Join us for the Alabama Historical Association’s annual pilgrimage on Saturday, October 10, 2009 in Lowndesboro, Alabama.
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Lowndesboro, Alabama must be experienced.

It was a seminal thought which Leah Rawls Atkins implanted in my mind when she suggested that Lowndesboro be given consideration as the site for this year’s fall pilgrimage. The seed of that idea has germinated over the last few months and will come to fruition on October 10 when people across Alabama converge upon this historic village between Montgomery and Selma.

Across the years I have been privileged to have a number of friends in Lowndesboro. When I approached them wanting their help in identifying the most capable planner and organizer, they spoke with one voice: Dot Dickson. And they were right. Over the last few months Dot has opened her beautifully appointed home for planning meetings. She has helped us assemble the finest and most talented team to prepare for the fall pilgrimage: Peggy McPherson, Tyson and Laura Howard, Wayne and Gwen Taylor, and Jean Styles, AHA Board member. This group brings much more than rich experience to the task; they bring amazing enthusiasm too. Their hard work, combined with Secretary Mark Wilson’s ability to leave no detail unaddressed, bodes well for us in October.

An excursion down the prominent thoroughfare of Lowndesboro, garrisoned on each side by historic churches, antebellum homes, and old cemeteries, will make one think that this is the town time forgot. Yet the citizens of this village, tucked away on the north side of Highway 80, have preserved the best of the past while harnessing contemporary resources.

At the outset of our one-day pilgrimage, we will convene in the old CME Church to hear brief presentations from panelists who will erase all doubt about the incredible significance of this unique Alabama town. So just why is Lowndesboro important? Major, watershed events helping to shape us as a state occurred in and around Lowndesboro: (1) the Creek War and subsequent treaty made possible the eventual migration of settlers into our state. Holy Ground is only a short distance away; (2) the Civil War, especially the final days of the conflict, and Emancipation; (3) the Civil Rights Movement and Freedom Trail continue to impact the town. The Lowndes County Interpretive Center is ten minutes away.

This trilogy of events continues to define the essence of what it means to live in Alabama. So when you experience Lowndesboro, be prepared for an intellectual and experiential feast.

AHA membership has its privileges. Make your plans now for October 10.

Gary Burton
President, Pintlala

Cover photo: Rosewood, by Chip Cooper. We are deeply indebted to Chip Cooper, Tuscaloosa, for his permission to use photographs from his book, Silent in the Land.
CME Church

1830s

In the early 1830s, through the efforts of a wealthy planter, Major William Robinson, the Methodist-Protestant Church (as it was originally named) was built. It was a typical end-gabled structure with a portico across the entire front, supported by four wooden columns. Inside, narrow stairs wind on either side to the balcony across the rear of the church. On the roof is a small octagonal steeple topped with the copperplated dome which once graced the state capital at Cahaba.

Photo by Wayne Taylor.

Marengo

Howard-Reese-Powell-Landmarks House

1847

Marengo was originally built in Autauga County by Dr. Charter Campbell Howard, who decided in 1854 to improve his practice by moving to Lowndesboro, bringing his house with him. Each brick and board was separately dismantled, numbered, and floated down the Alabama River to Newport Landing, and then transported by ox-card to its present site and re-erected.

Photo by Wayne Taylor.
Steelehaven, constructed by Lorenzo Powell in 1818, is one of the oldest homes in the Black Belt, a fine example of the country homes built prior to the prosperous 1850s. Features to be noted are the four brick chimneys made of handmade brick and the front and side verandas supported by small square columns with connecting banisters on the front veranda.

Lorenzo Powell received a land grant in 1818 to this plantation and built a two-room log house. The present house was constructed in the early 1830s, and the log house was incorporated into this structure as an ell. This was used as the kitchen and large pantry. Inside, the wood paneling of the chair rails, the heart pine floor, the eight plain mantels, and the simple staircase are further marks of the antiquity of the home. 

Photo by Chip Cooper.
Mockingbird Place
1834

Mockingbird Place, a raised cottage with a Greek Revival portico, is an example of the transition from the style of simple cottage to homes of modest elegance. The kitchen and dining room are located in the basement, completely bricked with the original brick sunk into red clay. *Photo by Wayne Taylor.*

President’s Home
1834

As home for the presidents of the Lowndesboro Female Institute, the President’s Home served as the social center for the community and surrounding area for many years. An L-shaped, two-story frame structure, the house is a notable example of retardataire Federal style architecture in central Alabama and has identical entrance porticoes on the east and north fronts supported by four Doric columns. The four sets of double doors are framed by fanlights and sidelights. *Photo by Wayne Taylor.*
“Had Settlement Nov. 17, 1855 with Edmund Harrison and paid him in full for building my dwelling house, extra work also brickwork on the kitchen and smokehouse,” Dr. Hardy Vickers Wooten wrote in his diary after the completion of Rosewood, a country house built in the Palladian spirit. “It is exactly to my notion.”

The lumber for the house was hauled in wagons from Picket’s Mill near Autaugaville, with additional materials floated by boat up the Alabama River. After Wilson’s Raiders burned Selma during the Civil War, they march to Lowndesboro and camped nearby in a grove of trees on their way to capture Montgomery.

*Photos by Chip Cooper.*
Holy Ground Battlefield Park

Holy Ground Battlefield Park is the site of the December 23, 1813 battle between Creek Indians led by William Weatherford, also known as Red Eagle, and American forces under the direction of Brig. Gen. Ferdinand Claiborne, as well as Choctaw allies. The Americans killed twenty-one Creeks and forced the rest into the Alabama River and surrounding swamps. Red Eagle escaped by leaping his horse, Arrow, from a 12-foot bluff into the Alabama River and swimming to the opposite shore with his rifle over his head, while bullets spattered around him. 

Photo by U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Lowndes County Interpretive Center

Lowndes County Interpretive Center in Hayneville is dedicated to the memory of the protesters of the Selma to Montgomery March in March 1965 during the civil rights movement. The Interpretive Center opened in 2006 as the first of three sites established by the National Park Service (NPS) to commemorate, preserve and interpret the events, people, and route of the Selma to Montgomery Voting Rights March of 1965.

Photo by the National Park Service.

For articles on the Battle of Holy Ground and Lowndes County, visit www.encyclopediaofalabama.org.
2009 Fall Pilgrimage Venue:

CME Church
61 N. Broad Street
Lowndesboro, AL 36752

Directions to the Pilgrimage Program Venue

Exit I-65 just south of Montgomery at Exit # 167.

Go west on US Hwy 80 (four lane) toward Selma for 16.3 miles.

Turn right on Cty Road 29 at caution light.

*NOTE: A BP gas station is on the left side of Hwy 80 at this intersection.*

Proceed 1 mile and CME Church will be on the right.
Accommodations

**Hampton Inn**
60 Wasden Rd.
Hope Hull, AL 36043
334-280-9592
$89, plus tax
Rooms must be reserved by October 2, 2009.

**Best Western**
7731 Slade Plaza Blvd.
Montgomery, AL 36105
334-280-0306
$62.95, plus tax
Rooms must be reserved by September 9, 2009.

Both hotels are located south of the city of Montgomery, off Interstate 65, at exit 164.
Pilgrimage Schedule

8:30 AM  Registration, Book Sales, Coffee
Historic CME Church
61 N. Broad Street
Lowndesboro, AL 36752

10:00 AM  Welcome
Gary Burton, President, Alabama Historical Association

Welcome
Dot Dickson, President, Lowndesboro Landmarks Foundation

Panel Presentation

“A Glimpse into Lowndesboro’s Past”
Wayne Taylor, Lowndesboro

“Battle of Holy Ground”
Dr. Kathryn H. Braund, Auburn University

“Lowndes County Civil Rights History”
Robyn Harris, National Park Service

A Tribute to Virginia Van der Veer Hamilton
Dr. Wayne Flynt, Past President of the Association

11:30 AM  Lunch at Marengo House
(directly across from church)

12:30-3:30 PM  Self-Guided Tours
Steelehaven
Mockingbird Place
President’s Home
Rosewood
Holy Ground Battlefield Park
Lowndes County Interpretive Center
Dr. Virginia Van der Veer Hamilton, preeminent historian of Alabama and longtime supporter of the AHA, will be available at the pilgrimage luncheon to sign copies of her new family memoir, *Teddy’s Child: Growing Up in the Anxious Southern Gentry Between the Great Wars*, published by NewSouth Books. Dr. Wayne Flynt, Auburn University professor emeritus, will discuss Hamilton’s significance as author and historian as part of the pilgrimage program.

During and after World War II, Virginia Van der Veer Hamilton became a pioneer in journalism and academe—two careers in which only a small minority of women then participated. She was the AP reporter for the “women’s beat” at the Truman White House. While a wife and mother, she became the second woman to earn a Ph.D. degree from the History Department of the University of Alabama. She taught at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, chaired its history department for ten years, and wrote eight award-winning books as well as numerous articles in scholarly journals.


“This is a wonderful book. Virginia Van der Veer Hamilton has long been noted for her polished historical writing. Now she turns her literary skills to an enthralling personal history of her colorful, troubled family. Her account of that family’s battle against hereditary anxiety and depression is unflinching, but also loving and inspiring. With the fine eye of a novelist, she also recreates a lost time when Southern intellectuals struggled under the twin burdens of racism and oppressive moral codes.”

*NewSouth Books will be present at the pilgrimage to sell copies of the book at a discount price for AHA members.*
At its June 9 meeting, the Board of Directors of the Alabama Historical Association approved a $3,500 donation to the Leah Rawls Atkins Endowment for Excellence in Programming. The endowment will support the public humanities programs of the Caroline Marshall Draughon Center for the Arts & Humanities, the dedicated outreach office of the Auburn University College of Liberal Arts.

Dr. Atkins, the founding director of the Center, established a tradition of public outreach in the arts and humanities that has profoundly influenced the cultural life of the state. “No individual has been more important to the enrichment and promotion of the humanities in Alabama than Dr. Atkins,” notes AHA treasurer Steve Murray. “Through her teaching, scholarship, and leadership, Dr. Atkins has equipped organizations such as the Draughon Center for the Arts & Humanities and the Alabama Historical Association to preserve Alabama history and to improve the quality of life of the state’s citizens.”

“AHA’s support of the Atkins Endowment reflects a partnership and mutual support that have helped the center achieve its mission for many years,” notes Jay Lamar, current director of the Caroline Marshall Draughon Center for the Arts & Humanities. “It is an honor to Dr. Atkins and a most meaningful and treasured expression of support for the Center’s future. We could not be more grateful to AHA and its generous membership.”

For additional information on the Leah Rawls Atkins Endowment for Programming, please contact the College of Liberal Arts Office of Development at 334-844-1483. Contributions to the endowment should be made payable to the AU Foundation and may be sent to: Office of Development, College of Liberal Arts, 321 Biggin Hall, Auburn, Alabama 36849-5223.

The first graduate of the doctoral program in history at Auburn University, Dr. Leah Rawls Atkins served as AHA president in 1986-87. She served as the association’s secretary from 1989 to 1997 and from 2002 to 2007. In 2008, the AHA recognized her service with the Rucker Agee Service Award.
AHA Meeting in Tuscaloosa

Ken Noe

On Thursday afternoon, April 23, 2009, Alabama Historical Association members began arriving in Tuscaloosa for the sixty-second annual meeting. Many of the early birds embraced the special opportunity to take a members-only tour of the world-class Westervelt-Warner Museum of American Art, which otherwise was closed to the public all weekend. That night, attendees gathered for an opening reception at the historic Jemison-Van de Graaff Mansion, an Italianate masterpiece completed during wartime in 1862. With Civil War Era historians chairing the local arrangements and program committees, as well as presiding as Association president, that era not surprisingly would continue to be a recurring theme during the rest of the conference.

On a bright, beautiful Friday morning, roughly 200 attendees gathered at the University Church of Christ for the conference’s first full day. Given the worsening national economy, the turnout was heartening to the officers and organizers alike. After the invocation and traditional welcomes, Guy Hubbs of Birmingham-Southern College delightfully explained how he first came to Tuscaloosa. He went on to speak on the more serious and intriguing local history behind one of the most familiar images of Reconstruction, the infamous cartoon of two lynching victims and a mule labeled “KKK.”

The subsequent morning sessions concerned a variety of topics, including nearby Bryce Hospital, Tuscaloosa’s Hunter Chapel AME Church, actor Johnny Mack Brown, eating in Birmingham, the “Redneck Rivera,” and, of course, the Civil War. Following lunch, Association members fanned out across the University of Alabama campus and through the city for the traditional Friday afternoon tours, expertly arranged by Sarah Wiggins. Tour stops included the Murphy African-American Museum, the Battle-Friedman House, and the President’s Mansion. The Drish House, once a fabulous mansion later immortalized in Walker Evans’ Depression Era-photograph of the Tuscaloosa Wrecking Company, proved another popular venue. The scale model of that house, complete with a figure of Dr. John Drish dead at the bottom of the stairs, became the topic of many a dinner conversation. So did Secretary Mark Wilson’s portable Auburn University chair, placed strategically near the Josiah Gorgas House without apparent incident.

That evening, members assembled at the NorthRiver Yacht Club for the annual dinner. Built by Jack Warner near his Westervelt-Warner Museum, the ornate club contains an extensive collection of nautical art and memorabilia. As usual, the association award presentations following the meal were a special highlight.
Scotty Kirkland received the Clinton Jackson and Evelyn Coley Research Grant Award. The Virginia Van der Veer Hamilton Award for contributions to Alabama history went to Jay Lamar. Sylviane Diouf received the James F. Sulzby Book Award for her *Dreams of Africa in Alabama*. As she could not attend the meeting, Sulzby Committee Chair Jim Day read her acceptance speech, which described how her positive personal experiences with Alabama and Alabamians had changed her previously negative views of the state. Following the award presentations, Stephen Berry of the University of Georgia spoke eloquently on “Abraham Lincoln’s Alabama Kin during Wartime.” Professor Berry described the often-tragic lives of Mary Todd Lincoln’s siblings with a particular focus on sisters Martha and Elodie, who spent the Civil War in Selma. Several AHA members later praised the program as one of the most spellbinding in Association history.

Saturday morning proved to be another lovely day. A large crowd gathered again at the church for breakfast and the morning speaker, Pulitzer Prize-winning author Rick Bragg. He briefly used the Civil War as a springboard to movingly discuss his family’s later history in the state. At times both hilarious and gripping, Bragg’s address elicited many questions and much enthusiasm. The business meeting and election of new officers followed. Morning sessions proceeded, with topics ranging from Native Americans past and present to the lives of Alabama women, state politics, and prohibition. The annual luncheon session closed the meeting, with President Ken Noe speaking on the motivations of “later-enlisting” Confederate soldiers from Alabama. Adjournment and promises to meet again in Lowndesboro for the Fall Pilgrimage followed.
Faithful Member Donates Portion of Estate to AHA

William Johnson Jr., longtime member of the AHA and resident of Montgomery, passed away on January 25, 2008 at the age of eighty-seven. Johnson directed a portion of his estate to the Alabama Historical Association, a gift of nearly $16,000.

“Mr. Johnson is fondly remembered by all of us as a gentle and kind man, and his presence at AHA meetings will be missed,” says Steve Murray, treasurer. “The AHA Board of Directors has agreed to direct this gift into the publishing endowment for The Alabama Review, which means his generosity will make a long-term contribution to the work of the Association.”

As an engineer in the U.S. Army Air Corps, Johnson was responsible for the Air Transport Command in the China Burma India Theatre of World War II and received the Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal and Bronze Star for his service. He shared some of his war experiences with members at the 2004 annual meeting through a paper titled “‘Pick’s Pike’: That ‘Impossible’ World War II Military Highway from Ledo, India to Kunming, China.” Johnson worked as an aerodynamics and structures engineer for General Dynamics, the Chrysler Corporation Space Division, and the Army Air Force Reserve until retirement in 1980.

Johnson was predeceased in death by his beloved wives, Helen Mars and Maxine Bowles. He will be remembered for his pleasant demeanor and active participation in the work of the Alabama Historical Association.

Johnson (right) visits with Joe Jones and Ola Ann Lee at an annual meeting.
Call for Papers

63rd Annual Meeting
Gadsden, Alabama
April 15-17, 2010

The Alabama Historical Association invites proposals for individual papers to be given at its 63rd annual meeting in Gadsden, Alabama on April 15-17, 2010. This meeting is open to scholars, educators, public historians, students, local historians, and members of the general public who share an interest in the history of Alabama.

Proposals must include a one-page abstract of a 20-minute presentation on an Alabama history topic and a c.v. or resume including the author’s e-mail address, telephone number, postal address, and academic affiliation (if any). **Electronic submissions are preferred.**

Presenters will be required to register for the conference and be members of the AHA by the time of the meeting. The committee gives preference to authors who have not presented papers at the annual meeting within the past three years.

Please send your submissions and any questions you may have to the program chair:

Dr. Ruth Truss
Department of History
Station 6180
University of Montevallo
Montevallo, AL 35115
trussr@montevallo.edu

(Right) Gadsden’s Noccalula Falls Park boasts a spectacular 90-foot waterfall and botanical garden with over 25,000 azaleas.
As many of our members already know, last year was a year of change for the Review. First and foremost, Jeff Jakeman stepped down as editor in the fall. I personally am grateful for Jeff’s dozen years of service to the Review and the association. Without him, I doubt the Review would have survived in its present form as a quarterly scholarly journal, and perhaps not at all. We owe him our most sincere thanks. I took over as editor in October, with responsibility for the January 2009 issue. I am much obliged to Carey Cauthen, our associate editor, for making what I believe was as seamless a transition as was possible. It has been a pleasure working with her this past year, and I look forward to having her on board for years to come. Our graduate assistant, Tommy Brown, has been with us all year, helping out with book reviews, fact checking, and other mundane tasks essential to publishing the Review.

New additions to the Review’s Editorial Board last year were Tony Carey from Appalachian State University and Judy Sheppard from Auburn University. Gordon Harvey (Jacksonville State University) and John Fair (Georgia College and State University) kindly agreed to stay on for second terms. Their expertise, as well as that of our “outside” referees, ensures that the articles appearing in the Review meet the best academic standards.

I am pleased, also, to report that we have eliminated a backlog of manuscripts pending decision and now have a healthy selection of manuscripts accepted and waiting for copy-editing and publication. Ultimately, though, we depend on you and your friends and colleagues to research, write, and send us your manuscripts. Although we welcome submissions dealing with all aspects of the state’s history, of particular interest to us are the immigrant experience in Birmingham (or other Alabama cities), women and ethnic minorities, sports history, the 1930s, 1940s, the Depression and World War II, transportation, and pre-Civil War industrialization.

We need money just as much as we need manuscripts to continue publication of the Review. I am happy to report that State Representative Mike Hubbard once more stepped up with funding for the 2010 fiscal year, thus guaranteeing issues through at least October 2010. We also have an understanding that the bequest from Association member Bill Johnson will be used to help offset the costs of the Review. Nevertheless, to cover all our expenses for the year we will have to dip into the Review’s reserves. I have to stress that such windfalls as the Johnson bequest, welcome as they are, and year-to-year funding from the state, especially in today’s economic climate, cannot assure our long-term financial stability. Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the Association to establish a dedicated fund sufficient to pay for staff and other publication costs of the Review or risk seeing the state lose its only scholarly historical journal.

Coming up will be the sesquicentennial of the Civil War in 2011, followed the next year by the bicentennial of the War of 1812 and the Creek War. We are looking ahead to publishing special issues commemorating these key events in Alabama history. It is not too early for those of you who have done research on these subjects to send us manuscript articles.

When you get a chance, please check out the new look of the Review’s website, thanks to the work of Carey Cauthen. Carey and I, in full consultation with the Review’s Editorial Board, are also considering updates to the appearance of the Review. I assure everyone that whatever changes we make will not be sudden or drastic and will not add significantly to the costs of publication.

I greatly appreciate the hard work of everyone involved with the Review this past year and look forward to serving the Association as editor in the years to come.
The Alabama Historical Association began sponsoring historical markers as early as 1950, and a standing AHA marker committee was created in 1952. The committee’s duties are to encourage and assist interested parties in the purchase and erection of markers for historical sites. The committee also serves to check the accuracy of information carried in the proposed marker texts and to attest to a site’s historic importance. The distinctive design of the Alabama Historical Association marker is a double-faced cast aluminum plate with a baked enamel finish. The plate has a deep blue background and the text is portrayed in gold letters. The insignia at the top is the Alabama flag, the St. Andrew’s cross, in red, white, and gold.

For more information regarding historical markers, please visit www.archives.state.al.us/aha/marker.html.

Make a lasting contribution to Alabama history with a gift to the Alabama Review endowment fund.

All contributions are tax-deductible and will ensure a solid financial future for our state’s quarterly journal on Alabama history. Designate your contribution to the “Alabama Review Endowment” and mail to:

Alabama Historical Association  
P.O. Box 300100  
Montgomery, AL 36130
Save the Date for the 2010 Annual Meeting

Mark your calendars and join us for the 63rd Annual Meeting of the Alabama Historical Association!

The meeting will be held at the Crosspoint Community Church.

Hotel reservations can be made at the Gadsden Inn and Suites (800-637-5678) and Hampton Inn (256-546-2337). Mention the AHA to receive a discounted rate.

Complete information will be available in the spring newsletter.

April 15-17, 2010 Gadsden, AL