

ECHOES



The
Escambia
County
Historical
Society,
Founded
1971

The April 2021 Newsletter

**There Will Not Be An April Meeting.
Students Are on the Campus for the Spring
Term. However, the Museum and Alabama
Room Are Still Closed.**

News from the College, the Museum and the Alabama Room

Although there is still no definite date for reopening the Museum and Alabama Room or a date for an ECHS meeting, there is news of acquisitions, visitors to the Museum and Alabama Room, as well as work on acquiring new materials and planning new displays.

Don reports that he has had quite a few visitors who are doing family research. These visitors have been from Pensacola, Tampa, and even a family from Los Angeles.

Also, he has been organizing new acquisitions and displays for the museum. One is a new display on the Civil War. Another involves a donation to the museum of mannequins to be used in period costume displays.

However, Don says he needs wigs, both male and female, to complete the display, so anyone who can help with acquiring these items please contact Don. (Contact information is given at the end of this article.)

Perhaps the most interesting new display will be a full size doctor's buggy built in the 1870's which will be assembled and on display when the museum reopens.

Other items that have been added to the museum collection include whale bones (from the period when this part of Alabama was under the waters of the Gulf) and

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**Alabama Archives Founding Director
Thomas McAdory Owen**



**Brewton from
RedZone Weather**

**Volume 48 No. 4
April 2021**

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News from the College, the Museum and the Alabama Room

(Continued from page 1)

radios from the 1940's and 50's.

Don also notes the Alabama Room has also been growing and adding materials. He has added filing cabinets for the Vertical File collection.

In another project associated with the historical society, Don has asked Stephen Salter to look into obtaining a camera which could be installed in the meeting room and used to record the programs of the monthly meetings, focusing on the speaker's presentation.

In a note about the success of the society's scholarship program, one of the recipients from a few years ago, Kelsey Chandler, who attended JDCC with the help of a society scholarship, is now a graduate Physician's Assistant and is working with a doctor in nearby Jay, Florida. Kelsey is the granddaughter of president Don Sales.

In other news, ECHS member Darryl Search is now writing a regular column for the Tri City Ledger on local plants, in his words, "Heritage plants that reside just outside your door."

The column, located in the Lifestyles section of the paper, is an excellent advertisement for the society since it appears under the heading, Escambia County



Don Sales and Owner, Bayley Carden. the Owner, in front of the Community Cup.

Ala. Historical Society, with an introduction giving the purpose and scope of the society as well as information about its monthly meetings.

(One of his articles for the paper appears in this newsletter on Page 3.)

Concerning the college, many students are now on campus verses working from home. Masks are required for everyone and teachers are behind Plexiglas. Approximately 70% of the students enrolled this spring semester are now attending in-person classes.

One addition to the college campus is a food concession for hot meals. The College Director, Dennis Fuqua, had asked for suggestions for improving col-

lege services. Don Sales suggested serving hot meals. As a result, The Community Cup is now open in the student center. It is open to the public (see pictures above).

Don still welcomes visitors to the Museum. He is there Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, 9:00 am to 4:30 pm. The museum and Alabama Room are still available to individuals who contact Don for an appointment. Address: P.O. Box 276, Brewton, AL 36427; Phone: 251-809-1528; E-mail: <escambiahistoricalsociety@gmail.com>.

Remembering a Brewton Landmark Jernigan Nordmeyer Tire Co. By Margo Nordmeyer Adams

From May 15, 2020, Facebook:

A few tears were shed today as I rode past Jernigan Nordmeyer Tire. I remember when my grandfather Fred Jernigan and my daddy built that building. To ride by today 55 years later and see it almost gone was like a knife to my heart.

The memories of my childhood... learning to change a tire or the oil in a car, the recap shop, the Greyhound Bus Station, and Western Union. I worked doing all of it even the Amoco gas station. The many wonderful people I met when I worked for Daddy after school



and during the summers. Wonderful memories that I will hold dear for the rest of my life. Although it was sadness that gripped me as I rode past.

There was happiness as well especially for my wonderful brother Fred Nordmeyer. No more worrying about flooding, and having to frantically move equipment and cars as the water would start to rise. He has a new place with the same exemplary fairness and wonderful service. I am so happy.

Cherokee Rose - Snow-white Rose - Wild Rose *From Darryl Searcy's Column in the Tri-City Ledger*

The plant is a climbing perennial with prickles. Its preferred habitat is roadsides, woods and disturbed areas. Distribution is throughout the region. Cherokee Rose is the state wild-flower of Georgia.

The leaves are alternate on the stem, ternately compound (arranged in or consisting of sets or groups of three), with three leaflets that are elliptic to lance-like and toothed margins.

The flowers are large, white, and solitary on the stem. Flowers occur in the spring.

Fruit is an aggregate of achenes (known as a hip).

From the "Legend of the Cherokee Rose" by the Northern Cherokee Nation: In the latter half of 1838, Cherokee People who had not voluntarily moved west earlier were forced to leave their homes in the East.

The trail to the West was long and treacherous and many were dying along the way. Their hearts were heavy with sadness and their tears mingled with the dust of the trail.

The Elders knew that the survival of the children depended upon the strength of the women. One evening around the campfire, the Elders called upon the Heaven Dweller telling him of the people's suf-



Cherokee Rose
Rosa laevigata - Michaux
Rosaceae (Rose) Family
The Latin "laevigata" means
"smooth and polished."

fering and tears. They were afraid the children would not survive to rebuild the Cherokee Nation.

The Heaven Dweller spoke to them, "To let you know how much I care, I will give you a sign. In the morning, tell the women to look back along the trail. Where their tears have fallen, I will cause to grow a plant that will have seven leaves for the seven clans of the Cherokee. Amidst the plant will be a delicate white rose with five petals. In the center of the blossom will be a pile of gold to remind the

Cherokee of the white man's greed for the gold found on the Cherokee homeland. This plant will be sturdy and strong with stickers on all the stems. It will defy anything that tries to destroy it."

The next morning the Elders told the women to look back down the trail. A plant was growing fast and covering the trail where they had walked. As the women watched, blossoms formed and slowly opened. They forgot their sadness. Like the plant, the women began to feel strong and beautiful. As the plant protected its blossoms, they knew they would have the courage and determination to protect their children who would begin a new Nation in the West.

Eagle's Claw Japanese Maple

The tree was presented to Darryl Searcy by the Meadorwood Garden Club and the Garden Club of Brewton in Recognition of his Services to the City of Brewton.

The presentation was at a banquet held at the St. Maurice Catholic Church Parish Hall. The tree is located on the lawn beside the pond that decorates the landscape of the Fine Arts Building of Coastal Alabama Community College.



Eagle's Claw Japanese Maple
Acer palmatum "Palmatifidum"

Darryl's knowledge of plants and many months of tireless efforts were put forth to enhance the beautification of the Greater Brewton area, including what we know today as Jennings's Park, and to restore the grounds at the D. W. McMillan Hospital following Hurricane Ivan

The Eagle's Claw Japanese Maple "Washi-no-o" is a cultivar of the Green Lace Leaf Maple. It differs from the

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Eagle's Claw Japanese Maple

(Continued from page 3)

standard in that the lobes are not as deeply cut at the edges, and the tips are turned slightly similar to an eagle's foot clutching a branch, thus giving the leaf a sturdier appearance that is equally as beautiful. The autumn display is a colorful blend of yellow, gold, and crimson."



**Bear Claw Maple
with Dedication Plaque in Front.**

The dedication plaque reads:

"This tree is placed by the Meadorwood Garden Club and the Brewton Garden Club in honor of Dr. Darryl Searcy, botanist, who has served the area for many years in beautification projects that were intended to maintain Escambia County's place in the nation's Evergreen Forest."

American Century Plant Agave Americana Asparagaceae (Asparagus) Family

Darryl Searcy has sent this material on the Century plant.

Have you noticed that the large Century plant at the corner of Mildred Street Park is preparing to flower soon. It has begun to raise its flower stalk and when matured, it will burst into a large bundle of flowers some 15-20 feet above the planter box. I am so pleased to draw your attention to it. It was in the spring of 2002 that I put the small plant in the vicinity of its present location, where it remained in a container until the park was dedicated, at which time I removed it from its temporary container and placed it at the park.



Agave Americana, has several common names -- Sentry Plant, Century Plant, Maguey, or American Aloe. The plant is a species of flowering plant in the family Asparagus, native to Mexico and the western United States. Today, it is cultivated worldwide as a novelty ornamental plant.

The plant is monocarpic, meaning it will bloom at least once in its lifetime. The plant usually blooms around its 25th year, depending on the climate. Many species in the genus will flower just once, although there are a few that are repeat bloomers. This particular plant is approaching it's first flower and if our good fortune holds, it will come back to bloom for many years in the future. As best I recall, this particular plant is 22 years old.

Let us celebrate this unique plant and protect it for many years to come.

This Week in Alabama History

April 19 - 25

From the Alabama Department of Archives and History

April 25, 1865

Having Departed the Battlefield at Blakely near Mobile on April 14th, the Federal 16th Corps under Major General A.J. Smith Arrived in Montgomery, Formally Beginning the Union Occupation of the City of Montgomery.

The Battle of Fort Blakeley took place from April 2 to April 9, 1865 in Baldwin County, Alabama, about 6 miles (9.7 km) north of Spanish Fort, AL, as part of the Mobile Campaign of the American Civil War. At the time, Blakeley, Alabama was the county seat of Baldwin County.

The Battle of Blakeley was the final major battle of the Civil War, with surrender just hours after Lee had surrendered to Grant at Appomattox on the morning of April 9, 1865.

Mobile, Alabama was the last major Confederate port to be captured by Union forces, on April 12, 1865.

After the assassination of President Lincoln on April 15, 1865, other Confederate surrenders continued into May 1865 (from [Wikipedia](#)).



"View from Centre of Second Division Showing Confederate Redoubt No. 4."
Lithograph of Blakeley from History of the Campaign for Mobile by C. C. Andrews. Circa 1865
Image and text from ADAH.

From Wikipedia: A redoubt is a fort or fort system usually consisting of an enclosed defensive emplacement outside a larger fort, usually relying on earthworks, although some are constructed of stone or brick.



**Major General
A. J. Smith**



**Storming of Fort Blakeley - Illustration in Harper's Weekly,
May 27, 1865.**

This Week in Alabama History

April 19 - 25

From the Alabama Department of Archives and History

April 24, 1922 Alabama's First Radio Station, WSY, Begins Broadcasting.

This brief history is from Alabama News Center:

Alabama's first licensed radio station was launched April 24, 1922. Alabama Power launched WSY-AM from a studio near its Powell Avenue Steam Plant in Birmingham. The radio station was used to communicate with isolated steam plants and rural work crews, and the company soon started receiving letters from residents thanking them for broadcasting things like weather reports and making programming suggestions.

The utility responded by adding interviews, stock quotes, an orchestra composed of Alabama Power employees, five Birmingham church services and more to their programming. As one of the country's oldest radio stations, WSY had the ability to reach people as far away as Canada and Cuba.

Instead of hiring employees dedicated solely to running the station, the company opted to get out of the radio business and sold the station, producing its final broadcast on Nov. 6, 1923 (<https://alabamaneWSCent.com>).

In 1925 the station merged with Auburn's WMAV to become WAPI. The first broadcast of the new station at Auburn featured an in-studio announcer reading telegraphed updates from the school's September 1925 football game at Birmingham-Southern College.

To the right are pictures of broadcasts from WSY studios in Birmingham.



**The end of
each broad-
cast day of
Station WSY
was signaled
by three slow
anvil strikes.**

This Week in Alabama History

April 19 - 25

From the Alabama Department of Archives and History

April 25, 1944

The United Negro College Fund Is Established by Tuskegee President F. D. Patterson, After Convincing 26 Other Black Colleges to "Pool Their Small Monies and Make a United Appeal to the National Conscience."

Since its founding, UNCF has raised more than a billion dollars in support of its member institutions.

From the United Negro college Fund website, this introduction to the organization:

"A mind is a terrible thing to waste."

For more than seven decades, this principle has remained at the heart of UNCF, enabling us to raise more than \$5 billion and help more than 500,000 students and counting not just attend college, but thrive, graduate and become leaders.

We do this in three ways: By awarding more than 10,000 students scholarships, worth more than \$100 million, each year. By providing financial support to 37 historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs). And by serving as the nation's leading advocate for the im-



Douglas in the 1930's

portance of minority education and community engagement.

This three-pronged approach is powerful: Since our founding in 1944, we've helped to more than double the number of minorities attending college. The six-year graduation rate for UNCF African American scholarship recipient is 70%. This is 11% higher than the national average and 31% higher than the national average for all African Americans (<https://uncf.org>).



Douglas with President Lyndon Johnson in the White House. Douglas was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1987.

April 23, 1957

An earthquake with its Epicenter near Guntersville Affects Parts of Alabama, Georgia, and Tennessee, but Causes Little Damage.

The Montgomery Advertiser reported that "thousands of light sleepers were awakened by the shock" at about 3:30 a.m.

"Felt by, awakened, and alarmed many. Minor damage to several chimneys; one report of cement steps cracked in two; and several small cracks in walls. Table-top items tumbled to the floor."

Earthquake Map of Alabama



From the Website of the Geological Survey of Alabama:

Most of the earthquakes we experience in Alabama are associated with the Southern Appalachian Seismic Zone (an extension of the East Tennessee Seismic Zone) that runs along the Appalachian Mountains from the northeastern corner into the central part of the state and the Bahamas Fracture Seismic Zone in southern Alabama.

This Week in Alabama History

April 19-25

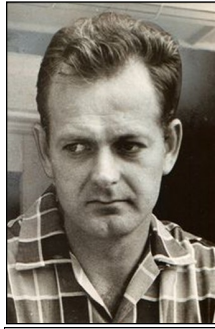
April 23, 1963

At the Outset of His One-Man March against Segregation, William Moore Is Slain alongside an Etowah County Highway when He Is Shot by a Rifle Fired at Close Range.

Moore, a white postal worker from Binghamton, New York, had begun his march in Chattanooga intending to travel to Jackson, Mississippi. A white store owner from DeKalb County was implicated in the shooting but never indicted.

From Wikipedia: At the outset of his one-man march against segregation, William Moore is slain alongside an Etowah County highway when he is shot by a rifle fired at close range. Moore, a white postal worker from Binghamton, New York, had begun his march in Chattanooga intending to travel to Jackson, Mississippi. A white store owner from DeKalb County was implicated in the shooting but never indicted.

On April 23, 1963, about 70 miles (110 km) into his march, Moore was interviewed by Charlie Hicks, a reporter from radio station WGAD in Gadsden, Alabama, along a rural stretch of U.S. Highway 11 near Attalla. The station had received an anonymous phone tip about Moore's location.



William Moore

In the interview, Moore said: "I intend to walk right up to the governor's mansion in Mississippi and ring his doorbell. Then I'll hand him my letter." Concerned for Moore's safety, Hicks offered to drive him to a motel. Moore insisted on continuing his march.

Less than an hour after the reporter left the scene, a passing motorist found Moore's body about a mile farther down the road, shot twice in the head at close range with a .22 caliber rifle. The gun's ownership was

traced to Floyd Simpson (a white man), whom Moore had argued with earlier that day, but no charges were ever filed against him. Moore died a week short of his 36th birthday.

Moore's letter was found and opened. In it, Moore reasoned that "the white man cannot be truly free himself until all men have their rights." He asked Governor Barnett to: "Be gracious and give more than is immediately demanded of you...." (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Lewis_Moore).

This Week in Alabama History

April 26-30

From the Alabama Department of Archives and History

April 30, 1863

The Battle of Day's Gap {s Fought between the Cavalry Forces of Union Col. Abel Streight and Confederate Gen. Nathan Bedford Forrest.

The engagement was the first in a series of skirmishes between Streight and Forrest during Streight's Raid across north Alabama. The raid ended with Streight's surrender to Forrest just short of Streight's intended destination of Rome, Georgia.

From Wikipedia,

The goal of Streight's raid was to cut off the Western & Atlantic Railroad, which supplied General Braxton Bragg's Confederate army in Middle Tennessee. Starting in Nashville,

Tennessee, Streight and his men first traveled to Eastport, Mississippi, and then eastward to Tuscumbia, Alabama.

On April 26, 1863, Streight left Tuscumbia and marched southeastward. Streight's initial movements were screened by Union Brig. Gen. Grenville Dodge's troops

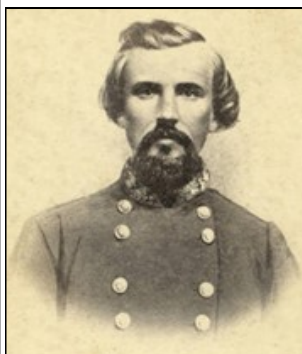
On April 30 at Day's Gap on Sand Mountain, Forrest caught up with Streight's expedition and attacked his rear guard. Streight's men managed to

(Continued on page 9)

This Week in Alabama History

April 26-30

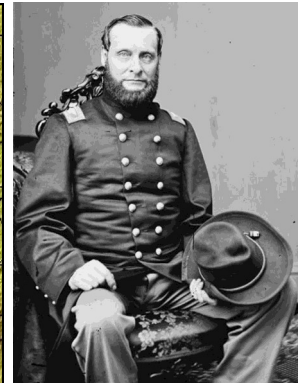
From the Alabama Department of Archives and History



Nathan Forrest



Map of Streight's Campaign

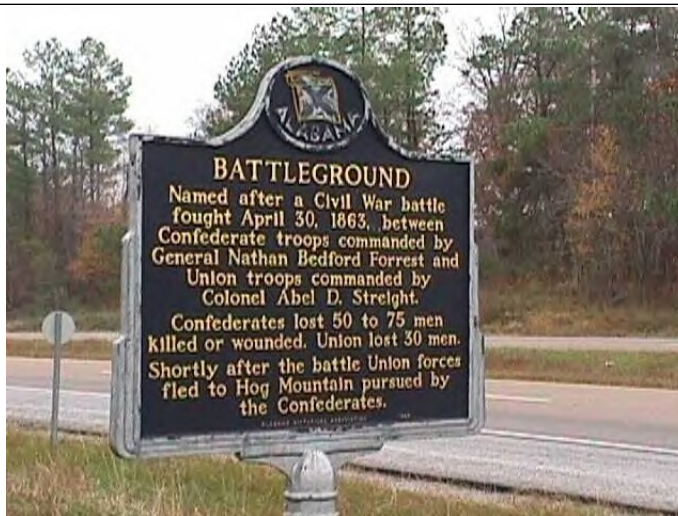


Abel Streight

(Continued from page 8)

repulse this attack and as a result they continued their march to avoid any further delays and envelopments caused by the Confederate troops.

This battle set off a chain of skirmishes and engagements at Crooked Creek (April 30), Hog Mountain (April 30), Blountsville (May 1), Black Creek/Gadsden



Historic Marker at Site of Battle of Day's Gap

(May 2), and Blount's Plantation (May 2).

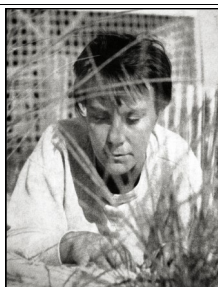
Finally, on May 3, Forrest surrounded Streight's exhausted men 3 mi east of Cedar Bluff, Alabama, and forced their surrender. They were sent to Libby Prison in Richmond, Virginia. Streight and some of his men escaped on February 9, 1864

(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Day%27s_Gap).

April 28, 1926

Harper Lee Is Born in Monroeville.

Her famous novel, To Kill A Mockingbird, was published on July 11, 1960, and sold more than two-and-one-half million copies in the first year. On May 1, 1961, To Kill A Mockingbird was awarded the Pulitzer Prize in Letters.



Portrait of Harper Lee from the First Edition of To Kill a Mockingbird (1960) Photo by Truman Capote.

ECHOES
THE NEWSLETTER FOR
THE ESCAMBIA COUNTY
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