



# ALABAMA HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

VOLUME 39 • ISSUE 2 • FALL 2024



Fall Pilgrimage | October 11-12, 2024 | Phenix City, Russell County



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*Cover photo courtesy of Melissa Gauntt*

*Special thanks to Laura Murray for designing the map on pages 12 and 13.*

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*Founded in 1947, the Alabama Historical Association is the oldest statewide historical society in Alabama. The AHA provides opportunities for meaningful engagement with the past through publications, meetings, historical markers, and other programs. The AHA is a volunteer-led and membership-supported organization. Our members are from every walk of life but share a common interest in Alabama history and a belief in its value for society today. Visit [www.alabamahistory.net](http://www.alabamahistory.net) for more information.*



**Dr. Richard Bailey**

Serving as the seventy-sixth president of the Alabama Historical Association (AHA) represents the fulfillment of a lifetime. My first annual meeting in Selma after my return to Alabama in 1982 resonates still, as several attendees expressed their interest in Horace King. I realized immediately I was where destiny had beckoned.

AHA presidents have colored my life since 1980, when Milo B. Howard allowed this Kansas State University student to serve as an intern at the Alabama Department of Archives and History, thus initiating my fruitful relationship that continues to this day. At the conclusion of my 100-hour internship, I embarked upon a fifteen-month stint as a dissertation researcher. Howard treated me as a trusted friend. He never brushed me off during my visits to his office to talk. My close ties to the archives continued with Edwin Bridges, one of my speakers for my tribute to James Thomas Rapier in Florence in 2008. Debbie Pendleton has helped me tremendously over the years and applauded my walking tour of downtown Montgomery during our annual meeting in April 2016. Steve Murray provided valuable insight into the nation's first such agency for my City of Montgomery-sponsored documentary, namely "Downtown Montgomery: Mark of Distinction" (2019) and its spinoff, "Moments in Montgomery History" (2020).

C. J. Coley enjoyed recounting little-known aspects of the life and times of Booker T. Washington. I met John Hawkins Napier and Jeff Jakeman through my employment at Maxwell Air Force Base. Napier was a noted scholar, and Jakeman was a friend of the first order. Val McGee invited me several times to speak in Ozark, resulting in my autographing some books and making the front page of the local daily. J. Wayne Flynt participated in my first Horace King program and portrait unveiling at the capital in February 2003. Great-great-grandson David King spoke and unveiled the portrait. Chriss Doss and Harriett Amos Doss, jointly and individually, helped to create a welcoming environment at our annual meetings. Leah Rawls Atkins always had a suggestion for my next book. Henry E. Sterkx offered me full-time employment at Auburn-Montgomery while I conducted research for my dissertation. Michael Thomason helped me tremendously during my early

years as a researcher. Harvey H. Jackson III's warm smile and pleasant conversations made a lasting impression. Gary Burton's heart-felt words continue to inspire. My brief talks with Kathryn Holland Braund yielded much-needed insight into Creek culture. Sarah W. Wiggins encouraged me over the years and attended the Horace King program at the state capitol in 2003 and the Alabama Men's Hall of Fame Induction in Birmingham for King in 2017, saying to me after the ceremony that King's induction was overdue. Marty Olliff provided a pleasant reception during my visit to Dothan for my speaking on the Bicentennial in 2019. Gayle Thomas was a joy to speak with regarding the history of Abbeville and other parts of Henry County.

David Alsobrook is fondly remembered as a confidant. Mary Ann Neeley and I offered the first walking tours of local cemeteries and select streets in Montgomery for more than thirty years. Frazine K. Taylor blazed a trail for all of us in genealogy. I am a much better student of history because of these AHA presidents.

My charge as president then is to ensure that we continue our march toward excellence. Let us build on the forty-four new members from 2023. We must continue our excellent work regarding diversity and historical accuracy. Let us ensure no stone is unturned when it comes to local history. I welcome your feedback and cooperation on these issues.

Former president Ruth Truss and her committee ensured the trip to Sylacauga in 2023 was worthwhile and that every event was well planned. If the pilgrimage had continued, I believe attendees would have welcomed the additional time.

Mayor Eddie N. Lowe and other Phenix City officials have opened the doors to the city. Our members will hear from some excellent speakers and view excerpts from the Horace King documentary. Several members of King's family will offer their reflections on him during a video interview. We will also recognize our second president and Seale native Peter A. Brannon. During the tour of Fort Mitchell, attendees will view the Peter A. Brannon Exhibit. A tour of the old South Girard High School is a must-see.

A special feature of the Saturday, October 12, schedule will highlight Mayor Lowe's declaring the day as Horace King Day, renaming a thoroughfare for King, and unveiling a new historical marker for the celebrated bridge builder.

I look forward to seeing you in Phenix City for another exciting Fall Pilgrimage.

Dr. Richard Bailey, President

# Still Rising

## THE PHENIX CITY STORY

*By Dr. Richard Bailey, President  
Alabama Historical Association*

Next to Mobile County, Russell County is acclaimed as the most historic county in Alabama. Therefore, the Fall Pilgrimage to Phenix City must include what other areas have done to develop the county.

Located ten miles south of Phenix City, what became Fort Mitchell was a major fur-trading post from 1793 to 1807 and became the area's first military presence as an outpost in 1813 with the construction of a fort and the establishment of a settlement by Gen. John Floyd, commander of Georgia's 1st Brigade during the War of 1812. He left the fort in 1814, after one year. The fort was named for Scottish-born and former three-term Georgia governor David Brydie Mitchell, who donated the land.



*Portrait of John Crowell. Courtesy of Alabama  
Department of Archives and History*

Fort Mitchell occupies a significant chapter in county history. Currently unincorporated, Fort Mitchell was home to Col. John Crowell long after its abandonment in 1840. This fifth and last Indian agent died in 1847 at age sixty-six, and his grave is a must-see. He was appointed as an Indian agent by President James Monroe in 1821 to replace Mitchell for his involvement in the smuggling of African slaves from Spanish Florida into Creek and United States territory in violation of the 1808 law against the American slave trade. Thomas and Henry Crowell helped their brother to relocate the agency from Fort Hawkins in Crawford County Georgia and to re-establish it at Fort Mitchell. President Andrew Jackson dispatched songwriter Francis Scott Key to the fort in the winter of 1833 to investigate a land dispute between the Creeks and squatters. He found the squatters at fault. Buried there also is Timpooshee Barnard, the Creek leader and interpreter for the United States Army in 1836.

Also interred at the Old Fort Mitchell Cemetery is Atty. Thomas E. Burnside, who served in the Georgia legislature from 1823 to 1828. He became entangled in an argument with George Walker Crawford in 1828. Crawford was a future Georgia governor who had fought in the American Revolution. He enjoyed reminding Burnside of his family's loyalty to the crown. Burnside spoke in the House of Representatives about the loose morals of Crawford's sister. Crawford then challenged Burnside to a duel, which he accepted to honor his family's name. The two men from Augusta rode on the same stagecoach to Fort Mitchell to circumvent Georgia authorities, since Alabama was still Creek territory and the fort stood close to the Alabama-Georgia border. The duel began on the morning of January 25, 1828. When Crawford's first shot missed, and Burnside's shot hit the dirt, the crowd and some Indians pleaded for them to cease. Crawford agreed but Burnside wanted an apology to which Crawford disagreed. Both second shots missed their targets. The men fired simultaneously for the third round. Crawford did not miss this time.





*Members of the Alabama Anthropological Society at Fort Mitchell, including Peter A. Brannon, past president of the AHA and former director of the Alabama Department of Archives and History. Courtesy of Alabama Department of Archives and History*

In 1836, sixteen hundred Creek Indians were forcibly removed from Fort Mitchell and dispatched to the West. The next year, the fort became the point of departure, as the Creeks embarked upon the Trail of Tears. Former Indian agent Crowell purchased the Indian reservation of eighteen hundred acres in 1837 for \$1.25 an acre. Maj. S. Donoho had rebuilt the fort in 1825.

Sixteen years after the first military presence at Fort Mitchell was fixed, the first permanent white settlement was rooted in the Glennville Beat, then a part of Barbour County. The beat was named for Methodist minister James Elizabeth Glenn, who founded the town in 1835. Two years later, the Alabama General Assembly created Russell County on December 18, 1832 from Creek Territory. Col Gilbert Christian Russell had fought in the Indian wars and later became a merchant and contractor. Barbour and Russell Counties were established on the same date and under similar circumstances.



*Sculpture designer Kathy Hamrick and Sacred Fire sculpture at the Chattahoochee Indian Heritage Center adjacent to Fort Mitchell. Photo courtesy of Mike and Kathy Hamrick*

Located in the northeastern part of the county, Girard was the first county seat from 1832 to 1834, with Crawford succeeding Girard until 1868 and Seale following Crawford until 1935. (Seale and Phenix City served jointly as county seat from 1926 to 1935, when Phenix City became the sole county seat.) Girard was named for Bordeaux, France, native Stephen Girard, the philanthropist and slave dealer who purchased much of the Muscogee territory that became Russell County. Girard was the last town in the county to incorporate.

The area developed rapidly, with John Godwin and Horace King constructing the first covered bridge to connect Alabama and Georgia at old Dillingham Street Bridge in 1832. King built the first two houses in Girard in 1833, one for Godwin and the other for himself. He proceeded to construct many of the other homes in Girard.

The circuit court met in Girard for the first time on October 14, with Ptolemy T. Harris presiding. This session was held in the yard of a Mr. Golding and relied on the work shed tool shops of Godwin for its offices. The first grand jury included Anderson Abercrombie as foreman, Lillie Sims, William Reynolds, George Ingram, Hiram Haney, Allen Arnold, Jack Riley, John Haney, Simeon Harris, Peyton Parker, Jesse Markan, John Pride, S. S. Coleman, James Fitzpatrick, and Moses Cox. One is left to wonder if Sims were a female and its implication for state legal history. The first lawyers admitted to the bar in Russell County were Barkley Martin, Ulysses Lewis, Benjamin Iverson, Robert Carnes, James Shealy, and Garrett Holenbeck. The first county commissioners in the class of 1833 were Hardeman Owens, Thomas M. Martin, and Anderson Abercrombie.

The various oaths taken by these attorneys included

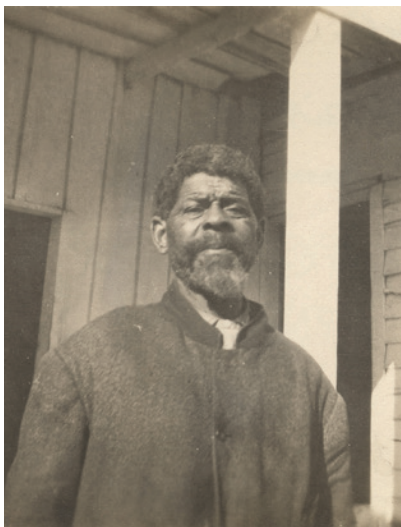


*Dillingham Street covered bridge over the Chattahoochee River between Columbus, Georgia and Girard, Alabama. Courtesy of Alabama Department of Archives and History*

one against dueling. The first trial was to charge six Indians with molesting several white settlers. Some of the Indians were hanged for this crime. The first murder trial in Russell County was listed as True Bill #20, which involved three soldiers at Fort Mitchell, namely James King, David Manning, and Jeremiah Austil. They had been sent to arrest Henderson Owens for illegally occupying Indian land. He was killed when shooting erupted after he resisted arrest. The incident caused such an uproar that President Andrew Jackson sent Key to resolve the issue. The soldiers were found guilty.

Leading up to the Civil War, King continued his bridge-building exploits, earning a reputation for his skills and his honesty. He was able to travel without restrictions throughout the Deep South. Through the influence of Robert M. Jemison, King was manumitted by an act of the legislature on February 3, 1846. Godwin and Wright later freed him. King may have been related to the family of Godwin's wife, Ann Wright.

King answered the clarion call to public service after the new capitol had burned in Montgomery in 1849. His



*African American man in Fort Mitchell, Alabama. Courtesy of Alabama Department of Archives and History*

rebuilt staircase has withstood the test of time. King was the wealthiest African American in Alabama in 1860.

After his success in the Battle of Nashville in December 1864, Gen. James Harrison Wilson was directed by Gen. George H. Thomas to head to the Deep South and to destroy its military centers in Tuscaloosa, Selma, Montgomery, Girard, Columbus, and Macon. He arrived in Girard on Easter Sunday, April 16, between 1:30 and 2 pm, and the fighting commenced. Confederate forces collapsed around 10 that night.

Wilson made his way across the Chattahoochee to Columbus at 11 on the night of April 17. On the morning of April 18, he ordered the destruction of all resources that could aid the Confederate cause. The Union cavalry vanguard departed Columbus on April 18. General Wilson had continued to fight unaware of the surrender on April 9.

The Reconstruction Acts of March 1867 enfranchised African Americans. As a registrar, Horace King became the first black officeholder in Lee and Russell Counties and enrolled the first black voters in those counties. He later served two concurrent terms in the legislature before relocating in 1872 to LaGrange, Georgia, where he died in 1885. Other African American lawmakers from Russell County were D. J. Daniels, Prince Gardner, Washington Johnson, and J. R. Treadwell. Daniels served in the state senate in 1872 and in the house in 1874. He spoke against the resolution to defeat the Sumner Civil Rights bill. A leader in the African Methodist Church in Russell County, Gardner served in the house in 1874. Daniels and Gardner were forced from office by Democrats. W. H. Chamber and A. G. Jones replaced Daniels and Gardner.

Phenix City was established as Brownville by an act of the legislature in House Bill (HB) 585 on February 23, 1883. T. S. Young served as the first mayor of Brownville. The board of aldermen met in the Masonic Building for the first time on March 27, 1883, with Young presiding. Brownville was named for Judge John Brown, who had died on October 23, 1873. Through HB 679 Brownville officially became Phenix City on February 19, 1889. The same source also cites the date of change as February 19, 1897. Brownville was a large part of the tract Miles Ingersoll sold to the Eagle Factory.

Located north of Girard, Brownville was established before the Civil War. Its Post Office called it Lively, and Central of Georgia Railroad called its depot Knight's Station. From around 1836 to the end of the century, African Americans comprised a majority of



*Whiskey barrels confiscated in 1916 government raid. Courtesy of Columbus State University Archives, Columbus State University, Columbus, Georgia*



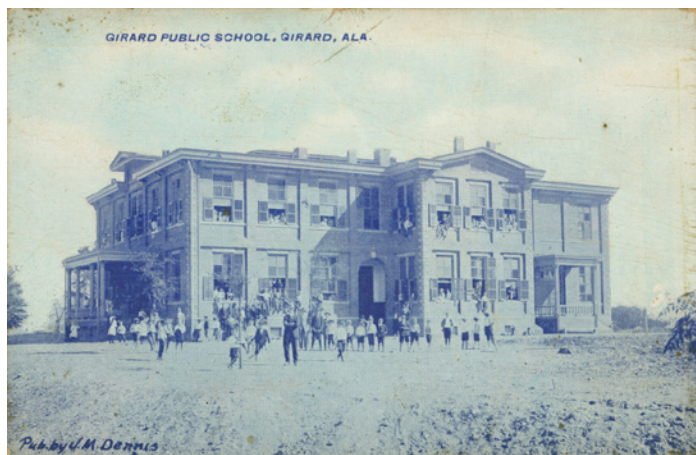


*Crowd gathered near the alley where Albert Patterson was murdered in Phenix City, Alabama. Courtesy of Alabama Department of Archives and History*

the population. Between 1840 and 1860, these enslaved people constituted 84 percent of the population.

Girard was incorporated by HB 333 on December 8, 1890. A Mr. West was its first mayor. Gambling and bootlegging flourished in 1915, although the state had prohibited alcohol sales. The Clean-Up Campaign of 1916 brought in fifty or seventy-five deputies from Montgomery, Birmingham, and Opelika, who confiscated illegal whiskey, beer, etc. Girard was placed under martial law on Wednesday, May 17, 1916.

Girard and Phenix City merged on August 9, 1923, with a population of 10,374. After consolidation, Dr. Ashby Floyd was appointed mayor, and Homer D. Cobb Sr., Isaac I. Moses, Clyde M. Knowles Sr., and Claude B. Gullatt served as commissioners until December 1923. The five-man board of commissioners was considered unconstitutional, and a board of fifteen aldermen and a mayor governed the city from December 1923 to September 1928. A three-man board of commissioners headed city government from 1928 to 1947, when it changed to a five-man board until 1953. The board reverted to a three-man arrangement until 1977, when the present five-member council form of government was adopted. It is headed by a mayor and



*Girard Public School, Girard, Ala. Courtesy of Alabama Department of Archives and History*

a city manager. Elected for the new government were George E. H. Chard, mayor; Jane Gullatt, at large; Gene Oswalt, District 1; Billy Ray Head, District 2; and Austin Sumbry, Jr., District 3. Sumbry was the city's first African American councilor. The Austin Sumbry Park was named in his honor. In 1976 Marie Rose "Dolly" Wilson became the first woman elected to the Russell County Commission. In 2012 former Canadian Football League standout-turned banker Eddie N. Lowe became the city's first African American mayor.

Phenix City has experienced its share of ups and downs. For example, in 1929 the Great Depression had a profoundly negative impact on the city, forcing it into bankruptcy and causing it to be placed under receivership for fifteen years. Local authorities came to view crime as a source of revenue. Soldiers from nearby Fort Benning saw this as an opportunity to drink, gamble, and engage in prostitution. Phenix City became known as Sin City, until former state senator Albert Patterson decided to fight the crime bosses. He was assassinated on June 18, 1954 in the alley between the Coulter Building and the Elite Café by crime bosses shortly after winning the nomination for attorney general. Gov. Gordon Persons placed the city under martial law from Thursday night, July 22, 1954, to January 1955. This period in local history was captured in 1955 by three books and the Hollywood film, *The Phenix City Story*. The city was named an All-American City by *Look* magazine and the National League of Municipalities the same year.

Central High and South Girard High Schools were merged after the closing of the 1969-1970 school year. The Elementary School of Girard was established by the legislature in 1883. The school provided classes for black and white students, a rarity for the turn of the century. In 1909 the president of the school board persuaded Gunby Jordan, president of the Eagle and Pheonix Mill, in helping to construct a new school building, which was built on the site of the 1867 school and was the first public school in Girard. The school was accredited as an elementary school in 1923, and the name of the two-story Neo-Classical brick building was changed from Girard Elementary School to Girard High School.

Shreveport, Louisiana, native Lloyd A. Bowie was principal at South Girard from 1963 until it closed in 1969. He retired in 1972. Former student Elizabeth Henry Wilson said, "He was more than a principal and like a father to us."

The old Palace Theater was demolished in 1970. Opened on September 2, 1926 as the Manos Theatre, it was considered the crown jewel of the Manos

family's vaudeville movie houses in the area. The theater was home to concerts, comedy, dances, family entertainment, and more. Closure came in 1956.

Through Acts 394 and 1277 of the 1973 session of the Alabama legislature and the Alabama State Board of Education, Chattahoochee Valley Community College was established on September 26 and October 18 to serve Russell, Lee, Chambers, Barbour, Bullock, and Macon Counties. Classes were held initially in temporary quarters across the city until two permanent buildings and fifteen temporary buildings were completed in January 1976. Troy University opened a branch in facilities across the street to enable students to complete the final two years of a four-year program they had begun at the local community college. The first president and Columbus, Georgia, native, Dr. Ralph M. Savage presided over the initial graduating class of ten spring students and seven summer students in June 1974. The number of graduates had swelled to nearly 300 by May 1976.

Russell County occupies a special place in state history. A quick perusal shows that Horace King was the first person to have his portrait displayed permanently at the state capitol. I noticed the portrait while conducting research at the Russell County Courthouse in September or October 2002 and asked the Russell County Commission for permission to use it for my program at the capitol on February 3, 2003. David King, a great-great-grandson of Horace King, spoke



*David King, Richard Bailey, and Ed Harbison unveil portrait of Horace King. Courtesy of Richard Bailey*



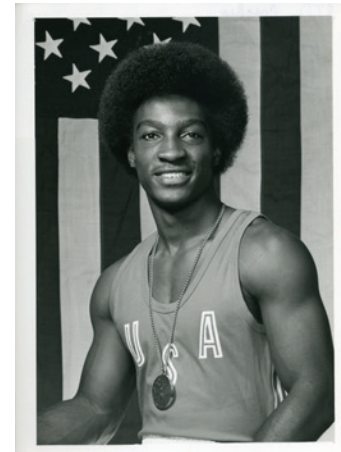
*Montgomery Advertiser, February 22, 2017*

at the event and helped to unveil the portrait. I returned the portrait to the Russell County Courthouse the next day. I learned from capitol tour guide Kizzie Long in March 2003 that school children had dashed into the capitol in droves in search of the King portrait, prompting me to consider placing the portrait there permanently. With the splendid cooperation of Alabama Historical Commission director Lisa Jones, I sponsored a second program there on February 21, 2017 and unveiled the portrait for permanent display. David King is sole family member on record to have viewed the magnificent staircase of Horace King and to have been photographed at the capitol.

Another example focuses on Girard native Albert C. Baker, the only person to serve on the Arizona Territorial Supreme Court (as chief justice for four years) and the Arizona Supreme Court (as justice for two and one-half years).

In nearby Seale was born Peter A. Brannon, one of three persons in state history to have served as president of the Alabama Historical Association and as director of the Alabama Department of Archives and History.

In June 1976, Harvey Glance won an Olympic Gold Medal in Montreal as a member of the four-man 400-meter relay team. He also starred in the 1979 Pam-Am games. The 1979 Auburn University graduate was inducted into the Alabama and Chattahoochee Valley Sports Hall of Fame. A local street bears his name.



*Harvey Glance. Photo courtesy of Special Collections & Archives, Auburn University Libraries*

Austin Sumbry Jr. became the city's first African American councilor in 1977. In 1928, he founded the Cooperative and Union Aid Society to bury the dead. Sumbry established Rosemont Park in 1955. The city renamed it posthumously in his honor on February 21, 1984. A street in Tuskegee also bears his name. Former three-term county commissioner Isaiah Sumbry speaks admiringly of his granduncle's achievements.

Little wonder *Business Week* named Phenix City in 2007 as the nation's No. 1 Best Suburb to rear a family, citing such major pluses as Chattahoochee Valley Community College and the satellite campus of Troy University. Even the Phoenix bird, a symbol of hope, might agree and exclaim the municipality is still rising.



# Fall Pilgrimage

## PHENIX CITY AND RUSSELL COUNTY

*Note: All Times Eastern Time Zone*

### FRIDAY, OCTOBER 11

#### Pre-meeting Tours “On-Your-Own” in Russell County

*Note: Times when sites are available are listed beside the site.*

*See map for addresses.*

- Crawford Masonic Lodge (11 a.m. to 3 p.m.)
- Crockettville Store Museum (11 a.m. to 3 p.m.)
- Fort Mitchell Historic Site (11 a.m. to 5 p.m.)
- Jones Store Museum, Smiths Station (10 a.m. to 2 p.m.)
- Museum of Wonder Drive Thru (always open)
- Old Seale Courthouse (11 a.m. to 3 p.m.)

**5:30 p.m. Opening Program: “Civil Rights in Phenix City, Alabama”**  
Rev. Isaiah Sumbry, Beaming Light Baptist Church  
Marriott Hotel

**6:30 p.m. Reception at Troy University**  
(next to the Marriott Hotel)

### SATURDAY, OCTOBER 12

**9:00 a.m. Registration, Coffee, Book Sales**  
Marriott Hotel

**10:00 a.m. Program**

Dr. Richard Bailey, President of the Association, presiding

Welcome from Mayor Eddie Lowe

Proclamation of Horace King Day

*“The Life and Legacy of Horace King”*

Tom Lenard, Documentarian

Video Message from King Family members

Honoring Peter Brannon

**11:30 a.m. Buffett Lunch at the Marriott**

**1:00 p.m. Horace King Marker Dedication**

**1:00 – 4:00 Tours On-Your-Own**

- Old Post Office, featuring WPA Mural
- Albert Patterson statue
- Russell County Courthouse, featuring Albert Patterson artifacts
- South Girard School, featuring materials from alumni
- Trinity Methodist Church
- New Central Baptist Church
- Franchise Baptist Church

*Steerback riders in Russell County.  
Courtesy of Alabama Department of  
Archives and History*





## CRAWFORD MASONIC LODGE

The lodge was erected in 1848 to serve as the Tuckabatchee Masonic Lodge No. 96. At the time, Crawford, Alabama (formerly known as Crockettville from 1832 to 1843, named after Davy Crockett), was the county seat of Russell County. The Masons met in the building from 1848 to 1995. Members of the Crawford Masonic Lodge No. 863 built a modern structure on the property, and a local landowner purchased the historic building and moved it 100 feet to the east, where it stands today. The building remained vacant until 2012, when a newly elected Russell County commissioner proposed creating a community-based committee to lead a restoration effort, which was completed in 2015. The building currently serves as a community center and museum.

## CROCKETTSVILLE STORE MUSEUM

The historic Crockettville General Store Museum resides in Crawford Park and serves as a local community museum. The community of Crockettville was settled around the time Russell County was formed in 1832. One prized and unique artifact in the museum is the seed counter, which resided in the Dupriest store on Highway 51 in neighboring Lee County. The March 3, 2019, tornado that caused so much destruction lifted the counter from storage, depositing it in a nearby muddy field. The seed drawers were destroyed and had to be restored by volunteers, and the seed counter is back on display.



## FORT MITCHELL HISTORIC SITE

Fort Mitchell received National Historic Landmark status in 1990 and features a reconstruction of the 1813 fort that was an important United States military post in the Creek War. It includes a visitor's center, a museum, a diorama of different eras, a collection of historic carriages in the Carriage House, a restored nineteenth-century log home, and the grave site of John Crowell, Alabama's first territorial delegate to the United States House of Representatives and the first Alabama member of the same body. The site also features the Chattahoochee Indian Heritage Center, which includes interpretive panels that tell the story of the Creek War and the subsequent forced removal of Creeks to Indian Territory. A ceremonial sacred fire sculpture stands at the center of the monument. Fort Mitchell National Cemetery is adjacent to the historic site. The cost for admission to the site is \$6 per adult (\$5 for seniors/military) and can be paid at the visitor's center.

*Photo courtesy of Fort Mitchell Historic Site*



### JONES STORE MUSEUM

George Wyatt Jones built the Jones Store around 1910. He and his wife, Maggie Huguley Jones, operated the store in the Smiths Station area for decades. The couple settled in the area in the late 1800s and opened their store on Old Opelika Road on the present-day site of Smiths Station High School. In 2017, the structure was gifted to the city and relocated to the Smiths Station Government Center Campus the same year. Following restoration, the structure reopened as the Historic Jones Store Museum at a ceremony held on July 12, 2019. The store houses a number of artifacts documenting Smiths Station’s history and includes exhibits commemorating individuals who have contributed to the city both past and present.



*Photo courtesy of Cyndi Farmer*



### MUSEUM OF WONDER DRIVE THRU

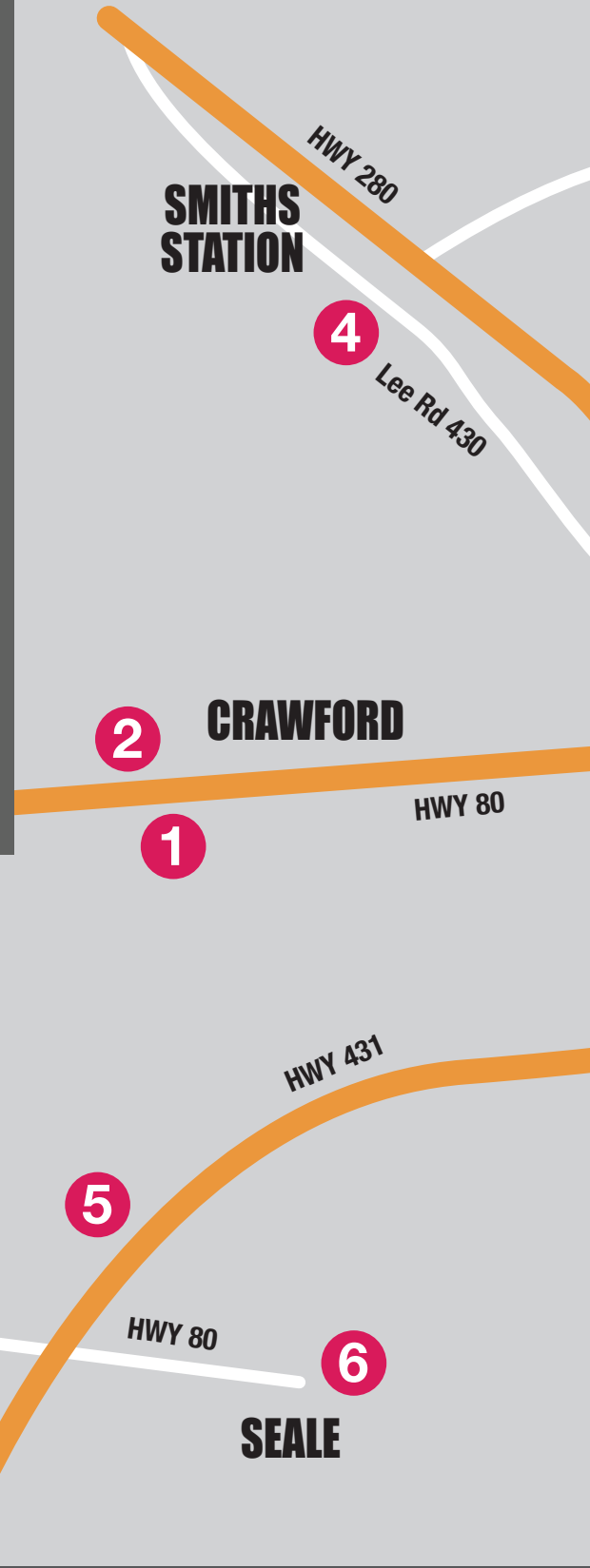
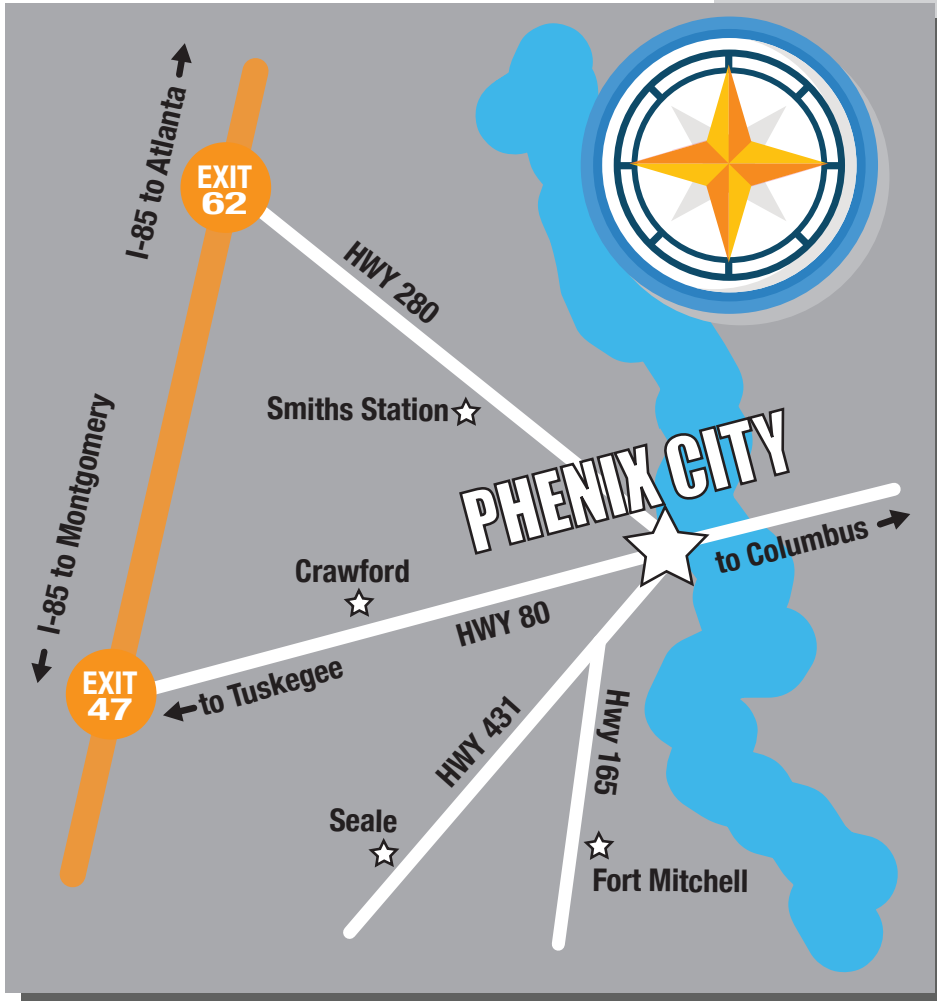
Butch Anthony is a contemporary, self-taught artist, maker, and collector of objects and antiques in Seale. At the age of fourteen, he built a one-room log cabin that became a workshop for his many creations and eventually the first incarnation of the Museum of Wonder. As his skills developed, Butch began to build and fashion furniture, sculptures, and many other works of art and constructions. The Museum soon became too small and too popular for the log cabin to contain. In 2014, he built “The World’s First Drive-Thru Museum” out of shipping containers, and it contains a rotating display of Butch’s handcrafted designs and curiosities for the wonderment of visitors and passersby alike. Visit the museum at [www.museumofwonder.com](http://www.museumofwonder.com).

*Photo courtesy of Butch Anthony*



### OLD SEALE COURTHOUSE

Following the creation of Lee County after the Civil War, the county seat of Russell County moved from Crawford to the more centralized location of Seale. Originally a wooden structure constructed in 1868, the red bricks of the current structure were added in 1908. Phenix City and Seale served jointly as the county seat beginning in 1926, and then after Phenix City was declared the sole county seat in 1935, the building served as a branch courthouse until 1943, when it was permanently closed. Following extensive renovations, the courthouse now serves as a community center and event venue.

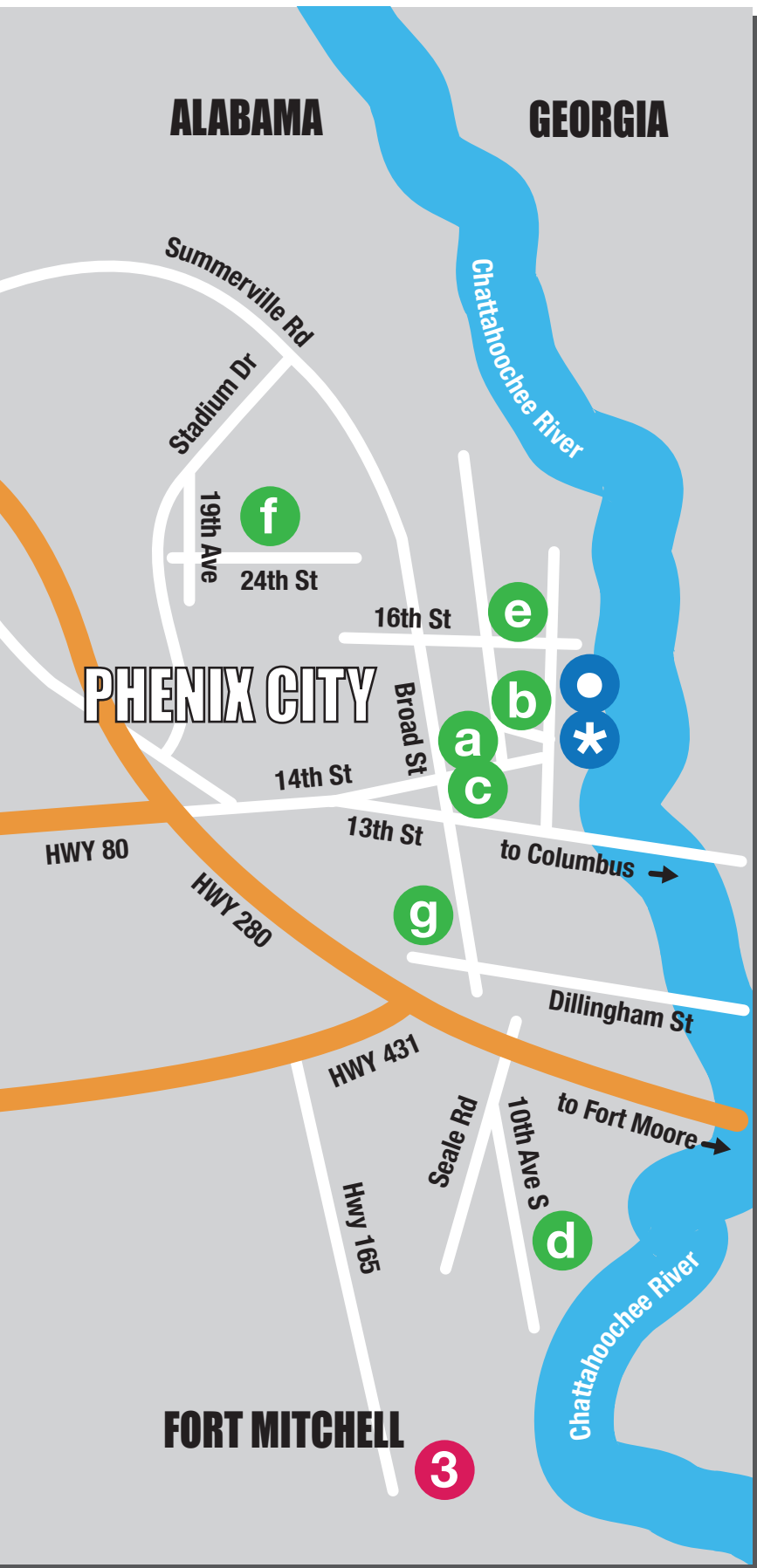


**Friday Tours:**

*On-your-own; see schedule for available hours.*

- 1** Crawford Masonic Lodge  
4499 U.S. Hwy 80, Phenix City
- 2** Crocketsville Store Museum  
4504 AL-169, Phenix City
- 3** Fort Mitchell Historic Site  
553 AL-165, Fort Mitchell
- 4** Jones Store Museum  
1361 County Road 298, Smiths Station
- 5** Museum of Wonder Drive-Thru  
970 AL-169, Seale
- 6** Old Seale Courthouse  
5 Jackson Street, Seale





**Hotel:**

- Marriott Phenix City Riverfront**  
1400 Whitewater Ave. 334-664-9840  
\$154 USD - \$164 USD/night before 09/10

**Reception:**

- Troy University Riverfront Campus**  
1510 Whitewater Ave.

**Saturday Tours, Phenix City:**

- Old Post Office**  
500 14th Street
- Albert Patterson Statue**  
Corner of 5th Ave & 15th Street
- Russell County Courthouse**  
501 14th Street
- South Girard School**  
521 Fontaine Road
- Trinity Methodist Church**  
1600 5th Ave
- New Central Baptist Church**  
1702 24th Street
- Franchise Missionary Baptist Church**  
1000 Dillingham Street



Be on the lookout for the red and white AHA signs!

Scan this QR code for access to the Google Map.



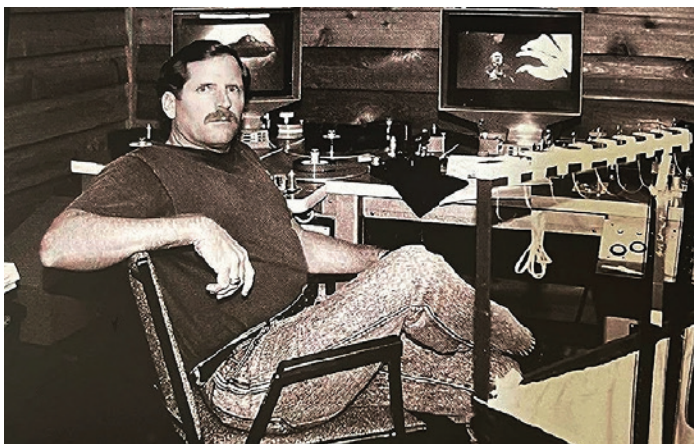
Please don't rely on the scale of this map for navigation.

**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 11,  
5:30 P.M.  
“CIVIL RIGHTS IN  
PHENIX CITY, ALABAMA”  
REV. ISAIAH SUMBRY**

A native of Russell County, **Isaiah Sumbry** is a 1980 graduate of Mount Olive High School in Fort Mitchell and earned degrees from Selma University and Stillman College. He is a former music instructor in Russell County and Muscogee County, Georgia schools and has served churches in Russell County as pastor since 2000. Sumbry served as District 4 Russell County Commissioner for twelve years, and his service on boards, commissions, and agencies throughout the community is extensive, earning him numerous awards and recognitions. He is pastor of Beaming Light Baptist Church in Phenix City. ▶



**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 12, 10:00 A.M.  
“THE LEGACY OF HORACE KING”  
TOM LENARD**



Originally from Shreveport, Louisiana, **Tom Lenard** has been an editor, producer, and director of photography since the early 1970s. He worked in WTVM Channel 9’s Production Department while attending Columbus College, transferring to Auburn University (AU) in 1976 to continue his education while working for Alabama Public Television at AU to develop live television productions and documentaries. Lenard has produced, filmed, and edited numerous high concept TV commercials, documentary, and 35mm sci-fi movie theatre short film messages. He currently lives in Opelika. ◀

**SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT!**

In recognition of the Alabama Historical Association Fall Pilgrimage and the international reputation of Horace King, Phenix City mayor Eddie Lowe and members of the city council will declare Saturday, October 12 as “Horace King Day.” At the pilgrimage, attendees will join Mayor Lowe and council members to unveil a new Horace King historical marker and celebrate a section of a highway named for King. *“Declaring October 12th as Horace King Day is a significant honor for Phenix City. Horace King’s legacy as a pioneering engineer and bridge builder has left an unforgettable mark on our community and the broader region. It is essential to celebrate and remember his contributions, which continue to inspire and uplift us today.”* - Mayor Eddie Lowe

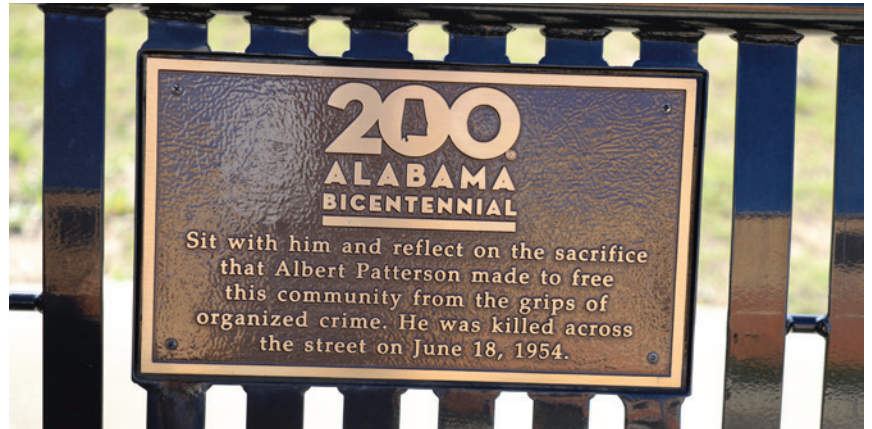


Mayor Eddie Lowe



**ALBERT PATTERSON STATUE**

Phenix City’s Albert Patterson statue and memorial bench stand just across the street from the alley where he was assassinated on June 18, 1954. Patterson, a prominent local attorney, had recently won the election as Democratic nominee for state attorney general, and he had promised during his campaign to clean up the city and county from organized crime and corrupt politicians. Albert Fuller, chief deputy sheriff, was convicted for the murder and sentenced to life in prison. The statue was created by Phenix City artist Jon Lumpkin and unveiled on June 26, 2020, as part of the Alabama Bicentennial.



**FRANCHISE MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH**

Franchise Missionary Baptist Church’s history dates to 1852, when a few black citizens met under a brush harbor on the banks of the Chattahoochee River and made a joyful noise through praise and worship. Because their manner of praise and worship was a bit too loud for some of the neighboring people, this group of believers was moved to Girard Baptist Church. When they were considered too loud for that sanctuary, they constructed a wood-frame building in 1882, and the congregation adopted the name Franchise Baptist Church. After an eventual move to a brick structure, and following numerous renovations, Franchise expanded to the current building in 1999. The congregation has been under the effective and dynamic pastoral guidance of Dr. Raymond Cochran Sr. for 56 years!



**NEW CENTRAL MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH**

New Central Missionary Baptist Church was founded when a group of members from Shiloh Baptist Church decided to branch out and start their own congregation. Rev. Ruben Lanier, the first pastor, donated the land and the foundation was laid for Central Baptist Church. The original location of the church was on 26th Street in Phenix City, across from the cemetery where enslaved persons were buried. When the original church building burned in 1924, members met at the Masonic Hall until New Central Missionary Baptist Church was erected. Rev. Jeffrey L. Dancy Sr. currently serves as pastor.







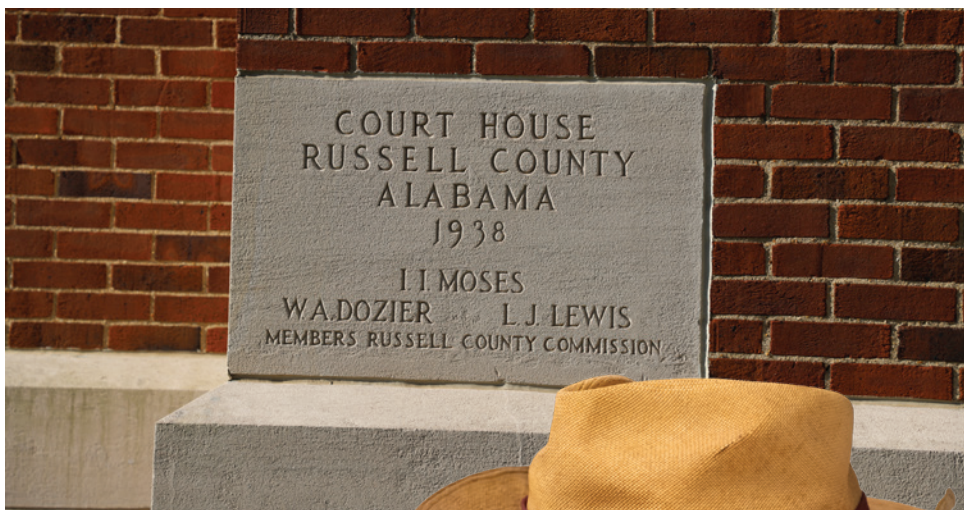
## THE OLD POST OFFICE NEW DEAL MURAL

The Old Post Office is home to one of 18 murals commissioned for Alabama post offices as part of the Works Progress Administration of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's New Deal during the Great Depression. The artist, John Kelly Fitzpatrick (1888-1953), painted the mural Cotton in 1938. Fitzpatrick, a Wetumpka native, was a well-established artist in Alabama by the 1930s and helped found the Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts and the Dixie Art Colony. His only other post office mural was painted in Ozark, Alabama, and titled Early Industry in Dale County.



## RUSSELL COUNTY COURTHOUSE

The Russell County Justice Building was designed by Columbus, Georgia, architect James Joseph Walton Biggers Sr. and built in 1938. Thanks to museum specialists from the Alabama Department of Archives and History, we will have a chance to view an exhibit curated for the Fall Pilgrimage related to the assassination of Albert Patterson, which occurred on June 18, 1954, just a block from the courthouse. The exhibit will feature the hat and boots that Patterson was wearing at the time of his murder, as well as documents from the Russell Betterment Association.



*Photos courtesy of the Alabama Department of Archives and History.*



## SOUTH GIRARD HIGH SCHOOL

South Girard High School opened its doors in 1945 to Black children, although the small brick building school was inadequate from the beginning with only twelve classrooms and no dining area, library, science labs, or band room. Despite these deficiencies, students found more than expected at the place they affectionately called the “Barn,” and although invisible to the larger community, city, and state, the school and its dedicated teachers instilled a sense of dignity and pride in its students from its beginning to 1970. The school currently serves eighth graders, and a memorial plaque and historical marker remind the community of the school’s important past. When you visit the school on October 12, you will have a chance to meet alumni of the school and learn about the many graduates with national reputations in business, law, science, athletics, and more!



## TRINITY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Although the exact date of the establishment of the congregation is not known, Trinity United Methodist Church has served citizens of Phenix City and Russell and Lee Counties, Alabama, since 1872. Church historians suggest that the first structure was likely a one-room building, followed by a larger one constructed in the 1880s. In 1927, the congregation renovated the sanctuary and added Sunday School rooms using a plan drawn by Columbus architect T. F. Lockwood. In preparation for hosting the annual conference in 1947, extensive renovations were completed, including the installation of a new pipe organ. Most of the Methodist churches in Phenix City can trace their roots to the outreach ministries of Trinity United Methodist Church. The phrase, “A Warm-hearted Church...At the heart of The City...With the City on its Heart,” expresses well the spirit of this congregation.



## *Congratulations to the following award winners!*

### **CLINTON JACKSON AND EVELYN COLEY RESEARCH GRANT**

This graduate student research award supports new research on an Alabama-related topic. Congratulations to Allie Lopez, Baylor University, for her dissertation project, “The Injustice That Permeates: Jim Crow, Fear, and Dispossession in Rural Alabama, 1930–1985.” Pictured are Staci Glover and Allie Lopez.



### **VIRGINIA V. HAMILTON AWARD**

The Hamilton Award is given for contributions to Alabama history which encourage joint endeavors and mutual understanding among avocational and professional historians. Congratulations to Barry McNealy of the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute. Pictured, from left to right: Bert Frandsen, Lateefah Muhammad, Barry McNealy, and Hannah Garmon.





## HISTORICAL MUSEUM AWARD

The Historical Museum Award recognizes exceptional achievement by small and large museums in promoting state or local history. Congratulations to the Scottsboro Boys Museum. *Pictured, from left to right, Lasagne Smith, Thomas Reidy, and Rhonda Davis.*

## JAMES F. SULZBY BOOK AWARD

The Sulzby Award recognizes excellence in a book that has made the most significant contribution to greater knowledge and appreciation of Alabama history. Congratulations to Dr. R. Isabela Morales for her book *Happy Dreams of Liberty: An American Family in Slavery and Freedom*. Pictured are Christine Sears and Isabela Morales.





## CALL FOR PAPERS

77th Annual Meeting  
Opelika, Alabama  
April 9-11, 2025

The Alabama Historical Association invites paper proposals to be given at its 77<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting in Opelika, Alabama, on April 9-11, 2025. This meeting is open to scholars, educators, public historians, students, local historians, and members of the general public who share an interest in the history of Alabama.

Proposals must include a one-page abstract of a **20-minute presentation** in one of two categories:

- 1) Traditional presentation – original research, often based in primary sources, in Alabama history;
- 2) Public history – projects related to archival practice, exhibit curation, or creative dissemination of Alabama history content.

Also required is a brief curriculum vitae or résumé (two-page max).



Proposals must be submitted electronically

at <https://aub.ie/AHACFP> by **October 1, 2024**.

All presenters are required to register for the conference and be members in good standing of the Alabama Historical Association by the time of the annual meeting. The committee gives preference to presenters who have not given papers at an annual meeting within the past three years.

**If you would like to discuss your proposal or have other questions:**

Veronica Henderson, Program Committee Chair, [veronica.henderson@auburn.edu](mailto:veronica.henderson@auburn.edu) or

Dr. Mark Wilson, Secretary, [mwilson@auburn.edu](mailto:mwilson@auburn.edu), 334-844-6198

**For more information on the Alabama Historical Association, visit** [www.alabamahistory.net](http://www.alabamahistory.net)



## 2025 NOMINATIONS

## NOMINATIONS SOUGHT FOR 2025 AWARDS

*The following awards will be presented at the annual meeting on April 10, 2025.*

- The **Clinton Jackson and Evelyn Coley Book Award** goes to the best book or pamphlet focusing on local history, including but not limited to the history of an Alabama community, town or county, or any institution therein. Works published since January 2023 are eligible, and those written by non-professional historians are welcome. Nominations must be postmarked by December 31, 2024. For submission information, contact Christopher Maloney at [cpm0003@auburn.edu](mailto:cpm0003@auburn.edu).
- The **James Ray Kuykendall Award** honors a local historical society in Alabama for outstanding achievements and for significant contributions to a greater appreciation of community and state history. Any historical society is eligible to apply by January 15, 2025, provided it has not received the award in the last ten years. For a copy of the application/nomination form, visit [www.alabamahistory.net](http://www.alabamahistory.net) or Erik London at [erik.london@archives.alabama.gov](mailto:erik.london@archives.alabama.gov).
- The **Robert J. “Jeff” Jakeman Digital History Award** recognizes projects that deliver information on Alabama’s past using the Internet and social media tools. Both large and small projects will be awarded, and a full description of the award and online submission form can be found at [www.alabamahistory.net](http://www.alabamahistory.net). The deadline for submission is January 15, 2025. For more information, contact Marty Olliff at [molliff@troy.edu](mailto:molliff@troy.edu)
- The **Sarah Woolfolk Wiggins Award** recognizes a master’s thesis or doctoral dissertation completed at any institution of higher education in the last two years focusing on Alabama history. Dissertations or theses defended in 2022, 2023, and 2024 are eligible for submission and should be sent as a PDF file to Dr. Ben Severance at [bseveran@aum.edu](mailto:bseveran@aum.edu) by December 31, 2024.

For more information on all of these awards, visit [www.alabamahistory.net](http://www.alabamahistory.net).

# The AHA would like to thank the following individuals for their generous support!

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*Thank  
you*



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**77th Annual Meeting**

**April 9-11, 2025**

**Auburn Marriott Opelika Resort & Spa at Grand National  
Opelika, Alabama**

Visit [www.alabamahistory.net](http://www.alabamahistory.net) for hotel room blocks and more information.

Photo courtesy of Christopher Johnson

