



HISTORY HAPPENS

Official Newsletter of the Alabama Historical Commission

MARCH 2024

A Word from Lisa

Greetings,

March is Women's History Month and I want to celebrate the women who had influence over our historic sites. Read more on the last page about some of their stories and history!

I would like to offer my congratulations to the staff and the Friends of Gaineswood and the Colbert County Historical Landmarks Foundation (CCHLF) for receiving grants from Americana Corner, an online resource focused on the founding of our nation. Belle Mont will use the funding for furniture conservation. Gaineswood will be using their funding for interpretive and directional signage. Also, thank you to our other Friends' groups, Friends of Fendall Hall and Historic Magnolia Grove Foundation for their support for our other house museums. We appreciate their hard work behind the scenes to advocate for our historic sites and we are thrilled to have them working alongside the AHC!

The Historical Commission held its' quarterly meeting in the Capitol on February 28 and voted to adopt the slate of officers presented by the Nominating Committee. Officers for the year are Eddie Griffith, Chairman; Judge David Breland, Vice-Chair; Dr. Jim Day, Treasurer; and Pat Edington, Secretary. The officers will serve for a one-year term. We are looking forward to working with these officers on AHC projects this year.

Our AHC grant program, the Education Trust Fund, is still open for applications but the deadline is approaching! The grant application closes on March 29. To apply, click [here](#).

Lisa D. Jones
Executive Director
State Historic Preservation Officer

UPCOMING EVENTS

March 14
Heritage Days
Gaineswood

March 16
Living History
Fort Toulouse-Fort Jackson

March 23
Bird Walk for Beginners
Old Cahawba

March 23
Kite Day & Easter Egg Hunt
Belle Mont

REMINDER:
ETF Grant
Applications
due March 29!

April 6
Civil War Walking Tour
Old Cahawba

[Click here for more information!](#)

AHC speaks on the continued preservation efforts of Rosenwald schools

In celebration of Black History Month, Freedom Rides Museum Site Director Dorothy Walker was invited to speak on the history and significance of Rosenwald and Equalization schools at the Chambers County Library.

The presentation described the history of the schools built by Dr. Booker T. Washington and Julius Rosenwald under the school construction project that lasted from 1912 until 1932 and the efforts made by the AHC to work with communities to document approximately three dozen Rosenwald schools or former sites. Macon and Chambers County are tied for the counties with the most Rosenwald schools built in the state. The presentation also included the history of Equalization schools. These schools were constructed in the South to maintain segregated education.

AHC has undertaken a study of the state's Black schools through a grant from the National Park Service through the Underrepresented Communities grant program. This study will research the history of African American schools in Alabama from Reconstruction to 1972. Dorothy shared resources that individuals can use to get more information about the history of African American schools. The AHC's GIS [Historic Preservation Map](#) features the location of many African American schools. Grants are available for cities, counties, and non-profits who own and operate school buildings as historic sites in their community. Click [here](#) for more information.

This presentation was part of the Alabama Historical Association's Speaker's Bureau.



New Hope Rosenwald School, Chambers County

AHC map receives another round of upgrades

AHC continues to look for ways to improve our preservation programs and the Historic Preservation Map has been given additional improvements. The map layer for the Alabama Register of Landmarks and Heritage now contains detailed, searchable information about each property and their significance. Additionally, documents and pictures were scanned and have been made available for properties and historic districts. Lastly, viewers can now experience a Google Street View for most locations that allows the public to see and explore Alabama Register properties.

"I am thrilled to have these new features available to the public because now the state of Alabama has a detailed, complete and searchable GIS database of all the properties and historic districts associated with the Alabama Register which allows the public to better explore and learn about our state's historic sites," said GIS Specialist Joseph Massey.

To view the Historic Preservation Map, click [here](#).

AHC IS HIRING!

Alabama Historical Commission

- Cultural Resources Coordinator
- Cultural Resources Coordinator, Senior

The Alabama Historical Commission is looking for qualified candidates for the jobs listed above. For more information, please click [here](#).



Mattie Fulcher **Confederate Memorial Park**

Mattie Fulcher was a registered nurse at the Alabama Confederate Soliders' Home, now Confederate Memorial Park, during the 1920s

and 1930s. While at the Soliders' Home, Mattie worked under Dr. J.T. Fowler and lived on site with other employees. Mattie never married and dedicated her time and efforts to the recovery and health of veterans.



Annie Wheeler **Pond Spring**

Miss Annie Wheeler, one of the daughters of General Joe Wheeler, turned the grounds of Pond Spring into a pastoral garden following the Civil War. Annie and her sister, Lucy, planted daffodils, irises, roses, daylilies, ivy and wisteria and Annie continued planting after Lucy's death in 1924. To help with the grief, Annie planted approximately 500 English boxwoods on the property some of which still thrive today. In her east garden, Annie had a cedarwood arbor constructed, lined with stone pathways, benches and birdbaths, and even a marble sundial.

Sara J. Hatcher Duncan **Old Cahawba**

Sara Hatcher was born in Cahaba in 1869 to parents who were emancipated from slavery. As a young girl, she went door to door reading the Bible to the elderly residents of Cahawba who never learned to read. Subsequently, she became a school teacher and then became involved in missionary work. She was regarded as the Pinnacle of Women's Power in the African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E) Church.



Catherine Burks Brooks **Freedom Rides Museum**

Catherine Burks Brooks grew up in Birmingham. As a student at Tennessee State University, she honed her activism in the Nashville Student Movement in 1960 and the Freedom Rides in 1961. She is remembered for her bravery, especially when she confronted Bull Connor, Birmingham's infamous lawman who jailed the Freedom Riders. After he arrested them, Catherine engaged in dialogue with him and even offered to have breakfast with him in the spirit of universal brotherhood.



Margaret Hobson **Magnolia Grove**

Margaret Hobson was born in 1884 and served as an early advocate of historic preservation in Greensboro. She worked for years to have

Magnolia Grove preserved as a memorial to her brother Richmond, a Spanish-American War hero and US Congressman. Margaret also worked on the campaign to save the Southern University building. Margaret was the last family member to live at Magnolia Grove until her death in 1978.

Lurleen B. Wallace **Alabama State Capitol**

Lurleen Burns Wallace served as the 46th governor of Alabama for 16 months from January 16, 1967 until her death on May 7, 1968. She was the first wife of Alabama governor George Wallace, whom she succeeded as governor because the Alabama constitution forbade consecutive terms. She was Alabama's first female governor and was the only woman to hold the governorship until Governor Kay Ivey. She is also the only female governor in U.S. history to have died in office as well as being the first and only female Democrat to have served as governor in Alabama history. She was also instrumental in starting the Alabama School for the Fine Arts.

