were mostly Presbyterians, Methodists and Baptists with fewer numbers of Episcopalians, Jews and Catholics. Methodists and Baptists established their first congregations in 1808, according to historian Wayne Flynt in an article in the Encyclopedia of Alabama. Before long, some Baptists would split from the church to form the Primitive Baptist Church.

Before the Civil War, women and black people were not welcome in the pulpit. As slaves always sat separately from white congregants, women sometimes had separate seating from men.

The Civil War changed the course of religion in Alabama. Many Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian and Christian churches split from their national denominations over the issue of slavery, forming southern divisions. Afterward, the human and financial costs of the conflict halted progress on most church projects such as new colleges.

Uchee Methodist Church, Hatchechubbee, 1859

Uchee Methodist Church is a Greek-Revival style building constructed in 1859 in Hatchechubbee. It was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1997.

The author of this article is the North Alabama region reporter and humor columnist for al.com.
Shoal Creek Baptist Church, Edwardsville, 1895
Built in 1895, this log building was the third church on this site in Cleburne County. It was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1974. Open only for special events.

Andrew’s Chapel, McIntosh, 1860
Andrew’s Chapel, also known as McIntosh Log Church, was built in 1860 and named for James Osgood Andrew, a bishop in the Methodist Episcopal Church. It was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1974. It is still used for Memorial Day celebrations and other special events.

Pine Torch Church, Bankhead National Forest, 1890
This church built sometime in the 1890s is likely the oldest building in the Bankhead Forest. According to legend, Pine Torch got its name from the pine knots that were set ablaze to light the building after dark.

Claybank Log Church, Ozark, 1852
Constructed by a Methodist minister, this hand-hewn log church is thought to be the oldest building in Dale County.
Clark Chapel United Methodist Church, Gainesville, 1867
Despite its completion date of 1867, this church is included on the list because construction was begun by freed slaves shortly after the Civil War ended. It still has its original pews.

Saint Paul's Episcopal Chapel, Mobile, 1859
Saint Paul's Episcopal Chapel is of a vernacular Gothic Revival style. It was built in 1859 and added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1984.

Mount Sterling Methodist Church, Choctaw County, 1859
Mount Sterling Methodist Church located in the rural community of Mount Sterling was completed in a Greek-Revival style in 1859.
The ECHS Journal Section

Alabama's Log and Antebellum Wooden Churches (Continued)

Ackerville Baptist Church of Christ, Wilcox County, 1848
Ackerville Baptist Church of Christ is a Greek Revival wood structure built of hand-hewn lumber circa 1848. The church was added to the Alabama Register of Landmarks and Heritage in 1991 and to the National Register of Historic Places in 2003.

Adams Grove Presbyterian Church, Sardis, 1853
Adams Grove Presbyterian Church is a Greek Revival style building erected in 1853 in rural Dallas County. It was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1986 and is now privately owned.

Old Scotland Church, Tunnel Springs, 1837
The community of Old Scotland was settled in Monroe County by families from Georgia and the Carolinas, many of whose families immigrated to this country from Scotland and Ireland. The Scotland Church was originally made of logs but was replaced in 1837 by a wooden-frame building. It is listed on the Alabama Register of Landmarks and Heritage.

Bethsaida Baptist Church, Furman, 1858-1860
Bethsaida Baptist Church was founded in 1831 near its present site in Wilcox County. The present building was erected between 1858 and 1860.
Methodist Episcopal Church South, Daphne, 1858
Also known as Old Daphne Methodist Church, this church was built in 1858 in a Greek-Revival style. The building was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1980.

Newbern Presbyterian Church, Newbern, 1848
Newbern Presbyterian Church was organized in 1844 by North Carolinians who settled the area in the 1830s and the church was built in 1848. The church typifies rural church architecture of the old South with hand-hewn lumber joined with wooden pegs. The early membership included slaves who sat on benches flanking pulpit.

Pleasant Hill Presbyterian Church, Dallas County, 1851 or 1852
Originally known as Mount Carmel Presbyterian Church, this Greek Revival church was built between 1851 and 1852. It was placed on the Alabama Register of Historic Landmarks and Heritage in 1990 and the National Register of Historic Places in 1999.

Montgomery Hill Baptist Church, Tensaw, 1853
Built in 1853 in Tensaw, it is a Greek-Revival style. The building was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1988.
Alabama's Log and Antebellum Wooden Churches (Continued)

Robinson Springs United Methodist Church, Millbrook, 1848
Robinson Springs United Methodist Church was built in 1848 and added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1982.

Sardis Baptist Church, Union Springs, 1850
Sardis Baptist Church was founded in Bullock County in 1837 and the church was erected in 1850. The church was added to the Alabama Register of Landmarks and Heritage in 1991 and the National Register of Historic Places in 2001.

Indian Springs Baptist Church, Monroe County, 1825
A marker for Indian Springs Baptist Church in the McWilliams community of Monroe County reads: “This sanctuary was built one mile west of this site about 1825 near springs used by local Indians. The original wood-frame building survived virtually unchanged – with no modern conveniences.”

Sumterville Baptist Church, Sumter County, 1833
Sumterville Baptist Church was organized in 1833, according to the Alabama Baptist Historical Commission.
St. John’s-In-The-Prairie, Forkland, 1859
St. John’s-In-The-Prairie, now known as St. John’s Episcopal Church, is a Gothic Revival structure built in Forkland in 1859. Originally located south of Greensboro, the church was moved across the Black Warrior River to Forkland in 1878. It was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1975.

St. James Episcopal Church, Livingston, 1841-’42
St. James Episcopal Church was established in 1833 and the church was built in 1841-’42 and consecrated in 1843 by Leonidas Polk. The church was originally Greek Revival style and later altered to add Gothic elements. It was placed on the Alabama Register of Landmarks and Heritage in 1984.

Sodality Chapel, Mobile, 1850
Sodality Chapel is a historic Roman Catholic chapel building on the campus of Spring Hill College in Mobile. It was built in 1850 and placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1984.
The ECHS *Journal* Section

**Alabama's Log and Antebellum Wooden Churches (Continued)**

State Street AME Zion Church, Mobile, 1854

The church is home to Mobile's oldest African American congregation, which was established in 1829 as the African Church. The current Romanesque Revival building was completed in 1854. It is on the African American Heritage Trail.

Cambridge United Methodist Church, Athens, 1818

Cambridge United Methodist Church, constructed in 1818 in Limestone County, was used by Confederate soldiers who drilled on the grounds before the Civil War. Later, the building was nearly destroyed by occupying Union troops. Cambridge church is one of the stops on the state's Hallelujah Trail.

Carlowville Baptist Church

Carlowville Baptist Church was founded in 1837 and added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1978.

St. Luke’s Episcopal Church, Cahaba, 1854

St. Luke’s Episcopal Church, a Carpenter Gothic church, was built in 1854 at Cahaba, Alabama’s first capital, which is now a ghost town. The building originally had a square bell tower, but it was not rebuilt when the church was relocated in 1878. Owned by the Alabama Historical Commission.
Gainestown United Methodist Church, Clarke County, 1854
Gainestown United Methodist Church was founded in 1819 by Rev. Joshua Wilson. In 1854, this two-story building was erected for use as a church and Masonic Lodge. It was damaged by a tornado in 1911 and rebuilt as a single-story building using material from the original building. It was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1999.

Ebenezer Missionary Baptist Church, Auburn, 1865
Ebenezer Missionary Baptist Church was the first African American church built in the Auburn area after the end of the Civil War in 1865 and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Church members built the church out of hand-hewn logs, transported from miles away by mules. It currently houses the Auburn Unitarian Universalist Fellowship.

Uchee Methodist Church, Hatchechubbee, 1859
Uchee Methodist Church is a Greek-Revival style building constructed in 1859 in Hatchechubbee. It was added to the National Register of Hist-
Elizabeth Presbyterian Church, Sumter County, 1858
Elizabeth Presbyterian Church was established in 1838 about nine miles south of York. It was named in honor of the woman who donated the land: Elizabeth Knox. The original log structure was replaced in 1858 with this wooden frame, two-story building. Slaves were members of the Elizabeth Church and remained part of

St. Stephens First United Methodist Church, St. Stephens, 1857
First United Methodist Church was built in about 1857 for $500. The main sanctuary of this church is the original structure. Classrooms have been added to the sides and rear. It was listed on the Alabama Register of Landmarks & Heritage in 1976.

To the Right, First Presbyterian Church, Eutaw, 1851
This church is a Greek Revival church built in Greene County in 1851. It was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1974.

Above Left, The Camden Church
According to the historical marker in front of this Camden church, "This building was constructed circa 1849 as a Cumberland Presbyterian Church. The Camden Associate Reformed Presbyterian congregation was organized in September 1890 in the parlor of the William Joel Bonner home. This building was purchased soon after."
DO YOU PREFER TO GET YOUR NEWSLETTER BY U.S. MAIL ___ OR EMAIL? ___

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

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

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