

PRESERVATION

Alabama Historical Commission

REPORT

VOL.40, NO. 5

AUGUST-SEPTEMBER 2013

ALABAMA'S NEW HISTORIC TAX CREDITS

This May the Alabama Legislature passed landmark legislation for historic home and business owners. State rehabilitation income tax credits for preservation projects will be available beginning October 1st.

Developers of income-producing projects now have a state credit that mirrors the existing federal rehabilitation credit. But there is a significant difference in the Alabama credit. The new law also provides state income tax incentives for historic homeowners.

The law allows owners to take 25% of the cost spent towards a historic rehabilitation project as a credit. These types of credits stimulate restoration of historic downtown business districts and neighborhoods across Alabama, creating new jobs and putting money back into the local economy.

Twenty million dollars in credits will be available each year for the next three years. "We expect the competition to be stiff," says current federal tax credit coordinator Chloe Mercer. "Those applications which arrive on-time and are completed by experienced hands will stand the best chance."



One of this year's *Places In Peril* nominees, The *Thomas Jefferson Hotel* in Birmingham, is a great candidate for *Alabama's* new historic rehabilitation tax credits.

The property must be listed in the National Register either individually or within a district. For owners whose buildings are not currently listed, they must consult with the Alabama Historical Commission for an official determination of its eligibility. This is the first part of the application process. In order to continue with a project, the proposed work must meet the U. S. Secretary of the Interior's "Standards for Rehabilitation." In general, these standards focus on repairing original materials rather than replacing them.

The third part of the application process documents the completion of the project. If the project meets all the standards, a certificate is issued. Owners can take the tax credit in the taxable year they begin using the building again.

"Alabama has so many historic residential and commercial buildings that will benefit from the incentive," said former AHC historic preservation division director, Elizabeth Brown. "Its potential to ignite revitalization in downtown and historic neighborhoods is exciting."

See http://preserveala.org/taxcredits.aspx?sm=i_b.

20 YEARS OF "PLACES IN PERIL"



"Constructed in 1823, *Locust Hill* is a fine and very early residence in Tusculumbia, and one of the oldest surviving brick houses in the state. It retains many of its fine mantelpieces and Federal style woodwork." Robert Gamble, State Architectural Historian.

The "Places in Peril" program began over twenty years ago. Inspired by the National Trust's yearly listing of "America's Most Endangered Historic Places," a handful of Alabama preservationists decided to develop a similar roster for their own state. They knew it was no magic bullet, but it could bring attention to landmarks Alabama should not lose.

The initial 1994 list of 10 "Alabama's Most Endangered Properties" got statewide news coverage. A full article with color pictures followed in the fall issue of Alabama Heritage magazine. Since then the joint project of the Alabama Historical Commission, the Alabama Trust for Historic Preservation, and Alabama Heritage has highlighted 216 places.

Twenty years later, more than a quarter of the listings are real success stories. Tusculumbia's 1823 Locust Hill and Tuscaloosa's 1932 Queen City Pool are among the 59 once-endangered places that now have a secure future. Media attention inspired a couple to buy Locust Hill and make one of the city's earliest houses their home.

The Queen City Pool reflects the influence Frank Lloyd Wright had on Alabama architect Don Buell Schuyler. In 1998, few appreciated its architectural significance. Once vacant and crumbling, today it is a transportation museum.

Thirty-five or 16% of the listings are gone—lost to demolition, nature, or neglect. In minutes, a tornado destroyed Morgan County's Murphrey House. A rare 1820s Tidewater Cottage, it went from being a success story to a major loss. In Conecuh County, a wrecking ball ended a long-fought battle over the elegant, turn of the century courthouse designed by Frank Lockwood.

"These places give Alabamians a chance to change history."

Melanie Betz

But 122 important Alabama Landmarks are still in play. The 1855 Italianate Bluff City Inn could be a fabulous boutique hotel, giving tourists a reason to linger longer in downtown Eufaula. Montgomery's experiment in modern architecture—the 1947 Grove Court Apartments—could afford an investor real returns.

"All these wonderful places give Alabamians a chance to change history by helping save an important piece of it," says AHC architectural historian Melanie Betz.

For more information go to: http://preserveala.org/preservationscoreboard.aspx?sm=f_j.

Historic Places, Meaningful Spaces: Birmingham Civil Rights Movement 50 Years Later

On September 15, 1963, four little girls preparing for church services died when a bomb exploded in Birmingham's 16th Street Baptist Church. This horrific killing fueled Birmingham's Civil Rights activists and leaders.

For much of the year, they had been marching to protest local laws and practices requiring racial segregation in stores, restaurants, and theaters. In May, images of police attacking protesters—including children—with fire hoses and police dogs flooded newspapers and televisions worldwide.

Earlier that spring Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr, wrote one of America's most famous letters from a jail cell in Birmingham.

The 1963 events did not start or end Birmingham's Civil Rights movement, but they marked a turning point in our national history. And they helped bring about landmark legislation that changed and continues to change American lives. The 1964 Civil Rights Act ended segregation in public places and banned employment discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.

To commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of 1963, Birmingham has been hosting dozens of events throughout the year. Plays, musical performances, art exhibits, lectures, and conferences honor thousands of ordinary people, mostly black, who risked their lives to end segregation.

The **American Association for Landmarks and History**, selected the city for its **September 18-21, 2013** conference. "Turning Points: Ordinary People, Extraordinary Change" offers reflections on the Birmingham events, as well as tours of key sites. Conference info: <http://www.aaslh.org/am2013.htm>.



Above: **16th Street Baptist Church**, site of the 1963 bombing.

Right: **Carver Theater**, located in the 4th Avenue Historic District.

Below: **16th Street Baptist Church Stained Glass Window**.



Birmingham Civil Rights Landmarks

Birmingham boasts over 100 Civil Rights-era sites on the **National Register of Historic Places**. Many are downtown and are connected by a marked walking trail. Two churches—16th Street Baptist Church and Bethel Baptist Church and Parsonage—are National Historic Landmarks and may become World Heritage Sites.

- **16th Street Baptist Church** served as King's headquarters for the 1963 marches and demonstrations. The bombing focused international attention on Birmingham.
- **Bethel Baptist Church and Parsonage**, located in a working class neighborhood, headquartered the Alabama Christian Movement for Human Rights. From this church, Rev. Fred Shuttlesworth helped ignite the Birmingham movement.
- **The Civil Rights Historic District** includes 40 places where demonstrators protested or planned their strategies. It includes Kelly Ingram Park, where police turned fire hoses and dogs on peaceful protestors. The A. G. Gaston Motel served as headquarters for the 1963 movement leaders.
- **4th Avenue Historic District** was Birmingham's Jim Crow-era business district. The **Carver Theatre** is now a Jazz Hall of Fame. The individually listed **Vance Federal Courthouse** and the **A. G. Gaston Building** are nearby.
- **Miles Memorial College, Smithfield Historic District**, and **15 African American Churches** are outside the city center.

50th Anniversary Events

August 22 – Lyric Theater, "Belly of the Beast" – a vocal duel between a black gospel choir and white bluegrass singers – captures the segregation era. The Lyric is the only existing theater that allowed blacks and whites to attend performances at the same time.

September 1-7 – Fourth Avenue Business District, The Taste of 4th Avenue Jazz Festival and the Civil Rights Film Festival at the Carver Theater.

September 15 – Sixteenth Street Baptist Church, Commemorating the 50th anniversary of the church.

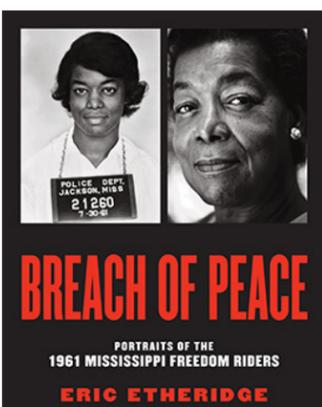
November 3-December 27 – Downtown Birmingham Public Library, "Unseen, Unforgotten: The Civil Rights Photographs of *The Birmingham News*."



For a complete list go to:

- <http://birminghamal.org/events/50th-anniversary-of-the-civil-rights-movement-in-birmingham/>
- <http://bcri.org/resources/images/calendar2013final.pdf>

Montgomery's Freedom Rides Museum Opens 2013 Road to Equality Exhibit



Powerful photographs of Freedom Riders add depth and detail to new and returning works Southern artists created for the museum. The portraits, mug shots, and personal stories come from Eric Etheridge's 2008 book, *Breach of Peace: The 1961 Mississippi Freedom Riders*.

Yvonne Wells' new quilt "Let Freedom Ride II" is a showstopper. Thanks to private donors and the artists, favorite works by Jean Grosser and Deborah Shadrack are on exhibit and in the permanent collection.

www.freedomridemuseum.org



Quilt Detail "Let Freedom Ride II" by Yvonne Wells.

ALABAMA DOWNTOWNS COMING ALIVE

Our historic downtowns are treasure chests. They enrich us in many ways. Communities taking the Main Street approach use a town's unique character to bring dollars, people, and vibrancy to downtowns. Archaeologists and architectural historians burrow beneath city surfaces revealing rich and hidden histories.

Mary Helmer Joins Main Street Alabama

Five years in the making, Main Street Alabama is up and running. New President/State Coordinator Mary Helmer brings extensive experience helping downtowns thrive.

As the first full-time staff person, Helmer will initially focus on assisting existing local Main Street communities. Working with merchants, entrepreneurs, city leaders and supporters, she will help these programs qualify for national certification.

In addition, she will work with partner organizations offering guidance and support to communities interested in using the proven Main Street approach.

"Mary brings tremendous economic revitalization experience and expertise to Alabama," said Main Street Alabama chair Charles Ball. "Her know-how creating jobs and growing sustainable new businesses stood out among the dozens of applicants we had."

Helmer led local and statewide revitalization programs in Kansas for 15 years. "I am eager to help Alabama's small towns and downtowns develop strategies for new and expanding businesses," says Helmer, "Providing training to help them succeed is one of my favorite parts of the job," she added.

Main Street Alabama incorporated in 2010 as a 501(c) 3 nonprofit to serve as state coordinator of the Main Street program in Alabama. Main Street® is a national model designed to bring jobs, dollars, and people to small towns and commercial districts. Main Street programs leverage private investment and capitalize on the unique appeal of historic downtowns. The result is one of the most successful economic revitalization strategies in the country. Main Street Alabama is dedicated to nurturing successful revitalization programs across the state.



Uncovering Tuscaloosa's Urban Past

It was a parking lot that people walked past every day. But below the asphalt lay thousands of artifacts, rich with details about Tuscaloosa's downtown history. Among them were fragments of imported ivory, Spanish coins, a Mason's pipe, and movable type from a printing press.

"This was a very busy part of the city," said Brandon Thompson, the University of Alabama archaeologist leading the excavation. Both Thompson and Matt Gage, the Office of Archaeological Research director, were astonished by the site's richness. Layer by layer they uncovered 13 privies, 2 wells, and 40 architectural elements that appeared on early fire insurance maps.

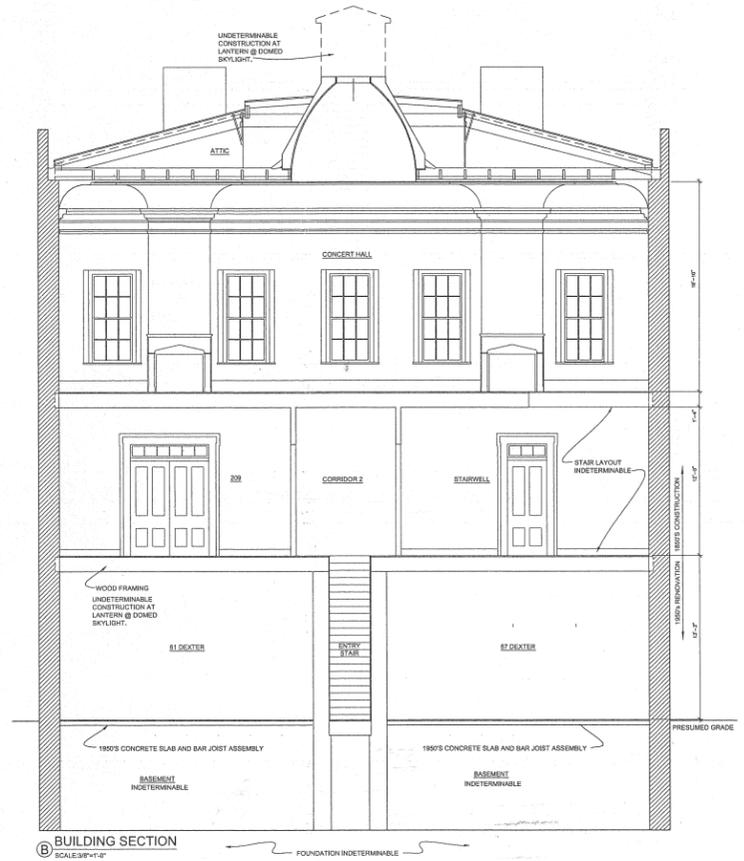
"What is fascinating," said Thompson, "is the extent to which Tuscaloosa was engaging in national and international trade." He cited the early Tuscaloosa cabinetmaker, Augustine Lynch, who furnished the nearby 1827 Alabama State Capitol. Lynch was reaching national markets with ivory billiard balls carved from elephant tusks most likely imported from Africa.

Building remains include the 1829 Bank of the State, where researchers found decorative architectural details. Nearby silver Spanish Reales document those foreign coins were acceptable currency in early 1800s.

Printer's press type/letters found in a privy bring vivid details to a little-known Civil War prison story. According to historical researcher Robert Mellow, a two-story building on site housed up to 300 Union soldiers in 1862-1863. Using a printing press, they found in the building, the prisoners made counterfeit confederate money until they were caught.

A new Embassy Suites hotel will occupy the site. Because the City of Tuscaloosa bought the lot with federal funds, archaeologists got a rare opportunity to look deeply at one of Alabama's early cities. The National Historic Preservation Act requires that projects using federal funds or licenses investigate whether or not a project will harm significant historic or archaeological resources.

According to AHC State Archaeologist Stacye Hathorn, "This site is clearly eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places and merited this extensive excavation."



"Culturally, historically, and architecturally, **Concert Hall** is one of Montgomery's most important buildings," says historian Mary Ann Neeley. She noted that **Estelle Hall**, located next door, was demolished in the late-19th century.

Hidden History Revealed

"Concert Hall was the place to see and be seen in antebellum Montgomery," says historian Mary Ann Neeley.

The elegant room occupied the third floor of an 1851 three-story brick building. It sported Greek Revival details and a grand stairway. A windowed lantern on top of a shallow, saucer-shaped central dome admitted light and fresh air.

Along with the next-door Estelle Hall, Concert Hall provided Montgomery with space for concerts, lectures, events, and dances. During the Civil War, the building served as one of six Montgomery Confederate hospitals. It is the only one to survive.

It is one of Montgomery's most storied buildings. But for most of the last century, it hid behind a pair of 20th-century storefronts, dropped ceilings, and partition walls.

When the City of Montgomery bought the building in 2011, Neeley led a team to investigate a rumor that it contained the remains of Estelle Hall. What they found instead was Concert Hall and the second floor spaces originally used as rented offices.

"It's a real find," says AHC architectural historian Robert Gamble. "Antebellum commercial interiors are rare and getting rarer," he said.

The team, composed of Montgomery City Planning Department, the Alabama Historical Commission, and Landmarks Foundation of Montgomery, began exploring and measuring the building with a handful of volunteers.

Later, the city funded professional measured drawing to send to the National Park Service's Historic American Building Survey. They hired Rebecca Fonville and Timothy Vaught to do the drawings, with volunteer assistance from Lynda Wood, Robert Wool, and Michael Panhorst.

Planning department's Christy Anderson and Gamble served as project coordinators. "It's above ground, urban archaeology," says Gamble. "You research the written record, and then you actually go in and peel back the layers to see what's really there."



Right: Tiny metal printing press letters found at the site of a former Tuscaloosa Civil War prison.



Credit: Brandon Thompson, Office of Archaeological Research.

ALABAMA'S PLACES IN PERIL 2013

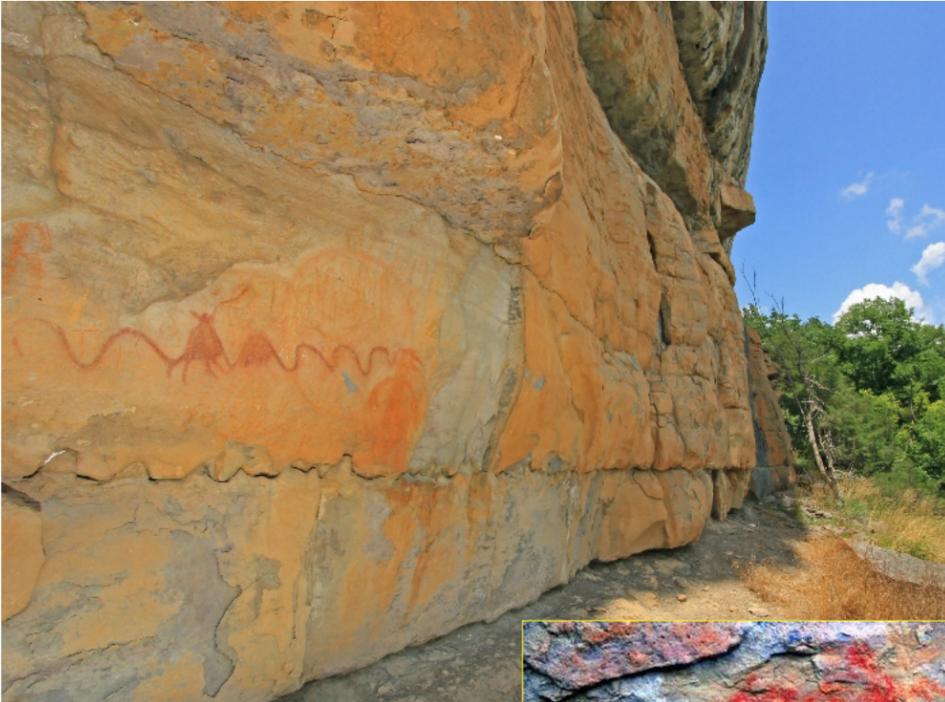


Photo Credit: Alan Cressler

Above: The lower ledge of **Painted Bluff** above the Tennessee River in Marshall County. Native peoples created colorful carvings and drawings like these on bluffs and in caves. "Rock art was an important part of prehistoric people's religion. It helped link people to their faith and to nature," according to Dr. Jan Simek, Distinguished Professor of Anthropology, University of Tennessee.



Left: Figure drawing at **Painted Bluff**, Marshall County. This detail shows a head with oversized ears and the upper body with arms raised.

PAINTED BLUFF, Marshall County

"Painted Bluff" is one of Alabama's most special places. On two bluffs overlooking the Tennessee River, native peoples created nearly 80 orange, red, and yellow drawings 600 years ago. These symbolic images include people, snakes, birds, and other animals.

Few outdoor painted bluffs remain in Alabama because of the humid environment. Nature is slowly wearing down the paint, posing a long-term threat. Modern graffiti and rock climbers are more immediate concerns.

The Tennessee Valley Authority manages the area with these irreplaceable art works. Currently they are researching ways to maintain the images and carvings.

OLD GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH, Sheffield, Colbert County

Old Grace Episcopal is among the oldest churches in Sheffield. Constructed in 1903, it is a brick and stone building designed in the Late Victorian Gothic style. In 1963, the Episcopal Diocese sold the building and parishioners moved to a suburban location. Various congregations used it afterwards.

Maintenance of the structure is a concern. Leaks in the roof continue ongoing moisture damage in the building. The original woodwork and historic fixtures remain

but previous owners removed the stained glass and pews.

There is hope for Old Grace Episcopal Church. The Colbert County Historical Landmarks Foundation recently acquired the building to prevent its demolition.

Working with the Historic Sheffield Commission, Landmarks is raising funds to restore the building. These dedicated volunteers plan to preserve it as a museum and space for community uses.

URQUHART HOUSE,

Huntsville vicinity, Madison County

The Urquhart House is one of Madison County's oldest buildings. It shows the evolution of a one-room log cabin into a larger, five-room house. Unfortunately, its dilapidated condition threatens its survival.

The house sits on land transferred to Allen Urquhart on December 2, 1813. His simple log dwelling was typical. Few of these early houses still exist. Urquhart and later owners added more rooms to the cabin and outbuildings to the property. Federal period mantles, windows, and door trim are intact. An early 20th-century barn and privy also survive.

The owners value the house and its history. They are currently looking at ways to stabilize it.



CHAPPELL HOUSE, Montgomery, Montgomery County

The Chappell House, built around 1850, is an early preservation success story. Recognizing its historical significance, the Montgomery Housing Authority restored the city's only surviving brick Greek Revival-style cottage in the 1930s.

For nearly 70 years, it served as business offices for the surrounding Riverside Heights housing project. With the housing project now gone, the vacant Chappell House is facing an uncertain future.

In 2007, the City of Montgomery unanimously approved a municipal master plan that included saving the old house. The building was to be incorporated into any new development, just as it was in the 1930s. Local preservation groups have asked city officials to retain this important link to Montgomery's past.

THOMAS JEFFERSON HOTEL, Birmingham, Jefferson County

The 19-story Thomas Jefferson Hotel dominates the western skyline of Alabama's largest city. Known as the "Pride of Birmingham" during its heyday, this Renaissance Revival building opened a month before the 1929 stock market crash.

It has been vacant since 1983 when local health officials declared the old hotel uninhabitable. Thirty years of neglect has taken its toll on the building. Unfortunately, attempts to revitalize it have not been successful.

The hotel provided lavish accommodations for many celebrities like Presidents Calvin Coolidge and Herbert Hoover. Other patrons included Mickey Rooney, Ethel Merman, George Burns, and Ray Charles. Alabama legends George Wallace and Paul "Bear" Bryant stayed there too.

Today only pigeons, squatters, and occasional urban explorers visit the hotel. Downtown Birmingham's revival continues to grow with more buildings restored each year. The new state rehabilitation tax credit also offers additional incentives for the hotel and other historic buildings like it.

ALABAMA'S PLACES IN PERIL 2013

GEORGE SEARCY HOUSE, Tuscaloosa, Tuscaloosa County

Elegant 19th and early-20th century mansions once lined Greensboro Avenue in Tuscaloosa. Today the 1904 George Searcy house is one of the few surviving buildings from that era. For nearly 30 years this fine neo-classical building served as offices for the Board of Education. Today it is vacant and future is uncertain.

Searcy was a prominent local businessman. At a time when "Old South" nostalgia was gaining popularity, he chose large Ionic columns for the front of his home. The building retains many of its original details, including an unusual cylindrical spiral staircase salvaged from an earlier Tuscaloosa home. The six massive columns that once graced the imposing facade are missing. Some in the community think the columns still exist.

CARROLLTON MALE AND FEMALE ACADEMY, Pickens County

Private "academies" were among the earliest schools in Alabama. By the mid-19th century, these institutions appear in small towns and large cities. In Pickens County, alone, there were 11 private academies in 1855. The Male and Female Academy in Carrollton was one of them. Today it is one of only 15 surviving antebellum school buildings in the state.

The school became a private home when it closed in the early 20th century. Many mid-19th century features are intact, including an old chalkboard discovered behind a wall. The building should be preserved for future generations as a reminder that early Alabamians valued education.

OLD GREENSBORO HOTEL, Hale County

Once an elegant downtown hotel, the Greensboro Hotel remains a local landmark with great potential for revival. All it needs is a new owner committed to a new future.

Impressive brickwork is its most significant feature. Brick-arched doors and windows stand out prominently. The hotel began as a two-story building with "Flemish bond" bricklaying: a decorative pattern created by alternating short and long sides of brick. This type of brickwork indicates an early construction date, possibly as early as 1830.

When the third story was constructed around 1890, they added the elaborate brick cornice. A pressed metal cornice caps the building, displaying the hotel's name.

Around the turn of the century, owners added two-story cast iron balconies on the front and side streets. Today the hotel guests and cast iron balconies are gone but the old Greensboro Hotel is ready for new uses. Redevelopment options include housing, offices, restaurant, or retail space.



Above: The **Searcy House** has seen many transitions, but it is very much a place worth saving. The columns were temporarily removed, but never replaced, when the Board of Education renovated the building for its offices. The Tuscaloosa County Preservation Society, the Tuscaloosa County Commission, and the Phoenix House were partners in the 1980s renovation.

Above: Historic photo of Tuscaloosa's **Searcy House**, circa 1900, showing original columns.

ROSA LOTT SCHOOL, Citronelle, Mobile County

From 1949 to 1968, the Rosa A. Lott School in Citronelle was the only African American High School in northern Mobile County.

Under the leadership of local educator Rosa Amelia Lott (1903-1952), the Citronelle Consolidated School provided grades 1-12 for local students and at least 18 communities in Mobile and Washington Counties.

Prior to its construction, parents had to send their children away to attend high school. Some traveled over 30 miles to get an education. Children lived away from home, boarding or staying with family in these distant black communities.

The Lott School closed in 1968 when integrated with other schools. Currently empty, it suffers from little maintenance and continued deterioration. The Rosa A. Lott Historical Preservation Society is working to save the building and return it to the community use.

Below: **Rosa Lott School**, Citronelle, Mobile County.



TROY MASONIC BUILDING, Troy, Pike County

Troy's Masonic Building is a striking downtown landmark. Architect Enoch Crites designed this three-and-a-half story Romanesque Revival building in the late 1890s. It has interesting decorative elements such as carved stone arches, terracotta molding, and a pressed metal trim work. A round, stone plaque contains the carved Masonic square and compass logo in the upper "half story."

The building housed the Masonic Temple on the upper floors. A lively mix of tenants, key to town life, occupied the first two levels. The ground floor contained a grocery store and print shop. The second floor had general office space but also included a post office from 1903 to 1912 and a "picture show" house from 1915 through the 1930s.

The Masons abandoned the third floor many years ago for newer quarters. A drug store moved into the first level in the mid-1970s. Presently the rest of the building is empty and long-term water leaks are causing significant damage in the upper floors. The City of Troy wants to see this important building preserved. It is a valuable piece of their downtown revitalization effort.

NEWS FROM THE HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Belle Mont Exhibits Local Quilts



Belle Mont's quilt exhibit begins the first Thursday in October and runs through the end of the month.

In its third year, the **Belle Mont** Quilt Show exhibits the area's rich tradition of quilting. "We're excited to bring this exhibit back again," said new director Kara Long. "It provides an opportunity for us to spotlight historic and modern quilts from Colbert and neighboring counties."

The show includes a wide variety of quilting styles and techniques. Organizers bring popular patterns—the double wedding ring, Rose of Sharon, the log cabin block, and—display them within the beautiful setting of 1820s Belle Mont.



Experience the Union Siege Line at Fort Morgan

Union troops made their final attack on **Fort Morgan** in late August of 1864, building an elaborate series of sand earthworks and trenches. As they advanced, the U. S. Army constructed more lines and used cannons to pound the fort until the Confederates surrendered.

Recent reconstruction of these earthworks offers visitors a better tour experience. The "Siege Line" project also

includes period-appropriate cannons and wayside exhibits. "These new features give us tools to tell the fuller story of Union forces at Fort Morgan during the Civil War," says site director Brian Hill.

Of particular interest are the various types of cannons used. Some, like the "naval" mortar cannons, were so heavy they were more permanently situated. Other artillery pieces like the "artillery rifle" and "Napoleon" cannons were mobile.



Examples of reproduction artillery rifle and Napoleon cannons recently acquired during Fort Morgan's "Siege Line" project.

Shrimp "Boat Hit-and-Run" Damages Middle Bay Lighthouse



Credit: Jeff Dute/al.com-Mobile Press-Register

Divers inspect underwater damage done to the Middle Bay Lighthouse. Although decommissioned for nearly 30 years, the Coast Guard maintains an active "light" atop Middle Bay Lighthouse. It still serves as a landmark for large ships, boaters, and the local community.

When Mobile area media reported damage at **Middle Bay Lighthouse** in early June, the Alabama Lighthouse Association responded immediately. Engineers and divers, sponsored by the Association, quickly assessing the damage.

An apparent "hit and run" accident broke and stretched more than a dozen tie rods, cracked an iron bracket, broke bolts, and bent a piling. Engineers estimated it would cost around \$75,000 to repair the 128-year-old structure.

"The tie rods aren't just decorative," said former Lighthouse Association President Jim Horner, "they are the structural integrity of the lighthouse and without them, it can sway and twist in a severe storm."

According to AHC Director Frank White, "This is an emergency situation, and we are

on a fast track to repair the damage." He added, "We are grateful for the Lighthouse Association's quick response. It saved us money and is helping us move much faster."

The commission owns the lighthouse, spending more than \$200,000 repairing and maintaining it in recent years. Initial repair work began in July and completion is expected in early fall.

Eyewitness accounts from local fishermen reported a 52-foot long commercial shrimp boat rammed the lighthouse around May 11. It ran directly into one of the metal support pilings making a loud noise, backed up, and kept on going.

The Coast Guard and Alabama Marine Police are investigating the accident.

Celebrating Careers and Welcoming New Staff Changes

In May, Pond Spring, the General Joe Wheeler Home, offered "behind the scenes" tours, led by then retiring site director, **Melissa Beasley**. These special tours explored the work and research that went into restoring the General's homestead. Melissa became the first site director of Pond Spring in 1994, when the state acquired it. She oversaw the restoration of six buildings, including the 1870s Wheeler House. New site director, **Kara Long**, brings a lot familiarity with Pond Spring. She helped Melissa curate nearly 50,000 objects associated with the General and his family.

About 60 people gathered in June at Confederate Memorial Park to celebrate **Elizabeth Brown's** career at the commission and her well-earned retirement. Hired to provide architectural services in 1990, Elizabeth went on to hold progressively important positions and served as interim director on two occasions. At retirement, she was head of the Historic Preservation Division and the Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer. Her extensive and broad preservation knowledge was invaluable to the state. Director **Frank White** named **Lee Anne Wofford** as the interim division head. The

commission is currently advertising to fill the position.

Dorothy Walker, the commission's Outreach Coordinator, accepted a new position at Alabama State University in July. She began at the AHC as an intern recommended by Hardy Jackson, but held several positions during her 15 years at the agency. Her commitment to exceptional customer service and a later-earned M.A. in Historic Preservation enhanced her value to the agency. Among the programs she coordinated during her tenure were the Alabama Register, the Rosenwald School project, and the Black Heritage Council. At

ASU, she now coordinates their history and preservation issues. The commission will fill the position in mid-fiscal year 2014. Black Heritage Council intern **Destiny Williams** will assist the council in the interim.

In mid July, **Karen Davis** transferred from the AHC main office to Fort Toulouse-Fort Jackson in Wetumpka. She now works at the Forts' welcome center greeting the public, making orders for the museum store, and checking campers in at the campground.

NEWS FROM THE HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Recent National Register of Historic Places Listings

The Civil Rights Movement in Selma, AL, 1865-1972, Multiple Property Submission (MPS), Dallas County. Listed, 6/26/13.

Tabernacle Missionary Baptist Church, 1431 Broad Street, Selma, Dallas County. Listed 7/10/13 under the **Civil Rights Movement in Selma, MPS.**

Howell School, 408 East Newton Street, Dothan, Houston County. Listed 6/26/13.

Skyline Commissary/Cumberland Mountain Farms Store, Scottsboro, Jackson County. Listed 6/12/13 under the **Skyline Farms Resettlement Project, Jackson County, AL, 1931-1960, MPS.**

Boxwood Plantation Slave Quarter, Courtland vicinity, Lawrence County. Listed 7/10/13.

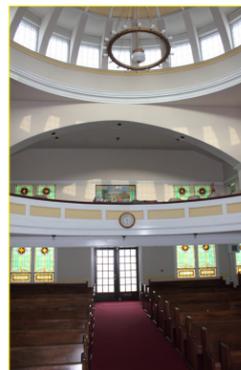
Downtown Montevallo Historic District, Montevallo, Shelby County. Listed 4/23/13.

Dadeville Historic District, Dadeville, Tallapoosa County. Listed 7/10/13.



Above: **Tabernacle Missionary Baptist Church.** Designed by black architect, David T. West, in 1922, it played an important role in Selma's 1960s civil rights movement. The first mass meeting for voting rights was held here.

Right: Interior of the sanctuary.



Right: **Boxwood Slave Quarter** is one of the rarest building types in Alabama. In its earlier years, Boxwood probably held two slave families. Today it consists of two rooms sharing a common wall, separate entrances, and end-wall chimneys.



Howell School, Dothan. Detail of upper story brickwork. This 1902 school still contains important architectural details. Notice the arched windows, engaged columns, and heavy dentils.



Alabama Register of Landmarks and Heritage, Listed June 20, 2013

Silas Elementary School, Choctaw County, c. 1936.

Shaw Home, Colbert County, c. 1850-1950.

Paul Post Office, Conecuh County, c. 1908.

The Shack (Old Boy Scout Hut), Montezuma, River Falls Street, Andalusia, Covington County, c. 1922.

R. B. Hudson High School, Selma, Dallas County, c. 1949.

2600 Block of Old Broad Street (University Boulevard), Tuscaloosa, Tuscaloosa County, c. 1899-1940s.



Spotlight: **Temple Emanu-El, Tuscaloosa.** View above shows the 1953 facade alterations. Notice where the Star of David plaque once adorned the gable.

A proposed hotel development currently threatens the future of the original **Emanu-El** temple and the other historic buildings in the **2600 block of Old Broad Street.**

Few small Jewish temples remain in Alabama. Historically, these religious buildings only existed in populated cities.

The first German Jews came to Tuscaloosa in the mid-1800s. These businessmen and their families worshiped the High Holidays in their homes until 1912. That year trustees purchased a building in the 2600 block of Broad Street and created the city's first Jewish house of worship. **Temple Emanu-El** joined the Union of American Hebrew Congregations and established an active "Sabbath School." The following year, women founded their "Sisterhood" group.

Emanu-El continued to flourish. But they eventually outgrew the original building, despite earlier attempts to make it work. In 1958, the congregation moved from Broad Street into larger facilities. Relocating three more times, Emanu-El now resides on UA's campus next to the Jewish student building.

*Reference: <http://www.shalomtuscaloosa.com/>.

State Honors Dowe Houses with Historic Marker



The main Dowe residence, built in 1863, with the porch remodeled to a portico in 1908. The **three Dowe family houses** are listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The National Trust for Historic Preservation holds a preservation easement on the properties.

The Alabama Historical Commission unveiled a historical marker for Montgomery's landmark Dowe houses, March 6, 2013.

Continuously owned by the same family since the Civil War, the three houses are virtually the last reminders of the fine residential neighborhood that existed here in the 19th century.

John Dowe, an Irish-born grocer and confectioner, built the house for his wife Joanna and their children in 1863, during the midst of the Civil War. Originally designed as an Italianate-style "raised cottage," the main family residence changed again in 1908 with the addition of a two-story columned portico. It replaced an earlier, high porch approached by twin curving stairs.

In 1885, widow Joanna Dowe constructed another house just west of the earlier residence. The local press hailed this eclectic-styled house as an "ornament to the city ... a revolution in architecture and workmanship." The family built a third home in 1890. This American Queen Anne-style faces Hull Street, just behind the main residence.

After his death in 2007, John Dowe III donated his family homes to the AHC so that future generations could enjoy their historic and architectural value. Both the Montgomery Landmarks Foundation and the Montgomery County Historical Society partnered with the AHC in this endeavor.

LATE SUMMER AND EARLY FALL FUN AT THE SITES

August 30-September 1 FORT MIMS, Tensaw Delta

200th Anniversary of the Attack on Fort Mims
Join Volunteers and re-enactors honoring the 200th Anniversary of the attack on Fort Mims and the beginning of the Creek Indian War. See living history demonstrations and battle re-enactments. Observe an archeological 'dig' by University of South Alabama. Admission charged, 9am-3pm daily. Contact 251-937-5665 or visit www.fortmims.org.

September 7 WHEELER HOME-POND SPRING, Hillsboro

Gen. Wheeler's Birthday Celebration
Celebrate the General's 177th birthday September 7. The public can explore activities throughout the grounds for free from 10am-4pm. Admission charged for house tours. Call 256-637-8513 for more information.

September 7-8 FORT TOULOUSE-FORT JACKSON, Wetumpka

War of 1812 Militia Camp
Encampment of Creek War and War of 1812, including the Tennessee militia in period dress, will exhibit camp life and weaponry. Saturday 9am-5pm and Sunday 9am-1pm. Admission charged. Contact: 334-567-3002.

September 19 HISTORIC PRESERVATION WORKSHOP, Valley

The Valley Historic Preservation Commission is hosting a workshop providing information on the benefits of historic preservation and successful grant writing. Contact Jane Fulghum at 706-586-4757 for agenda, registration, and general information.

September 21-22 FORT TOULOUSE-FORT JACKSON, Wetumpka

French Garrison Encampment
Costumed re-enactors portray daily lives of 1750s-60s French soldiers and Creek Indians. Saturday 9am-4pm and Sunday 8am-1pm. Admission Charged. Contact: 334-567-3002.

September 28 OLD CAHAWBA, Orrville

B.Y.O.B.—Bring Your Own Bike Tour
Take a guided two-hour bike tour over four miles of mostly unpaved roads and explore a landscape of relics, ruins, and graveyards. Bring your bike, water, and snacks. Admission charged. Contact: 334-872-8058.

The Month of October BELLE MONT, near Tusculumbia

Historic Quilt Show
View historic quilts at Belle Mont every Thursday through Saturday from 9am-4pm. Special to this exhibit, Belle Mont will also be open Sundays from 1pm-4pm in October. Admission charged. Contact: 256-637-8513.

October 5 FORT TOULOUSE-FORT JACKSON, Wetumpka

War of 1812 Militia Camp
See September description of event. Admission charged. Contact: 334-567-3002.

October 18 OLD CAHAWBA, Orrville

Haunted History Tours—Cahawba Spirits Investigation

A rare moonlit tour will shuttle you around this ghost town's most haunted locations. Central Alabama Paranormal Investigations will demonstrate the art of "ghost hunting." If you encounter a spirit at Old Cahawba, join us at the bonfire to share your experience. Seats for this 90-minute "investigation" are limited and advanced tickets are required. Contact the Selma-Dallas County Tourism & Convention Bureau at 800-45-SELMA. Tour times are 7, 7:30, 8, 8:30 and 9pm. Admission charged.

October 19-20 FORT TOULOUSE-FORT JACKSON, Wetumpka

French Garrison Encampment
See September description of event. Admission charged. Contact: 334-567-3002.

October 19 OLD CAHAWBA, Orrville

"HEAR THE DEAD SPEAK," A Special Walking Tour of Old Cahawba

Be an "above-ground archaeologist" and discover messages in Cahawba's relic landscape left behind by the town's long-dead residents. This guided walking tour of Alabama's most famous ghost town lasts about 45 minutes. Admission charged. Contact: 334-872-8058. Note: this is part of Selma's Haunted History Weekend.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS: ALABAMA FRONTIER DAYS

November 6-10, FORT TOULOUSE-FORT JACKSON, Wetumpka
Experience the most authentic living history event in Alabama. Contact: 334-567-3002.

PRESORTED
STANDARD
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 109
Montgomery, AL

PRESERVATION REPORT
August-September 2013
Alabama Historical Commission
468 South Perry Street
P. O. Box 300900
Montgomery AL 36130-0900

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

PRESERVATION Alabama Historical Commission REPORT

Preservation Report is a bimonthly publication of the
ALABAMA HISTORICAL COMMISSION
468 South Perry Street / P. O. Box 300900
Montgomery, AL 36130-0900 / (334) 242-3184

John Schmidt *Chair*
Frank W. White *Executive Director*
Ellen Mertins *Editor*
Trina Binkley *Assistant Editor*

Please e-mail address corrections to: ahc.intern@preserveala.org

Funded in part with funds from the National Park Service, Department of the Interior, but does not necessarily reflect its views. Regulations of the U.S. Department of the Interior prohibit unlawful discrimination in federally assisted programs on the basis of race, color, handicap, and/or national origin.

Any person who believes he or she has been discriminated against in any program, activity, or facility operated by a recipient of federal assistance should write to:

Director, Equal Opportunity Program / U. S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service / P. O. Box 37127 / Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

preserve 
ALABAMA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

www.preserveala.org

Preserve, Protect, and Interpret Alabama's Historic Places