

ECHOES

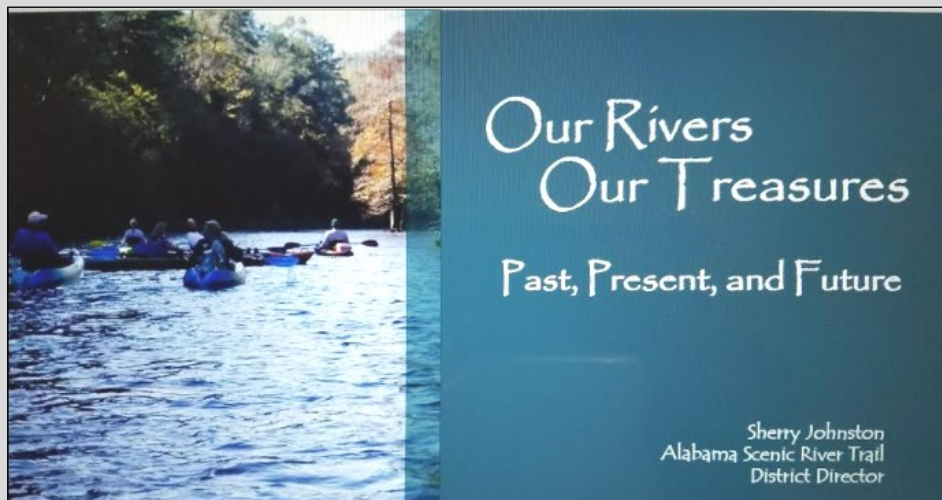
THE NEWSLETTER AND JOURNAL FOR
THE ESCAMBIA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



The
Escambia
County
Historical
Society,
Founded
1971

The March Meeting
Tuesday, March 27, 2018
McMillan Museum
Coastal Alabama Community College
Brewton Campus
3:00 PM

The Program: A Power Point Presentation by Sherry Johnston on:



(Continued on page 2)

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Don't forget to Bring Your Favorite Finger Food or Snack for the Refreshment Period after the Meeting. ECHS Will Provide the Drinks and Ice.



Sherry Johnston
Our Speaker

Volume 45 No. 3
March 2018

April Meeting
Tuesday, April 24, 2018
McMillan Museum
3:00 p. m.

Guest Speaker Harry King, who has made some interesting archaeological discoveries, will discuss his findings. He recently found an Indian Canal on Fort Morgan Road.



Shorter Mansion, Eufaula, Alabama

The Program

(Continued from page 1)

Our speaker, Sherry Johnston describes herself in an article from Alabama Pioneers, January 12, 2017 (<https://www.alabamapioneers.com/author/sherryjohnstone/>):

"I am a genealogist/historian for a municipal library in my hometown of Evergreen, Conecuh County, AL. I help people from all over the world research their family trees. It's rewarding work, though very low-pay, so I moonlight as a genealogist as well.

"I enjoy meeting new people and helping them discover the keys to their family puzzles. I also write a weekly newspaper column for our local weekly paper, The Evergreen Courant, called "Written in Stone," which features cemeteries in our region. I am passionate about cemetery preservation.

"I've been in charge of the genealogical department at the library for last 10 or so years--hard to believe I've been here this long, again, already. I worked 10+ years for the City of Evergreen in the position of Director of the Animal Control Dept. before going into business with my dad for several

years; then, finally found my niche in the field of family research!

"It's been great! Not great pay, but great dividends in meeting wonderful people from all over the world! I so enjoy history and preservation, family and solving ancestral puzzles for folks, and getting the opportunity to write about it all! One day, I'm gonna finish that book!"

As noted on the cover of the River Trail Presentation, Sherry is the District Director of the Alabama Scenic River Trail and her presentation will describe the importance of Alabama's rivers. However, this is not the first program she has given to ECHS.

In April of 2008 she joined with Lee Ann Wofford, manager of the Historic Cemetery Program for the Alabama Historical Commission, for a program on cemetery preservation. At that time Sherry was both state President of the Alabama Cemetery Preservation Alliance (ACPA) and local representative of that organization for Conecuh County.



Pictured at the left top:

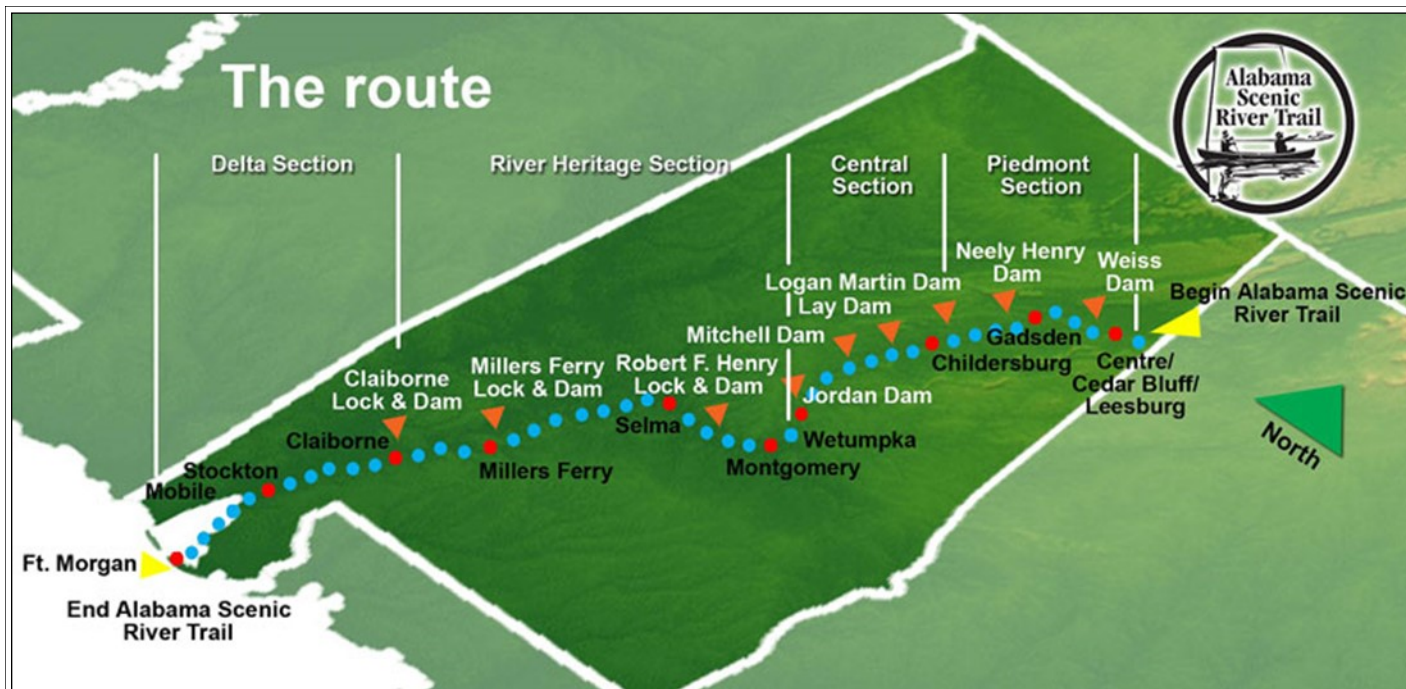
From the left, Lee Anne Wofford, Mary Catherine Luker, and Sherry Johnston, pictured at the former location of the Franklin Cemetery, wearing hard hats and protective glasses because the cemetery at that time was on an industrial site at the Georgia Pacific Plant in Brewton. Since that time, the Franklin cemetery has been removed to Union Cemetery in Brewton.

Ms. Luker, an ECHS trustee, has since passed away. She was a leader in the movement to preserve the Franklin Cemetery which resulted in its movement to Union Cemetery, the refurbishment of the grave markers, and the placement of a state marker denoting an historic cemetery.



Pictured at the left bottom, Sherry, on the right, with Irene Price, visiting missionary of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints during family research training at Conecuh County Library.

Alabama Scenic River Trail



Alabama Scenic River Trail - 631 miles across the State of Alabama
Diagram from Wikipedia

From the National Recreation Trails web-site, this article about Alabama's Scenic River Trail (<https://www.americantrails.org/nationalrecreationtrails/trailNRT/Alabama-Scenic-Water-Trail.html>):

The Alabama Scenic River Trail opened in June of 2008 as a recreational and tourism trip destination for paddled and powered boats. At approximately 631 miles in length (the suitability of various river channels will vary the exact route for different types of watercraft), the trail is considered to be the longest in a single state in the U.S.

The Trail begins at the point where the Coosa River enters Alabama just northeast of Cedar Bluff, and continues down the Coosa River to its confluence with the Tallapoosa near Wetumpka. From this conjunction the trail follows the Alabama River to its junction with the Tombigbee/Warrior system just



Canoeing on the Alabama Scenic River Trail

north of Mobile.

The Trail then proceeds along the Mobile River and through the Tensaw-Mobile delta, along the Tensaw River and its tributaries to Mobile Bay. To avoid maritime traffic, paddleboats such as canoes and kayaks follow a slightly different route to the Trail's terminus at Fort Morgan.

The Trail is designed to be clean and hospitable,

and activities of the Trail Association include conservation stewardship, and outreach projects, to ensure the Trail's family-friendly aspect.

The route, suitable for every kind of craft from canoes and kayaks to powerboats, begins in the mountainous terrain of northeastern Alabama, flows through beautiful scenery in nine lakes, through the serenity of the second largest river delta in the United States, through Mobile Bay, terminating at historic Ft. Morgan.

Alabama Lakes, Rivers and Water Resources



Alabama Rivers Shown on the Map: Alabama River, Black Warrior River, Cahaba River, Chattahoochee River, Chocowhatchee River, Conecuh River, Coosa River, Locust Fork, Mulberry Fork, Pee River, Sipsey River, Tallapoosa River, Tennessee River and Tombigbee River.
Alabama Lakes Shown on the Map: Guntersville Lake, Lewis Smith Lake, Logan Martin Lake, Martin Lake, Pickwick Lake, Walter F. George Reservoir, Weiss Lake, West Point Lake, Wheeler Lake and William Dannelly Reservoir.

From <<https://geology.com/lakes-rivers-water/alabama.shtml>>.

News and Announcements



**17th Annual Cemetery
Preservation Workshop
And Annual Membership
Meeting
Saturday, May 12, 2018
Farah Hall, Room 214
University of Alabama,
570 University BLVD
Tuscaloosa. AL (for the
morning meetings)
& Historic Evergreen
Cemetery (tour in afternoon)**

From Ted Urquhart, President, Alabama Cemetery Preservation Alliance (ACPA):

The 17th Annual Alabama Cemetery Preservation Workshop will be conducted on Saturday, May 12, 2018 on the campus of the University of Alabama at Farrah Hall, home to the Department of Criminal Justice, Cartographic Laboratory, and Map Library.

Registration will start at 8:30 a.m. in Room 214. The program will start at 9:00. The workshop will relocate after lunch to the historic Evergreen Cemetery a few blocks away in the shadow of Bryant-Denny Stadium.

Guest Speakers include,

- Alabama Cemetery Preservation Alliance (ACPA) Staff in a Round Table Discussion:
- ACPA staff conduct a round table discussion with the active participation of workshop attendees: "Planning, Preserving and Protecting Your Cemetery."
- Craig Remington: Director, Cartographic Research Lab, Univ. of Alabama: "Using County Highway Maps to locate your Family Cemetery"
- Hannah Garmon: Historic Cemetery Programs, Markers & Alabama Register, Alabama Historical Commission, "Historic Cemetery Registry, General Maintenance and Cleaning Guidelines of Tombstones."
- Bob Davis: Director, Genealogy Program, Wallace State Community College, Hanceville, AL; "Death as a Source of Genealogical Information."

For information, registration forms, and maps for location of meeting: <<http://www.alabama-cemetery-preservation.com/>>.



**The Alabama Historical
Commission Concludes
Shipwreck Investigation,
Determines Shipwreck is
Not the Clotilda**

From Wikipedia:

"The schooner *Clotilda* (often misspelled *Clotilde*) was the last known U.S. [slave ship](#) to bring captives from Africa to the United States, arriving at [Mobile Bay](#) in autumn 1859 (some sources give the date as July 9, 1860), with 110-160 slaves. The ship was a two-masted [schooner](#), 86 feet (26 m) long with a [beam](#) of 23 ft (7.0 m). The vessel was burned and [scuttled](#) at Mobile Bay, soon after. The sponsors had arranged to buy slaves in [Whydah](#), [Dahomey](#), on May 15, 1859.

"Many descendants of [Cudjo Kazoola Lewis](#), the last survivor of *Clotilda* and said to be the oldest slave on the ship, resided in [Africatown](#), the community the slaves and descendants made on the north side of [Mobile, Alabama](#). After World War II, it was absorbed as a neighborhood of the city. A memorial bust of Lewis was placed in front of the Union Missionary Baptist Church there. The Africatown historic district was listed on the [National Register of Historic Places](#) in 2012."

A team, composed of experts from SEARCH, the National Parks Service, Slaves Wreck Project (SWP), and the University of West Florida, examined and documented the Twelvemile Island Wreck Site on March 1-2, 2018 at the request of and under the supervision of the Alabama Historical Commission.

A summary of the conclusions that determined that the shipwreck is not that of the *Clotilda* notes that the Twelvemile Island wreck is too long, the timbers are too large, timber known to have been used to build *Clotilda* was not seen, and there is no definitive evidence for burning.

The Alabama Historical Commission article adds these comments:

"The discovery and first examination of the wreck by Ben Raines and our colleagues at the University of West Florida and the media stories that followed have powerfully reconnected the story of *Clotilda* to a national and international audience," said Lisa D. Jones, Executive Director of the AHC. "It shares a story with profound meaning in Alabama, and

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News and Announcements

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especially to the descendant community of Africatown.

"While the follow up investigation of the Twelvemile Island Wreck has found that this wreck is not Clotilda, its discovery and the attention paid to it will be the start of a renewed effort to find Clotilda."

"Further historical research and field investigation we have done suggest that many wrecks lie in this part of the Mobile River," said James P. Delgado, PhD, Senior Vice President, SEARCH, Inc. "We believe that a comprehensive survey of the area with a range of modern technology, followed by an examination of each wreck encountered by knowledgeable professionals will be the best means to find the physical remains of Clotilda. The archaeological team will continue to make ourselves available to answer questions from the community of Africatown and the citizens of Alabama."

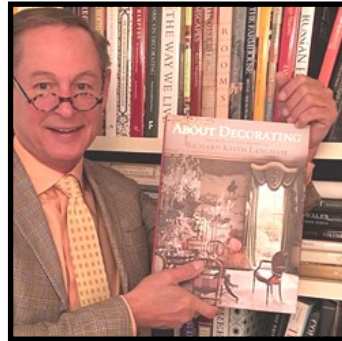
**Annual Eufaula Pilgrimage, April 6-8
2018 will Feature Fendall Hall.
Guest Speaker at the Luncheon on
Saturday, April 7, Will Be
Brewton Native and Well Known Interior
Decorator Richard Keith Langham**



Fendall Hall

Each spring, Eufaula hosts Alabama's oldest tour of homes. The town has more than 700 structures listed on the National Register. During the pilgrimage, the city of Eufaula opens its doors to share this

historical wealth. Visitors can take guided tours of homes and sites and also enjoy an art show, concerts, a wax museum and much more.

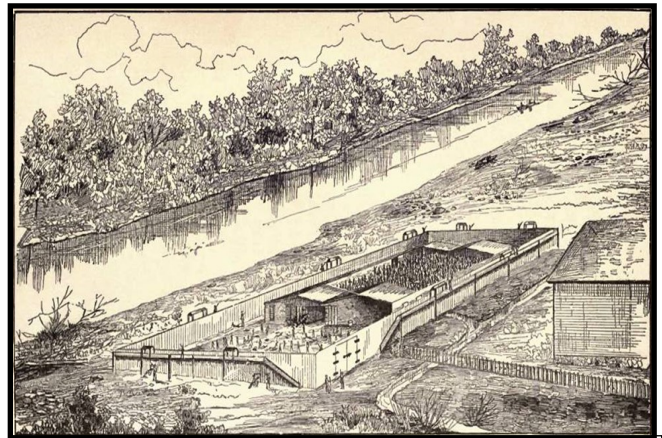


Keith Langham is shown at the left with his latest book, About Decorating. The Alabama born, Manhattan based decorator is known for "stylish and comfortable rooms. . . loaded with lush color, pattern, and a mix of old and new with

his signature couture detailing" (<https://www.richardkeithlangham.com/about>).

For more information on this, the 53rd Pilgrimage, go to <<http://www.eufaulapilgrimage.com>>.

Civil War Walking Tour of Old Cahaba



**The label attached to this drawing is
"Castle Morgan, Cahaba, Ala., 1863-1865.
Drawn from Memory by the Author."**

**April 07, 2018 in Orrville , AL.
10-11 a.m.**

This guided tour will visit Castle Morgan, the Prisoner of War camp at Old Cahaba, and explore the plight of these unfortunate soldiers as well as the hardships of the town's Confederate residents who suffered while their husbands, fathers and sons were off to war, many never to return.

For more information phone 334-872-8058. The address for Cahaba is—9518 Cahaba Road, Orrville, Alabama 36767.

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News and Announcements

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April 21-22 Fort Toulouse /Fort Jackson French & Indian and War of 1812 Encampment and Re-enactment



. The Fort Toulouse French and Indian War encampment focuses attention on daily life at a French frontier fort and Creek village in the year 1756. Soldiers engage in mock battles each day and souvenirs replicating items of the time period will be available from merchants on site. Living history demonstrations of military, Indian and civilian life will take place on Saturday and Sunday throughout the day.

For More Information: Call (334) 567-3002; or go to .<Rmsil toulous1@bellsouth.net>.

April 27-28 Confederate Memorial Park---- Civil War Living History Saturday Skirmish



Located between Montgomery and Clanton, Confederate Park is unique in Alabama history. It is the site of Alabama's only Home for Confederate veterans (1902-1939). The park museum interprets the Confederate period and the Alabama Confederate

Soldiers' Home.

Wayside signage and visitor guides enable visitors to take walking or driving tours of the Soldiers' Home site. The park nature trail takes visitors through an Alabama "Treasure Forest" where they will encounter the original hand-dug spring and 86,000 gallon reservoir which provided water for the Soldiers' Home.

The park is situated on the original 102-acre facility, which includes the site of the original twenty-two buildings and two Soldiers' Home cemeteries. The Marbury Methodist Church (c.1885), where a number of Soldiers' Home "inmates" were members, and the Mountain Creek Post Office (c.1900), where most Soldiers' Home "inmates" would visit daily, are also part of the park.

Both buildings were moved to the site from their original locations nearby in order to save them. In addition, the park offers a Confederate research library for study of the period as well as a full-scale replica of a Civil War barracks which houses our living history soldiers for scheduled events.

The museum artifact displays, interpretive panels and interactive media stations allow visitors to fully comprehend the history of the Alabama Confederate veteran and in particular, the history of the Alabama Confederate Soldiers' Home.

In conjunction with this, the driving and especially the walking tours allow visitors to experience the site of the Soldiers' Home including visiting the graves of Confederate veterans who lived at the Home and whose stories are detailed in the museum.

For more information visit:

<<http://ahc.alabama.gov/properties/confederate/confederate.aspx>>; phone 205-755-1990

Address: 437 County Road 63, Marbury, Alabama 36051

The American Quilt Study Group: 2014 Study Of Civil War Quilts Traveling Exhibit Now On Display At The Museum Of Alabama Montgomery, AL

The exhibit features twenty small-scale quilts made for the American Quilt Study Group's (AQSG) 2014 quilt study.

A flagship project of the AQSG, an organization dedicated to the history of quilt making, participants in the 2014 study crafted new quilts inspired by existing historic quilts made between 1850 and 1865.

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News and Announcements

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Through the project, quilt makers learned about historic techniques, patterns, and traditions, while incorporating their own styles and perspectives.

"The quilts on display in this exhibit provide a unique way for visitors to learn about quilt making of the past through those working in the craft today," said Ryan Blocker, textile curator at the ADAH.

Studies of two Alabama quilts are featured in the exhibit, including the Archives' 1853 Mt. Ida wedding quilt. The traveling exhibit is on display in the ADAH's Milo B. Howard Auditorium, located on the first floor, through May 2018. For additional information, call (334) 353-3312.



**Mt. Ida Wedding Quilt,
the Original**

Alabama's Six Constitutions and Ordinance of Secession to Undergo Conservation Exhibition Set for 2019 in Honor of the State's Bicentennial

The Alabama Department of Archives and History (ADAH) has announced the beginning of a yearlong project to conserve the state's six constitutions and the 1861 ordinance of secession, which declared Alabama's separation from the Union on the eve of the Civil War.

These documents, some of the most important in state history, will be conserved by the Northeast Document Conservation Center (NEDCC), located in Andover, Massachusetts. Upon completion of the conservation work, the documents will be exhibited at the ADAH and elsewhere in the state during the 200th anniversary of Alabama's statehood in 2019 (<http://www.archives.alabama.gov>).



ECHS to Receive the Poarch Creek Indian Newsletter at No Cost.

Print copy will be mailed to the Alabama Room. You can view the newsletters online at www.pci-nsn.gov. The link to the April issue has already been posted; feel free to check it out at <https://indd.adobe.com/view/54367352-94ea-4894-8388-1071e6dcb687>.

Snapshots of the February 2018 ECHS Meeting



Dr. Elizabeth Benchley, Our Speaker.



In the Back, Tom McMillan Visiting with Carolyn Geck. To the right in the background, Don Smith. In the Foreground, June Martin.

Snapshots of the February 2018 ECHS Meeting *(Continued)*



June Martin, on the Left, Visiting with Carol Jokela.



In the Center, Mike Edwards Talking with Barbara McCoy.



Jacque Stone, Foreground, and Lee Merritt, in the Back, at the Refreshment Table.



Charles Ware and Paul Merritt, Two Pilots Are Probably Talking about Airplanes.



Don Sales Visiting with Dr. Benchley.



From the Left, Marie Heaton, Carol Jokela, Al Jokela, and Margaret Collier. In the Background, Jacque Stone and Beverly Stark.

Snapshots of the February 2018 ECHS Meeting *(Continued)*



Nice Smiles from Barbara Page and June Martin.



Marie Heaton Enjoying the Program



Carolyn Geck and Robert Mays of Atmore Visiting in the Elvira Room.



Don Sales and Neil Collier.



Darryl Searcy and Margaret Collier



Members and Guests Visiting and Enjoying Refreshments in the Elvira Room.

Our Business Members

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The ECHS *Journal* Section

Mystery Mill Site Uncovered On Williams' Land At Teddy, Alabama

By Ann Biggs-Williams

One creek.—two mills. Mike Williams has uncovered the remains of what he has dubbed a “**Mystery Mill**” site in the clear water of Boulware (Boler) Mill Creek on his property in northeastern Escambia County, Alabama. Drifting sands were blown away to reveal a large rectangular wooden framework of a mill and two mill stones. The wooden beams measure about 12’ x 12’ and the decking width was probably about 16 feet. The mill was put together with wooden pegs and had burned to the water line. The only metal found at the site was a five inch square with a knob in the middle. Each corner of that square had a square hole punched for a hand forged nail. The square was on a 16 foot hand-hewn tapered beam. This gave the impression of a pivot point of some type. Mike has discovered arrowheads and musket balls at the site. He also discovered some pottery, which would have helped date the mill. Unfortunately, the pottery was destroyed when his sister, Jo Williams,’ home burned.

Mike removed the two large mill stones from the creek and took photos in hopes of dating this mill

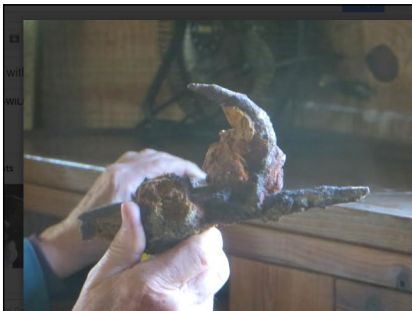
through contact with archeological experts. The mill-stones are a rough stone with hammer blows and the only straight line is where the stone was cut down the middle.

The Williams’ property has been in that family since the early 1900’s and neither Mike’s Father, John Dana Williams; his Grandfather, Andrew Robinson Williams; nor his Great Grandfather, John Freeman Williams, who purchased the land, was aware of this “**mystery mill**” located 75 yards from the head of the spring and some 200 yards from the well-known Teddy Mill or Williams mill that Andrew Robinson Williams operated.

The Williams’ family mill was given to Andrew in part by his father as a wedding gift upon his marriage to Mamie Strong of Brewton in 1910. Andrew received one-half interest in the store and mill when he married and the other half he inherited on the death of his Father, John Freeman Williams in 1922. According to a hand-drawn map by a former Williams’ neighbor, the late Morris Stone in 2004, the mill included a saw mill, a cotton gin, a grist mill, a seed

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Items from the Williams Mill



At Left, Clock Made by
Mike Williams from
Turbine and a Gear from
Williams Mill

The ECHS *Journal* Section

Mystery Mill Site Uncovered On Williams' Land At Teddy, Alabama



Williams Mill at Teddy, Alabama (not to be confused with the Mystery Mill). Men in photo, left to right: Andrew Robinson Williams, Dr. Andrew J. McCreary, & Ed Leigh McMillan. The water for the pond had apparently been let down for maintenance when the photo was taken of the three men and showed the exposed beams. Normally, the water would have covered the infrastructure.

(Continued from page 12)

house, a blacksmith shop and a store. The Teddy Post Office was located in the store. The Williams Mill was purchased from Elbert J. Blow. Remnants of the Williams' mill includes the millstones, the turbine and a gear which Mike has made into a clock. Mike found some log tongs near that mill as well as a hook and jam and some axes and some bolts and spikes.

The Williams Mill or Teddy Mill ceased operating during World War II when it burned. Andrew Robinson's sons had all joined the service. The story goes that a helper at the mill fell asleep with a cigarette and that caused the mill to burn. ECHOES has previously reported some first person reminiscences of the mill. (ECHOES Vol. 42, April 2015, page 7.)

In this research, I learned from Jake Holmes that the first Hoomesville Church of Christ was blown away during a storm. John Allen Hoomes donated

the logs which were sawed into lumber at Teddy to build the next church building.. (The Heritage of Escambia County, Alabama page 34).

Mike maintains that none of his ancestors knew about the “**mystery mill**” and whoever built the Williams Mill must have not known about it. In that day and age, who would have bought two new millstones, if 200 yards away they were aware of these perfectly good millstones that he has removed from the creek?

The “**mystery mill**” had burned to the water line, was that accidental or intentional? What period of time was the older mill built? Dr. Andrew J. McCreary's account of “The Yankee Calvary Raid into West Florida and South Alabama,” (ECHOES, Vol. 38, August 2011) outlines a number of local structures that were burned to keep the Yankees from

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Mystery Mill Site Uncovered On Williams' Land At Teddy, Alabama

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crossing the river such as the McCauley Bridge, now McGowins' Bridge in a slightly different location.

Determined to resolve the questions about the history of this mill, Mike and I began to search land records. Foremost was the realization that this land was in Conecuh County from 1818 to 1868 before Escambia County was formed.

For years, it was assumed the Williams land was part of the Mortimer Boulware Plantation as the creek on Williams land was called Boulware Mill Creek and the mill pond with the sawmill was called Boulware Mill Pond. However, Mike had been told that the Boulware Mill was in another location closer to the river. Several writings by the Boulware Family say that Mortimer Boulware staked out a claim on a creek later known as Boler Mill Creek and that Boulware, along with Henry Hoomes and John W. Hoomes settled in the area in 1889. Indeed, in Dr. McCreary's article, we learned **Teddy was originally called Springdale**. "During the spring and summer, when the mosquitoes were bad, the Boulwares would move to a house they had built in the piney woods. This house was on a hill which became known as

"Summer House Hill". They built a slave cabin on the hill and would spend the entire summer there. The community the Boulwares lived in was known as Springdale, now Teddy. It was named for a large spring that flows out of the hillside forming a fairly large creek, known as Boulware Mill Creek. It runs into the Conecuh River about a mile above McGowin Bridge."

My own research years ago at the postal archives uncovered that the Teddy post office was established October 16, 1900. The first post master was John A. Hoomes. He was succeeded by James M. Sanders, who was appointed May 11, 1903. John A. Hoomes was appointed on January 15, 1904, and Andrew Robinson Williams was appointed on February 11, 1908. The post office at Teddy was discontinued June 30, 1917.

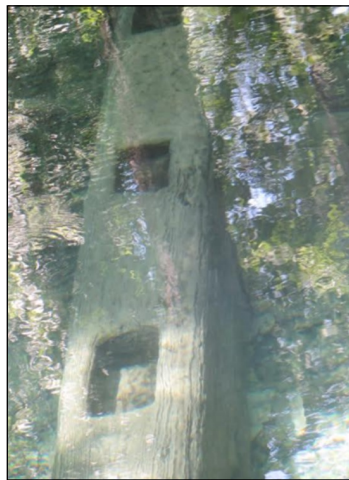
According to Family Maps of Escambia County, Alabama: With Homesteads, Roads, Waterways, Towns, Cemeteries, Railroads and More by Gregory A Boyd, the oldest patent for part of the Williams land was a group patent to Kennard Kendall and

(Continued on page 15)

Items Uncovered from the Mystery Mill.



Above and Right, Uncovered Foundations from Mystery Mill



At Right, Millstones from Mystery Mill.



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Mystery Mill Site Uncovered On Williams' Land At Teddy, Alabama

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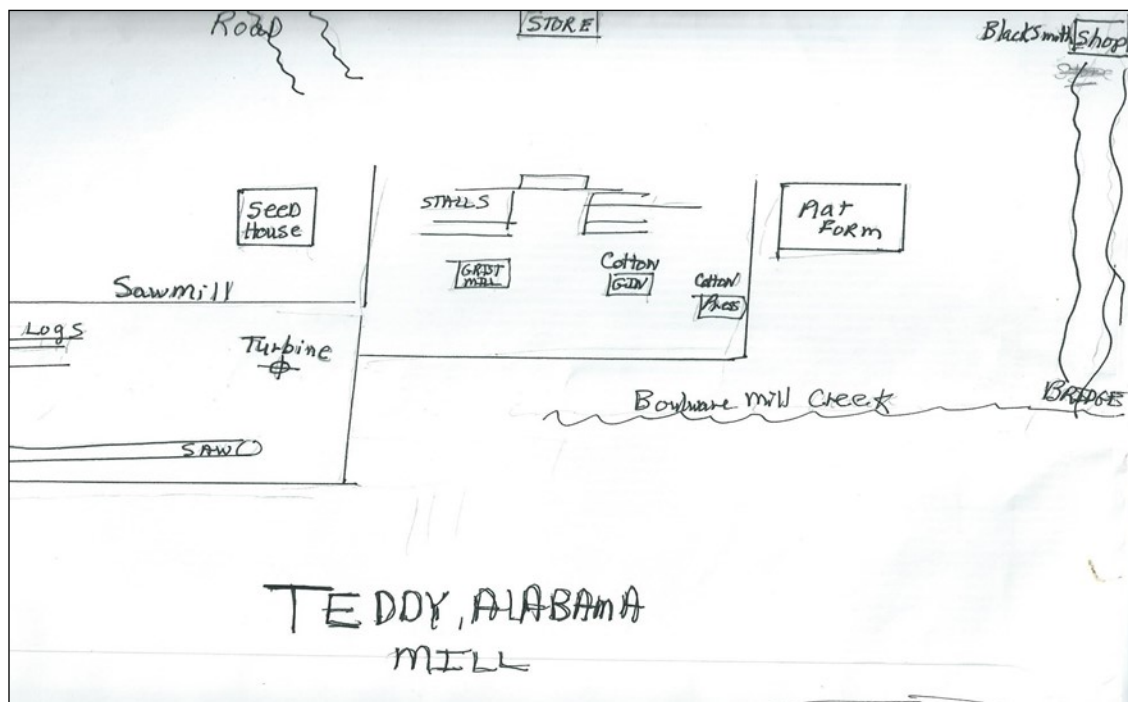
William Stoneham in 1830. The other patent of the land was to Matthew B. Sanders in 1891. Family lore was that Matthew B. Sanders and John Freeman Williams did a land swap for that portion. It appears that the mystery mill is possibly on the 1830 patent land to Kendall and Stoneham. As mentioned earlier, the part of the land with the Williams mill was purchased from Elbert J. Blow. In speaking with descendants of the Blow family, they were also unaware of a second mill on the creek.

Research on Kennard Kendall revealed that he operated a ferry on the Sepulga River. Annie Waters writes in The History of Escambia County Alabama that the early ferryboats were log rafts poled across the stream taking advantage of the water current as much as possible. Later ferries were flat-bottomed barges with a pulley cable across the stream. The cable was usually pulled by a horse, mule, or oxen or a windlass. She writes that the Kendall ferry was three miles north of Moores' Ferry which was located

at the fork of the Sepulga and the Conecuh Rivers in Section 33 Township 3N Range 13E. This move seems to be in line with relocating to the area where the old Indian Trail that wound its way from Fort Gaines, Georgia crossed the river near what was called, "the forks." Dr. McCreary writes that people used to ford the river near this location before Kendall established a ferry.

Wyley Donald Ward from Andalusia, Alabama writes in The Folks From Pea Ridge in Covington and Conecuh County Alabama that Kennard Kendall and his older brother Thompson Kendall came to Conecuh County in 1830 from Virginia. Kennard met Sophia Jane Floyd, the daughter of Thomas and Ruth Floyd who were neighbors. Thomas was a successful farmer who came from Georgia in 1817 and settled on the west side of the Sepulga River. He did not approve of Kennard as they knew nothing of his background. Sophia was 17 and Kendall was 25. Sophia left the house one morning as they had planned to go milk the cows and met Kendall and

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Williams Mill Drawing by Morris Stone with Blacksmith.

The ECHS *Journal* Section

Mystery Mill Site Uncovered On Williams' Land At Teddy, Alabama

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they eloped and were married. Ward further states that Kendall lived near the Floyds for ten years before moving across the Sepulga to Pea Ridge in the 1840's. In a phone interview, Wyley Ward told me that Kennard swam the river to meet and elope with Sophia Floyd.

The other early patent holder was William Stoneham. He was a brother to George Stoneham who was the first person to operate a boat on the Sepulga River. Annie Waters also wrote that there was a Stoneham Community in Escambia County located three miles upstream on the Sepulga River above the junction of Sepulga and Conecuh Rivers. The Stoneham Family eventually moved to Texas

and there is a town there named after this family who left Escambia County.

The information uncovered about the Kendall and Stoneham families is fascinating and worthy of another article.

Our search has led us to the land records and the people who lived on the east side of the Sepulga River in Pea Ridge and the people who lived on the west side of the Conecuh and Sepulga Rivers.

We now seem to have more questions than answers! If any ECHOES' readers can assist in this puzzle, please contact the Escambia County Historical Society at the contact information on the newsletter. Our next step is to use "Ancestry" to study the family surnames that have surfaced as we continue our **mystery mill** search.

Gulf Sturgeon Visit Conecuh and Sepulga Rivers

By Ann Biggs-Williams

Ah, it's officially spring on the calendars as of March 20. However, there is one group of visitors who come to Escambia and Conecuh Counties each spring without the need of a calendar. I'm talking about the magnificent **Gulf Sturgeon**, a prehistoric-looking aquatic species that leaves the gulf and heads up to the limestone ridges of the Sepulga to spawn. These fish are bottom dwellers but they do breach and once you see this happen, you never forget it. Gulf sturgeon can grow up to 8 feet long and weigh up to 200 pounds. When sturgeon breach, they can remind you of a dolphin or perhaps an alligator gar. The Gulf Sturgeon was designated as a threatened species in 1991 by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and are also protected under the Rules and Regulations of the Alabama Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Division.



Gulf Sturgeon
From <<http://www.outdooralabama.com/gulf-sturgeon>>.

I learned of the annual migration of the Gulf Sturgeon after the formation of the Conecuh/Sepulga Watershed Alliance (CSWA) in 1999. The alliance was formed by citizens from the community of Brooklyn in Conecuh County and Teddy in Escambia County to preserve and

protect the area around the confluence of the Conecuh and Sepulga Rivers.

CSWA posted signs at the Brooklyn landing on the Sepulga River with the phone number to report historical or current sightings of the sturgeon. Critical habitat for the sturgeon on the Conecuh River where sturgeon have been tagged in the past was extended to include the Sepulga River.

There are historical accounts of folks who killed sturgeon for food, back **before** the sturgeon was placed on the endangered list. The fish were in some cases described as being larger than a man. Some

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people would drive around with a sturgeon on the hood of their vehicle to show off when it was caught. When sturgeon come up for air and flop back in the river, they make the sound that something the size of a cow or horse plunging in the river might make.

There was one historical story about a man who lived near the Conecuh River who fished for sturgeon and took the fish into Brewton to sell. We were not told this man's actual first name, but his nickname was "Sturgeon" Evans.

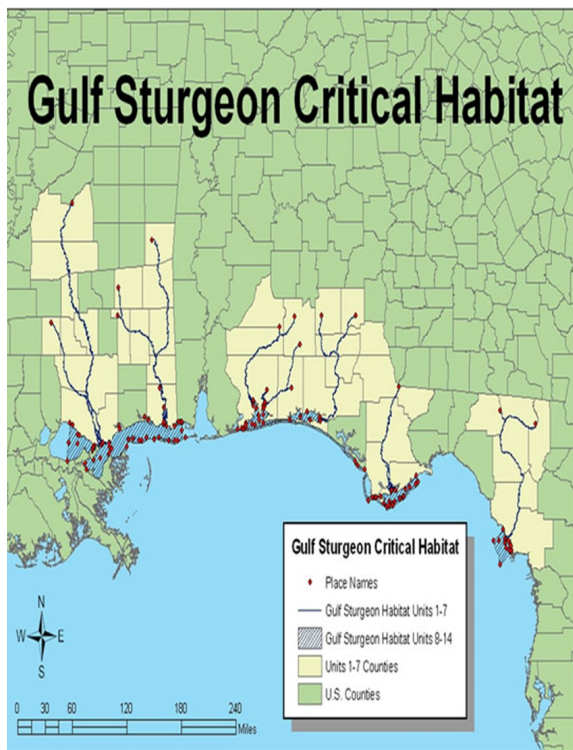
U.S. Fish and Wildlife confirmed that Gulf Sturgeon had spawned above and below the mouth of the Sepulga River where it empties into the Conecuh River. Radio transmitters on some sturgeon showed that they went up as far as Bull Slough Bridge on the Sepulga in recent years.

A symposium of scientists in Florida theorize that the breaching may be attempts by the sturgeon to

communicate. Most leaping is done at dawn or dusk with just sporadic jumping in between.

About two years ago, Mata Williams of Damascus was standing on McGowin's Bridge on Highway 29 when he saw a sturgeon breach. He even got a photo with his cell phone but the resolution was not high enough to post here. Mata has also seen the gulf sturgeon breaching at Mancil Rock on the Conecuh River. Thanks to the invention of go pro cameras, you can go on YouTube and see videos of sturgeon breaching, although most of those are in Idaho and I believe are a different type sturgeon. although most of those are in Idaho and I believe are a different type sturgeon.

The Sepulga River has become very popular. The Facebook page for "South Alabama River Enthusiasts" now number over 1000 and the Sepulga River run is often mentioned. Hopefully, a new generation of river lovers will continue to preserve and protect our irreplaceable natural heritage.



Map from <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gulf_sturgeon>.



Gulf sturgeon jumping on the Suwannee River, Florida. The Caption for this photo notes that large jumping sturgeons can inflict serious injuries to humans who get in the way.

Text and Photo from

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gulf_sturgeon>.

ECHOES
THE NEWSLETTER FOR
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