

The December Meeting
The Annual ECHS Christmas Party
Saturday, December 6, 2008, 2:00—4:30 p. m
At the T. R. Miller House
Now the Home of Carolyn and Jim Hart

The Christmas Party and The T. R. Miller-Hart House

Plan to come and bring your favorite, holiday finger food. ECHS will provide the drinks.

There will be tours of the downstairs and the basement of the home with a brief program on the history of the house.

The T. R. Miller house, was built in 1905-06 when Thomas and Alice Miller used a Montgomery architect to supervise the building of their new home on Belleville Avenue, on the site of the first house which Thomas Miller had built in Brewton.

This first house had been occupied by Miller and his first wife, Mary Elizabeth Foshee Miller, and their children. After



The T. R. Miller –Hart House, 1997
Built by T. R. Miller around 1905, this beautiful house is now the home of Carolyn and Jim Hart, our hosts for the 2008 ECHS Christmas Party.

her death in 1889, he married Alice Collins of Milton in 1890. By 1905, the couple had decided to build a bigger and finer house.

From the book, The T. Miller Mill Company, Inc. Story, by John Ap-

pleyard, we have this description of this second Miller house and the care in its construction:

“Thomas Miller prided himself on the materials and workmanship that went into his new home. The very best heart pine his mill could produce was used, and the flooring and mill work came from his operations, too. The interior

(Continued on page 2)



Miller-Hart House, 2008

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The January Meeting

January 27, 2009

Nancy Grisham Anderson, one of Alabama Humanities Foundation's Road Scholars, will present a program on "To Kill a Mockingbird: Successes and Myths"

*******Don't Forget*******

The January Meeting is the Time to Pay Dues

The Christmas Party

The T. R. Miller House (Continued)

(Continued from page 1)

decorating was done for the family by a German painter named Wever who had gained fame for his designs and preparation of Mardi Gras Floats for celebrations in Mobile and Pensacola. Mrs. Miller, by now a well-schooled expert on such matters, in part gained from her contacts with the Brent family, supervised what was to be done. One of her items of pride was the fresco painted inside.”

The Brents referred to in the previous paragraph were a wealthy and prominent couple from Pensacola who had become friends of Thomas and Alice Miller. Francis C. Brent, noted as lumberman, banker, and realtor in John Appleyard’s book, was not only a friend of Thomas Miller but a business partner as well.

This comment on the Brents in Mr. Appleyard’s book is credited to a T. R. Miller family member:

“Mr. Brent and his family lived in a very luxurious manner. They had a beautiful home and many servants. He was an Epicurean and had the best food and the finest whiskeys and wines. He was very fond of beautiful china, linens, and glassware. His table, the food and service were a great pride with him. He owned a yacht at one time, and when the Millers came to visit, he would give them a boat party going out onto Pensacola Bay for the day.

“Brent would come to Brewton for visits. He would bring different members of his family from time to time and often would bring a number of friends from the Navy Yard. Mr. Brent was most generous and would always bring gifts of some kind. He was interested in seeing that Mrs. Miller had the latest in china and glassware for her table. He gave her many pieces for such service. He never forgot the younger children and would often bring a five-pound box of candy and other gifts for them.”

The program and tour at the Christmas party will give more details on this historic and beautiful house.



The Miller-Hart House is located at 441 Belleville Ave.



The Miller-Hart House is on the right, is shown here with the Catherine and Donny Fountain home on the left. Catherin and Donny were hosts for the ECHS Christmas Party in 2005.

Parking

ECHS has made arrangements for parking in the empty lot to the right of the Miller-Hart House. Look for the sign.

If the parking lot to the right fills up, there can be parking on one of the side streets, such as McClelland.

Just Briefly—

Wow – just a few more weeks until Christmas! Hope it didn't sneak up on you this year and catch you not shopping yet. If you don't have your shopping done, consider a gift membership to the Escambia County Historical Society. It's something that will remind the recipient of your thoughtfulness for 11 months next year and it costs you only \$25.00 for the year. Remember, since we publish the newsletter January through late November/early December, every month your gift will have someone think of you and your thoughtfulness.

Between now and the January meeting is the time to send in your dues. While you're giving that membership as a Christmas present, be sure to also add your check for your own membership.

Other gift ideas are found here, too. We have several books your special person would enjoy, such as our newest offering, the History of Brewton and East Brewton (soft cover, \$45.00). The hardcover version (\$60.00) will be available by the first of December..

The Flomaton Centennial Scrapbook (hardcover, \$40.00) is available, too. Don't forget that Annie Waters' History of Escambia County, Alabama (hardcover, \$50.00) and the ECHS Cookbook (softcover, \$5.00) make great gifts!

Rounding out our offerings is the Headstones and Heritages (hardcover, \$35.00) and a brand new book by Kathy Jernigan, a home-grown daughter of one of our members, Adelaide Jernigan. It's the neatest little

children's book, The Know It All Kitty and the Peanut Butter Factory (\$8.50). Remember, each purchase helps our society!

There were several all-day visitors to the Alabama Room in November and each one came away with some, if not most, of the information they were looking for. It's gratifying to me for them to thank us for our work and our collections. One student came by and said he had just about everything there was on his ancestors, yet he stayed for several hours when he discovered more treasures in the Alabama Room.

Don't forget to stop in and use the society's membership to Ancestry.com. It's a valuable resource and it's yours free of charge, courtesy of your society. I'll give you a short course on using it. Then it'll be up to you to use your imagination, because once you get familiar with it, you'll find all sorts of rabbit-tracks to follow!

Elsewhere in the newsletter, you'll find details on the Society's Christmas party. As the holiday season approaches, my wife Dianne, and I, and all the officers and trustees of the Society want to wish every one of you and yours a very politically incorrect Merry Christmas!

Jerry

Howell House



Once a well known boarding house, Howell House was located next to Murder Creek across the street from where the vegetable stand is located today.

The Howell House shown on the left with staff and residents is said to be the second of two houses which were boarding houses and called Howell House.

The boarding house had eighteen rooms and served two meals a day when it was run by Mary Howell.

After her death in 1937, Howell House, owned by another family, remained open until sometime in the early 1950's.

News of Members and Announcements

New Books for Research

ECHS member **Larry Massey** has contributed two documents to the Alabama Room.

One is a hardback book entitled, Marriage, Death and Legal Notices From Early Alabama Newspapers, 1819-1893.

The other is a paperback entitled, Dallas County Alabama Estate Settlements 1818-1866, Deed Book A Cemetery Records.

The Encyclopedia of Alabama Is Now Online

The Encyclopedia of Alabama is now available online. Housed at the Auburn University Libraries, the encyclopedia can be viewed at

< <http://encyclopediaofalabama.org/>>.

Aaron Trehub, Assistant Dean for Library Technology at Auburn, explains that the encyclopedia is “like a traditional print encyclopedia with its emphasis on authoritative content based on sound scholarship.

“The edited entries are written by scholars and experts from across the globe. But the online format makes it a modern reference tool offering video, audio, graphics, and hyperlinks.

“New content will be added on a weekly basis--more than 5,000 potential articles have been identified and that list continues to grow.”

ECHS Lost Two Members this Month.

Morris Stone passed away on Sunday, Nov. 2, 2008. We extend our sympathies to his wife, Lillie Stone, and daughter, Margaret Stone

Frank Luttrell passed away on Nov. 22, 2008. Our sympathies to Frank’s family who have suggested that memorials may be made to the American Cancer Society, Boy Scouts of America, or a charity of one’s choice.

Note: ECHOES will have more on these two long-time members in the next issue.



Canoe, Alabama Poll Worker Featured on BBC-America

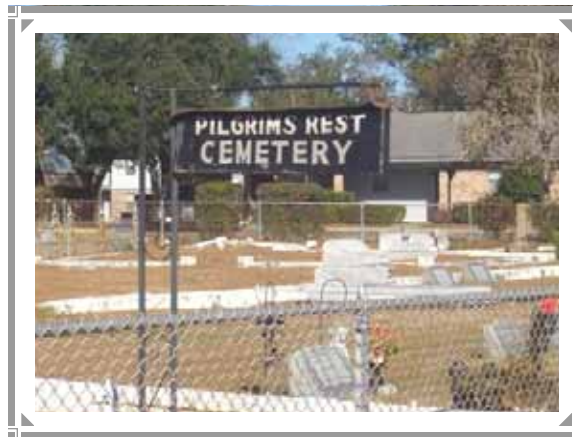
Olvena Smith, of Canoe, Alabama, who has been a poll worker in Canoe for fifty years, was featured on BBC-America’s World News recently.

At ninety-two, she still worked the polls at the 2008 elections. A video of this feature on Olvena can be viewed online at this address

http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/programmes/world_news_america/7734463.stm.

The beginning segment of the video shows Olvena receiving an award from Woodfin Patterson, the first president of JDCC, who was instrumental in the development of ECHS and the Thomas E. McMillan Museum.

Pilgrims Rest Cemetery Recognized



Pilgrims Rest Cemetery on Alco Dirve in Brewton is now listed on the Ala-

bama Historic Cemetery Register. **ECHS Trustee, Mary C. Luker** nominated Pilgrims Rest to the historic register

Lee Anne Wofford (State Architectural Survey & Cemetery Program Coordinator), in her letter of notification points out that the Alabama Historic Cemetery Register is a prestigious listing of historic cemeteries worthy of recognition and preservation.

Her letter includes this information on the Cemetery:

(Continued on page 5)

Queries

Request for List of People Interred at Brushy Creek Cemetery

Mark Henderson has written asking for information on the burial site of his grandfather:

“I am 90% sure that my great-great grandfather (**George T. Henderson**) is buried at Brushy Creek Cemetery. He was born August 1843 and died Nov. 11, 1923. His death certificate states that he was buried at Brushy Creek, Lenox.”

Anyone who can help Mark with his request for a list of people buried at Brushy Creek can contact him by email at papahender@bellsouth.net. He has also listed his phone number which is (615) 584-2244.

Ph. D. Candidate at Fordham University Requests Help with Research for His Dissertation

Clifton N. Watson has asked for help with research concerning the migration of Afro-Americans from Brewton, AL to New Haven, CT following World War II.

He has specifically requested help in publicizing the project, finding information from the Alabama Room and any other local sources which could be accessed, as well as help with locating members of the Brewton community who would be interested in doing recorded interviews.

Seeking a Photograph of a Vietnam Veteran

USAF Sgt., ret., Troy Smith of Spanish Fort, Alabama is attempting to locate a photo of his 2nd cousin, J. C. Summerlin of Brewton, who was killed in action in the Quang-Tri Province of Vietnam on May 21, 1971.

Sgt. Smith believes his cousin was a 1970 graduate of TR Miller High School and believes there may have also been some type of obituary in the Brewton Standard.

Seeking Information on William B. Travis's Slave, Joe

Phillip Tucker is searching for information about African Americans in Brewton and Escambia County. He comments that a rumor and research published in 1981 indicates that the slave of Col. William B. Travis, the Alamo's commander, Joe, eventually left Texas and settled in or around Brewton, where he died.

Philip believes that Joe could be buried in our area and that Joe returned to this area because he might have been born here.

Mr. Tucker would appreciate any advice, assistance, and help in attempting to solve the mystery surrounding Joe.

Note: Anyone interested or with information on any of the Queries can contact ECHS by email at escohis@escohis.org, by phone at 251-809-1528, or at P. O. Box 276, Brewton, AL, 36427.

News of Members and Announcements (continued)

(Continued from page 4)

“Pilgrims Rest Cemetery was established around the same time as Pilgrims Rest Baptist Church, which was founded on September 17, 1854.

“The church moved to north Brewton in 1878 and a Methodist Church was founded in the same location in 1889. It was known as Alco Methodist Church until it was sold by the Methodist Conference in 1990.

“**Edmund Troupe Brewton**, the city of Brewton's namesake, was buried here in 1896. **Some Confederate and Union veterans of the Civil War** are buried here along with **veterans of World War I and II.**”

The four cemeteries in Escambia County on the State Register are **Sullivan Cemetery (Nokomis), Franklin Cemetery (on Georgia-Pacific Grounds in Brewton), Union Cemetery (Alco/Brewton), and now Pilgrims Rest (Alco).**

Snapshots from the October Meeting



Enjoying John Appleyard's presentation about his new book, The History of Brewton and East Brewton, Alabama.

Enjoying refreshments in the Elvira McMillan Parlor.



Our witches and goblins hosts.



(Snapshots continued on page 7)

Snapshots of the October Meeting (continued)

John Appleyard and Tom McMillan. Tom engaged Mr. Appleyard to write the book on the history of Brewton and East Brewton.



John Appleyard, author of the History of Brewton and East Brewton shown with his wife (seated). Standing are Margaret Collier, Jerry Fischer, and Don Sales.



Mr. Appleyard discussing The History of Brewton and East Brewton, Alabama at the October meeting.

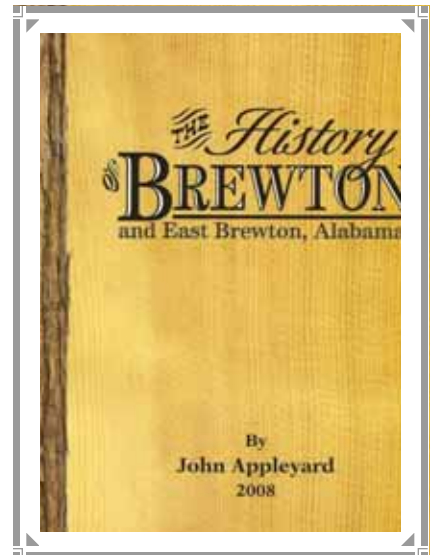
The History of Brewton and East Brewton, Alabama (cover is pictured at right) is now available for purchase. Soft cover is \$45.00 and hard cover is \$60.00.

The design of the cover was chosen to represent the striations of wood in tribute to the lumber industry which was so important to the settlement and development of the area.

The book begins with the period of the Native American tribes as occupants of the area, traces the coming of the explorers and settlers, and continues through all the developments since that time, ending in the 1980's.

A great resource, the book would also make an excellent gift. The books can be ordered through ECHS.

For those who ordered hard covers, those will be available at the Christmas Party on December 6.



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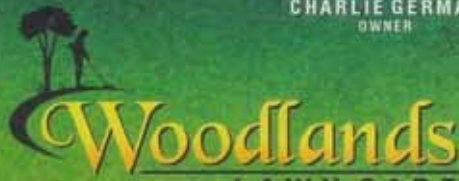
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The ECHS *Journal* Section

The T. R. Miller House

The following article about the T. R. Miller house is written in by Iva Lee Miller McMillan, the Daughter of Alice Collins and Thomas Richard Miller, the couple who built the house. It is dated June 1, 1942.

“The present T. R. Miller home, now occupied by Mr. Miller’s son, John Richard Miller, was built in 1905-06. This home was built upon the foundation of the old home built about 1887 when Mr. Miller moved to Brewton, from Mason, about twenty miles away. Mr. Ausfeld, of Montgomery, Alabama, was the architect and Jehle Brothers of Montgomery, were contractors.

“Thomas Richard Miller, was a pioneer lumberman of this section and selected the best lumber and timber that could be cut to go into the home. He lived there until his death, May 23, 1914. His wife, Alice Collins Miller, continued to live there, even after her children married and moved away, until her death, November 27, 1941.

“There was a damaging fire about 1924, caused by a defective chimney. Only the roof was destroyed, but there was much damage by water. Mrs. Miller remodeled the home and redecorated the interior at this time. She made a large drawing room out of the old parlor and sitting room combined,. She also added a large sleeping porch upstairs and downstairs.

“Much of the work done in the interior of the home after the fire was done by The Strassell Company of Louisville, Kentucky. They also furnished some of the new furniture and draperies. Furniture in this home was collected from many parts of the country over a long period of years.

“The large paintings in the home were done by Hal



***The T. R. Miller–Hart House, November 2008
Picture Courtesy of Paul Merritt***

Morrison of Atlanta, Georgia. The Portrait of Thomas Richard Miller was painted by Charles Frederick Naegels of Marietta, Georgia. There were many objects of art, beautiful china, glass, and silver, which Mrs. Miller collected on her wide travels and several trips abroad.

“On the stair landing is a stained glass window, resembling the first steam-driven saw mill of Thomas Richard Miller.

“The gardens of this home were first landscaped by Pfhingstl, of

Montgomery, Alabama. This landscape work was the first to be done in Brewton, and Mr. Washburn of Bolling, Alabama, did some landscape work later.

“The present garden is filled with many beautiful camellias and azaleas/ Mrs. Miller was an ardent gardener and had flowers blooming at all times of the year. Most of the time she had flower arrangements artistically placed about the home. She delighted in sharing her flowers with her friends.”

T. R. Miller died in 1914. Alice Miller, who was 25 years younger than he, after his death, in addition to continuing to add to the beauty of her home and garden, became a benefactor to the community

John Appleyard in his book The T. R. Miller Mill Company, Inc. Story writes of her gift of the property for T. R. Miller High School, her love of literature leading her to become one of the founders of the community’s rental library, in general becoming a patron of the public school systems, and one who provided “financial assistance to many young men and women, enabling them to complete their higher educations” (p. 66).

The ECHS *Journal* Section

The T. R. Miller House (continued)



This picture of the T. R. Miller House is not dated. Notice that Belleville Avenue is not paved but the placement of the house in relationship to Belleville Avenue and the location of the sidewalk are basically the same as in the current picture shown below. This picture of the T. R. Miller House is from a postcard in the collection of Yank Lovelace. The picture is sent to us by Lydia Grimes.



This picture of the Miller-Hart house as it is today, Nov. 2008. The porches and banisters are the same. The trees have gone, as has the wrought-iron fence with a brick retaining wall. Picture courtesy of Paul Merritt.

The ECHS *Journal* Section

St. Luke's Episcopal Church

From the website for Wikipedia, online encyclopedia. This story of the preservation and restoration of this historic church. For further information go to <[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St._Luke%27s_Episcopal_Church_\(Cahaba,_Alabama\)#History](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St._Luke%27s_Episcopal_Church_(Cahaba,_Alabama)#History)>.

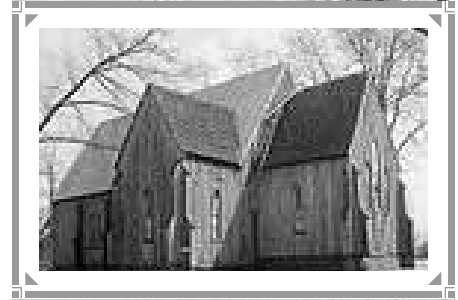
“St. Luke's Episcopal Church is a historic Carpenter Gothic church, which was built in 1854 at Cahaba, the first capital of Alabama. The unknown builder closely followed plans published by architect Richard Upjohn in his 1852 book Rural Architecture. Exterior features include board and batten sheathing, lancet windows and pointed arch doorways. The building originally had wooden buttresses and a square bell tower on the corner to the left of the current main front entrance, the tower was not rebuilt when the building was later relocated.

“Because of the danger of flooding, the church was dismantled in 1876 and moved to the village of Martin's Station where it was reassembled. It later was used by an African-American Baptist congregation for over 60 years before being abandoned. It was added to the National Register of Historic Places on March 25, 1982.

“During the academic year 2006-2007, students from Auburn University's Rural Project carefully dismantled the church building so that it could be moved back to Cahaba and reassembled on the Cahaba State Historic Site. During the current school year 2007-2008, the students are reassembling the building at Cahaba, near the corner of Cahaba Road and Capitol Avenue.”

Pictures are from the Wikipedia site.

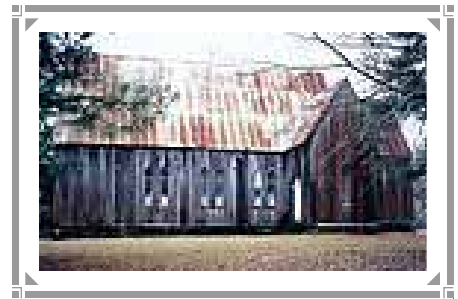
Northern and Western rear view from 1934



Interior View toward Chancel, from 1934



Northern Side View, from 1996.



Sketch made in 1854 when building was still in original location in Cahaba.



Another View of St. Luke's taken in 1934



THE NEWSLETTER FOR
THE ESCAMBIA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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<u>History of Brewton & East Brewton (sc)</u>	\$51.00	\$45.00
<u>History of Brewton & East Brewton (hc)</u>	\$ TBA	\$ TBA
<u>Flomaton Centennial Scrapbook</u>	\$46.00	\$40.00

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 or call 251-867-7332, or 251-809-1528.

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