



HISTORY HAPPENS

Official Newsletter of the Alabama Historical Commission

JUNE 2024

A Word from Lisa

Hello everyone,

Last month, AHC highlighted preservation efforts across the state including success stories, history behind the sites, helpful resources and tools for the public, and this is a reminder of all the hard work the AHC staff does across the state to continue the agency's mission in protecting, preserving, and interpreting all of Alabama's historic places.

Last month we announced the start of the AHC maritime program. We would like to thank Governor Kay Ivey and the Alabama Legislature for understanding the importance of this much needed program and the impact it will have on the state's underwater cultural resources. AHC will be looking for two maritime archaeologists to join our archaeology staff, so I encourage those interested to watch for our upcoming job announcement.

Did you know the AHC is tasked with maintaining the state's cemetery register and issuing cemetery permits? With recent media stories on the upkeep of abandoned cemeteries, we recommend those interested in keeping private cemeteries clean, to create a cemetery rehabilitation authority for your area. Cities and counties have the legal ability to create these authorities. For more information on these codes for the state of Alabama, click [here](#).

Lastly, we are so excited by the number of submissions for our AHC Historic Sites Photo Contest. The staff is currently reviewing all submissions and will announce the winners soon, so stay tuned!

Lisa D. Jones
Executive Director
State Historic Preservation Officer

UPCOMING EVENTS

June 22

3rd Alabama Infantry Talk by
Author Dr. Brandon H. Beck
Confederate Memorial Park

June 26-29

Art of the Dish
Belle Mont Mansion

July 13

Book Club (via Zoom)
Freedom Rides Museum

[Click here for more information!](#)



AHC Historic Sites Photo Contest

Winners to be announced soon!

Belle Mont Hosts Annual Art of the Dish Exhibit in June

“Art of the Dish,” the popular antique and vintage china exhibit, will return to Belle Mont Mansion on June 26-29. Individuals will be invited to display china and tableware from their private collections, some dating from the early 1800’s and spanning through the mid-20th century. A special feature of this year’s event on Friday and Saturday will be the participation of Facebook’s Beautiful Table Settings founder, May Ridolphi Eason of Wetumpka. Eason will be displaying table settings, fittingly called an “Independence Day Celebration.”

Eason will share table settings to celebrate the 4th of July with china and decorations that commemorate our nation’s history, including flatware with the 13 original colonies along with dinnerware representing the American Revolution.

Eason, a graduate of the University of Alabama launched a Facebook group called “Beautiful Table Settings” in September 2019, hitting 35,000 followers in the first year and now with 244k followers.

For the Friday-Saturday events, \$30 advance reservation tickets are required for the Eason program. Seatings are scheduled at 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. A box lunch is included in the ticket price and will be served at noon to ticket holders (only). Due to limited seating, a reservation is required. Tickets may be purchased at Belle Mont Mansion or by calling 256-381-5052 for payment by credit card or emailing: bellemontmansion@gmail.com.

To attend the china exhibit only, \$8 museum admission will apply and can be paid at the door.



China demonstration at Art of the Dish exhibit



May Eason

AHC Participates in Alabama History Days



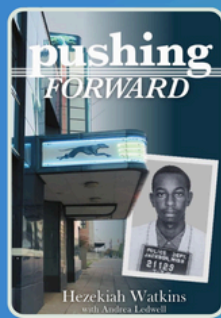
Last month, AHC Archaeologist Amanda McBride visited Edgewood Elementary’s 4th grade classes as part of the school’s Alabama History Days annual event. Amanda presented on Native Americans and Fort Toulouse, one of AHC’s historic sites and National Historic Landmark in Wetumpka. She also gave an overview of historic preservation programs of the AHC and how they protect, preserve, and interpret the state’s history. The students attended the Frontier Days event at Fort Toulouse in November and were excited to share what they had learned during the event. The students got to see and touch some of the reproduction artifacts and other hands-on items, like deer hides, pottery, and more.

AHC is always looking for opportunities to further promote and educate the public on the mission of the AHC. Interested in having a guest speaker for your next event? Email pr.management@ahc.alabama.gov for more information.

FREEDOM RIDES MUSEUM MONTHLY BOOK CLUB

JULY BOOK

Pushing Forward: The Story of Mississippi’s Youngest Freedom Rider
by Hezekiah Watkins and Andrea Ledwell



Special Guest: Author and Freedom Rider Hezekiah Watkins

Saturday, July 13th
4:00 pm CST
via Zoom

To participate, please email for the Zoom link. freedomrides.museum@ahc.alabama.gov



AHC Announces Maritime Archaeology Program

Alabama Historical Commission Executive Director Lisa D. Jones is pleased to announce the beginning of the historical commission's maritime archaeology program.

This program will now bring AHC in line with state historic preservation offices in other coastal states.

The beautiful state of Alabama has 60 miles of shoreline along the Gulf Coast, 600 miles of tidal bay and bayou shoreline, over 3500 miles of lake shoreline, and over 132,000 miles of rivers and streams, all of which contribute to the maritime heritage of the state. Most of these waters have not yet been inventoried for submerged archaeological sites and shipwrecks.

This maritime archaeology program will concentrate on the remarkable archaeological resources in Alabama's waterways. It will be an extension of the current archaeological program that preserves, protects, and interprets archaeology on land. AHC recognizes the increasing demand for reviews of maritime archaeological reports and to properly investigate the growing number of reported discoveries of underwater cultural resources by the citizens of Alabama.

"Federal and state legislation tasks us with the responsibility of protecting, preserving, and educating the public about archaeological sites and shipwrecks in Alabama waters," said Jones. "The development of this program will help bring light to hidden history that has yet to be discovered."

With the start of this program, AHC will be hiring two maritime archaeologists. Be on the lookout for an upcoming job announcement with AHC! To ensure you don't miss it, make sure to follow our social media channels linked at the footer below.

Confederate Memorial Park Holds Headstone Cleaning + Genealogy Workshop

In celebration of Preservation Month, Confederate Memorial Park held a headstone cleaning and genealogy workshop in May.

Calvin Chappelle, site director of Confederate Park, demonstrated the techniques used to properly clean a headstone. In a step-by-step process, Calvin explained the importance of wetting the headstone with water for 10-15 minutes for absorption, then applying a cleaning solution called D2 to the stone to let sit for 10-15 minutes, and lastly scrubbing with a soft bristle brush to clean away dirt, mold, and other debris on the stone. This D2 solution helps clean and protect the headstone for further preservation and can be found at most online retailers.

Following the headstone workshop, Calvin shared a variety of resources for genealogy research. Using Ancestry, Fold3, and Find a Grave, he showed how to find information on family trees and military records or where someone is buried. For more information, assistance with headstone cleaning, or genealogy tips, please contact Calvin at Calvin.Chappelle@ahc.alabama.gov.



Workshop attendees gather in Cemetery No. 2 for headstone cleaning.

AHC Employee Appreciation Day



AHC celebrated employee appreciation with a luncheon and games and all staff, including site staff were able to come together for fun and fellowship.