PINTLALA HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

Next Meeting:

July 17, 2016 - 2:30 p.m.

c/o Pintlala Public Library
255 Federal Road
Hope Hull, Alabama 36043

Founded 1987

Second Montgomery County Bookmobile utilized in 1955, from *Montgomery Advertiser*, October 8 , 1955

2016 OFFICERS

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

"Pintlala History and Drone Technology"

Thanks to the kindness of Pintlala resident, Mark Dauber, I was invited to observe the flying of a high-tech drone over the Manack Tavern site on the old Federal Road. On Saturday, June 18, we gathered on the driveway and front pasture of Charles Murrell who is always supportive of historical investigation. The weather was perfect.

Dr Terry Winemiller and Tanya Burton programmed the fight patterns into a laptop which operated from the back of a vehicle. Dr. Winemiller is the Associate Professor of Anthropology and Geography at AUM. He has wide experience and expertise in Geographic Information Systems. It was also obvious to me that Tanya Burton brought a depth of past experience in drone technology to the task. Of course, Mark Dauber is proficient in his knowledge of the Federal Road and high-tech photography.

The experience was fascinating. The drone looked like an ordinary bird once airborne. Photographs were taken every few seconds by the drone's camera. Three fight patterns were flown with each lasting about thirty minutes. In an almost silent manner the drone did its work. A few days later a re-fly was necessary to complete the number of photographs. I can't wait to learn about the interpretation of the photographic data.

A few years ago, May 10-11, 2011, the site of Manack's Tavern was confirmed by the archaeological work done by Dr. Greg Waselkov and team from the University of South Alabama. The project was paid for by PHA. That report can be found on the PHA website.

" We are in the middle of a revolution in aerial survey for archaeology"

—Yorke Rowan

Senior Research Associate at the Oriental Institute

We live in a wonderful age of historical discovery...and we don't have to go far.

Tanya Burton, Terry Winemiller, Mark Dauber, Photo courtesy Gary Burton

Gary Burton, President

July 2016 Program

Pintlala Historical Association will meet at Pintlala Baptist Church Fellowship Hall on Sunday, July 17, 2016 at 2:30 p.m.

Our program will be presented by former State Representative Steve Flowers from Pike County. He will discuss his book, *Of Goats and Governors: Six Decades of Colorful Alabama Political Stories.* This high-spirited memoir will entertain and inform readers on the backstage intrigue of Alabama politics.

Steve Flowers is a multi-talented man. He is a political columnist, commentator, analyst, book author, and professor in residence at Troy University where he teaches Southern politics. His political column, "Inside the Statehouse with Steve Flowers", appears in over 72 Alabama newspapers. He can be heard weekly on Public Radio in Alabama and appears regularly on television station WAKA as their political analyst. Representative Flowers is generally considered the ultimate authority on Alabama politics and Alabama political history.

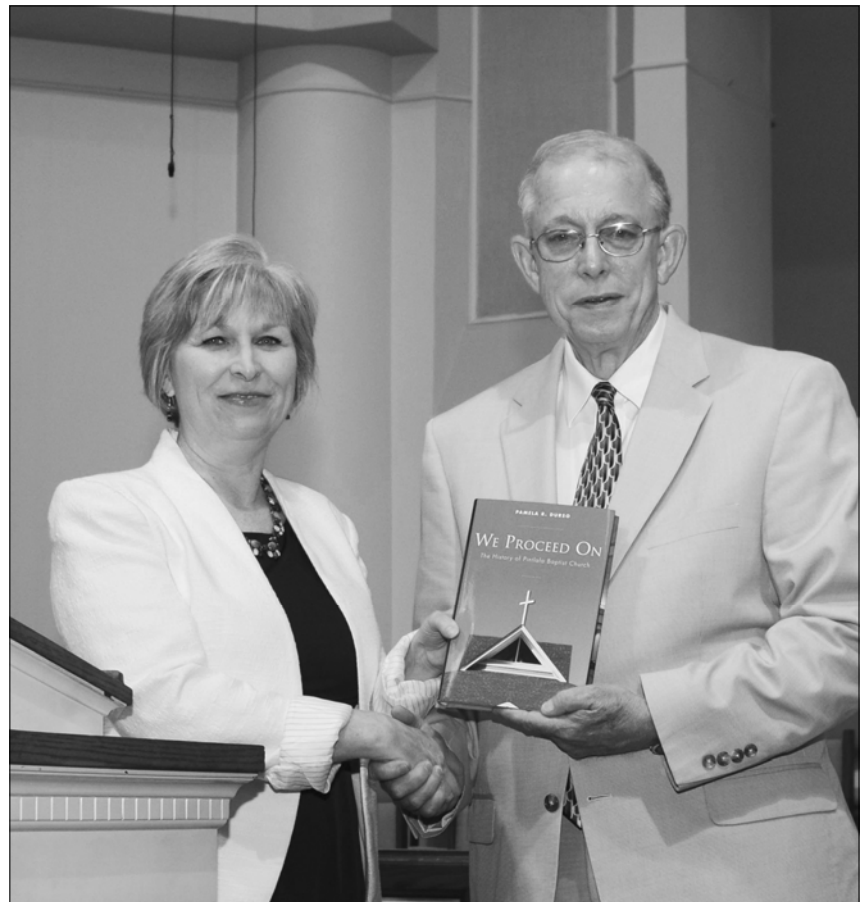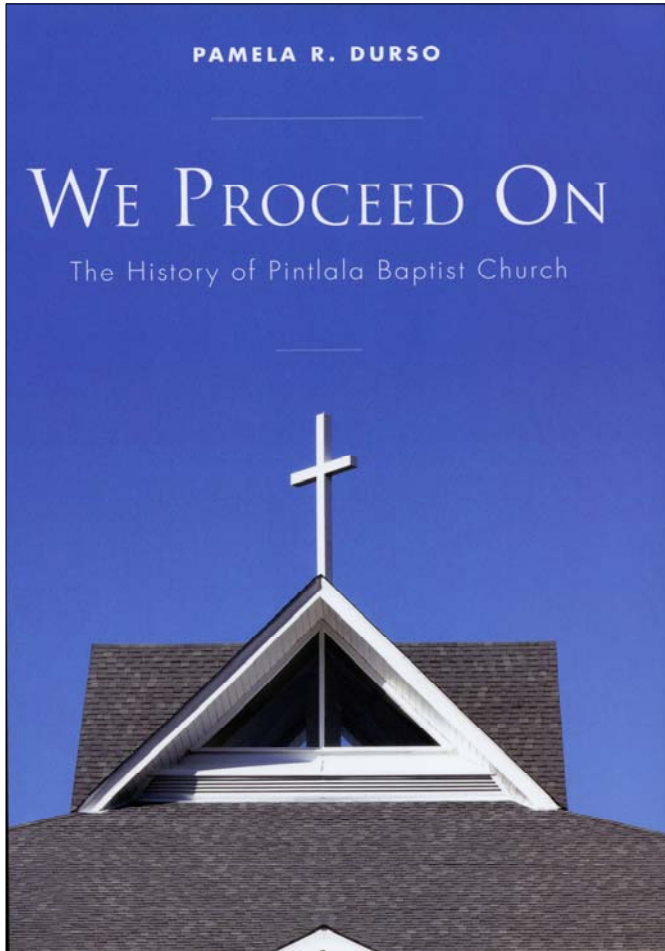His book will be available for purchase at $30.00 per book.

Come for an entertaining July afternoon!

Steve Flowers, Photo courtesy http://www.steveflowers.us/

Pintlala Book

Pintlala Baptist Church has just recently published *We Proceed On: the History of Pintlala Baptist Church* by Dr. Pamela R. Durso. The 323 page history is available for purchase from PBC at $22.00 per book. It is illustrated with numerous images of members and their activities over their 56 year history. The book is a tribute to the PBC family and its place in the Pintlala community.

Author Dr. Pam Durso presenting Gary Burton with her book *We Proceed On: The History of Pintlala Baptist Church* on June 5, 2016 at the church's 56th anniversary celebration.

History of Pintlala Branch Library

Alice T. Carter

A history of the community library in Pintlala, Alabama is an integral part of public library service in Montgomery County; an examination of one is not possible without looking at the other. On October 9, 1955 the Montgomery Advertiser published a full-page salute to ten years of progress by the Montgomery County Bookmobile. This one source provides a history of county library service found no where else. The Advertiser reported that there had been a rural library program started as a WPA project in 1941 where a librarian swapped out books by car monthly at ten community stations. No list of these locations has been found. The first library service to Pintlala and southwest Montgomery County was provided by a surplus army ambulance converted into a bookmobile in 1945. It made free public library service available to citizens who resided outside the Montgomery city limits. The ambulance was purchased by the Montgomery County Board of Revenue at the request of citizen delegations led by members of the Home Demonstration Clubs and PTA groups. They wanted to improve the library program started by the WPA project in 1941.

U.S. House of Representatives member Carl Elliott from Jasper, Alabama introduced the Library Service Act in 1956, which brought bookmobiles and public libraries to rural America including his home state of Alabama. Elliott served in Congress from 1949 to 1964.

By 1955 a Bookmobile, in an upgraded version, went around the county every two weeks on an announced schedule**.** This program was funded by the Montgomery County Board of Revenue with some assistance for book purchases from the Alabama Public Library Service.   The Bookmobile was staffed by a trained librarian and a driver. The first Montgomery County librarian was Ethel Sanders who served Montgomery County from 1944 to 1956 when she moved to Troy University Library. The next known County Librarian was Tommie Greene Lacy who came to Montgomery from Elmore County High School in 1958 and served until her retirement in 1974. Her daughter believes the 1958 date is accurate though no County employment records can be located. The big green bookmobile stopped at crossroads, churches, post offices, schools and small neighborhoods where there were no public meeting places. It also changed collections of 25 to 150 books in country stores where patrons, who were unable to meet the bookmobile, could choose books at the local store. The books were checked out and returned by the honor system. In the Pintlala area Mosley's Store and Lassiter's Store had a shelf designated for the circulating books. The success of this early system of distribution was built on the cooperation and assistance of everyone concerned—county organizations, storekeepers, school personnel, individual adults and children.

One of the fondest memories of this writer was the time spent out of classes at Pintlala Junior High School to work as a Bookmobile assistant. The student assistants were used to check out books to other students while the librarians guided students in the selection of their books and aided teachers in finding appropriate materials for their classroom needs.

Until 1974, there were two library systems in Montgomery County—the city and county libraries each with its respective boards and staff. In 1974 the two systems merged, working to provide equal library service to all citizens of Montgomery County. At the time of the merger, Mary Hass was director of the City Library. A few weeks after the merger agreement had been signed, Hass resigned and Gillis Doughtie became director of the newly merged system.

A non-drivable bookmobile was moved to the Pintlala community likely in 1979. This first Pintlala Branch Library was located on property leased from the Montgomery County Board of Education, between Pintlala Elementary School and Pintlala Baptist Church. This had been the site of the Pintlala Grange Hall which is now located at Old Alabama Town Historic District in Montgomery. Ethel Tankersley Todd, life-long Pintlala resident, retired teacher from Pintlala Elementary School and member of the Montgomery City-County Library Board of Trustees, 1961-1993**,** lobbied hard for this unique library facility. The non-drivable bookmobile had been in use at Ramer prior to their brick and mortar library. It was loaded on the back of a truck and brought to Pintlala—rotten tires and all! Ethel Todd worked to recruit and schedule volunteers to man the library, with training of volunteers provided by the Library System.

Non-drivable bookmobile used at Ramer prior to a brick and mortar building, then moved to Pintlala in 1979. Photo courtesy Ramer Branch Library

Great progress was made in terms of a library facility for Pintlala in 1983. A prefabricated building with "in-door plumbing" (a real plus for volunteers!), telephone and capacity for many more books became a reality. After years of being totally manned by volunteers other than the rotation of books by system librarian, Gerry Edwards, a part-time para-professional librarian was hired by the City-County System around 1991. This allowed for longer hours of access for readers. Among those known to have worked in the prefabricated library included Janet Brown and Jacky Todd who was followed by Janice Anderson, a retired Pintlala Elementary teacher. Volunteers were still utilized on a regular basis. Cooperation and a good working relationship between Gillis Doughtie and Ethel Todd helped make these progressive steps at the Pintlala facility a reality.

Prefabricated building erected in Pintlala, 1983, replaced non-drivable bookmobile

The generosity of life-long Fleta resident, Buena Mae Duncan Sellers proved to be the turning point for library facilities in Pintlala. According to her will, which was probated in the Montgomery County Probate Office in July 1991, generous bequests were made to three institutions: Mount Carmel United Methodist Church, the United Methodist Children's Home and Pintlala Library. These bequests were in the form of acreage, which was sold with derived income divided among the three aforementioned groups. With her love of community and magnanimous spirit, Buena Mae Sellers paved the way for a permanent library facility in Pintlala.

Groundbreaking ceremony for brick and mortar building on September 10, 1995. Pictured L to R: Dr. Pete Eberhart, Montgomery County Superintendent of Education; Mr. O.A. Wilkerson, president, Montgomery City-County Library Board; County Commissioners: Lynn Gowan, James Brown, Sam Wingard and Chairman W. A. (Bill) Joseph

The pairing of Mrs. Sellers' generosity and the vision, leadership and persistent nagging of Ethel Tankersley Todd was wonderful providence for the Pintlala community in terms of an educational and cultural facility. This pairing along with supplemental financial aid and cooperation of: the Montgomery County Commission under the leadership of William F. Joseph; City Council during the term of Mayor Emory Folmar; City-County Library Board led by Chairman, O.A. Wilkerson, and Library System Directors, Gillis Doughtie, followed by Jaunita Owes in July 1994 made a 6,600 square foot library a reality in Pintlala. The legal services rendered by Frank Hawthorne, another Pintlala native, were invaluable in settling the Sellers' estate. During this period of progress, Bill Hine served as Montgomery County Commission Administrator and was helpful in working out the additional financial contributions of the County Commission to funds from the Sellers Estate.

On September 10, 1995 a groundbreaking ceremony was held on the site of the newly planned Pintlala Library facility. This site was on land leased from the Montgomery County Board of Education with W. A. "Pete" Eberhart as Superintendent at the time. The construction site was on the Federal Road between Pintlala Elementary School and the Pintlala United Methodist Church. A liason committee had been in place for sometime, bringing together ideas and personalities from the community, Library System and the architectural firm of Goodwyn, Mills and Cawood. The committee was represented by Jaunita Owes, System Director; O. A. Wilkerson, Chairman City-County Library Board; residents Mrs. Susan Scott, Mr. Pat Moseley, Mrs. Louise Newell, Mrs. Ethel Tankersley Todd, Mr. Frank Hawthorne and the Reverend Gary P. Burton, who was a

Officials from the Montgomery County Commission, Montgomery City Council and Alabama Public Library Service prepare to cut the ribbon officially opening Pintlala Branch Library

Library Board member as well as Pintlala resident. Burton's leadership, which cannot be understated, on the Library Board began in 1993 when he replaced Mrs. Todd. He continues to serve this group as of 2016. The dedication and formal opening of the Pintlala Branch Library was held on July 21, 1996 with dignitaries from city and county government, Alabama Public Library Service and Library Board of Trustees participating. At long last Pintlala now was home to a permanent rural branch library surpassed by the Ramer Library in 1980, which had been the first rural public library in Montgomery County.

The handsome new brick structure complimented but did not duplicate the architectural style of its close neighbor, Pintlala Elementary School. Tasteful landscaping complimented the building.

New Pintlala Branch Library, Goodwyn, Mills and Cawood, Architects

Janice Anderson and Bonnie Stanfield were the first Library Assistants in the new facility and they brought an atmosphere of welcome and helpfulness to a new and ever increasing group of patrons. Olivia Anderson-Johnson replaced Janice Anderson in 1999 and Sabrina Knox replaced Bonnie Stanfield a few months later. In April 2002, Anita Berry assumed the position held by Johnson upon her retirement after 27 years of service to the Montgomery City-County Library System. Sandra Savage Berry picked up the reigns from Anita Berry in 2005. Several assistants have come and gone over the years. As of 2016, Sandra Berry and Greg Loggins are providing excellent service to library patrons.

In 1997 an active group of community residents formed a legally incorporated Friends of the Pintlala Branch Library hoping to keep alive the involvement of Pintlala residents who for so long had been involved with the community library. It is their mission to support the library in any way possible and to encourage residents to use the library and to feel an ownership with the facility. The spirit of volunteerism that had helped keep the library working for so many years is still alive and the group is always ready to be of service to the local library. Current president, Patricia H. McLaney, welcomes new members into the group. The Friends of the Pintlala Library sponsor the Children's Summer Reading Program, author events, purchase of equipment such as vacuum cleaner, cri-cut imaging and cutting machine, leaf blower, paper cutter and provides refreshments for various events.

The Pintlala Branch Library will celebrate its 20th anniversary on July 21, 2016 with an event—Books and Banjos! Come join us at 3:30 p.m.

Sources:

Files of Ethel Tankersley Todd and Alice Carter

Montgomery Advertiser, Sunday, October 9, 1955

Ramer Scrapbook, 1986

Phone interview: Eleanor Greene Hemmes, Dallas, Texas, June 13, 2016

Visitors await ribbon cutting

Library Board member, Gary Burton and former Board member, Ethel Tankersley Todd welcome guests to newly opened Pintlala Library
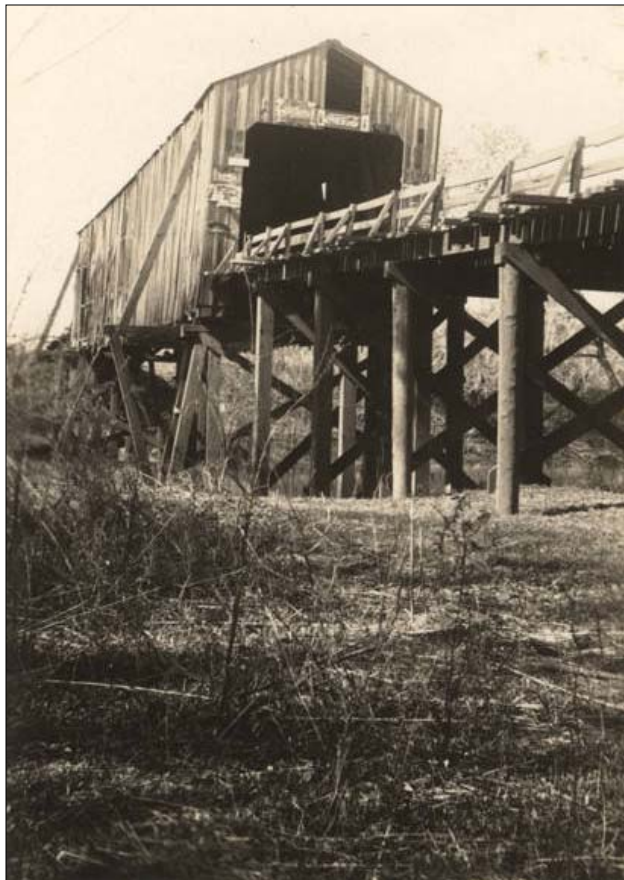

Dedicated Library volunteers presented awards by System Director, Juanita Owes at Grand Opening; Mary Hawthorne served continuously for twelve years

Covered Bridges on Pintlala Creek

Alice T. Carter

News articles spread over a decade from the *Montgomery Advertiser* provide information on the last two covered bridges in Montgomery County, both spanning Pintlala Creek, but on different roads. One bridge was on the Old Selma Road/CR 54 and the other on Wasden Road/CR 15. In both instances the bridges shared a county line with neighboring Lowndes County.

Old Selma Road Bridge, undated photo, Courtesy Alabama Department of Archives and History

Old Selma Road Bridge

The first of the two bridges to be replaced was located on Old Selma Road/CR54. This bridge replacement project was begun in 1954. County Engineer Thomas Edwards, who served Montgomery County Engineering Department from 1910 to 1964, never discovered who the builder of the Old Selma Road bridge might have been. He knew the bridge to be over 100 years old. Like its Wasden Road mate the bridge was constructed of heart-pine timbers and wooden pegs. Over the years political and soft drink advertising signs accumulated on its outside walls. Edwards pampered the old bridge by strengthening its joints many times. He supported the roof and sides with a cable attached to a large, strong tree on the Pintlala Creek bank. The *Montgomery Advertiser* of December 26, 1954 stated

Undated and unidentified people in auto— thought to be on Old Selma Road covered bridge, Photo courtesy Lamar Hall

the mile and a half of roadway, approach, and steel plus concrete replacement bridge would cost $158,000.00. Funds would be provided by the two counties of Montgomery and Lowndes that were joined by the bridge with additional funding from the state and federal governments.

Wasden Road Bridge

The covered bridge on Wasden Road in Hope Hull was originally constructed of heart-pine timbers measuring around 3 x 10 inches held together with wooden pegs about 2 ½ inches in diameter and nearly 12 inches long. It was described as a wooden-truss structure. Its location placed the bridge half in Lowndes and half in Montgomery counties. The bridge was completed in 1851, prior to the Civil War, with William Trimble listed as the builder by Thomas Edwards, County Engineer. No additional information on Trimble has been located. The original barn-like structure was a shingled, pitched-roof design but later was made into a tin, flat-roof design after a loaded truck damaged the shingled roof in 1956. Charles McWilliams of the *Montgomery Advertiser* staff reported the tin roof was riddle with bullet holes in 1962 at the time of its demise.

In 1956 the *Advertiser* reported that members of the Montgomery County Board of Revenue (County Commission) made a field trip to see for themselves the damaged, aged bridge, in order to make a determination for closing the road until a new bridge could be constructed. Little did they know that six years later the old bridge would still be in use. After their visit to the bridge, the Board appointed member Hiram Rowe (grandfather to PHA members Frank Lassiter and Elaine Lassiter) to confer with Lowndes County officials regarding their participation in seeking federal and state funds for a new bridge.

Floods in February 1961 raised the water level a foot over the bridge's floor and washed away the approach bridges. These smaller bridges were temporarily restored as cars could still ford the small streams and swamp in normal weather. The larger covered bridge was posted with signs stating " Bridge Unsafe" and "Do Not Use".

County Engineer Thomas H. Edwards prepared plans for concrete and steel bridges measuring more than 800 feet including the approach bridges. The roadbed and creek channel were to be straightened, and redesigned placing the new bridge above the line of the 1961 flood and several hundred feet upstream from the old leaning, sagging, and creaking bridge. The 1851 covered bridge would be left to die out in the swampy land on Wasden Road. Edwards estimated the new bridges would cost around $200,000.00, to be financed primarily from federal emergency relief funds based on the earlier flood. Remaining funds would be divided between Montgomery and Lowndes counties. Ultimately the century-old bridge was replaced in 1962.

Covered bridge over Pintlala Creek on Wasden Road, undated photo, from *Montgomery Advertiser*

Its replacement was met with sadness by residents who had enjoyed riding under its trussed structure. The Montgomery Historic Foundation, led by Miss Rebie Holt, incorporated in 1957, discussed the possibilities of preserving the symbol from a by-gone era. Montgomery resident, Rod Frazer, and author of *Send the Alabamians: World War I Fighters in the Rainbow Division* wrote a letter to the *Montgomery Advertiser* in 1962 encouraging the preservation of the bridge. However, some local residents had previously petitioned the Board of Revenue to have the bridge replaced with a modern span. Progress prevailed and the new concrete and steel bridge was erected, opened to traffic in 1962 and continues to provide passage between Montgomery and Lowndes counties.

Sources:

Alabama Department of Archives and History *Montgomery Advertiser* : issues from August 29, 1951; January 4, 1952; March 23, 1952; December 26, 1954; June 19, 1956; June 19, 1957; January 28, 1962; February 2, 1962 *Alabama Journal*: March 21, 1961.

James Kelly, Assistant Montgomery County Engineer

Lamar Hall, retired, Montgomery County Engineer's Office

Cahawba Cemetery Mystery

Our long-time PHA member Phyllis Armstrong has been at it again— pursuing good works involving cemeteries! This time Phyllis and her co-worker Denise Hardin have helped to solve a long standing mystery at the cemetery at Old Cahawba. We are proud of the two cemetery detectives!

The reprint of an article in the Sunday, June 5, 2016 *Montgomery Advertiser* written by Alvin Benn is published in our newsletter courtesy of both the *Montgomery Advertiser* and reporter, Alvin Benn. We are grateful to both and appreciate their generosity.

Read on for the rest of the story:

Stolen Cemetery Stone Back Where It Belongs

By Alvin Benn

Special to the Advertiser

SELMA – Happy endings are wonderful, especially when they involve an infant's missing tombstone, thieves probably long gone and rediscovery at a cemetery more than 50 miles from its point of origin.

If it sounds a bit confusing, it may have been to a small group of visitors Saturday morning during a walk through a cemetery in Old Cahawba, Alabama's first capital city.

Assistant Site Director Jonathan Matthews led the walk and stopped at several final resting places where he explained some very unusual stories about each "occupant."

None could match the story of Mary Louisa Portis who died in infancy in 1853 and was laid to rest near some towering shade trees.

That's where the plot thickened on a hot, muggy morning as Matthews explained the mysterious disappearance of tiny Mary Louisa's headstone.

"Nobody's quite sure just when it was stolen or why, but it had to have been a long time ago," said Matthews. "Then, strangely enough, it winds up over in Montgomery at the Lincoln Cemetery."

That cemetery had become an embarrassment for Montgomery until a group of kind-hearted volunteers in the capital city took matters into their hands and began to clean up the mess.

Mary Louisa's marble headstone slab was found under a magnolia tree just inside the main entrance to the Lincoln Cemetery, according to the Alabama Historical Commission.

The commission praised volunteers Denise Hardin and Phyllis Armstrong for their genealogical research that led them to Linda Derry, site director of the Old Cahawba cemetery in Dallas County, 15 miles from Selma.

By that time, volunteers had cleaned it to look almost as pristine as the original headstone put in place in 1853 and ascertain it belonged in Cahawba, not Montgomery.

Matthews said both of Mary Louisa's parents were educators who left Cahawba several years after her death and moved to another part of the country to start a new life.

Now, about those responsible for stealing the headstone. The marble could have had some value, but the real reason may never be known or the reason why it was dumped in the Lincoln Cemetery.

"Could be it was a case of a guilty conscience getting the best of whoever did it," said Matthews.

The headstone slab was finally returned to the Old Cahawba Cemetery a year ago where a ceremony was

held to "welcome" Mary Louisa back home.

Derry said those involved in recovering and returning the headstone to Dallas County were to be commended for their hard work.

It was finally determined the headstone may have been stolen from the Cahawba Cemetery during the early 1960s, meaning it was missing for more than 50 years.

Taking part in the Dallas County ceremony a year ago was Phillip Tauton, sexton of Montgomery's Oakwood Cemetery and chairman of the Montgomery Cemetery Rehabilitation Authority.

Tauton brought with him the reason for the ceremony-- the long, lost gravestone that, once again will mark the all-too short final resting place of an infant girl born eight years before the start of the Civil War.

The state Historical Commission described return of the headstone part of a "miraculous homecoming" and Matthews couldn't agree more.

"If not for finding it in the Lincoln Cemetery, Mary Louisa would have been wiped off the history books of Dallas County," said Matthews.

The way he looks at the tombstone discovery and return to its rightful place a "one in a million thing."

Jonathan Matthews kneels beside the marble headstone returned to the Cahawba Cemetery. Photo courtesy, *Montgomery Advertiser*

PINTLALA HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

c/o Pintlala Public Library
255 Federal Road
Hope Hull, AL 36043

Founded 1987

NEXT MEETING

JULY 17, 2016

2:30 P.M.

PINTLALA BAPTIST CHURCH

Join the Pintlala Historical Association
Please mail completed form & dues to:

Pintlala Historical Association
Ina Slade
15212 Highway 31
Hope Hull, Alabama 36043

Name _____

Address _____

City, State Zip _____

Phone (Home & Office) _____

E-Mail Address _____

Areas of Interest _____

If you are interested in genealogy, please indicate family surnames _____

$15.00 Annual Dues