

ECHOES

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ESCAMBIA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The August Meeting will be Tuesday, August 25, 2026, 3:00 pm at the McMillan Museum. Ethan Elmore will be speaking.



THOMAS E. MCMILLAN
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VISIT OUR SPONSORS



Join us on Tuesday, August 25th at the Escambia County Historical Society meeting and learn about the evolution of the United States Flag. Ethan Elmore will be presenting several of his flags to the group. Ethan is the Vice President of the Clarke County Historical Society.

Battle of Burnt Corn Creek Dedication 25 July 2026



Invitation:

The Daughters of the American Revolution chapters in Baldwin County have extended an invitation to the Escambia County Historical Society to attend a marker dedication in Historic Blakeley State Park in Spanish Fort. The event will take place on September 11, 2026 at 11am.

Please join them in marking this historical site.

ROBERT MORRIS

Stories from the American Revolution

By John Angel



Robert Morris

**January 20, 1734 -
May 8, 1806**

Robert Morris, Jr. was a British born American merchant, investor and politician, as well as one of the Founding Fathers of the United States. Morris served in the Pennsylvania legislature, the Second Continental Congress and the United States Senate. He was one of the only two individuals (along with Roger Sherman) to sign the Declaration of Independence, the Articles of Confederation and the U.S. Constitution. From 1781-1784, he held the post of Superintendent of Finance of the United States, a role that earned him the title “Financier of the Revolution”. Alongside Alexander Hamilton and Albert Gallatin, Morris is often regarded as a founder of the financial system of the United States.

Born in Liverpool, Morris was brought to North America by his father when he was 13 years old, quickly becoming a partner in a successful shipping firm based in Philadelphia. In the aftermath of the French and Indian War, Morris joined with other merchants in opposing British tax policies such as the 1765 Stamp Act. By 1775, he was the richest man in America. After the outbreak of the American Revolutionary War, he helped procure arms and ammunition for the revolutionary cause, and in late 1775, he was chosen as a delegate to the Second Continental Congress. As a member of Congress, he served on the Secret Committee of Trade, which handled the procurement of supplies, the Committee of Correspondence, which handled foreign affairs and the Marine Committee, which oversaw the Continental Navy. Morris was a leading member of Congress until he resigned in 1778. Out of office, Morris refocused on his merchant career and won election to the Pennsylvania Assembly, where he became a leader of the “Republican” faction that sought alterations to the Pennsylvania Constitution.

Facing a difficult financial situation in the ongoing Revolutionary War, in 1781 Congress established the position of Superintendent of Finance to oversee financial matters. He helped provide supplies to the Continental Army under General George Washington, enabling, with the help of frequent collaborator Haym Salomon, the decisive victory in the Battle of Yorktown (1781). Morris also reformed government contracting and established the Bank of North America, the first congressionally chartered national bank to operate in the United States. Morris believed that the national government would be unable to achieve financial stability without the power to levy taxes and tariffs, but he was unable to convince all thirteen states to agree to an amendment to the Articles of Confederation. Frustrated by the weakness of the national government, Morris resigned as Superintendent of Finance in 1784. Morris, essentially, was a war profiteer who became rich through government contracts, but used much of his own wealth to pay Washington’s soldiers before the Battle of Yorktown.

In 1787, Morris was selected as a delegate to the Philadelphia Convention, which wrote and proposed a new Constitution for the United States. Morris and his allies helped ensure that Pennsylvania ratified the new Constitution and the document was ratified by the requisite number of states by the end of 1788. The Pennsylvania legislature subsequently elected Morris as one of its two inaugural representatives in the United States Senate. Morris declined Washington’s offer to serve as the nation’s first Treasury Secretary, instead suggesting Alexander Hamilton for the position. In the Senate, Morris supported Hamilton’s economic program and aligned with the Federalist Party. During and after his service in the Senate, Morris went deeply into debt through land speculation, leading into the Panic of 1796-1797. Unable to pay his creditors, he was confined in the Prue Street Debtors’ Apartment adjacent to the Walnut Street Prison (Philadelphia) from 1798 to 1801. After being released from prison, he lived a quiet, private life in a modest home in Philadelphia until his death in 1806.

MARGARET COCHRAN CORBIN:

A PIONEER FOR WOMEN IN MILITARY SERVICE

Stories from the American Revolution

Born on November 12, 1751, in Franklin County, Pennsylvania, Margaret Cochran experienced profound hardship at an early age. When she was only five years old, Native Americans attacked their frontier home, her father was killed, and her mother was taken captive and never returned. Orphaned and vulnerable, Margaret and her brother were raised by an uncle.

In 1772, Margaret married John Corbin, a Virginia farmer who later enlisted in the Pennsylvania artillery when the American colonies entered into conflict with Great Britain. Like many women of the period, Margaret accompanied her husband as a camp follower, assisting the Continental Army by cooking, washing clothes, and caring for wounded soldiers. During military engagements, she also carried water to thirsty soldiers and artillery crews, earning the nickname "Molly Pitcher," a title shared by several women who supported the war effort in similar ways.

Margaret Corbin's place in American history was secured during the Battle of Fort Mifflin on September 26, 1777. As Hessian and British forces attacked the American position in northern Manhattan, John Corbin served as a member of an artillery crew operating a cannon. Margaret remained beside him throughout the battle, helping to load and maintain the weapon. When John was killed by enemy fire, she immediately assumed his position and continued firing the cannon against advancing British forces. Demonstrating remarkable composure and skill, she loaded, aimed, and discharged the artillery piece despite intense combat. Fellow soldiers reportedly admired her accuracy and steadfastness under fire. She had watched her husband meticulously and learned how to load and fire the cannon.

Corbin's courageous defense came at a tremendous cost. She suffered severe wounds to her arm, chest, and jaw, injuries that left her permanently disabled and unable to fully use her left arm for the remainder of her life.

Following the battle, Corbin struggled with the physical and financial consequences of her injuries. Recognizing both her sacrifice and her service, the Continental Congress awarded her a lifelong pension in 1779. This distinction made her the first woman in United States history to receive a military pension for service rendered in combat. She was later enrolled in the Corps of Invalids, a military unit established for wounded soldiers, and remained associated with the army until her discharge at the conclusion of the war.



WELCOME TO THE TOWNS OF HAMMAC AND FOSHEE

Hammac is located about 10 miles west of Brewton and one mile north of Foshee. It is located on the Little Escambia Creek and the old Louisville and Nashville Railroad. Hammac was settled prior to Foshee. It is thought to have been established in the 1880s and named after George Hammac and his family who settled and established a grist mill with a post office and train station in the early 1900s. In 1905, Hammac had a population of 330 people, two lumber companies, a turpentine mill and two general stores. There was also a public school and housing for traveling railroad crews. As Hammac's population disappeared in the 1910s, the post office and train depot were moved to Foshee. The residents soon followed.

Foshee is about a mile down the Little Escambia River from Hammac. It is located between Brewton and Pollard on US Route 29 near County Route 18. Stewart J. Foshee opened a lumber mill and began operating in June 1895. In 1901, Russell A. Alger and Martin Sullivan founded the Alger-Sullivan Lumber Mill. With the addition of businesses and families from Hammac, Foshee grew into a thriving mill town.

According to Mrs. Annie Waters, History of Escambia County, Alabama, "there were several stores, including a mill commissary, a post office, hotel, church, school, residences and cemetery on the hill." The town developed with buildings on both sides of the railroad, and at the intersection on Main Street the "downtown" area built up.

Saturday nights in Foshee however were not for the faint of heart. It was typical for a town to be a meeting spot for rowdy behavior as people sought to spend their weekly earnings and relieve a bit of stress. One such evening that resulted in stories still being told involved a shootout between James R. Stewart and Pierce Travis. Stewart was the superintendent of the Alger-Sullivan mill and Pierce Travis was one of its employees as well as the town jailer. There were conflicting reports between it being a face-to-face shootout to Travis being ambushed and shot in the back. Stewart turned himself in, but it was ruled a justifiable homicide. Many legends have been told over the years regarding what really happened that evening.

Hammac and Foshee were both once a thriving mill towns, but now only consists of a handful of families.



Alger Sullivan Lumber Company, Foshee, AL



Foshee Train Station

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THE ESCAMBIA COUNTY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

251-809-1528 or
escambiahistoricalociety@gmail.com

www.escohis.org

The Museum is on Facebook at
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Donations and contributions that are not for books or membership dues may now be made online through PayPal

to <escambiahistoricalociety@gmail.com>. Please continue to use the form shown for book requests and membership dues, by mail, as your complete name and address are needed for our records. Thank you again for your support!

Books Available by Contribution

	Regular	Mailed
History of Escambia County, Alabama	\$90.00	\$97.00
Headstones and Heritage	\$20.00	\$27.00
Escambia Historical Society Cookbook	\$10.00	\$16.00
Wildflowers of The Conecuh/Escambia		
River Basin CD	\$10.00	\$16.00
History of Brewton and E. Brewton (SC)	\$40.00	\$47.00
Flomaton Centennial Scrapbook	\$30.00	\$37.00

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Many members give a membership as a gift!
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advertisement 10 months of the
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ECHOES, The newsletter for the Escambia County Historical Society, a 501 (c) (3) corporation, is published monthly except November and December. Comments are welcome. You may email the Society at escambiahistoricalociety@gmail.com or call 251-809-1528.

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