

The June Meeting Tuesday, June 28, 2016 3:00 p. m. The McMillan Museum

The Program: "Show and Tell"

"Show and Tell" programs remind us of the importance of preserving the past. The Verona, New Jersey historical society reports that one member joined just because of the "Show and Tell" programs:

"To preserve the living memory of the past," he said of his reasoning to join, "that so many others are so willing to throw away."

"Show and Tell" programs are always programs with good stories and everyone loves a good story? This was the advertisement for one society's "Show and Tell" program:

"It's just like in elementary school when you brought a special item to share and tell the story behind it to others! What can you share" a photo...a letter...a family heirloom...something you found...anything else you treasure in your life has a story. You'll find eager listeners."

Another society said:

"If not showing and telling, just join us to hear the collectors' stories."

Finally, "Show and Tell" isn't just about antiques. One group suggested:

"Bring an item of antiquity, curiosity or mystery to show and tell."

Contents

ECHS Scholarship Recipients	2
Alabama's Places in Peril for 2016	2
Snapshots of the ECHS June 2016 Meeting	5
Our Business Members	9
David Tate Moniac-A First	10
Gardenia	14
Capitals of Alabama	15

July ECHS Meeting

July 26, 2016

McMillan Museum

**ECHS Member Charlie Booher
Will Present a Program on Historical
Documents of the area.**



School in Escambia County
1930's

Volume 43 Number 6

June 2016



Former Brewton Depot in 1973

ECHS Scholarship Recipients



ECHS President Sally Finlay awards Kelsi Chandler, center, and Jessica Warner, right, ECHS Scholarships for the 2016-17 Academic Year to Jefferson Davis Community College. The three are pictured in front of the stained glass panels saved from the Escambia County Courthouse built in 1901. This courthouse was torn down in 1959 and replaced by the current courthouse, which was constructed in 1960.

A graduate of Flomaton High School, Kelsi will attend JDCC this fall. She has a wide range of interests, including softball and basketball, the Alger-Sullivan Historical Society, playing the piano, and community service. She says she takes her granddad's advice about life, which is to do the things which give one happiness. Her granddad is Don Sales, McMillan Museum Coordinator



Kelsi Chandler



Jessica Warner

Jessica attends JDCC where she is enrolled in the nursing program. She says she has often been told she is a born caregiver. She has done community service at Sacred Heart Hospital and at Century Care Center Nursing Home. The oldest of five children, she is balancing work, school, and living on her own. She says the scholarship will be wonderful help.

Alabama's Places in Peril for 2016

Five Places have been identified by the Alabama Historical Commission as places "with exceptional historical and/or architectural significance that require prompt attention to insure their preservation" (<http://www.alabamatrust.info>).

First on the list of Places in



Revis House

Peril for 2016 is the **Revis House in Birmingham**, also known as the Bethel Church Guardhouse. The house still stands beside the parsonage of the Rev. Fred Shuttlesworth and is across the street from Bethel Baptist Church. All three

(Continued on page 3)

Alabama's Places in Peril for 2016

(Continued from page 2)

structures are recognized as a National Historic Landmark. Of these structures, the guardhouse is derelict.

In 2005 the historic Bethel Baptist Church, its parsonage built in 1957, and the Revis House were designated a National Historic Landmark for their role and that of Rev. Shuttlesworth, pastor at the time, in the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950's.

Fred Shuttlesworth was the founder of the Alabama Christian Movement for Human Rights headquartered in the church and a national leader in the Civil Rights Movement. After the church was bombed in 1956, the Revis House became the guardhouse, the site of the volunteers who watched the church to prevent any further threats.

The House was also the refuge for several days for the Freedom Riders who were on the Anniston bus when it was burned in 1961.



Whispering Oaks



Interior of Whispering Oaks

The second place designated as "In Peril" is

Whispering Oaks in Opelika. Built around 1900, it is a two-story, brick, Beaux-Arts residence located in a National Register Historic District.

It still has elaborate-neoclassical woodwork, original doors and windows and multiple fire-

places but needs extensive repair. The house has been used as a restaurant and a B and B but now stands vacant. The city has threatened to demolish it.

The present owner would like to open it as a restaurant or other appropriate use but needs financing for the restoration and updating.



Supervising Architect for the Department of the Treasury."



The lobby has a 1947 mural, shown above, by Russell Hardman. It depicts Native Americans meeting DeSoto.



Lobby of the 1940-41 Guntersville Post Office

The building still has its original marble in the lobby, brass mailboxes, and stained wood trim.

The post office is located in Guntersville's historic and entertainment district and the city wishes to

have it refurbished and remain an attraction to the area. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and owned by the city of Guntersville.



Visitor's Center at Manitou Cave

The fourth "Place in Peril" is **Manitou Cave in Fort Payne.**

The cave may have seen human

(Continued on page 4)

Alabama's Places in Peril for 2016

(Continued from page 3)

activity for 10,000 years. It is a sacred space for the Cherokee. The name means spirit and other connections to Cherokee history include inscriptions in the cave as well as Port Payne's involvement in the Indian Removal. The Trail of Tears passed below the site of the cave. The town and fort were a place of internment for the Cherokee as well as a stop on the removal trail.

The cave's first development as a tourist attraction was in the late 19th century when the Fort Payne Iron and Coal Company developed both the town and Manitou Cave as a tourist attraction. The same architect who designed the parks for the town developed the cave, including the large area in the cave called the ballroom, where dances were held, lit by candlelight.

The Landmarks of De Kalb County internet site describes the ballroom in the cave: "Bridges and winding stairways were built leading to the huge ballroom, where dancers could watch the reflections of hundreds of candles glitter from the stalactites of the walls and ceiling. Later electricity was installed inside the cave and a public park created near the entrance" (<http://www.landmarksdekalbal.org/communities/FortPayne2.html>).



The approach to Manitou Cave, which was developed by the Fort Payne Coal and Iron Company in 1888 as an attraction. During the boom the beautifully landscaped park and candlelit ballroom were favorite meeting places for picnics and dances.

**Text and Picture from
<<http://www.landmarksdekalbal.org>>.**

In the mid-twentieth century, the cave was commercialized and a Mid-Century Modern visitor center was built in 1961. The tourist attraction closed in 1973 and the pavilion was abandoned.

The cave, spring fed pond, and ten acres are managed by Manitou Cave of Alabama, a newly formed non profit organization. The cave is on the Alabama Register of Landmarks and Heritage.



The fifth "Place in Peril" is **Grace Episcopal Church in Clayton**, shown at the left.. This small, frame, Neo-Gothic chapel was de-sanctified in the 1960s but has been lovingly maintained over the years by local garden clubs, community mem-

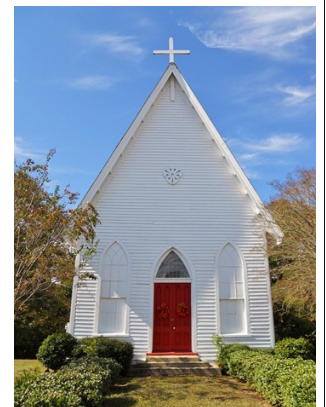
bers, and the family that donated the land for the church.



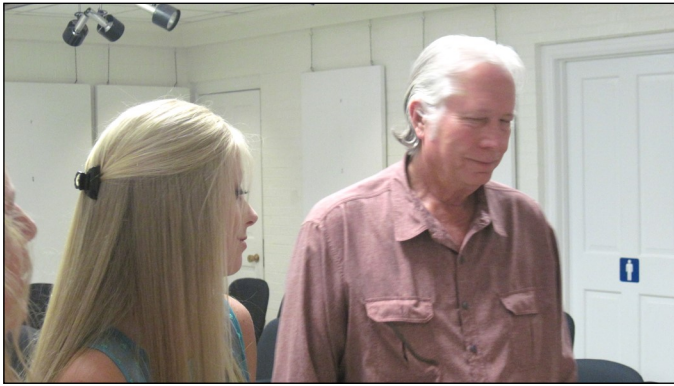
Picture shows the beautiful stained glass and some of the damage in the interior of the church.

The Episcopal Diocese of the Central Gulf coast still owns the chapel and supports preservation but does not have the funds for the project. This architecturally significant building has its original pews which are attached to the exterior walls, to make the most of the interior space, and the original stained glass. It needs a comprehensive plan for restoration and preservation. €

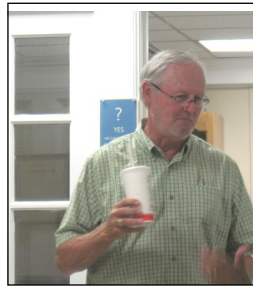
Another View of Grace Episcopal Church in Clayton.



Snapshots of the June 2016 ECHS Meeting



**Don Sales with his Granddaughter,
Kelsi Chandler**



**On the
left, Tom
McMillan.
On the
right,
Elvin R.
Earthly**



**Eva Mcinnish, Yank Lovelace, and
Tom McMillan**



**Robin Brewton, on the left, and Jo
Brewton enjoying refreshments in the
Elvira McMillan Room.**



Barbara Page and Beverly Stark.



**Carolyn Jennings, on the left,
visiting with
Barbara Page.**



**Speaker for the program, Chuck
Simon, holds a World War I era
saddle.**

Snapshots of the June 2016 ECHS Meeting *(Continued)*



In front, Linda Godwin. Back row, Sammie McGlothren, on the left, and Susan Blair



**Left to Right Lee Bain, Wayne Lisenby, and Robert Godwin.
Back Row, Sandy Chandler.**



Finding a Seat, Sue and Burrell Jerkins. In front, left to right, Jessica Warner, Carolyn Jennings, and Eva McInnish.



Jacque Stone and Eva McInnish



Left to Right, Darryl Searcy and Jo Ross Enjoying a Laugh.



Sally Finlay talks with Don Sales.



**Photo at the left.
Enjoying the Program,
Left to Right,
Front Row: Wayne Lisenby, Robert Godwin and Barbara Page.
Back Row: Kelsi and Sandy Chandler.**

Snapshots of the June 2016 ECHS Meeting *(Continued)*



**Left to Right
Back Row: Sammie McGlothren
and Susan Blair.
Middle Row: Linda Godwin
and Jessica Warner.
Front Row, Byron Strength, Christine
Strength, Carolyn Jennings,
and Eva McInnish.**



Yank Lovelace and Don Sales



**Sammie
McGlothren (on
the Left), and
Susan Blair**



**Lee Bain (on the Left) and Darryl
Searcy enjoying a good laugh.**



**Chuck
Simon, on
the left, and
Don Sales,
examine an
example of
the Cracker
whips used
on cattle
drives.**



**Chuck Simon and
Marie Heaton**



Carol and Al Jokela



Charlie Ware

Snapshots of the June 2016 ECHS Meeting *(Continued)*



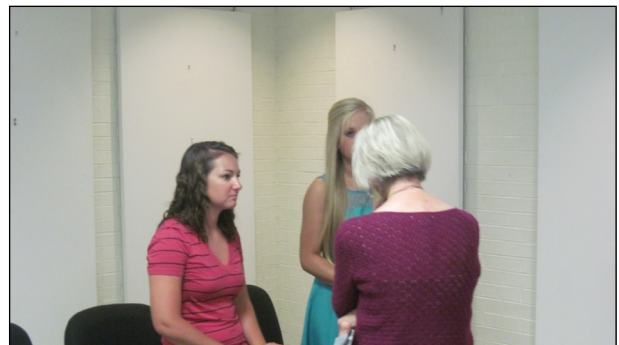
On the phone, Susan Crawford.



Against the wall on the left, Ann Biggs-Williams, Kelsi Chandler, and Don Sales. In the middle, seated, Jacque Stone. On the right wall, back to front, Ranella Merritt, Sandy Chandler, and Sally Finlay.



In the Background, Charles Booher, in the Middle, Libby Davis, and in the Foreground, Sally Finlay.



Jacque Stone (back to camera), visits with Jessica Warner (on the left, and Kelsi Chandler.



The beautiful refreshments table for members and guests to enjoy after the meeting.



Left to Right, Marie Heaton, Jo Brewton, Elvin Earthly, and Jessica Warner.

Our Business Members

**Remember to support
our Business Members**

Herrington's
The FLORIST, Inc.
"Where Flowers Are Special"
719 Douglas Ave.
Brewton, AL 36426
(251) 867-7085
(800) 235-0824
RONNY HERRINGTON

the L house
Printing & Frames
Custom Event Stationery
Business Documents • Custom Framing
131 Saint Joseph Avenue
Brewton, Alabama
251-867-9962
Lhouseprinting@gmail.com

William Smith 251.238.3966
Quality
Lawn Services
PO Box 823 Brewton, AL 36427
QualityLawnsBrewton@yahoo.com

Place your future in our hands...



"The Bank To Believe In"

A Locally Owned Community Bank
Striving to Meet Your Financial Needs

Personal Loans

- Rates based on length of time and type of collateral

Real Estate Loans

- Fixed rates up to 15 years
- Adjustable rates up to 30 years
- Home Equity Loans
- Construction Loans

Local Decisions

- Fast approvals
- Local closings
- Minimum fees on all loans



ESCAMBIA
COUNTY BANK

P.O. Box 601 • Flomaton, Alabama 36441
Telephone (251) 296-5356

The ECHS *Journal* Section

David Tate Moniac-A First

By Charles Ware

Moniac is a name that figures prominently in the heritage of many from the Poarch Creek community. I was recently doing research into my own family history and came upon the name of the man who was my great, great, great, great uncle, David Tate Moniac. The information I was reviewing contained a note that David Moniac was a graduate of West Point. This immediately captured my interest and prompted me to do an internet search of West Point records and graduates and to try to find out as much as I could about this historic man. At the west-point.org web site I was amazed to find the following:

This page is dedicated to a real First among the many notable graduates of West Point:

**The FIRST minority graduate of West Point...
The FIRST American Indian Graduate of West Point...
And the FIRST West Pointer from the Great State of Alabama.....
was MAJOR DAVID MONIAC-West Point Class of 1822...
this graduate was a Creek Indian."**

David Moniac was indeed the first Native American to graduate from West Point and, since Alabama became a state while he was enrolled, he became the first graduate from the state of Alabama. He had lived in the Little River area, only about 25 miles from Atmore.

David's father, Samuel Takkes-Hadjo Manac (spelling later changed to Moniac), was a Native American Creek. He was born in what is now central Alabama. In 1790 he was chosen to accompany



Depiction of Davis Moniac Leading a Charge

the famous Creek leader, Alexander McGillivray, to New York to meet with George Washington to attempt to negotiate a treaty between the young United States and the Creek nation. Samuel and the other Native Americans at the meeting were presented medals by George Washington.

Samuel married Elizabeth Weatherford, the sister of William Weatherford (Red Eagle), and they opened an inn along the old federal road near Pintlala in what is now southern Montgomery County. Samuel became a very successful businessman, ac-

quiring a large plantation where he raised horses and cattle. It was here that their son David was born in 1802. David was named after David Tate, a half-brother of William Weatherford. David Tate was highly educated and was greatly respected among the Creeks.

In 1813 when a hostile band of Creeks (Red Sticks) revolted against the United States, Samuel refused to join the uprising. Instead, he headed a party of friendly Creeks (White Sticks) and served as a guide for the army. As a result, Samuel's plantation was ransacked, his house burned, and he and his family were forced to flee. They lost almost all of their possessions. After the war, Samuel received some compensation from the government and was able to acquire more land. He once again became a prominent farmer and community leader.

Little is known of David's boyhood and education, but apparently he had received some degree of basic education for by the time he was fifteen years old, he was thinking of attending college in the north and possibly becoming a military officer. There was a provision in the treaty of 1790 that required the United States to provide higher education for a small number of Creek boys. Also, Samuel was still highly regarded by many of the military officers with

(Continued on page 11)

The ECHS *Journal* Section

David Tate Moniac-A First

(Continued from page 10)

whom he had served, so in 1817 he was able to get an appointment to the United States Military Academy at West Point for his son.

David still had to pass entrance exams before being allowed to start classes at West Point so it was decided he needed to attend a preparatory school prior to reporting for his class. He went to Washington D.C. where he studied under a private tutor for about six months. David passed all of his exams and on September 18, 1817, began his first classes at West Point.

Apparently David adapted very well to the strict discipline and academic pressures of West Point and, even though his presence there was still considered quite unique, he seemed to make friends and enjoy a fairly normal social life. West Point records show that he occasionally got demerits for socializing too much during study hours. At the west-point.org web site there is an analysis of the demerit history of each cadet. A portion of the analysis for David Moniac reads: *"Interestingly, the nature of David's transgressions provide unique insight into his basic nature. I think we see in this record a young man who clearly has friends, does not mind enjoying himself, and is a bit willful."*

At the end of his first year, even though David was passing all of his courses, he was not satisfied with his progress. He felt that he could fall even further behind, so he requested, and was given permission, to repeat the first year. His academic record was not outstanding, but over the next four years he was able to complete all the requirements for graduation. Academically he finished 39th out of a graduating class of 40, but, it should be noted, 69 of the members of his first year class never finished. This was quite an accomplishment for a young teenager from the backwoods of Alabama. On July 1, 1822, David Moniac marched proudly with his class onto the parade ground and tossed his hat into the air as a graduate of the United States Military Academy.



1822 West Point Uniform

David was commissioned a second lieutenant and was assigned to the 6th Infantry Regiment, but he only served for about six months. He resigned his commission and returned home to Alabama. There is some speculation as to why he returned to Alabama but it was probably due to the fact that his family was losing much of their property to land speculators and swindlers and were being forced to move onto reservations. Also, at that time, the army was allowing officers to resign from the regular army to help form and train local militias.

David returned to Alabama and settled in the Little River area of north Baldwin County. He resumed work on the family farm and soon

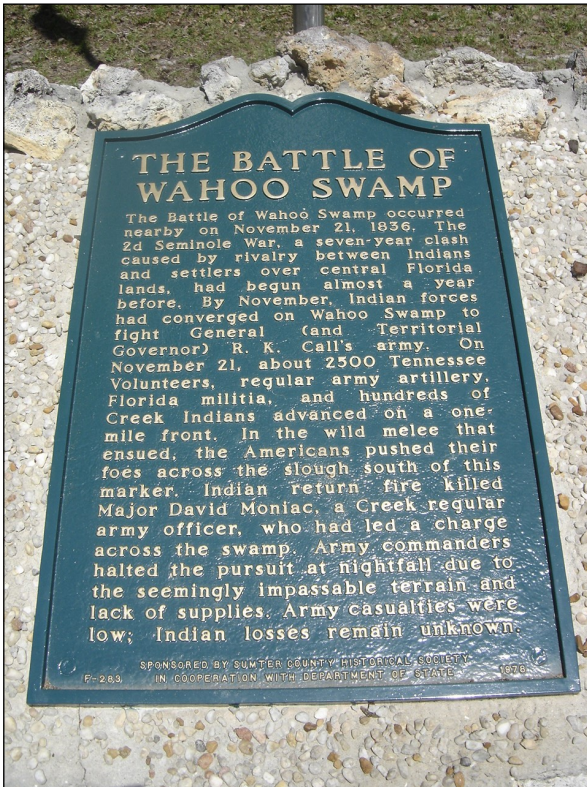
began acquiring additional property and established himself as a successful farmer and businessman. He was said to have enjoyed raising racehorses and seemed to be your typical country gentleman. An acquaintance was quoted as saying, "He was a high-toned chivalric gentleman and cordially esteemed by all who knew him." In 1828 he married Mary Powell and they had a son and a daughter. Their son, David Alexander Moniac, would later become sheriff of Baldwin County.

In 1836 the United States army became involved in what would become the Second Seminole War in Florida. Bands of Seminoles, who were distressed over a string of treaties which had been broken by the United States, were attacking and killing settlers and army troops throughout central Florida. The United States army was ordered to put down this uprising. The army requested volunteers from state militias throughout the south to augment the regular army units serving in Florida. A regiment of 700 Creek volunteers from Alabama was recruited with David Moniac serving as a Captain in the regiment. The Creek regiment departed on August 17 and soon joined with the other volunteer regiments and with the regular army units. The first battle took place on September 30 with the Creek regiment seeing almost daily action for several weeks thereafter. Captain

(Continued on page 12)

The ECHS *Journal* Section

David Tate Moniac-A First



Inscription on the Marker for the Battle of Wahoo Swamp

The Battle of Wahoo Swamp occurred nearby on November 21, 1836. The 2d Seminole War, a seven-year clash caused by rivalry between Indians and settlers over central Florida lands, had begun almost a year before.

By November, Indian forces had converged on Wahoo Swamp to fight General (and Territorial Governor) R.K. Call's army. On November 21, about 2500 Tennessee Volunteers, regular army artillery, Florida militia, and hundreds of Creek Indians advanced on a one-mile front.

In the wild melee that ensued, the Americans pushed their foes across the slough south of this marker. Indian return fire killed Major David Moniac, a Creek regular army officer, who had led a charge across the swamp. Army commanders halted the pursuit at nightfall due to the seemingly impassable terrain and lack of supplies.

Army casualties were low; Indian losses remain unknown.

(Continued from page 11)

Moniac was soon promoted to the rank of Major for heroism in battle.

The Seminoles were pursued deep into the swamps but they were very familiar with this territory and could use it to their full advantage. They could hide out in the thick brush until the army was almost on top of them, open fire and then disappear deeper into the swamp. This would go on for days with the army stalled and unable to advance. On November 21 the Seminoles made a stand in an area called Wahoo Swamp which is in what is now Sumpter County. They were waiting in ambush along a river bank with the army pinned down on the other side, unable to move further. Someone had to do something to rally the troops and get the charge going again.

An article titled "Warrior From West Point" originally published in the February 1974 edition of "Soldier Magazine" described the battle and the death of Major David Moniac.

All forward movement of the attacking force had stopped. In the complete stillness the Major crouched and looked across the obstacle that had halted the advance. The swampy stream was not very wide but he had no way of knowing how deep it was. What he was certain of was that the Seminole warriors they had been pursuing were waiting and watching on the other side of the stream, but no sign betrayed their presence.

He had to get the attack moving again. There was only one way to do it-with a yell the Major leaped to his feet and charged into the stream, his troops following close behind. War whoops and a ragged volley of shots greeted the assault and the Major's body slipped beneath the murky waters. A well-placed Seminole musket ball had stopped the attack and ended the story of the first Indian graduate of West Point.

They buried him not far from the battlefield but no memorial to him was ever raised. He died as he lived, in two worlds: as a Major in the service

(Continued on page 13)

The ECHS *Journal* Section

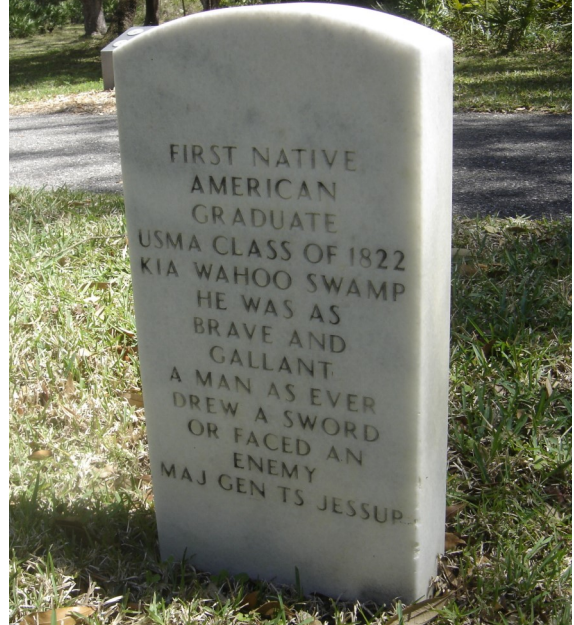
David Tate Moniac-A First

Front of Tombstone



**IN MEMORY OF
DAVID
MONIAC
MAJ
ALABAMA
MOUNTED
CREEK VOLUNTEERS
2ND SEMINOLE WAR
LT. 6TH US INF
DEC 25 1802
NOV. 21 1834**

Back of Tombstone



**FIRST NATIVE
AMERICAN
GRADUATE
USMA CLASS OF 1822
KIA WAHOO SWAMP
HE WAS AS
BRAVE AND
GALLANT
A MAN AS EVER
DREW A SWORD
OR FACED AN
ENEMY
MAJ GEN T S JESSUP**

(Continued from page 12)

of the United States Army-and as an Indian warrior in the service of his people.

The Wahoo Swamp area lies along present day SR-48 about six miles west of Interstate-75. The state of Florida is currently attempting to acquire about 850 acres of the land containing Wahoo Swamp in order to create a memorial park and land preserve. There is a historical marker along the highway near the site. A portion of the marker reads:

In the fierce engagement fought from tree to tree in mud and water, American troops pushed the Seminoles across the slough south of this marker. The Indians' return fire resulted in the death of Major David Moniac, a Creek regular army officer who led a bold attack across the swamp.

(Continued on page 14)

The ECHS *Journal* Section

David Tate Moniac-A First

(Continued from page 13)

In 1990, the body of Major Moniac was moved to the new Florida National Cemetery which is located near Bushnell. On his tombstone are carved the words spoken about him in 1836 by Major General Thomas Jessup, the commander of all U.S. forces in Florida:

“He was as brave and gallant a man as ever drew a sword or faced an enemy.”

There are several ironies surrounding the death of David Moniac. The first is that the Seminole Wars never officially ended. Some of the Seminoles were captured or surrendered and were later relocated, but many continued to elude the pursuing armies for years and moved deeper and deeper into the swamps of south Florida where their descendants still live today.

The second irony is that David’s wife, Mary, was a cousin of Osceola, the chief who was leading the Seminoles during the war.

The third was that within days of David’s death, his father Samuel also died. Samuel died in Pass Christian, Mississippi and was buried there with the medal he had received from George Washington in his pocket.

Fourth, David served in Florida with a number of his classmates from West Point, three of whom also died in battle. It was one of his classmates who was responsible for naming one of the newly constructed fortifications “Fort Moniac” in David’s honor.

Finally, at the same time that Major David Moniac died a hero in battle while serving in the United States Army, this same United States was in the process of removing many of David’s family members and friends from their homes and from the lands they had lived on for centuries, and forcing them to relocate hundreds of miles away to “Indian Territory.” €

Gardenia

By Darryl Searcy

It’s quite an honor to have a plant named after you. It’s an even bigger honor when that plant bears a flower with the most intoxicating fragrance in the world. Who among you does not have at least one gardenia gracing your garden? Now, having asked that question, let me ask another: Who among you remembers when that gracious shrub was called Cape Jasmine?

Gardenia or jasmine is an evergreen flowering plant of the coffee family (Rubiaceae). It originated in Asia and is most commonly found growing wild in Vietnam, Southern China, Taiwan, Japan, Myanmar, and India. With its shiny green leaves and heavily fragrant white summer flowers, it is widely used in gardens in warm temperate and subtropical climates,



“A single bowl of gardenia blossoms perfumes the entire household.”
Ralph Anderson

and even as a houseplant in temperate regions. It has been in cultivation in China for at least a thousand years, and was introduced to English gardens in the mid 18th century. Many varieties have been bred for horticulture, with low growing, and large- and long-flowering forms.

It was first described by English botanist John Ellis in 1761, after it had been conveyed to England in the 1750s. It gained its association with the name jasmine

as the botanist and artist Georg Dionysius Ehret had depicted it and queried whether it might be a jasmine as the flowers resembled the latter plant. The name stuck and lived on as common name and sci-

(Continued on page 15)

The ECHS *Journal* Section

Gardenia

(Continued from page 14)

entific epithet. The original scientific name was applied by Linnaeus as *Gardenia augusta*, but that name has long been ruled as invalid.

The common names cape jasmine and cape jessamine derive from the earlier belief that the flower originated in Cape of Good Hope, South Africa.

Gardenia jasminoides is a shrub with shiny evergreen leaves. The pristine white flowers appear in spring and summer and are highly fragrant, followed in the autumn by small oval fruits.

Briefly, and for our southern benefit, the first name actually changed way back in 1752 when Dr. Alexander Garden, a Scottish physician and naturalist, moved to Charleston. He corresponded with his English merchant friend named John Ellis, who just happened to be a good friend of Carolus Linnaeus, the famous Swedish botanist. Linnaeus had developed the genus-and-species system for scientifically naming and classifying plants.

In 1758, Ellis visited a garden outside London to inspect an evergreen shrub thought to be a jasmine and blessed with Heavenly scented double white flowers. Ellis doubted it was a true jasmine, and Linnaeus agreed. Ellis convinced Linnaeus to name the new find for his friend in Charleston, Alexander Garden. Enter the gardenia (*Gardenia jasminoides*). Fittingly, in 1762, the New World's first gardenia was planted in Dr. Garden's garden.

Decorated with a swirl of blinding white, the gardenia's waxy blossom is at once pure and sensual. So intoxicating is its sweetness that raising a bloom to your nose invites you to swoon; wanting for a second sniff. Intolerant of Northern winters, the gardenia saves its charms for the southern states. It quickly became a favorite of young ladies who turned the bouquets to corsages; floated the blooms in birdbaths; and consequently we all have spent heaven-scented, lazy evenings chatting on the porch basking in the sweet aromas of a brilliant southern tradition. €

Capitals of Alabama

The following article is taken from the Alabama Department of Archives and History at <archives.alabama.gov/capital/capitals.html>.

As a separate territory and state since 1817, Alabama has had five capitals. Saint Stephens, in southwest Alabama, was designated in the Congressional act creating the territory as the temporary seat of government. There, two sessions of the territorial legislature met. In accordance with the enabling act for statehood, the first Constitutional Convention assembled in the north Alabama town of Huntsville in 1819, where the first session of the General Assembly was held in the same year.

The territorial legislature, however, had chosen Cahaba (also spelled Cahawba), at the confluence of the Cahaba and Alabama Rivers, as the site for the capital of the state, so the second session of the legislature met there in 1820. Cahaba also was designated as the temporary seat of government in the Constitution, which expressly gave the 1825-26 legislature the power to decide upon a permanent site. That session of the General Assembly took the

opportunity to select Tuscaloosa for the new capital, deserting the oft-flooded and unhealthy Cahaba site.

Tuscaloosa was a thriving community located on the shoals of the Black Warrior River and had been a strong candidate for the capital site when Cahaba had been chosen for the honor in 1819. Serving as the home for the government beginning in 1826, however, it was increasingly inconvenient as a seat of government for the rapidly growing state. Alabama's population gains concentrated in the state's more eastern counties as Indian lands there opened to white settlement, prompted a clamor for a more centrally located capital. An amendment approved by the voters of Alabama struck out the section of the Constitution designating the 1825-26 selection as the "permanent" site for the capital, freeing the legislature in 1846 to choose another site from among a number of competing river towns. Montgomery, on the Alabama River, won the ensuing 16-ballot contest in the General Assembly.

Andrew Dexter, one of the founders of the town, had held on to a prime piece of property in long

(Continued on page 16)

The ECHS *Journal* Section

Capitals of Alabama



The State House at Cahawba

An artist's rendering of the first Alabama state capitol building in Cahaba, Dallas County.



The State Capitol at Cahaba - 1820 - 1825, From, Memories of Old Cahaba by Anna M. Gayle Fry 1908



**C. M. E. Church in Loundesboro
The Dome on the church is from the original state capitol at Cahaba. The Church is thought to have been completed before 1833.**

(Continued from page 15)

anticipation of the capital's eventual move to Montgomery. Dubbed "Goat Hill" for its use as pasturage, the site retained that affectionate appellation despite attempts to dignify the spot with names like "Lafayette Hill" (after the 1825 visit of the Marquis de Lafayette) and "Capitol Hill" (after the 1847 construction of the Capitol).

In selecting Montgomery, the legislature expressly provided that the state should be put to no expense in securing lands or in erecting a capitol building. Thus, the citizens of the town immediately organized to

secure the "Goat Hill" site and begin erecting a building. Bonds for \$75,000 were issued by the municipality which were taken up by local real estate dealers and investors. The Greek Revival plan of the new capitol was drawn up by Stephen D. Button; the contractors were Bird F. Robinson and R. N. R. Bardwell. The completed building was presented to the state on December 6, 1847, at the beginning of the legislature's first-ever biennial session.

On December 14, 1849, near the beginning of the General Assembly's second session in Montgomery, the Capitol was destroyed by fire. Moving to temporary quarters to continue deliberations, the legislature

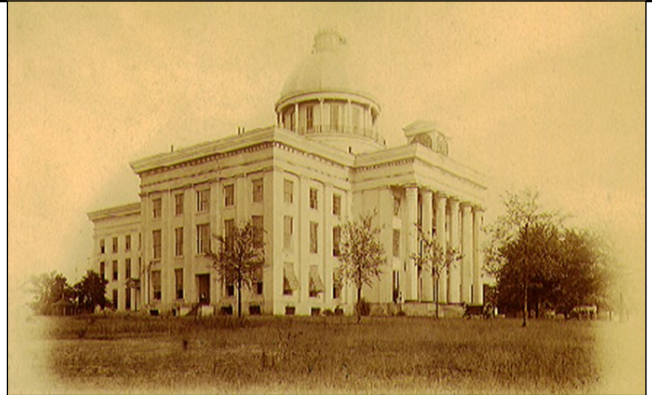
(Continued on page 17)

The ECHS *Journal* Section

Capitals of Alabama



Artist's Rendering of the Alabama State House in Tuscaloosa



The Early State Capital in Montgomery

The Current State Capital in Montgomery



(Continued from page 16)

in February of 1850 appropriated \$60,000 with which the central section of the present building was erected upon the foundations of the burned original. A new architect, Barachias Holt, designed the new structure.

During the 1870-72 period several improvements were made to increase the convenience and appearance of the Capitol's lower floor, but no increase in its capacity was made from its re-erection in 1851 until 1885. In February of the latter year, the legislature appropriated \$25,000 for a "needed enlargement," which became an east wing.

Another \$150,000 was appropriated in 1903 to purchase the privately owned property making up the south end of the capitol square, where a south wing was erected in 1905-06. A north wing followed in 1911 when an additional \$100,000 came from the legislature. An addition to the east wing was completed in 1992 as part of a major restoration and refurbishing project for the entire structure. €

Huntsville as State Capital

Alabama officially became a state in 1819. It was the 22nd state admitted to the Union.

The legislature first met in Huntsville, which also can lay claim to being a state capital of Alabama. While meeting there, the legislators designated the bluff at the confluence of the Alabama and Cahaba Rivers as the permanent site for a new capital city.

When delegates gathered in Huntsville to formulate Alabama's constitution, the building shown below (a reconstruction of the original building), was a vacant cabinet-makers' shop and was the only one large enough to house the 44 delegates gathered together on July 5th, 1819.



ECHOES
THE NEWSLETTER FOR
THE ESCAMBIA COUNTY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P.O. Box 276
Brewton, AL 36427
Phone: 251-809-1528

E-mail: escambiahistoricalsociety@gmail.com

We're on the web!

www.escohis.org

FIRST CLASS MAIL DATED MATERIAL

Address correction
requested

Books for Sale

	Mailed	Regular
<u>Headstones and Heritage</u>	\$20.00	\$25.00
<u>Escambia Historical Society Cookbook</u>	\$10.00	\$15.00
<u>Wildflowers of The Escambia CD</u>	\$10.50	\$15.00
<u>History of Brewton and E. Brewton (sc)</u>	\$35.00	\$40.00
<u>Flomaton Centennial Scrapbook</u>	\$30.00	\$25.00
Addendum to Headstones and Heritage	\$20.00	\$25.00
Headstones & Addendum Together	\$40.00	\$50.00

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

Date ____/____/____

Name _____

Mailing Address _____

Phone _____

Email Address _____

Do you prefer to get your newsletter by
U.S. Mail ____ or email? ____

Dues

(\$25.00/person, \$35.00/two family member at same address; Lifetime, \$250.00/person; \$50.00/year business)

Dues _____

Donation _____

Total Enclosed _____

Your interests _____

You will help with _____

Dues are to be paid at the beginning of the year

Many members give a membership as a gift!

Business members get a large scale
advertisement 11 months of the year.

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.

OFFICERS

President, Sally Finlay
Vice-President, Carolyn Jennings
Secretary, Jacque Stone
Treasurer, Susan Crawford
Echoes Editor, Ranella Merritt
Librarian, Barbara McCoy
Publicity, Ann Biggs-Williams and
Clay Lisenby
Historian/Curator, Tom McMillan

TRUSTEES

Ann Biggs-Williams
Ranella Merritt
Tom McMillan
Sally Finlay
Darryl Searcy, Alternate