



**The  
Escambia  
County  
Historical  
Society,  
Founded  
1971**

**The September Meeting  
Tuesday,  
September 27, 2016  
3:00 p. m.  
The McMillan Museum**



**Mary  
Humphrey**

## **The Program**

Mary Humphrey, student, principal and director at Southern Normal School in Brewton will present a program on her memories of the school.

A native of Brewton, Mary recounts that her first school experience was at the Brewton City School for blacks located off East Street. After this school burned, the students were sent to Piney Grove Elementary School located on the Southern Normal High School Campus.

She attended Southern Normal from the seventh grade through the twelfth, graduating as the valedictorian of her high school class in 1950. She continued her education and received a bachelor's degree from Alabama State College and a master's from Tuskegee University. She also has an Educational Specialist degree from the University of South Alabama and further graduate credit from the University of Texas at San Antonio.

Mary loves teaching because she sees it as a way of making a positive impact on not just the individual student but on the community as well. She has taught abroad in Germany and in the United States in Alabama, Florida, Texas and Missouri. She says her most fulfilling job was to return to Southern Normal High School as a principal (assistant director) and a director.

Now retired, she remains active in the Baptist Hill Missionary Baptist Church, serving on the Trustee, Mission, and Christian Education Boards. Mary's husband, James T. Humphrey, is deceased. She has a daughter and three grandchildren.

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**The October Meeting:  
Russell G. Brown will  
present a program on  
Logging and Railroads in  
the area.**

## **ECHS Field Trips-A Letter from Our President**

Dear Members,

I am excited about our next two field trips! The first is November 5 when we travel to Wetumpka, Alabama to visit Ft. Toulouse/ Ft Jackson's "Alabama Frontier Days." There we will see our early pioneer history and experience Indian villages, dancing, cannon firings, flint musket firings, highland music, and more. Hope you can travel with us.

Our second trip in March or April will be to Eufaula, Alabama and their spring "Pilgrimage of Homes."

You don't want to miss these trips,  
Sally Finlay



**Reenactors at Fort  
Toulouse**

**Volume 43 Number 9**

**September 2016**

# Southern Normal School

## The Historical Marker

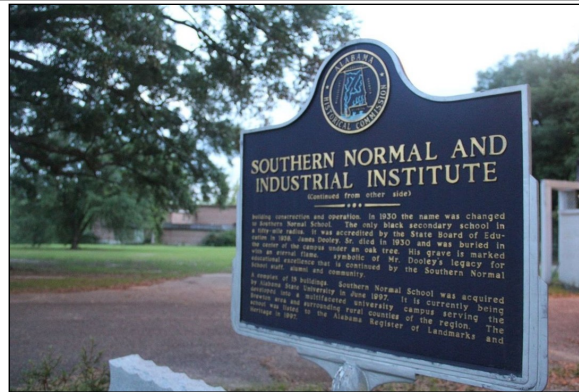
*Following is the text of the Southern Normal Historical Marker:*

The Southern Normal and Industrial Institute was established on September 18, 1911, by James A. Dooley, Sr. The first black school in the Brewton area, it offered an academic and vocational education program. When Mr. Dooley arrived in the area, he found limited educational opportunities for blacks such as inadequate facilities and materials combined with an exceptionally short school term.

With his personal funds, Mr. Dooley purchased an existing school for disadvantaged boys and established a co-education day and boarding school, the Southern Normal and Industrial Institute. In an effort to raise money for the school, Mr. Dooley visited a number of Reformed Churches in the East and Midwest. The churches became interested in the school and supported it as a mission center.

In 1919, Southern Normal and Industrial Institute was transferred to the Board of Domestic Missions of the Dutch Reformed Church of America of New York City. The church provided funding for building construction and operation.

In 1930 the name was changed to Southern Normal School. The only black secondary school in a fifty-mile radius, it was accredited by the State Board of Education



**Historical Marker Placed at Southern Normal by the Alabama Historical Commission in 2004**



**Southern Normal Classroom and Administration Building**

**Mary Humphrey on Her Southern Normal Experience**  
**In an interview in 2011 with Brewton Standard reporter Lydia Grimes, Mary Humphrey commented on her work as an administrator at Southern Normal, "It was an honor for me to return to Southern Normal and try to give back what the school had given me. "We were taught not only to get a good education, but to learn to work and the importance of living the Christian life" (<http://www.brewtonstandard.com/2011/09/13/alumni-celebrate-southern-normal-legacy/>).**

**After serving as assistant director for several years, Ms. Humphrey became the director in 1984 and served in that role until 1993.**

in 1938. James Dooley, Sr. died in 1930 and was buried in the center of the campus under an oak tree. His grave is marked with an eternal flame, symbolic of Mr. Dooley's legacy for educational excellence that is continued by the Southern Normal School staff, alumni and community.

A complex of 15 buildings, Southern Normal School was acquired by Alabama State University in June 1997. It is currently being developed into a multifaceted university campus serving the Brewton area and surrounding rural counties of the region.

The school was listed on the Alabama Register of Landmarks and Heritage in 1997.

## Financial Problems and Closings

During the Christmas break of December 1996, Southern Normal canceled its spring semester. It sent 90 students to other black boarding schools in the south.

According to an article in the New York Times, the cancelling of the spring semester came as a surprise to many interested in and supportive of Southern Normal, including accrediting agencies.

The Times article noted that Southern Normal had reworked its curriculum in the previous three years and enrolled a group of talented students.

*(Continued on page 3)*

## Southern Normal School

(Continued from page 2)

The school seemed to be on the right track to revamp and solve its financial and enrollment difficulties.

Enrollment had declined at Southern Normal after integration and financial pressures increased when in 1991, the Dutch Reform Church, which had helped fund the school since 1919, no longer supported the school as one of the Church's missions.

The Church turned control of the school over to a foundation created to raise funds to purchase the school and operate it. Sherman Jones, a Harvard graduate was hired to be the director. He redesigned the curriculum to be a college preparatory program.

However, Jones resigned in June of 1996, and by December of 1996, Thad McClammy, the acting



**Left to Right, former Southern Normal Teachers, Amanda Bell and Florence Rowser, are shown at the 2011 Southern Normal Teacher Appreciation Banquet.**

**Each taught at Southern Normal for over thirty years. Along with our speaker, Mary Humphrey, Amanda Bell and Florence Rowser serve on the ECHS Bicentennial Committee.**

director of the school, announced the school faced a \$1 million debt. The spring 1997 semester was cancelled.

In June, 1997, Alabama State University purchased the school buildings and campus. The name, Southern Normal School, was changed to Southern Normal Academy of Alabama State University.

The campus served as an off-campus degree location where students could earn an accelerated bachelor's of science degree in psychology and an assortment of degrees in the education field.

In 2015 Alabama State University closed Southern Normal School. Alabama State explained that the University did not have the

funds to pay the staff and keep the Southern Normal campus open.

## News and Announcements

### Escambia County, Alabama Historical Markers

Check out the section on the Escambia County historical markers which is part of the ECHS web site. Darryl Searcy has expanded this section to include a photograph and the text of 29 markers. The web address is <[http://www.escohis.org/Historical\\_Markers.html](http://www.escohis.org/Historical_Markers.html)>.

\*\*\*\*\*



### Conecuh National Forest 80<sup>th</sup> Birthday Bus Tour! October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016 8:00 a. m. — 2:00 p. m.

Leaving from and returning to USDA Service Center in Andalusia. Call 334-222-1125 by Thursday, Sept 29<sup>th</sup> to register!

**Free and open to the public.** A free lunch will be provided. Transportation will be by school bus; light walking involved.

\*\*\*\*\*



### West Florida Genealogical Society Meeting October 1, 2016, 10:00 a. m. The West Florida Genealogy Library, Pensacola

Genealogy Branch Manager Chris Hare and Facilities Coordinator Sean Kahalley will describe elements of the planned renovation of the Genealogy Library. The speakers will also answer question from the audience.

For more information, contact: Charlotte Schipman, 850-477-7166, [cschipman@mac.com](mailto:cschipman@mac.com)

(Continued on page 4)



## News and Announcements

(Continued from page 3)

### Steadham Reunion

The descendants of John Victor and Mary McGhee Steadham will meet Sunday, October 2, 2016 at 11:00 am in the Steadham Chapel, near McCullough, Alabama.

The meeting will be followed by a covered dish lunch. Come and bring your favorite food and enjoy fellowship with family. For more information contact Elaine Brooks, [251-267-3442](tel:251-267-3442).

\*\*\*\*\*

### Alabama Historical Association 70th Annual Meeting April 20-22, 2017 Auburn, Alabama.

Hotel reservations at the Auburn University Hotel can be made by calling [800-228-2876](tel:800-228-2876).

\*\*\*\*\*

### New Book on the Civil War in West Florida

Brian Rucker, who has presented several programs for ECHS, has a new book available, Mine Eyes Have Seen: Firsthand Reminiscences of the Civil War.

\*\*\*\*\*



### Williams Station Day, Atmore, AL Saturday, October 22, 2016 9:00 A.M. - 5:00 P.M.

Join a fun day of family entertainment with an old-fashioned sampling of southern heritage seasoned with the blues, arts and crafts, cane milling and heritage displays.



### 50th Vietnam War Commemoration November 5th Eglin Air Force Base Armaments Museum 10:00 am—3:00 pm

Called a “Welcome Home” celebration for local Vietnam Veterans, the event will be part of the National Commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of the Vietnam War

Veterans will receive a special pin and packet in honor of their service. The celebration will include guest speakers, service organization representatives, and refreshments.

\*\*\*\*\*

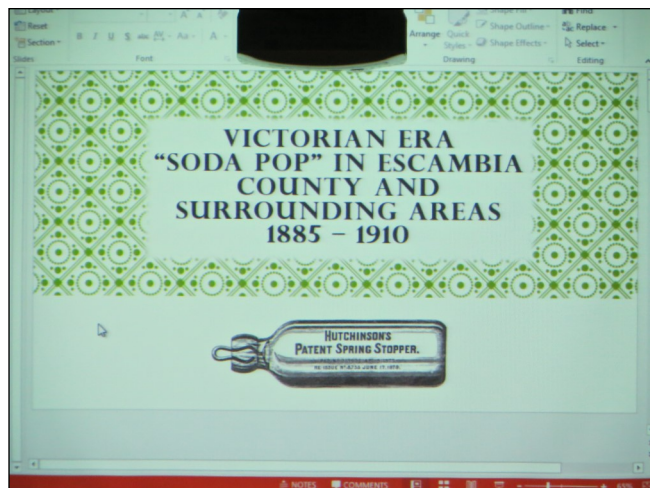


### Exhibit of 18th Century-era Fort of Pensacola's Commanding Officer's Compound Now Complete

The exhibit features large interpretive panels and colorful ground markings that highlight important archaeological features discovered in one of the many excavations of the site and provide an easy reference to the different time periods that make up Pensacola's history: First Spanish; British; Second Spanish; and American.

Located behind the Wentworth Museum in downtown Pensacola.

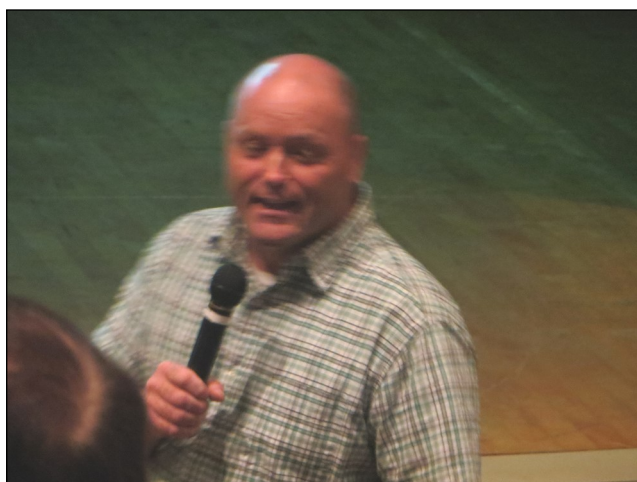
## Snapshots from the ECHS August 2016 Meeting



*At the left is the first screen for the power point Program which our speaker John Walker Hoomes' used in his program on "Soda Pop" bottling in the area in the early nineteenth century.*

*John is shown below on the left. To his right are samples of soda pop bottles in his collection which he exhibited at the program.*

*The bottom photo shows the view from the back of the auditorium in the Neal Colonial Center where we had our meeting and program for August.*





## Snapshots from the ECHS August 2016 Meeting (Continued)



**At the Refreshment Table in the Hallway outside the Auditorium.**

**Left to right, Kelly Hoomes (wife of John Hoomes, our speaker; her back is to the camera), Carolyn Jennings (white shirt), Ranella Merritt (hat in hand), Al Jokela (in the background), and**



**Mike Edwards and Charles Stone enjoying a visit**



page 8)

# ECHS Field Trip to Fort Toulouse/Jackson

(Continued from page 9)

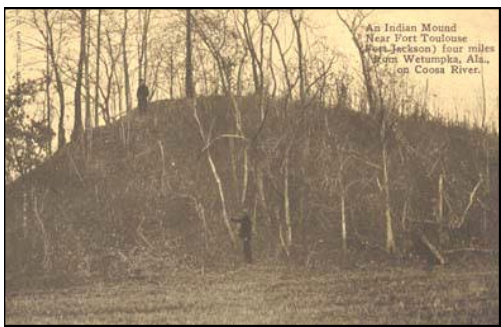
The militias of Georgia, Tennessee, North Carolina, South Carolina and the Mississippi Territory (which included what would later become Alabama) took to the field to defeat the Creeks. The British who the Americans were also fighting during the War of 1812 supported the Red Stick Creeks though there was little in the way of supplies and no troops in the Fort Jackson area.

The area of the headwaters of the Alabama River and the Hickory Ground (Wetumpka) was the goal of the American armies coming from the East, West, and

North. It was believed that the great battle to end the Creek War would come near the juncture of the Coosa and Tallapoosa Rivers.

The Armies fought battles from each direction but the battle that broke the Creek effort came at Horse-shoe Bend on the Tallapoosa River. Indian survivors of this battle fled south toward the Hickory Ground. The army led by Andrew Jackson pushed in the same direction and hoped to link with the army from Georgia also moving toward the Hickory Ground. The forces were unable to catch the fleeing Indians but they did join and soon encamped where Fort Toulouse

(Continued on page 10)



**An Indian Mound Near Fort Toulouse/Fort Jackson**  
From: <http://alabamapioneers.com>

The first farmers during the Mississippian period built this mound on the edge of the village. The chief's house was built on a platform on top. When the chief died, villagers tore down his house and covered it with a layer of earth. The mound grew with each new layer (<https://fttoulousejackson.org/>).



**Closed Indian House for Use in Fall and Winter**



**Open Indian House for Use in Spring and Summer**



**A contemporary Creek man starts a fire as he would have during the colonial era.**



**On the left, reenactors in front of tents for visitors as well as reenactors who stay on site during events. On the right, reenactors firing muskets.**





# ECHS Field Trip to Fort Toulouse/Jackson

(Continued from page 6)

**Event:** Frontier Days at Fort Toulouse/Jackson

**Date:** Saturday, November 5, 2016

**Location:** Wetumpka, Alabama

**Admission:** Adults - \$8  
Students - \$7

**Transportation:** By bus if there are enough signed up, will need close to thirty; with smaller numbers, by car pool.

## Schedule:

**8:00 a. m.:** Meet at the McMillan Museum in order to leave no later than 8:30.

**Rest Stop** at Greenville; can purchase sandwiches for lunch at Fort Toulouse/Fort Jackson Park.

**Around 12:00 p. m.:** Arrive at Fort Toulouse/Jackson Park.

**Time at Park:** Probably Two Hours. leave by around 2:00 or 2:30 p. m.

**On Return Trip:** Rest Stop and meal in Prattville or Greenville.

**Arrive Back at McMillan Museum:** Probably around 6:00 p. m.

## Frontier Days at Fort Toulouse/Fort Jackson Park

*From the Fort Toulouse/Fort Jackson web site, this description of the event:*

Experience one of the largest and most authentic living



**Arial View of Fort Toulouse**



**Reconstructed Fort Toulouse**



**Building at Fort Toulouse**



history events in Alabama! See the south as it transitioned from Creek Indian lands to military forts and civilian homesteads during the period 1700 to 1820.

Using Fort Toulouse - Fort Jackson Park as its historical backdrop, Alabama Frontier Days focuses on demonstrating life on the southern frontier during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The public can experience this "living history" as many frontier crafts and trades are demonstrated by specialists dressed in historic costume.

Frontier Days illustrates how people from this fascinating period of Alabama's past lived and worked. This snapshot of frontier life includes Creek Indians, French soldiers and their families, British traders who lived among the Creeks and American soldiers who fought in Andrew Jackson's army during the Creek War.

Additionally, there will be strolling balladeers, entertainers, period musicians and a magician as well as merchants selling quality reproductions of items used on the frontier (<https://fittoulousejackson.org/>).

## Fort Toulouse

*From the Fort Toulouse/Fort Jackson website, an introduction to the development of this fort:*

In 1717, when this region was part of French Louisiana, the French built a

**A cannon aims out from the reconstructed stockade of Fort Toulouse.**



## ECHS Field Trip to Fort Toulouse/Fort Jackson



**A Re-enactor stands in front of a model of the original Fort Jackson**



**Spring Flowers frame the gate and walls of Fort Jackson.**



**Walls of Fort Jackson  
The historic fort built by Andrew Jackson during the Creek War of 1813-1814 has been partially reconstructed.**



**To the Right, the Restored Guard House Located Near the Gate in Fort Jackson.**

**To the Left, although Fort Jackson is only partially restored, its total outline is visible in the form of its moat.**



*(Continued from page 8)*

fort near the strategically vital junction where the Tallapoosa and Coosa Rivers form the Alabama River. The fort was primarily a trading post where Indians exchanged fur pelts for guns and household items.

There were no battles at the post as French diplomacy forged allies with the natives. The surrounding Indians, commonly referred to as Creeks, wanted peace so they could trade with both the French and British.

Fort Toulouse, a re-creation of the last or 3rd French fort built between 1749 and 1751, is a National Historic Landmark. The wall of the

fort facing the Coosa River washed away in 1747 and a second fort was built in 1751 using a palisade of pointed logs.

The French lost the French and Indian War and the fort in 1763. The site was abandoned by the French and the lands reverted to native occupation.

Few vestiges of the French post were visible when a new large earthen fort was erected in 1814 and named in honor of General Andrew Jackson (<https://fttoulousejackson.org/>).

### Fort Jackson

*From the Fort Toulouse/Fort Jackson website, this background and history:*

Following the French abandonment of Fort Toulouse in 1763 at the end of the French and Indian War, the river valley was peaceful as first the British and then the American nations claimed the region but few white men came to the area.

Relations between the white settlers and Native peoples deteriorated in the first decade of the Nineteenth Century. The United States and Great Britain were at odds during the same time and by late 1813 the Creek War and the War of 1812 were underway.

Members of the Creek Nation who wanted to keep their traditional ways and not accept the white man in their country were called the Red Sticks and it was they who warred against the Americans. The members of the Creek Nation who wanted to accept the white man's ways and live peacefully with them were called the White Sticks and these groups fought along side the Americans against the Red Sticks.

*(Continued on page 7)*

# ECHS Field Trip to Fort Toulouse/Jackson

(Continued from page 7)

-Fort Jackson Park is located.

The militia troops from Tennessee returned home and soldiers from North Carolina, South Carolina and the regular army began building a large earthen fort. The fort was named by General Thomas Pinckney for his subordinate Andrew Jackson.

Fort Jackson had a moat that was seven feet deep and dirt walls ranging in height from 7 ½ feet to 9 feet high. When finished the fort contained barracks space to house 200 soldiers. A garrison was kept here as the focus of these armies changed to the war with the British and activities occurring on the Gulf Coast. During this time thousands of troops passed through the site on their way south.

In August of 1814 the Treaty of Fort Jackson was signed officially ending the Creek War. The Creeks agreed to give the United States more than twenty million acres as reparations for the war. This land was the majority of what became the State of Alabama.

Soldiers continued to occupy the post until 1816. In 1817 and 1818 efforts to build a town at the site were begun and Fort Jackson Town was born. This town served as the first county seat for Montgomery County



**An Indian Mound Near Fort Toulouse/Fort Jackson**  
From: <http://alabamapioneers.com>

**The first farmers during the Mississippian period built this mound on the edge of the village. The chief's house was built on a platform on top. When the chief died, villagers tore down his house and covered it with a layer of earth. The mound grew with each new layer (<https://toulousejackson.org/>).**

but by 1819 the town of Montgomery had become the principle place in the County and Fort Jackson Town was abandoned soon returning to forest and fields (<https://toulousejackson.org/>).

## The Indian Village

Material from <https://toulousejackson.org/>,

The Creek Indian houses represent two primary types of domestic structures used in the historic period. The fully enclosed buildings are winter houses and the open structure is for summer use. Until 1763, the lands within the park boundaries were home to

the Alabama. This tribe was a member of the Creek Confederacy and eventually left with the French at the end of the Seven Years War (French and Indian War). The state of Alabama was named after this tribe.

## The Indian Mound

From <http://www.exploresouthernhistory.com/toulousemound.html>.

Archaeological research at Fort Toulouse-Fort Jackson State Historic Site in Alabama

(Continued on page 11)



**William Bartram Marker**  
Bartram, a well-known botanist, visited the site in 1776 making notes and drawings of the area's plants, animals and native cultures .



**Path on the Nature Trail at the Fort Toulouse/ Fort Jackson Park**



## ECHS Field Trip to Fort Toulouse/Jackson

*(Continued from page 10)*

has revealed traces of Native American presence dating back thousands of years.

The strategic location of the park on the point of land formed by the confluence of the Coosa and Tallapoosa Rivers made it a natural crossroads. Not only were the rich bottomlands ideal for farming, hunting and gathering, the confluence of two rivers made the site an important crossroads for trade.

In around A.D. 1000, an important town of the Mississippian era began to grow on the site. The Mississippian culture, so named because it spread east and west from the Mississippi Valley in around A.D. 900, was one of the most significant prehistoric cultures in the Americas.

The area around the confluence of the Coosa and Tallapoosa Rivers was the location of a major chiefdom during the Mississippian era. When Hernando de Soto invaded the region during the 1540s, but this chiefdom was known as Talisi.

Talisi eventually became Tallassee, one of the major towns of the Creek Nation and the name is still preserved today in the form of an Alabama city.

The exact name of the town site preserved at Fort Toulouse-Fort Jackson State Historic Site is not known and it is unclear whether it was still occupied at the time of Hernando de Soto's presence in the region. During its occupation,



**A Place to Relax on the Nature Trail**



**Bird Watching on the Nature Trail at the Fort Toulouse/Jackson Park. The Coosa River is in the background.**

however, it was a major site.

The town included at least three earthen mounds,



**The Graves House originally located in Lowndes County was constructed between 1825 and 1830.**

**This Carolina Tidewater Cottage was built by David Graves, the son of a Revolutionary War hero and ancestor of Alabama Governor Bibb Graves.**

**The building has been restored to its original appearance and houses the site museum and gift shop at Fort Toulouse/Fort Jackson Park.**

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# The ECHS *Journal* Section

## The Lost Cannon of Fort Toulouse

**By Gene Worthington**

*The following article can be found at <<http://www.treasurenet.com/forums/treasure-legends-alabama/37969-lost-cannons-fort-toulouse.html>>.*

Located on the Coosa River near the junction of that stream with the Tallapoosa, 10 miles north of Montgomery, Alabama, is the site old Fort Toulouse. And somewhere around the site are six of the eight cannons which comprised its defense.

Fort Toulouse was constructed by the French in 1717 as an advance post of the colony of Louisiana. No detailed plan of the fort has ever been found but descriptions indicate that it was built on the pattern of other frontier forts of the period. There was a stockade of logs enclosing an area of about 100 yards square, with a bastion at each corner. Each of these bastions contained two cannons.

It is probable that the logs were of oak, nine feet long, close to one foot in diameter and stripped of bark and charred in the three feet that went underground. The logs were held by laths and a moat was dug around the stockade, as deep as it was wide. Within the enclosure were frame buildings which served as offices and quarters for the garrison.

The fort stood opposite a sharp bend in the Coosa



**French Cannon From  
Fort Toulouse  
On Display at the  
Alabama Department of  
Archives and History.**

River and the current undermined the bank under it, necessitating a move of the structure in 1748. The rebuilt fort stood only 15 or 20 yards from the original site, however.

Neither Fort Toulouse nor its garrison was involved in hostile action. The military potential was there of course, but absence of hostilities emphasized the diplomatic nature of the post.

The fort was evacuated in 1763. The officer assigned to oversee the evacuation was Director General

d'Abbadie. The general decided to leave the ordnance and military stores, explaining that it was impossible to move the artillery.

The cannons were spiked and dumped from their mountings onto the fort yard. Excess powder was dumped into the Coosa River. The fort fell in ruins within a few years.

Two of the cannons have been found. One of them is in the State Department of Archives and History in Montgomery. The other is on exhibition in the Wetumpka courthouse at Wetumpka, Alabama.

The remaining six cannons are now either covered with a growing accumulation of earth and debris somewhere on the fort site, or with mud in the bottom of the Coosa River.

These centuries-old guns would be a valuable find.

## Fort Toulouse-Fort Jackson Time Line

- 1680 AD The Alabama tribe occupies the site.
- 1717 AD French arrive and build the first Fort Toulouse along the banks of the Coosa River.
- 1751 AD French complete the third and final Fort Toulouse just south of the previous two forts.
- 1763 AD French are defeated by Great Britain in the Seven Years War and this area becomes part of the British colony of Georgia.
- 1763 AD Creek people establish the town of Taskigi.
- 1775 AD William Bartram visits this site.
- 1814 AD General Andrew Jackson arrives and builds Fort Jackson as a staging area for military operations along the Gulf Coast. Treaty of Fort Jackson signed August 9.
- 1817 AD Fort Jackson is abandoned by the United States.
- 1819 AD Alabama becomes the 22<sup>nd</sup> state.

**ECHOES**  
THE NEWSLETTER FOR  
THE ESCAMBIA COUNTY  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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	Mailed	Regular
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<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**

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**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](mailto:escohis@escohis.org) or call 251-809-1528.*

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