

- ESCAMBIA ECHOES -

Published by
THE ESCAMBIA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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Mrs. Carolyn Pugh McLendon, Editor

Annual dues - \$6.00

* SHOW-and-TELL MEETING *

Our May 20th meeting to be held at the

Jefferson Davis Junior College Student Center at 7:30 p.m. will be

another SHOW-and-TELL. This has become a favorite among our members as everybody has something to share. Anything historic, old or interesting, or a history note that is of special interest, almost anything will be appropriate. We will appreciate your sharing with the group whatever you might have. Come and bring a friend, the public is invited as always.

NEW MEMBERS - Miss Jo Ann McKay, 2000 W. Jordan Street, Pensacola, Fla. 32501; William E. Brooks, Jr., 1402 Burnett Lane, Vincennes, Ind. 47591; and Charles R. Floyd, P.O.Box 644, Monroeville, Al. 36460. Our total membership is now 292.

UNPAID DUES - If you have not paid your dues the word "unpaid" has been written on your mailing label for this newsletter. The Index for the 1974 quarterlies are being mailed out with this newsletter. Please see that your dues are paid soon. Unpaid members are not receiving the 1975 quarterlies and will be dropped from the mailing list at the end of June. We would regret to loose any of our members.

Many have asked about our annual Garden Party. It looks now as if we may have it in October. The Alabama Historical Association of Birmingham has inquired about the possibilities of making their pilgrimage to Brewton to see The Leigh Place (our first Brewton courthouse) and several of the lovely homes of the area with our Society as their hosts. This would be a wonderful occasion for our Garden Party!

Mrs. Permelia Townsend of the R.S.V.P. group typed the stencils for the index. We express appreciation to her for this fine work. R.S.V.P. has been a tremendous help to us in assembling and mailing our newsletters and quarterlies for the past several months and are doing a fine job. They are also handling our membership records while our Membership Secretary, Mrs. Gladys Byrd, is on an extended tour of the States. Under the leadership of Mrs. Helen Hildreth, a force has grown out of the citizenry that is being felt and helping in many areas of our society, ministering to many needs. We appreciate the Retired Senior Volunteer Program!

"LIVE-in-a-LANDMARK" Council - Joe B. Ray and his wife, Delaine, of 200 George Street, Mobile, Ala. 36604, phone 432-4901, have been appointed to assist in the three-county area, including Escambia County, to encourage and assist young people to purchase and restore old homes that have become landmarks. The group will advise you on how to go about the restoration work, who to get for special restoration problems, such as plumbing systems, lighting, heating etc. Mrs. Ray is especially interested in assisting in planning formal gardens for restored homes in keeping with the architecture of the home. The group hopes to be able to influence a favorable tax advantage to people restoring landmarks. They have toured our area, and would welcome hearing from any of you, especially anyone considering buying an old home or restoration work.

Books Available - EARLY COURTHOUSES OF ALABAMA PRIOR TO 1860, paperback volume, 79 pages with illustrations of early courthouses, published by the Alabama Chapter of Colonial Dames of America. This is a reprint of 1966 edition. \$4.50 from Mrs. Frank Bromberg, Jr., 4209 Old Brook Trail, Birmingham, Al. 35243.

THE LIFE OF ANDREW JACKSON by John Reed and John Henry Eaton, reprinted from 1817 edition, \$17.50 from University of Alabama Press, Drawer 2877, University, Alabama 35486.

NEWS OF MEMBERS -

One of our new members, Miss Jo Ann McKay, reports that she is working on the Miles, Leatherwood, Roberson, Buzbee, Troutman, Bryars, Franklin, Emmons families from the Flomaton-Canoe-Wawbeek areas.

Another member, Edward Chase Earle, Jr. of Reedville, Va., would like to correspond with anyone regarding the Hoomes family. He has a great deal of information to share.

Another member, Dr. David L. Payne of Columbus, Mississippi, expresses appreciation for help given him in researching his family histories, particularly Franklin, Gordon, and Payne.

TREASURER'S REPORT - 1974

Dr. E. D. Rosemore, Treasurer

Balance January 1, 1974 -----	\$ 28.25
Deposits during 1974 (membership and advertising) -----	2107.50
Total to be accounted for -----	\$ 2135.75
Expenses:	
Pictures -----	\$ 151.40
Printing Supplies -----	686.84
Postage -----	624.30
Expenses of meetings and parties -----	156.45
Total Expenses -----	1618.99
Balance on hand, January 1, 1975 -----	\$ 516.76

"Give to the world the best you have and
the best will come back to you!"

ESCAMBIA'S FIRST AIRPLANE

Recorded by: Mrs. Annie Waters,
January, 1975

Thursday, January 11, 1912, was a cold day with overcast skies, but hundreds of Brewton area residents had gathered at a corn field on present day Douglas Avenue, bounded by Granberry Street on the south, by Lovelace Avenue on the east, and Underwood Street on the north. They were expectantly awaiting the arrival of the famous aviator, Robert G. Fowler, and his Wright biplane, who was on a cross country flight from Los Angeles, California to New York City. They anxiously scanned the southern horizon for the "man-bird" who was scheduled to arrive about noon. The enthusiasm of the crowd, especially the children, was hardly contained to keep them off the field that was being used as a landing strip.

A handsome purse of \$100 had been made up for Fowler by his advance man to induce him to land at Brewton for one hour, which was his only scheduled stop in Escambia County.

As the day wore on and no plane appeared, the crowd was becoming restless when word arrived that the biplane had sustained a minor accident and had been forced to land at Flomaton.

Delays along the route did not permit Fowler to leave Mobile until 3:20 p.m. on Thursday and he arrived at Flomaton at 4:45. He had circled Flomaton and Century several times and then headed for Brewton when the accident occurred, which slightly damaged the plane but Fowler was unhurt.

Many residents listened and watched for his arrival next day, but due to the accident and unfavorable weather conditions he did not arrive at Brewton until shortly before 3:00 Sunday afternoon. Another large crowd had gathered at the field on Douglas Avenue where he was supposed to land but they were sorely disappointed when Fowler circled the field several times and then headed his plane toward Evergreen, where he was forced to land because of fuel shortage.

W. D. Sowell summed up Escambia County's first airplane visit by saying, "The sight here (Brewton) was witnessed by hundreds of interested citizens from town and country. The scene was spectacular and thrilling. Many in the crowd had never seen an air-ship, and still more doubtless never dreamed that they would see the sight of a man traveling in the air, but if anyone had any doubts of the practicability of it they were certainly dispelled on this occasion. The machine glides through the air with the agility of the most graceful bird."

"Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered; yet we have this consolation with us, that the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph. What we obtain too cheap, we esteem too lightly; 'tis dearness only that gives everything its value. Heaven knows how to put a proper price upon its goods; and it would be strange, indeed, if so celestial an article as FREEDOM should not be highly rated."

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--Thomas Paine