
CHILTONIAN

Volume 38, Number 1

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QUARTERLY MEETING

The Chilton County Historical Society will hold its winter meeting on **Sunday, January 14th, at 2:00 PM at the Senior Connection building.** The speaker will be **Mr. Bill Gardner**, Senior Engineer in the Environmental Affairs Department of Alabama Power Company (APC). He has been with them for 37 years and is a graduate of Samford University and the UAB. He is responsible for the management of cultural resources on APC's Hydroelectric Project Lands and will speak on APC's management of cultural resources, emphasizing historical documentation of the Dam Villages, in particular the Lay and Mitchell Projects.

It is time for officer elections and annual dues.

The meeting is free and open to the public.

CREDITS:

Chiltonian is a quarterly publication of the
Chilton County Historical Society & Archives, Inc.
P. O. Box 644
Clanton, Alabama 35046-0644

OFFICERS:

President	-	Derric Scott
Vice President	-	Colyn Moatts (acting)
Secretary	-	Scarlett Teel
Treasurer	-	VACANT
Reporter	-	Janette Bailey

MEMBERSHIP RATES:

Annual: Individual \$10, Family \$15, Student \$5
(All dues payable in January)
Lifetime: \$250

NOTE: On your address label, the two-digit number after your name indicates the year through which your dues are paid. An "L" indicates life member.

CHILTON COUNTY IS 150!!!

The year 2018 will include the Sesquicentennial (150th) anniversary of the formation of Chilton County. Our four newsletters in 2018 will focus on this celebration. Please feel free to offer any ideas to any officers.

Dues:

Please note that it is time for your annual dues for 2018, and there is a slight increase to \$10 per person or \$15 per family. If you are out-of-town, please mail your dues to the address shown on this page under "**CREDITS.**"

Officer Elections:

Please note we are scheduled to nominate and vote on officers at this month's meeting. Please consider being a candidate this term. We will need a full slate of active officers (and members) this year, especially because of activities related to the 2018 Chilton Sesquicentennial. We have been operating with unfilled officer positions for the last few years, so please come ready to serve!

Report on Sesquicentennial Activities:

The Chilton County Celebration Committee has been formed to work on the 2018 Chilton County Sesquicentennial (150th Anniversary). They are meeting periodically now and are seeking ideas and participation. If you are interested or have suggestions, please contact an officer. The week of October 21 through October 27, 2018 has been chosen as the Celebration Week, with Saturday the 27th being the "main event" celebration "bash."

Union Banner Online:

The speaker at our last meeting was Mr. Carey Heatherly, the University of Montevallo (UM) Archivist. UM is working with other partners to digitize the Union Banner and other publications by W. M. Wyatt. Thus far the Union Banner issues from 1913 through 1926 have been digitized, with more to come in the near future. They are searchable by text, and you can see them at the below address. Just choose the **Wyatt Digital Archives** on the left, and then scroll down to the Union Banner link:

<http://libguides.montevallo.edu/archives/>

You can also Google for "Wyatt Digital Archive" to find it.

Chilton County Chronology

By Chilton County Historical Society
Originally Published in the 1996 *Chiltonian*

- 1814 Aug 9** - Jackson's treaty with the Creek Indians was signed near Wetumpka.
- 1814** - Jackson's disbanded troops pass through area on way back to their homes.
- 1816-1820** - Early settlers arrive. Roads and churches come into being.
- 1818** - St. Stephens territorial capitol.
- 1819-1826** - Cahaba was state capitol.
- 1826-1846** - Tuscaloosa was state capitol.
- 1832-1838** - Indian removals to Arkansas and Oklahoma. Trail of Tears.
- 1846** - Montgomery became state capitol.
- 1852** - Selma, Rome railroad completed passing through Maplesville.
- 1858** - Community of Ranch. Autauga Co., designated [Postal Commission].
- 1866 Mar 8** - *L&N RR Co. proposes RR from Chicago to the Gulf. Mobile, New Orleans*
- 1868 Dec 19** - Legislative act creates county of Baker from Shelby, Bibb, Autauga, Perry.
- 1870** - Baker county government was finally inaugurated.
- 1870 Jan** - County census was 6,194.
- 1870** - Log cabin courthouse burned. New courthouse begun in Clanton.
- 1870 Oct.** - S&N Al. RR completed Chicago-Gulf.
- 1871 Feb** - Goose Pond Post Office designated, Alfred Baker, Postmaster.
- 1871 Apr** - Goose Pond Post Office re-designated Clanton Post Office.
- 1874 Dec** - Baker County re-designated as Chilton.
- 1880** - Census for county was 10,806.
- 1881 Nov** - Chilton View publication begun as county's first successful newspaper. Prior attempts included Baker Courier, Chilton Courier during mid-1870s.
- 1882** - Twenty-five crates of peaches shipped to Louisville and Indianapolis.
- 1883** - Housing and business construction boom.
- 1886 Jan 3** - S&N Al. Railroad track changed to standard gauge.
- 1886 Nov** - New jail completed. Known as "old '86"
- 1887 Sep** - Hot well test results published.
- 1888 May** - Hot well hotel being completed.
- 1890** - Census for county was 14,550.
- 1895** - Scandinavian colony settles town in county north of Strasburg and names it Thorsby.
- 1896** - Courthouse auctioned to Dr. J.S. Johnson.
- 1896 Oct 22** - New courthouse (gothic) dedicated
- 1897** - Daily paper published for one month.
- 1900** - Census for county was 16,522.
- 1901 Jan & Jul** - Fires destroyed the major portion of the business buildings on 2nd Ave. Replacements mostly brick.
- 1901 Nov 21** - Steam press purchased for Banner.
- 1902** - Construction begun of Old Soldier's Home.
- 1905 Oct 24** - Theodore Roosevelt, by invitation, train visit to county; only stop Mt. Creek.
- 1906 Feb 15** - Southern Bell to install local phone
- 1906 Aug 2** - 1st electric lights at courthouse
- 1908 Feb 20** - County voting precincts from 8-16.
- 1908 Nov 12** - Proposed power plant on Coosa River in Chilton makes local news.
- 1909 Feb 2** - William Jennings Bryan comes through county on train; spoke.
- 1910** - Census for county was 23,187.
- 1910** - Hayes/Hopkins infirmary opened to public (Old Stanfield Place).
- 1911 Aug** - First motion picture shown in Clanton.
- 1914 Jan** - Clanton Band played and an airplane made first landing in Clanton.
- 1914 Apr** - Lay Dam hydraulic power site completed and operating [Lock 12].
- 1914** - Contract let and High School built by J.H. Roberts and Son (Lockwood, Architect).
- 1918 Aug** - Fire destroyed the courthouse. Records saved except for Board of Ed.
- 1920** - Census for county was 22,770.
- 1920** - "Old" Wadesonian motion picture theater constructed.
- 1920 Aug 27** - The first woman ever registered to vote in Chilton County was Mrs. Mollie Murrah Sessions [Republican].
- 1923 Aug 15** - Mitchell Dam hydraulic power site completed and operating
- 1926 Jul** - Beeline Highway completed connecting Birmingham and Montgomery.
- 1930** - Census for county was 24,671.
- 1936 Apr 23** - New Wadesonian theatre opened.
- 1936 Apr 29** - First Sunday afternoon movie.
- 1939** - CC High School burned.
- 1962** - Courthouse dismantled and replaced.

Looking Back 50, 100, and 150 Years

This issue we'll take a quick look back at events that were leading up to the county formation year of 1868 and the 50 year anniversaries of it, specifically pre-anniversary years of 1967, 1917, and 1867. Happenings in these years set the stage for the formation of our county and the other years in which we celebrate our anniversary. In subsequent issues events in 1968, 1918, and 1868 will be explored.

Fifty years ago, in 1967, our county and nation were in the midst of the Vietnam War. The county lost five soldiers in 1967, bringing the total lost from Chilton County to 11 at that time. The war was still escalating.

The other major issue in 1967 was the Civil Rights Movement. It saw events such as Martin Luther King's speech against the Vietnam War, the Loving court case, riots in northern cities, and Thurgood Marshall becoming the first African American Supreme Court Justice.

One hundred years ago, in 1917, there was another war in progress: World War I. Subjects printed in the 1917 Union Banner included:

- 1) Women's suffrage amendment articles; it was on the verge of formal proposal. (Though ratified by enough other states on August 18, 1920 Alabama didn't officially ratify it until September 8, 1953).
- 2) World War I news in Europe was in every issue.
- 3) March 1st, the Alred Drug Company changed ownership – J. Hance Alred and T. H. Neighbors bought out D. C. Alred – "The Home of Quality."
- 4) Prohibition news was big. News concerning various State laws was reported. In December 1917 the US Congress approved submission of a constitutional amendment which would be completed in January 1919. Alabama would be one of the last to ratify it.
- 5) County Health Officers were given forms to report births to the State.

- 6) The county Board of Education elected the Superintendent themselves (no public election).
- 7) Americans died in German U-boat attacks, which led to the next item ...
- 8) War was declared on Germany, and the draft was instituted in 1917; lists of county men to report for draft physicals were published in August; the first county men drafted and shipped to Camp Gordon were Joseph W Franklin, David C Mooney, Robert L Williams, Miles V Smith, Will Henderson, and Samuel K Walker.
- 9) December 6, 1917 – the first four WWI deaths from the county: Jim Wyatt, John M Burnett, John Robert Roper, and Alvin Jones.
- 10) Singings were big events, as were church and school functions.

One hundred fifty years ago, in 1867, the South was in the "Reconstruction Era." Andrew Johnson had been President since Abraham Lincoln's assassination. At the time, the South was divided into military districts until they were to be readmitted to the Union, which required them to write new constitutions and ratify the 14th Amendment. Therefore, Alabama did not yet have representation in the U. S. Congress. A former Union Army Colonel, Wager Swayne, was serving as the military governor. Robert M. Patton was the nominal governor (but the military officer controlled the government).

Locally, the area that was later to become Chilton County consisted of parts of Autauga, Shelby, Bibb, and a little of Perry and Dallas counties. The oldest areas were Maplesville and Coopers (Chestnut Creek), both located on early roadways and railroads. The current location of Clanton consisted of fields and marshes and was called Goosepond. It was owned by the Williams family and they used it for pasture and hunting. During the course of the year of 1867 the land was bought by Alfred Baker; Alfred would later be instrumental in the creation of this county. Many years earlier when he was an infant, his family had moved to the area from South Carolina.

Some national events in 1867: Alaska was purchased from Russia in March for two cents an acre and it was switched from the Julian calendar to the Gregorian calendar. Jesse James was robbing banks and killing people in the west. The first elevated railroad in the country began operation in New York. The U. S. took control of Midway Island in the Pacific. Charles Dickens gave his first public reading in the United States, in New York. Yellow Fever killed over 3,000 in New Orleans. Chinese and other immigrants were laying railroad tracks in the west. Some notable births were: Laura Ingalls Wilder (author of "Little House on the Prairie"), Cy Young (baseball pitcher), and Scott Joplin (composer). The "Blue Danube" waltz made its premier. Alfred Nobel invented dynamite. The first article describing "antiseptic surgery" was published. They were looking for Dr. David Livingstone in Africa, we presume. Karl Marx' "Das Kapital" was published. The refrigerated railroad car was patented.

This set the stage for 1868....

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Chilton County Historical Society

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

