

PINTLALA



HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

C/O PINTLALA PUBLIC LIBRARY

255 FEDERAL ROAD

HOPE HULL, AL 36043

Founded in 1987

VOLUME XII, NUMBER 2

APRIL 1998

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NOTICE: CHANGE IN DATE OF PHA MEETING:

PHA WILL MEET ON APRIL 26, NOT APRIL 19.

**The Pintlala Historical Association
cordially invites you to a
historical marker placement recognition
commemorating Manac's Tavern and the Federal Road
on Sunday, April 26, 1998 at 2:30 PM
Pintlala Baptist Church Fellowship Hall
155 Federal Road, Hope Hull, Alabama**

Program presented by Will Hill Tankersley and Mark Dauber

Casual Attire

R.S.V.P. Alice Carter, 244-5700 day, 281-3708 evening

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Thanks to all of you who have done work on "Manac's Tavern" and the "Federal Road." And our SPECIAL THANKS to Will Hill Tankersley for completing this significant project and obtaining the beautiful historic marker! We look forward to our recognition celebration on April 26.

The Montgomery Pioneer Society has recently published a beautiful pictorial history of Montgomery. Hardbound copies will be available for \$15.00 each at the July PHA meeting.

PHA plans several worthwhile undertakings for 1998, including one very special project: compiling news articles written by Ms. Mildred Smith of Dublin. For years, Ms. Smith served as "County Editor," and documented county happenings for the Montgomery Advertiser. Dorothy Samuel has graciously accepted the challenge of leading the task to compile copies of Ms. Smith's columns. Thank you, Dorothy!

Be sure to mark your calendar, and come out for our April 26 celebration!

JACK HORNADY
President, PHA

1998 PHA MEMBERSHIP DUES

If you have not yet paid your 1998 membership dues (\$10.00 per year) please do so at the April meeting, or mail your check to the Treasurer, Thomas Ray, Route 1, Box 441, Hope Hull, AL 36043.

JANUARY MEETING

Pintlala Historical Association met Sunday, January 18, 1998 at 2:30 at the Pintlala Baptist Church. Dr. Wesley Newton, Professor Emeritus of History, Auburn University, presented a program on events in Montgomery at the time of the bombing of Pearl Harbor. His talk was based on his forthcoming book, *Darkness and Light: Montgomery in the "Good War" 1939-1946*. Audience members shared memories of their whereabouts and lives at the time of the bombing. Especially vivid were memories of bond drives at Pintlala School. Dr. Newton suggested that a wonderful source of Montgomery County history is the news columns by Mildred Smith in the Montgomery Advertiser.

IN MEMORIAM

The community mourned the loss of Pintlala's Mr. J. M. (Morris) Todd on February 21, 1998. Mr. Todd was born in Wetumpka, and moved to Chilsholm as a child where he grew up playing baseball and developed a lifelong love for sports. The Todd's moved to Pintlala

over 40 years ago, and have been very active in the community since that time. He operated a busy auto repair shop in Montgomery, but Mr. Todd took time to organize Pintlala's softball leagues and always served them enthusiastically. He took particular interest in helping and encouraging young players to develop their talents. A gifted musician, Mr. Todd continued to play the guitar until shortly before his death. Both he and his brother had played with the Hank Williams' band during their younger years. Mr. Todd was preceded in death by his wife, Louise, and is survived by five children and nine grandchildren.

SPECIAL THANKS

If you haven't recently visited the PHA section at Pintlala Library, you should do so at your earliest opportunity. Mary Ann Venable is organizing PHA's documents, and we have received two very special additions given by Dorothy Stanaland Samuel and W. E. Colvard of Letohatchie.

Dorothy Samuel donated a copy of early Montgomery County records that she, with some friends, had compiled as a special DAR project. It not only included marriages (I especially enjoyed reading the record of my husband's great-grandfather's marriage in 1830) but conveyances and recordings of the courts (including Orphan's Court) as well. The "conveyances" listed deeds and patents, the granting of property normally for military service, plus an intriguing entry "Relinquishment of Dower."

W. E. (Bill) Colvard donated a copy of his book, "Letohatchie Reminiscences," a splendid documentary of early happenings in and around Letohatchie. The book describes area happenings from the time his great-grandfather, Capt. Charles Platt Rogers, Sr. (1832 - 1922) began his survey for the railroad, until recent times. Complete with plats, photos, and colorful accounts of specific incidents, the book is a treasure for anyone with ties to the area. A recent issue of the Reader's Digest quoted author James Michener's statement that information is not real until it's written. Thanks to Bill Colvard for his time, talent, and dedication in making Letohatchie "real" by preserving in writing accounts of this period of history for a wonderful community!

PHA MEMBER HONORED

Dr. Frederick Bush, Jr. is being honored by the Republic of Estonia. The Montgomery Advertiser recently published an account of his being awarded the republic's Order of the Cross of the Eagle, which will be presented next month at the Estonian Embassy in Washington, D.C. From 1992-1995, Dr. Bush, who was at that time a colonel in the U.S. Air Force, served as the U.S. Defense attaché to the republic. He worked to help create a national defense there based on democratic principles. Now retired from the service, he and his wife Patricia live in Hope Hull.

McGEHEE CEMETERY

The McGehee Cemetery has been cleaned and restored. Anyone wishing to make donations toward its maintenance should send them to the Hope Hull United Methodist Church.

HISTORY OF PINTLALA

(The following history of Pintlala was written by Dr. William Tankersley shortly before his death in 1955. He was quite ill at the time and never actually completed the writing of his memories. Our special thanks to his daughter, Ethel Tankersley Todd, for sharing this treasured history.)

The Pintlala Community - so called because of the proximity to the junction of the Pintlala and Pinchona Creeks - was settled by early immigrants from Tennessee, the Carolinas and Virginias. It was in the western part of this community that Gen. Jackson's trail was blazed in his march to New Orleans in the War of 1812. On this march was my great-grandfather of Franklin, Tennessee, John Roy Tankersley, originally of Richmond, Virginia - and in his travel back home after the battle of N. O. in 1815, he camped one night and fell in love with a spring of water only a few hundred yards north of Pintlala and returned a few years later and settled a few hundred yards south of Pintlala Creek on the Montgomery and Mobile Highway. About half a mile south of this Creek, a Primitive Baptist Church was built - but of which he was not a part - called Bethel, one of the oldest Churches in Montgomery County until abandoned some years since and the site occupied now by the Principal (the L. R. Scarboroughs) of the Consolidated School of the Community. This church was directly across the road in front of the house of Dr. Ed Shackelford's parents - an alumnus of this University (Alabama?) and president of the State Normal College of Troy. Adjoining and crossing this Creek is the farm of Mrs. Mary Overton, niece of Gen. Bill Allen of Confederate fame, and one-time father-in-law of the late Judge Henry D. Clayton of the Middle U.S. District Court. At this (Bethel) Church from miles around gathered the early settlers on the days of worship, as many as fifteen hundred at times, to learn the news from the latest newcomers from other states.

In the middle Seventys a Christian Church (Liberty) was established by the late J. M. Barnes - a minister, teacher, and planter in this community - at the solicitation of my father, Felix M. Tankersley - though he was not a member. He had taught Mr. Barnes his letters and boarded in his parents' - of whom he was very

fond - house. Mr. Barnes for years was the founder and president of Highland Home College and the father of Prof. E. R. Barnes, Principal of Barnes boys school in Montgomery. Along about the same time or perhaps a few years previous, a Methodist Church (Tabernacle) was established by the late Geo Gilmer - rated a millionaire in the boom of the early 80's, Jas. Branscomb, and Almon Sanderson - grandfather of Rep. Lew Sanderson of Montgomery.

The negroes established several churches in this Community, chief of which was Big Zion established by Albert Chapple - widely known for his upright live, energy, honesty, and above all for his Christian charity, and a history of this Community would not be replete without mentioning his unselfishness to all and held undimmed to the end the love and respect of white and colored alike - and it was at this Church a few years since the Rosenwald (Roosevelt) party on their visit to Tuskegee visited and addressed the citizens, white and colored, at this church. A good three teacher school is a permanent fixture there now. A grange for social, political, and agricultural purposes was established in this community until some years since. A Consolidated School costing \$50,000 was built some ten (20) years ago while Dr. A. F. Harmon - now president of Montevallo College was Superintendent of Montgomery County Schools - but the fire and spirit for consolidation was instituted and begun while W. F. Feagin was County Superintendent of schools. There is also a consolidated school for Negroes known as the Tankersley school consisting of fifteen acres of land and four teachers in this community. Going out from this Community was the late ExGov. Grant of Colorado whose father sold his farm to my grandfather and removed to Russell County where he committed suicide and his son Gaugh (Goff?) removed to Colorado and become Governor and multimillionaire and owner of a silver smelting mine that was contemplated being reworked some three years ago. Others going out from here were Dr. Ed Shackelford, an Alumnus of this University and President of the Troy Normal College, the late Judge F.M.T. Tankersley of Crenshaw County, Mr. Frank Mosley of Montgomery, whose son, Dr. Sam Mosley, was the constant attendant at the bedside of the late Mayor Cermak of Chicago while in a Miami hospital wounded on a visit to that city with President Roosevelt. Quite a number of physicians have lived or gone out from this community - Drs. Harris, McWhorter, Grant, Almon, Sankey - father and son - Reeves - uncle and nephew, Gilchrist, Powell, Suggs, Duncan, Sellers, Drs. McLean - father and son - and Dr. Glen Davis - the latter two dentists, and Dr. Frank Schackelford now residing in the Community.

It was here two valuable plantations (Whigham Place) were lost by ExGov Watts - Civil War time governor - by giving surety on the bonds to friends. The Pharoahs were prominent settlers before the state was admitted to the Union and a cemetery here now bears their names. They had a daughter named Hannah who married a man named Mangrum and the community had a quaint saying that "The children of Israel wanted bread and the Lord gave the manna -- J. C. Mangrum wanted a wife and the Pharoahs have him Hannah." Going out from the Northern part of this community is our present governor (Bibb Graves) whose parents died when quite young and was reared by relatives until maturity. The Bibbs and McGehees owned vast tracts of land throughout this section. The Railroad Station is called McGehees. Inheriting much of this property were their relations and descendants - the Gilchrists, Graves, Clarks, and others of that section. Some of the Bibb land remains in the family. Some acres have been sold off but many hundred acres remain under the control of Dr. Bibb of Montgomery, whose father was a physician there until his death, but who at one time lived in Nashville, Tennessee, where he was a lecturer in the University of Tennessee and married a daughter of ExGov. Porter of Tennessee who afterwards was President of Peabody College subsequent to his term as Governor of Tennessee, and it could be said the original house of his wife being a cousin of the governor and her father a Bibb owner of some of the property. Henry Holmes was an early settler who acquired many hundred acres of land on both sides of Pintlala. He wore Osnaburg pants dyed with copperas. He left 3 or 4 thousand acres of rich prairie land - a remnant remains in the hands of his posterity. He established a bank in Montgomery and placed his son Geo in charge but it eventually came to naught.

REMEMBER WHEN?

Do you remember when:

Highway 31 was first paved? Sandra Lassiter said that Mrs. Nell Rowe Lassiter told her how she enjoyed roller skating down the hill north of the Rowe home toward Vickers Creek on the new concrete! Does anyone recall what year Highway 31 was paved?

Pintlala had beautiful "Pay Ponds"? In the early 1940s, L. T. Hataway loved to frequent the beautiful Davis Lakes, and the twin Lassiter Ponds, just off County Road 19. Davis Lakes, a favorite spot for church picnics, family reunions, etc., had a full time caretaker, Mr. Charlie Anderson. Lassiter Ponds, where Cecil Brendle now lives, teemed with beautiful bream, and L.T.'s special fishing buddy was Mr. Bob Matthews.

We are seeking your contributions for publication in the quarterly newsletter. Please describe one of your favorite happenings, haunts, or incidents, preferably from this area and a previous era, to Sandra or Julianne. For example, remember your favorite childhood hideout? Your first day of school? Your first car?

SANKEY HOME

PHA members and guests were recently privileged to tour the stately Sankey Home on Butler Mill Road. Here is a description of that lovely landmark.

A beautiful white frame two-story house was built by Dr. George L. Sankey on or before 1900. The house is located northeast of Old Hayneville Road on Butler Mill Road. The Sankey's moved to this area in the early 1800's from Green County Georgia. At one point in time, the three Sankey homes and their properties were known as "Sankey Town." Dr. Sankey built the house so that he could separately house sick patients or private tutors for his six children. The downstairs consisted of two bedrooms on the north side, hall down the center and parlor, dining room, pantry and kitchen on the south side. A porch reached from the front door to a side door on the south side of the house. There was also an "L" shaped porch on the back from the kitchen door to the back hall door. Upstairs there were two bedrooms on the north, a hall in the middle, and two bedrooms and bath on the south side. The walls were all wood with fabric wall covering in the upstairs bedrooms and painted walls downstairs. Huge sliding doors permitted the "parlor" and the dining room to be opened together. The house had hot running water and indoor toilet facilities. The hot water came from a tank in the kitchen which was hooked up to a wood cook stove which stayed hot most of the time during the day. All of the servants were fed from the kitchen, even the ones who worked outside. The place produced its own meat, fruit and vegetables. Flour, sugar and other commodities were brought in by wagons from town in barrels.

Where possible, Dr. Sankey used a horse and buggy to make his calls. Some areas, however, were so bad that they were accessible only by horseback. Dr. Sankey's horse was so well trained that if the fatigued physician fell asleep returning from a call, the patient animal would take his rider to the house and wait for someone to wake him and get him down.

The house has been in the Sankey family until recent years. The family who currently owns the house is restoring it.

Dr. George L. Sankey was born August 11, 1852 to Dr. John T. Sankey (February 27, 1825 - September 18, 1906) and Rebecca H. Sankey. He married Eddie Leonard October 8, 1884, and they had six children: Hal, Elizabeth, Catherine, Laura, Leonard, and Leroy. Dr. Sankey died January 3, 1931.

"FOOD FOR THOUGHT"

"Cholesterol" - "sodium" - "lite" and "fat-free"
"Calcium" - "potassium" - "Vitamin E" -
"Sugar" - "zinc" - "Iron" and "fiber," too,
Now must be considered 'fore cooking the stew.

These "words" speak loudly -
can blow your mood
when there's heavenly visions
of rich fatty food.

O' for the old meals when no need to read "cans".
The main ingredient was Mama's lovin' hands
Which prepared the food and were quite able
To cook a scrumptious meal in lieu of a label.

All these "food rules" just blow my mind.
If it's "good" it's a "no-no" - so I find.
I still bow my head, pray and all
"Thank you for the food, Lord -
(but what IS cholesterol?)"

By Laurie Smilie Sanders

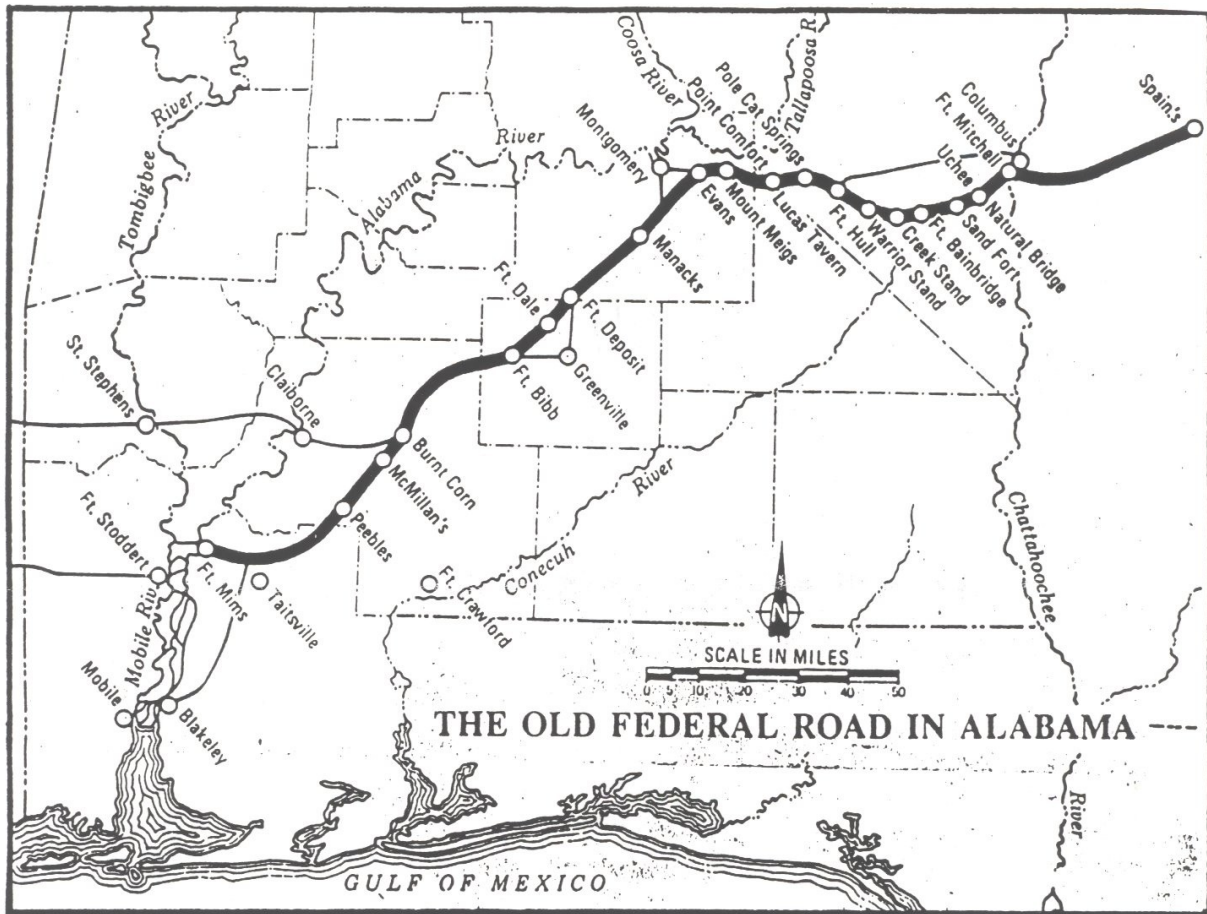
January 1998

MAPS OF THE OLD FEDERAL ROAD

These maps of the Old Federal Road should be especially interesting, as we recognize its historical significance here in the Pintlala area. They were taken from a brochure from the Henry County Genealogical/Historical Association in Abbeville.

Looking Back at Henry

(Descendants of Pioneer Immigrants Wonder How They Got Here!)



THE FEDERAL ROAD through Georgia, the Creek Nation, and Alabama, 1806-1836

The Federal Road project began 1805 when the Creeks gave permission for the development of a "horse path" through the nation for more efficient mail delivery between Washington City (D.C.) and New Orleans. A biographical history, *The Federal Road* derives its story from the diaries and journals of travelers, both famous and infamous.

CHARGES FOR COPIES

At the PHA board meeting held 28 March 1998, the group established a basic charge of \$5.00 for copying and mailing a copy of a PHA Newsletter, plus \$2.50 for each additional copy requested.

FRANK AND JESSE JAMES

Thanks to Lurline Hall, for submitting a 1993 series of articles by Nick Lackeos, printed in the Montgomery Advertiser, about these colorful characters' excursions and forays into Alabama!

Nick Lackeos emphasized Alabamians' vastly differing opinions of the brothers from Missouri. A local vintage gun collector, Gene Armstrong, had little sympathy for the them. A Greenville ancestor of his was murdered by South Alabama associates whose surnames were Hipp and Kelly. (The cover of the latest newsletter from the Butler County Historical Genealogical Society, available at the Pintlala Library, depicts the "Hanging of Hipp and Kelly.") Another local man, Mr. Frank Garrett, recalled an October 1875 visit to their Mt. Willing home by a Mr. J. T. Jackson, who said he intended to buy land in Lowndes County for a stock farm. Mr. Garrett was eleven at the time, the oldest of five children, and vividly remembers the stranger who stayed for some time. Mr. Jackson was very fond of children and told the most wonderful stories of the Civil War. When he arrived, Mr. Jackson had a wound in the shoulder "from the Civil War," which the family helped clean and dress until it healed. However, the war had ended 10 years earlier, and the family learned later that the wound had actually been received during a bank robbery. During his stay, Mr. Jackson was very industrious and resourceful: he cut and hauled fire wood, broke and harrowed land, and even constructed a special harrow. But, Mr. Garrett even as a boy, noticed some peculiarities about their guest. Mr. Jackson always stayed on the outside of a crowd and never permitted himself to become surrounded. Even at church, he sat on a back seat. He bolted his bedroom door at night, during a time when doors were only pulled to for privacy. He also had huge rolls of money. But most memorable was Mr. Jackson's expertise in shooting. Mr. Garrett's father was considered the best shot in the county with a rifle and could split a bullet from 50 to 75 yards. One day as his father was practicing, and adjusting his rifle sights, Mr. Jackson was watching with interest, and said "I believe I can beat you with my pistol." Everyone was amazed at his remarkable accuracy. It was some time after "Mr. Jackson" received a letter and suddenly left to catch a train at Ft. Deposit, that the family realized their esteemed guest was Jesse James.

Many Southerners were bitter about the Civil War and viewed the James Brothers as striking a blow of revenge by hitting Union backed banks and the trains of Northern based railroads. Many people viewed the James Gang as folk heroes, like Robin Hood. Jesse James was said to have given a poor widow \$3,000 in cash after he learned that the banker was coming to foreclose on her place. (She had fed him at her shack while he was on the run.) When the banker arrived to foreclose, she paid off her mortgage. But Jesse held up the banker on his way back to town, retrieved the \$3,000 and took his gold watch!

Jesse James is also said to have frequently stayed in the ornate St. James Hotel in Selma, which has recently been restored. Reportedly, he gambled and visited the waterfront district where riverboats from Montgomery and Mobile docked.

Frank James was as expert a marksman as his younger brother. Both rode with Confederate guerrillas during the Civil War. For a period after the Civil War, it appeared that both brothers wanted to settle down to a peaceful life. A general amnesty for Confederate guerrillas was issued in 1865, but when Frank and Jesse rode in, waving a white flag to surrender, Union soldiers opened fire on them. Jesse was wounded, but both managed to escape. The following year, they began a series of robberies and their skill and cunning is legendary.

Jesse was killed at the age of 34 by one of his own followers in 1882 in exchange for amnesty and a \$5,000 reward. Five months later, Frank turned himself in to the Missouri governor and was brought to Huntsville, AL to be tried for a robbery at Muscle Shoals. He was acquitted of that charge and others in Missouri, later ran a Wild West Show for some time and, supposedly died of natural causes in 1915.

But Wayne Greenhaw remembers a 1948 visit by an elderly gentlemen when he was in elementary school in North Alabama. The kindly looking old fellow, of medium build, and wearing a dark suit and Western string tie, said that he was Frank James. The old man told how he and his brother Jesse would come to Alabama to hide out and rest. They were friends with a North Alabama outlaw, Rube Burrow, who had a hideout in Dismals Canyon, just south of Russellville. According to the old man, he and his brother hung out in that beautiful area with Rube Burrow and hid from "the law."

"THE SANKEY HOME TODAY"

