

ECHOES



The
Escambia
County
Historical
Society,
Founded
1971

The June 2021 Newsletter
There Will Not Be A June Meeting.
However, Good News,
There Will Be a July Meeting,
Details to Be Announced Later.

News from the Museum and the Alabama Room

Don Sales has announced that there will be a regular monthly meeting of ECHS on July 27 at 3 pm. Details of the program and location will be given later. .

The museum and Alabama Room are now open Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, 9:00 am to 4:30 pm. Anyone who wishes to visit at any other time can contact Don and request an appointment. Address: P.O. Box 276, Brewton, AL 36427; Phone: 251-809-1528; E-mail: <escambiahistoricalociety@gmail.com>.

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WWI and WWII Uniforms Donated to Museum



**Pat Lufkin Hands Over the
Uniforms of Her Father,
Jack Curtis Lufkin,
and Grandfather,
Sewell Mariotte Lufkin, Sr.,
to Don Sales,
Director of the McMillan Museum**

Atmore native Jack Curtis Lufkin died Feb. 26 at the age of 94, after serving his country and his state and especially loving his family. Lufkin's legacy and the legacy of his father Sewell Mariotte Lufkin, Sr., will continue to live inside the Thomas E. McMillan Museum on the Brewton campus of Coastal Alabama Community College through a gift from the family of Sewell's World War I Army uniform and Jack's World War II Navy uniform.

Photo and text courtesy of the Tri-City Ledger, May 27, 2021 and Joe Thomas, Editor.



**J. C. Edwards House
the Gingerbread House
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**Volume 48 No. 6
June 2021**

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News and Announcements

Battle of Burnt Corn Creek Reenactment
Saturday, July 24, 2021
at 12 PM CDT – 3 PM CDT
Jennings Park, Brewton, Ala.



The actual battle scene reenactment will take place at 12:00 noon to coincide with the historical event. The event is open and free to the public.



This flintlock pistol was recovered in the vicinity of the likely site of the Battle of Burnt Corn Creek, which is widely acknowledged as being the opening skirmish of the Creek War of 1813-14.

Pistol from Alabama Department of Archives and History
Photo and Text from Encyclopedia of Alabama.

Century Plant at the Corner of Mildred Street in Brewton Now in Bloom



At the left, the Century Plant in bloom. At the right, the plant shaft developing in a photo from April, 2021.



In an article for the April 2021 ECHOES, Darryl Searcy gave a brief history of this plant: 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. 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 its 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.

News and Announcements

Brewton's Old Pure Oil Station Has New Role



In 2005 the Alabama Historical Commission was trying to preserve old gas stations across the state, such as this one above left, the old Pure Oil Station in Brewton.

From Alabama Heritage for 2005:

“Everybody has seen them—the simple old gas stations that once dispensed full service with a smile—now standing empty. Some have found new uses . . . Many, however, were abandoned as the local community disappeared or the traffic moved to a newer highway. And there they remain, overlooked, but still important to our state’s history.

“Architecture doesn’t always have to be grand to say something about the past. Sometimes it reflects a technological change that revolutionized the way people lived. Probably no other twentieth-century invention more recently transformed our environment and lifestyles than the automobile, and gas stations are tangible reminders of this history of change.”

(<https://www.alabamaheritage.com/places-in-peril/historic-gas-stations-statewide-places-in-peril-2005>).

As can be seen from the top right photo, the Pure Oil Station building in Brewton was saved and used as office space. Now, in the photo to the right we see that building will have a new roll as it is being remodeled as a Craft Sandwich business.

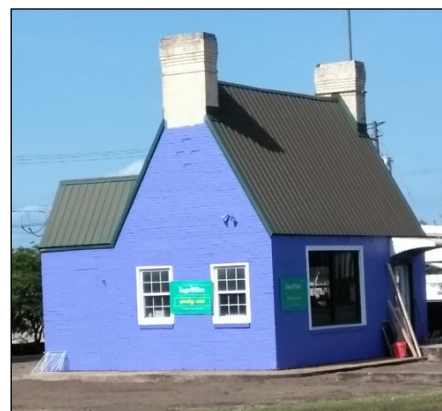


Photo upper left from Alabama Heritage magazine, 2005; upper right from Jimmy Emerson <www.flickr.com/photos/auvet/663947095/>; and lower right Paul Merritt, ECHS.

A Gas Station Preservation and Reuse in Atmore

Today’s popular Gather ‘s Restaurant in Atmore was originally a Pure Pep gas station that dated to the 1920s. Over the years it has been a hair salon, a car wash and boutique stores.

The brick walled bar area in the restaurant is the original gas station.

From Alabama Living, 2019.



This Week in Alabama History
June 14 - June 20
From the Alabama Department of Archives and History

June 19, 1864

The CSS Alabama, Captained by Mobile's Raphael Semmes, Is Sunk at the End of a Fierce Naval Engagement with the USS Kearsarge off the Coast of Cherbourg, France.

The Alabama had docked there for maintenance and repairs after 22 months of destroying northern commerce on the high seas during the Civil War.

From the article "CSS Alabama" by William Marvel: Built in England and manned by an English crew with Confederate officers, the CSS Alabama was the most successful and notorious Confederate raiding vessel of the Civil War. Between the summer of 1862 and the spring of 1864, the Alabama captured 65 vessels flying the U.S. flag and sank one Union warship.

The Alabama was a media sensation and spread panic throughout the pro-Union merchant fleet and distracted part of the U.S. Navy from the essential duty of blockading southern ports.

The Alabama's most important role in the conflict, however, was as a brief morale booster for the failing Confederate cause. . . .

The wreck of the *Alabama* was discovered in 1984 seven miles out from Cherbourg by the French mine-sweeper *Circe*. In 1988, the Association CSS Alabama was founded in France to oversee mapping and archaeological investigation of the wreck site. The ship's Blakely gun was recovered in 1994 and was found to be still loaded. In 1999, a second organization, the CSS *Alabama* Association, was founded in the United States to help raise funds and otherwise support the French organization. In 2002, several hundred artifacts, including the ship's bell (shown below), were recovered from the site by the Naval History and Heritage Command of the U.S. Navy. The artifacts are currently housed at the Washington Navy Yard in Washington, D.C. (<http://encyclopediaofalabama.org/article/h-973>).



**Left,
CSS Alabama
Ship's Bell.**

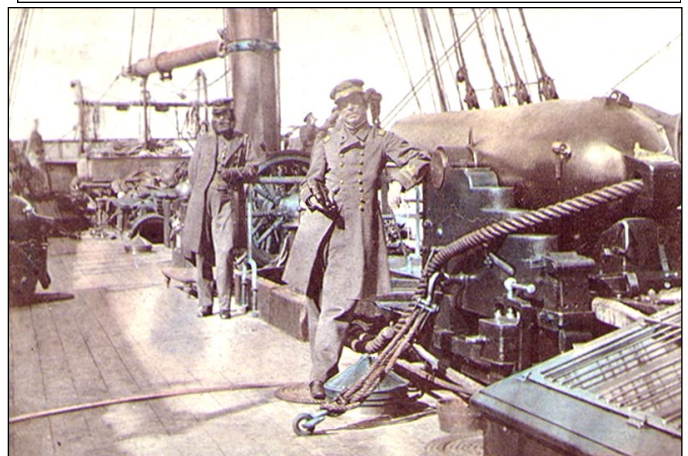


Above, right. The Blakely Gun (cannon) and its pivoting chassis raised from the wreck of the ship in 1994. The gun was on the fore deck of the ship.



**Commissioned on August 24, 1862,
the CSS Alabama was the
Confederacy's most effective weapon
on the seas in the Civil War.**

*Photo and Text from
Encyclopedia of Alabama.*



**Raphael Semmes, right, Captain of the
CSS Alabama, and Lt. John M. Kell stand
aboard the ship's deck.**

Text and Photo from Encyclopedia of Alabama.

**The Blakely rifles, guns, were British
designed muzzle loading guns that were
popular with the Confederacy.
One of CSS Alabama's recovered cannons is
now in the Museum of Mobile.**

This Week in Alabama History

June 14 - June 20

From the Alabama Department of Archives and History

June 18, 1916

The National Guard's 4th Alabama Infantry Assembles in Montgomery in Response to a Call for Troops from President Woodrow Wilson.

The 4th Alabama, under the command of William P. Screws, was one of four state units dispatched to the Mexican border to guard American interests while Gen. John Pershing attempted to capture Mexican revolutionary and bandit Pancho Villa.

Note: Villa was never captured by Pershing.

From the article "167th Alabama Infantry Regiment" by Ruth Smith Truss:

In 1916 and early 1917, the Fourth Alabama participated in the nationwide call of National Guard units to federal service for guard duty along the United States' southwestern border with Mexico in Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas. They were positioned there, as the Mexican Border Service, after a raid on Columbus, New Mexico, by forces under the command of Mexican revolutionary general Francisco "Pancho" Villa.

Although the success of this effort has been questioned by historians, the true value of the Mexican Border Service proved to be preparing the relatively untested, undisciplined, and untrained troops for their later service in World War I. Forced to abide by regular Army standards for months, the guardsmen were better prepared for active service when the United States entered the war against Germany in April 1917.

The Alabama troops also



Mexican Generals Obregon and Villa with U.S. Army General Pershing, posing after a 1914 meeting at Fort Bliss, Texas (immediately behind Gen Pershing is his aide, 1st Lt. George S. Patton Jr.). Obregon later lost his right arm fighting Villa's forces during the 1914-15 civil war between the winners who had ousted Victoriano Huerta.

Photo and text from [Wikipedia](#).



William P. Screws (1875-1955), pictured here in Vandiver Park in Montgomery, in 1917. Screws helped train the 167th Alabama Infantry Regiment at Montgomery's Camp Sheridan and would lead them during World War I in France.

Photo and Text from [Encyclopedia of Alabama](#)

benefited from the experience of their commander, Lt.

Col. William P. Screws, a former regular Army officer with years of active service and who, since 1912, had served as the inspector of the Alabama Troops before becoming commander of the Fourth Alabama (<http://www.encyclopediaofalabama.org/article/h-3734>).



Pancho Villa was a Mexican revolutionary and guerrilla leader who fought against the regimes of both Porfirio Diaz and Victoriano Huerta.

After 1914 he engaged in civil war and banditry. He became notorious in the United States for his attack on Columbus, New Mexico, in 1916.

In 1923 Pancho Villa was assassinated amid a barrage of gunfire while traveling home in his car from a visit to Parral, Chihuahua, Mexico.

Photo & Text from [Encyclopedia Britannica](#).

This Week in Alabama History

June 14 - June 20

From the Alabama Department of Archives and History

June 18, 1954

Albert Patterson, Democratic Party Nominee for State Attorney General, Is Assassinated in His Hometown of Phenix City

State and local officials were implicated in the crime, but only Russell County Chief Deputy Albert Fuller was convicted. The murder drew national attention because of Patterson's promise to rid Phenix City, called the "wickedest city in America," of corruption and organized crime. Adding to the drama, John Patterson was elected attorney general in his father's stead, and therefore had charge of the prosecutions in the case.

From the article "Albert L. Patterson" by Alan Grady: Patterson had predicted that it would take the state 10 years to accomplish the eradication of Phenix City's institutionalized vice and corruption. His murder sparked changes that achieved that goal in only seven

months.

Although tragic, the assassination of Albert Patterson was probably the impetus for the successful cleanup of Phenix City in such a short period of time. Far greater than its influence on local events, however, Patterson's murder affected Alabama as a whole because state officials have since taken a more watchful stance over errant local governments.

Patterson was inducted into the Alabama Lawyers Hall of Fame on May 1, 2015 (*Alan Grady, <http://www.encyclopediaofalabama.org/article/h-1250>*).

**All Pictures and text below from
Encyclopedia of Alabama**



**Albert Patterson
(1894-1954)**

In the picture at the right are, from the left, Arch Ferrell, Russell County circuit solicitor; Si Garrett, Alabama Attorney General; and Ralph Mathews, Russell County sheriff.

The three were initially implicated in the June 1954 murder of Garrett's opponent for attorney general, Albert Patterson.

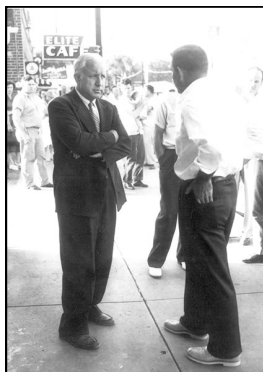
Mathews was convicted on 10 counts of neglect of duty. Ferrell was acquitted of involvement in Patterson's murder, and charges were never brought against Garrett.



Following the assassination of Albert Patterson in 1954, the Alabama Supreme Court sent circuit court judge Walter Jones to Phenix City to preside over vice cases, replacing the local judiciary.



John Patterson (1921-2021) became Alabama Attorney General in 1954 following the assassination of his father, Albert Patterson. A populist who courted the white vote by denouncing integration, John Patterson was elected as Alabama's governor in 1959 on his anti-civil rights record and with the backing of the Klu Klux Klan.



Pictured above and on the left in the photo, is Gov. Gordon Persons, in Phenix City shortly after the assassination of Albert Patterson. Persons declared limited martial rule following the murder, putting law enforcement in the hands of the Alabama National Guard.

This Week in Alabama History

June 21 - June 27

From the Alabama Department of Archives and History

June 21, 1865

President Andrew Johnson Appoints Lewis Parsons Provisional Governor.

Parsons, the grandson of Great Awakening leader Jonathan Edwards, was born in New York and moved to Talladega in 1840. Although a Unionist, Parsons followed moderate policies as he reorganized Alabama's state government under Johnson's reconstruction plan. His term ended in December 1865.

From "Lewis Eliphalet Parsons (1865)" by Sarah Woolfolk Wiggins:

After Democrats swept the 1874 elections in Alabama, Parsons continued as an active Republican while many other Alabama Scalawags* rejoined the Democrats. His nomination in 1877 as U.S. District Attorney for the Northern District of Alabama provoked a storm of opposition from political enemies. He held this office while awaiting confirmation from the U.S. Senate. Despite numerous endorsements, including a strong public recommendation from Alabama's U.S. senator John Tyler Morgan, a Democrat, the Senate rejected his nomination in March 1878. His political career now ended, Parsons returned to Talladega, where he practiced law until his death on June 8, 1895.

**Scalawag: A white Southerner who collaborated with northern Republicans during Reconstruction, often for personal profit. The term was used derisively by white Southern Democrats who opposed Reconstruction legislation.*



Lewis E. Parsons (1817-1895) was Alabama's provisional governor during Reconstruction, reinstating all laws passed before January 11, 1861, excluding those dealing with slavery.

A Talladega lawyer, he was an early leader of the *Alabama Whig and *Know-Nothing Parties and served in the state legislature.

Parsons was elected to the U.S. Senate in 1865, then denied his seat with other southern representatives by Congress.

Photo and text from [Encyclopedia of Alabama](#).

** The Whig Party developed during the presidency of Andrew Jackson and enjoyed success in Alabama from the 1830s to the early 1850s. Whigs achieved early political gains during a period of economic depression in the late 1830s. Party gains in the 1840s resulted from divisions among Democrats, but the Whigs never gained control of the state ([Encyclopedia of Alabama](#)).*

** The Know-Nothing Party was a secretive American political faction that flourished briefly in the 1850s as a result of "nativist" (anti-Catholic and immigrant) concerns, as well as slavery and states' rights issues. The party saw its end before the start of the Civil War in 1861 ([Encyclopedia of Alabama](#)).*

June 27, 1880

Helen Keller Is Born in Tuscumbia.

Having lost both sight and hearing by illness as a small child, Keller's life story and activism inspired new attitudes toward those with handicaps.

From "Helen Keller" by Kim Nielsen:

During her lifetime, she was known for her tireless activism on behalf of workers' and women's rights, her literary work, and her tenure as an unofficial U.S. ambassador to the world.



Although Keller left Alabama at the age of eight, she always claimed Ivy Green, her family's house in Tuscumbia, as home, and she continued to identify herself as a southerner throughout her life and travels.

Helen Keller sitting on a window seat with a dog. (1900-1909).

(Continued on page 8)

This Week in Alabama History

June 21 - June 27

From the Alabama Department of Archives and History

(Continued from page 7)

She was selected to represent Alabama on its 2003 state quarter, and on October 7, 2009, a bronze statue depicting seven-year-old Keller at the water pump replaced that of J. L. M. Curry in Statuary Hall in the U.S. Capitol (<http://www.encyclopediaofalabama.org/article/h-1123>).



This cottage on the Ivy Green grounds in Tusculumbia, Colbert County, is the birthplace of Helen Keller. The cottage is located next to the larger original home (1820) and was built as part of her grandfather's plantation and used as an office.

It was converted to a home for Keller's parents after their marriage until they inherited the main home. Keller again lived in the house with Ann Sullivan, after her arrival, until 1888, when Keller moved to the Perkins School for the Blind in Boston.

Photo and text from [Encyclopedia of Alabama](#).

June 24, 1896

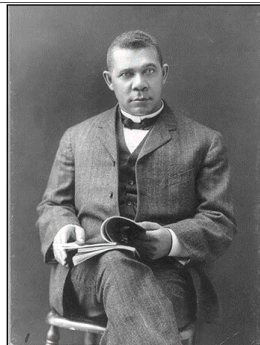
Booker T. Washington, President of Tuskegee Institute, Becomes the First African American to Be Awarded an Honorary Degree by Harvard University.

Born into slavery in Virginia, Washington moved to Alabama in 1881 to open Tuskegee Normal School. He soon gained fame as an educational leader among black Americans, a fact which Harvard recognized with a Master of Arts degree.

From "Booker T. Washington" by F. Erik Brooks: Booker T. Washington (1856 -1915) is probably best known as the founder of the Tuskegee Normal and Industrial School Institute (now Tuskegee University) in Tuskegee, Macon County. He was a leading voice for industrial vocational education and a measured approach toward gaining civil rights for blacks in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Many contemporary African American civil rights leaders, most notably W. E. B. Du Bois, criticized his emphasis on industrial education over liberal arts education and called for immediate access to political participation, accusing Washington of being an accommodationist. It was later revealed that Washington secretly supported more activist civil rights causes, however.

He covertly provided funding for organizations that fought to end lynching. When southern states began to disband colored militia in 1905, he asked



Secretary of War William Howard Taft to intervene, and when Pres. Theodore Roosevelt dismissed black troops in Brownsville, Texas, after a skirmish with town residents, Washington lobbied him to reverse his decision.

Washington's leadership at Tuskegee Institute had a lasting impact on African American education, and the university continues to be a leading institution of

higher learning (<http://encyclopediaofalabama.org/article/h-1506>).



Washington's work to improve African American education led to his association with some of the nation's most powerful and wealthy figures.

Here, he poses with education reformer R. C. Ogden, then-senator and future U.S. president William H. Taft, and industrialist and philanthropist Andrew Carnegie.

Photo & text from [Encyclopedia of Alabama](#).

This Week in Alabama History

June 21 - June 27

From the Alabama Department of Archives and History

June 22, 1937

Alabama Native Joe Louis Defeats James J. Braddock at Chicago's Comiskey Park to Become the First Black Heavyweight Boxing Champion Since Jack Johnson in 1908.

Born near Lafayette as Joseph Louis Barrow, the "Brown Bomber" held the world heavyweight title until 1948.

From "Joe Louis" By Herbert J. "Jim" Lewis:

Known as the "Brown Bomber," Alabama native Joe Louis was among the first African Americans to achieve national hero status in a white-dominated society. His defeat of German boxer Max Schmeling was renowned as a vivid refutation of Nazi Germany's official policy of white superiority.

He had a career record of 68 wins and 3 losses, with 54 wins by knockout. Louis still holds the record for successfully defending his title more times than any other heavyweight boxer, and his 27 championship bouts are also a record. In 1969, Joe Louis was inducted into the inaugural class of the Alabama Sports Hall of Fame (<http://encyclopediaofalabama.org/article/h-1601>).



**Joe Louis
(1914-1981)**



Marva Trotter Louis poses with new naval recruits at the U.S. Naval Training Station in Illinois circa 1943.

She entertained troops on a number of occasions during WWII. Marva and Joe Louis had a turbulent relationship that included two marriages and divorces and produced two children.

Marva went on to an acting and modeling career after the couple's second divorce.



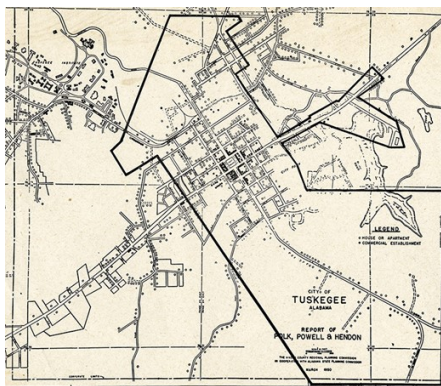
The U.S. Army took advantage of Joe Louis's boxing reputation in its recruiting and public relations efforts. His pro-America, pro-military stance on World War II contributed to the enlistment of African American soldiers and to the ultimate desegregation of the U.S. armed services.

Photos and Text from Encyclopedia of Alabama

June 25, 1957

Macon County Blacks Kick Off a Boycott of White Businesses at a Mass Meeting in Tuskegee Attended by 3,000 People.

The boycott was in response to a plan to protect white political power in Tuskegee by gerrymandering its city limits so that all but a few African Americans would reside outside the city. The boycott, which brought national attention to Tuskegee, was sustained for four years and met many of the goals of its originator, the Tuskegee Civic Association.



The Outline of the New Plan for Tuskegee Looked like a Seahorse.

In May 1957, Alabama state senator Samuel M. Englehardt introduced legislation to redraw the boundaries of the city of Tuskegee so that they would exclude almost all of the city's registered black voters from residency. He did so in response to increasing anxieties among white residents about the growing calls for voting and civil rights among Alabama's African American citizens. In response, the black residents mounted a boycott of white-owned businesses and filed the lawsuit, Gomillion v. Lightfoot, that eventually overturned the legislation. Photo and text from Encyclopedia of Alabama.

ECHOES
THE NEWSLETTER FOR
THE ESCAMBIA COUNTY
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