

Preservation Month: Places with a Purpose

May 1 – Welcome video from Director Lisa D. Jones

[Link](#)

May 2 – AHC Historic Sites Photo Contest



The Alabama Historical Commission is sponsoring the 3rd Annual Historic Places Photography Contest in celebration of Historic Preservation Month, May 2024. This year's theme is Historic Sites owned by the Alabama Historical Commission. We are looking for unique and artistic photos that feature these specific historic places. This contest is for all photographers of any age or skill. Digital photographs should be taken at the highest resolution possible. Only JPG format will be accepted. Please do not include an image with borders, watermarks, dates, or names. And, please do not include people or animals in your photo.

The following AHC sites will be accepted:

Alabama State Capitol
Belle Mont Mansion
Confederate Memorial Park
Fendall Hall
Fort Mims

Fort Morgan
Fort Toulouse-Fort Jackson
Freedom Rides Museum
Gaineswood
Magnolia Grove
Old Cahawba
Pond Spring

We will use the winning photos in a variety of places: websites, social media, digital and print materials, television, etc. The AHC will give credit wherever the photo is used. An applicant may submit more than one photo, but a separate entry form must be filled out. The deadline is May 31 at 11:59 pm.

GOOD LUCK!



[Submit your photo here!](#)

May 3 – Alabama Register Highlight: Bibb Graves Hall

Alabama Register Spotlight

Bibb Graves Hall, Jacksonville State University



Then

Now



Preservation Month wouldn't be Preservation Month without highlighting the Alabama Register of Historic Places, now would it? One that has recently been added to the list in fact...

Bibb Graves Hall is a new listing to the Alabama Register of Landmarks and Heritage. It is located on the campus of Jacksonville State University, previously Jacksonville State Normal School, in Calhoun County. Bibb Graves Hall is a two story late Gothic Revival building built in 1930. It housed all the campus facilities except dormitories. Classrooms, the library, and auditorium were in this building. On Monday December 8, 1930, the first classes were held. Bibb Graves Hall, originally named after Alabama Governor David Bibb Graves, is now called Angle Hall and serves as the administration building.

For more information on the Alabama Register, click the link below!

[Alabama Register of Landmarks & Heritage](#)

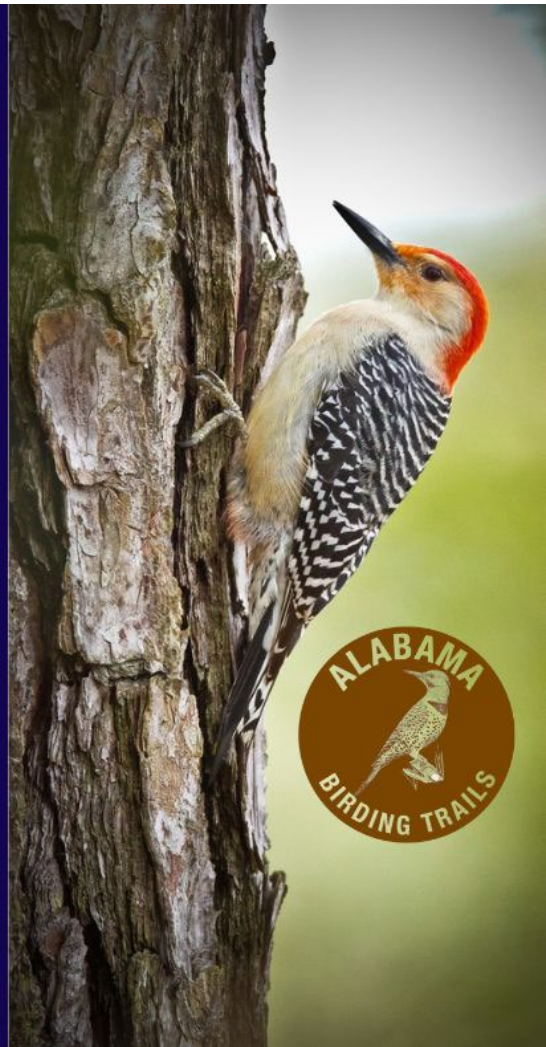
May 4 – Alabama Birding Trail & Fort Toulouse

Alabama Birding Trail Fort Toulouse-Fort Jackson

Fort Toulouse-Jackson Park is situated where the Coosa and Tallapoosa Rivers meet to form the headwaters of the Alabama River. The park preserves relics of over 6,000 years of human history within its 165 acres of woodlands and fields bordering the two rivers. The rich riverbank habitat makes this especially attractive to a variety of birds like Eastern Meadowlarks, Northern Bobwhites, and Red-tailed Hawks – and Northern Harriers, and American Kestrels in winter. The open swamp on the right of the entrance road has Anhingas and Prothonotary Warblers. Waders, such as Great Egrets and Great Blue Herons are possible throughout the year.

Located in the park is the Bartram Arboretum, named for the famed naturalist William Bartram, whose travels led him throughout the Southeast where he discovered and cataloged the botanical life. An easy walk on improved paths and boardwalks allows you to find a wide variety of songbirds such as Northern Parula, White-eyed and Red-eyed Vireos, and Blue-gray Gnatcatchers. Red-headed Woodpeckers are easy to spot throughout the year and the Yellow-throated Vireos call from the hardwood canopy. Wood Thrushes' flutelike songs permeate the woods in spring and summer, and Hooded Warblers are present in the warm months. Look and listen for the Barred Owls that call the woodlands of Fort Toulouse-Jackson home.

The Alabama Historical Commission is proud to partner with the Alabama Birding Trail.



Today is National Bird Day! 🌿🐦

Did you know Alabama has the Alabama Birding Trail? Even more, did you know Fort Toulouse-Fort Jackson, one of our historic sites is part of it?

Today we are celebrating National Bird Day by sharing about the bird trail at Fort Toulouse! Read more about the beauty of the Alabama Birding Trail!

[Fort Toulouse - Fort Jackson Park](#)

May 5 – Museums Lovers Day & Freedom Rides Museum

It's Museum Lovers Day!

For you museum hunters and lovers of history and more, today is your day! We know you love visiting the coolest places - those with stories, history, and what's left behind! Which is why we are highlighting one of our own museums, the Freedom Rides Museum!

In 1961, groups of volunteers challenged the practice of segregated travel through the South. They called themselves the Freedom Riders as they crossed racial barriers in depots and bus stations. Their arrival to this location changed history!

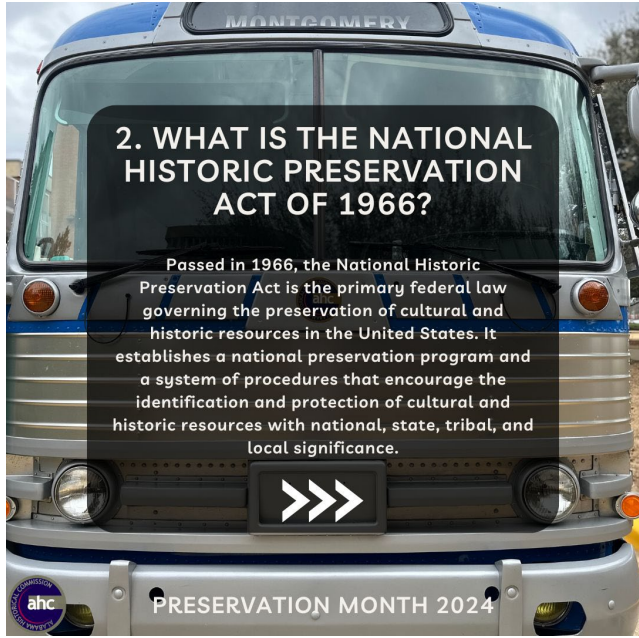
Be sure to check the [Freedom Rides Museum](#) off your museum list!



[Link](#)

May 6 – FAQ about Historic Preservation



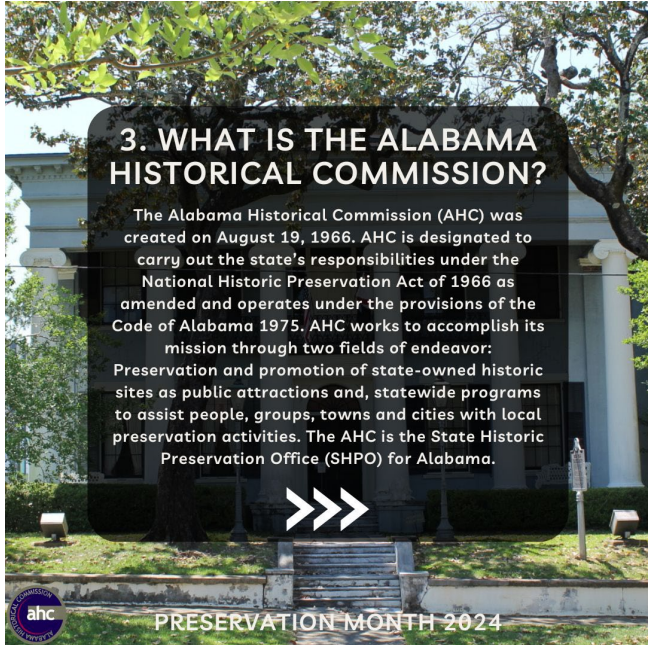


2. WHAT IS THE NATIONAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION ACT OF 1966?

Passed in 1966, the National Historic Preservation Act is the primary federal law governing the preservation of cultural and historic resources in the United States. It establishes a national preservation program and a system of procedures that encourage the identification and protection of cultural and historic resources with national, state, tribal, and local significance.



PRESERVATION MONTH 2024



3. WHAT IS THE ALABAMA HISTORICAL COMMISSION?

The Alabama Historical Commission (AHC) was created on August 19, 1966. AHC is designated to carry out the state's responsibilities under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 as amended and operates under the provisions of the Code of Alabama 1975. AHC works to accomplish its mission through two fields of endeavor: Preservation and promotion of state-owned historic sites as public attractions and, statewide programs to assist people, groups, towns and cities with local preservation activities. The AHC is the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) for Alabama.



PRESERVATION MONTH 2024



4. WHAT IS THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE?

The National Park Service administers the National Register of Historic Places, grant programs, and the federal rehabilitation tax incentives. It is a bureau within the U.S. Department of the Interior.



PRESERVATION MONTH 2024

5. WHAT IS THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

The National Register of Historic Places is the official list of the nation's historic places worthy of preservation. The National Register was authorized by the National Historic Preservation Act in 1966. In Alabama, the AHC administers the National Register. You can find properties listed in the National Register by visiting the National Park Service site or use the AHC's GIS Preservation Map.



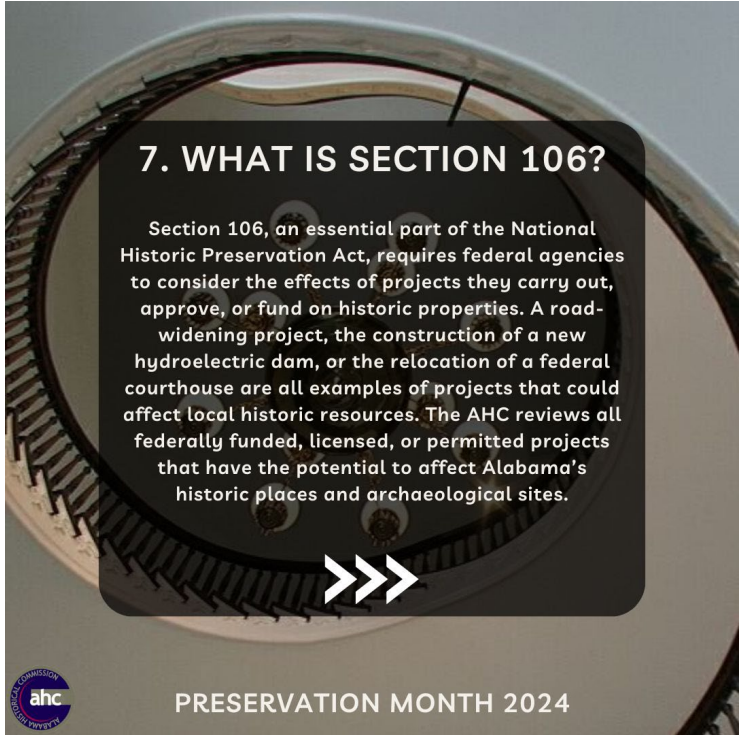
PRESERVATION MONTH 2024

6. WHAT ARE HISTORIC PRESERVATION TAX INCENTIVES?

The federal tax credit provides tax incentives for the rehabilitation of historic, income-producing buildings. The AHC is the point of contact for anyone who applies for federal tax credits for properties in Alabama. The Alabama Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit is a 25% refundable tax credit available for owners of income-producing properties who substantially rehabilitate historic properties that are listed in or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places and are 60 years old or older.



PRESERVATION MONTH 2024



7. WHAT IS SECTION 106?

Section 106, an essential part of the National Historic Preservation Act, requires federal agencies to consider the effects of projects they carry out, approve, or fund on historic properties. A road-widening project, the construction of a new hydroelectric dam, or the relocation of a federal courthouse are all examples of projects that could affect local historic resources. The AHC reviews all federally funded, licensed, or permitted projects that have the potential to affect Alabama's historic places and archaeological sites.



PRESERVATION MONTH 2024



8. WHAT IS A CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENT?

Local governments strengthen their local historic preservation efforts by achieving Certified Local Government (CLG) status from the National Park Service (NPS). The CLG program was established in 1983 by the NPS as a preservation partnership between the NPS, state historic preservation offices, and local governments with an active preservation program. Together, these groups work toward high quality survey documentation of resources throughout the community, training local preservation commission members, and public involvement. CLGs can compete for annual matching grants provided by the AHC to assist with preservation planning and documentation projects.




PRESERVATION MONTH 2024



9. WHAT IS ARCHAEOLOGY?

Archaeology is the study of the material remains of past human life and activities. Through the excavation of sites and the analysis of artifacts and other physical remains, much can be learned about humanity and its past. The Alabama Historical Commission's Archaeological Program provides advice and archaeological services for the general public and the historic sites of the AHC. Presenting Alabama's fascinating past to the public is an important part of the AHC's Archaeological Program. AHC answers questions, hold workshops, and make presentations on both archaeology and regulatory topics across the state. The AHC's goal is to explore Alabama's prehistory and history and interpret it for the citizens of Alabama.

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 **PRESERVATION MONTH 2024**



10. WHAT IS THE AHC'S MARITIME HERITAGE PROGRAM?

The Alabama Historical Commission Maritime Heritage Program works to protect maritime archaeological sites in Alabama waters and to advance awareness and understanding of the role of maritime affairs in the history of Alabama. Through leadership, assistance, and expertise in maritime history, preservation, and archeology, AHC helps to interpret and preserve our maritime heritage by maintaining inventories of historic maritime properties in Alabama waters; providing preservation assistance through consultation; educating the public about maritime heritage; and co-issuing and monitoring permits for maritime archaeological investigations in Alabama waters.

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 **PRESERVATION MONTH 2024**

TOP 10 FAQ about Historical Preservation 🍌

We always receive inquiries about what we do and how we do it, who we work with, and how we best accomplish preservation in Alabama. So, we put together a this list to get back to the basics.

May 7 – National Tourism Day at Fort Morgan



Happy National Tourism Day! 🌍🇺🇸🇦🇷

Did you know the Alabama Historical Commission has 15 historic sites?! Many of these sites are open to the public, but one in particular sees the most faces! Since 1834 Fort Morgan has stood as the guardian of Mobile Bay. This military site and National Historic Landmark is located 22 miles west of Gulf Shores.

Let's take it ...

Construction began in 1819, but due to its isolated location, the fort was not completed until 1834. Skilled masons, many of which were enslaved African Americans, built the fortification which contains more than 46 million cubic yards of bricks.

Fort Bowyer preceded Fort Morgan at Mobile Point. Fort Bowyer was constructed by the U.S. Army during 1813 to guard against possible British attack. This small log and sand fortification was attacked twice by the British during the War of 1812. The first attack made by four British warships and a combined force of British Royal Marines and Creek Indians came on September 15, 1814. The ensuing battle was a total American victory. One warship, the H.M.S. Hermes was sunk, and the marines and Creek Indians were forced to withdraw. During a second battle which took place during early February 1815, a combined British land and naval force forced the vastly outnumbered American troops to surrender the fort. By the terms of the treaty that ended the War of 1812, the British had to return Fort Bowyer to the United States.

May 8 – Historic Window Repair with Christy



Let's get to WORK! 🏠🔨🔵

Our very own Window Wizard, Historic Home Rehabber, National Register of Historic Places Coordinator, or as we like to call her, Christy, has some neat tips + tricks for the best way to deal with historic window repair!

How to repair, protect, and maintain historic windows is so important to preservation of the home or building you are working on. Have questions? Reach out to the Window Wizard at Christy. Anderson@ahc.alabama.gov 

See her full PP on the home page of our website under Preservation Month section!

[great rot.pdf \(alabama.gov\)](#)

May 9 – Reconstruction Era Network



DID YOU KNOW? 🧐

The National Park Service has a Reconstruction Era National Historic Network! AHC has partnered with the NPS to highlight and expand the Reconstruction Network. We are identifying, researching, and nominating historic buildings and districts for inclusion in the Network. To join, a site must be listed to the National Register of Historic Places or eligible to be listed. It should be a site, program, or facility related to the Reconstruction Era between 1861-1900. The Reconstruction Era in American History, typically defined as 1863-1877, is the period of time following the close of the Civil War and the emancipation of enslaved people. During this time, African Americans gained freedom and short-lived political rights as the nation attempted to reconstruct itself with a new social and economic system.

The Alabama State Capitol nomination is the first application of the NPS - AHC partnership. The Capitol building is related to the Reconstruction Era, because it is the site where Black legislators met and worked along with white legislators

between 1867- 1879. The legislators, many who were formerly enslaved, were active participants in Alabama's political process. They worked in the House, Senate, and were included in the 1867 state Constitutional Convention. In 2011, AHC erected a historic marker recognizing the Black members of the Alabama Legislature during Reconstruction. In 2017, a portrait of Horace King was unveiled inside the Capitol. King was a legislator and master builder, famous for building bridges throughout the South. The double staircase in the Capitol was designed by King. The Capitol nomination is a part of the continuing efforts of AHC to recognize the contributions of Black Alabamians to Alabama History.

For more information, please see:

<https://www.nps.gov/.../reconstruction/join-the-network.htm>

May 10 – Places in Peril

*Alabama Historical
Commission*
2023 Places in Peril



Since 1994, the Alabama Historical Commission and the Alabama Heritage Magazine have partnered together to promote Places in Peril, a public awareness program highlighting significant endangered historic properties in Alabama.

As awareness yields commitment, and commitment yields action, these threatened properties can be saved as treasured and preserved landmarks. The Places in Peril program has encouraged the preservation of important places in Alabama that may otherwise have attention to nominated places that rally local and statewide support.

The 2023 list highlights an array of resources, including an early twentieth century residence, a historic Black school, a former U.S. Army facility, a small-town commercial property, and one of the oldest African American communities established in the United States. By documenting the history of

these places and many other places like them, we can learn more about Alabama's exceptional residents and the stories they have to tell. As more of these places are emphasized through programs such as Places in Peril, previously unfamiliar histories and stories will come alive and allow current generations a glimpse into a past they otherwise would not have known. The Alabama Historical Commission is committed to encouraging the preservation of these tangible connections with the past so that stories are not lost but instead are cemented into Alabama history for both current and future generations. The 2024 Places in Peril nominations are NOW OPEN until October 31, 2024. For more information on the Places in Peril program, click the link below!

<https://ahc.alabama.gov/placesinperil.aspx>

May 11 – Belle Mont/Celtic Fest

Belle Mont

Positioned on a commanding hilltop, Belle Mont Mansion is one of Alabama's crowning architectural achievements.

Located just outside Tusculumbia in Colbert County, the mansion is one of a few Palladian-style houses in the Deep South. This style stems from the neoclassical architectural design of Italian Renaissance architect Andrea Palladio.

The Belle Mont Mansion hosts a Celtic Fest each year in May that celebrates Celtic music and history with food, vendors, activities, and historical reenactments.

The Alabama Historical Commission owns this historic site. Colbert County Historical Landmarks Foundation, Inc. is the support group in charge of operating the site.

For more information, visit ahc.alabama.gov.



May 12 – International Nurses Day – Mattie Fulcher



Confederate Memorial Park Mattie Fulcher

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.

Spread over 102 acres of rolling wooded countryside near the center of the state, Confederate Memorial Park incorporates the site of Alabama's only Confederate veterans' home. Life for the old soldiers, called "inmates" at the Home, was better than most had known before their admission. The Home provided housing, meals, clothing, allowances, medical care and, for many, a place to die and be buried with dignity. The museum offers exhibits on the life of an Alabama Confederate veteran from recruitment to old age, including hundreds of artifacts from the Civil War and the Soldiers' Home.

While it is Mother's Day, it is also International Nurse's Day!
While the AHC is tasked with preserving historic sites, the people who made
these sites so significant have stories worth telling!
We highlight Mattie Fulcher, a nurse who worked at the Veterans Home. 🩺 💊

May 13 – Old Cahawba Perine Well

Instagram video

[Alabama Historical Commission \(@alabamahistoricalcommission\) • Instagram photos and videos](#)

May 14 – Gaineswood Grant



🎵 We get by with a little help from our friends! 🎵

And by friends, we mean Americana Corner Grant Program! Recently, the Friends of Gaineswood and the Colbert County Historical Landmarks Foundation (CCHLF) applied for a grant from Americana Corner, an online resource focused on the founding of our nation and received that funding for interpretive and directional signage. If you're in the Demopolis area, look for our new signage soon!

Gaineswood, a National Historic Landmark, was constructed over an 18-year period (1843-1861). Owner and architect Nathan Bryan Whitfield produced a series of elaborate interior suites with domed ceilings. He adopted many details from popular architectural pattern books by Minard Lafever and others. A cotton planter, Whitfield is described as a Renaissance man. His family's antebellum furnishings and remarkable decorative arts fill the Greek revival structure.

The Alabama Historical Commission owns this historic site. Friends of Gaineswood is the support group in charge of operating the site.

May 15 – Magnolia Grove National Register Update



The National Register of Historic Places is best known for recognizing beautiful architecture and historically significant places, but what about the stories of those who significantly impacted those places in other ways?

The AHC was awarded an Underrepresented Community Grant by the National Park Service to document buildings and spaces where enslaved people lived and

worked. With this funding, the AHC selected Magnolia Grove for an update to the 1973 National Register listing to acknowledge the presence of the enslaved and their impact on antebellum society. The original nomination credits Colonel Isaac Croom with building Magnolia Grove, but the house and other buildings were constructed with enslaved labor. This work is an effort to recognize places like Magnolia Grove exist because of a system that utilized forced labor. This nomination is currently being revised for presentation to the National Register Review Board in September.

Want to know more about the National Register of Historic Places and its process? Click the link below. 🖱️

<https://ahc.alabama.gov/nationalregister.aspx>

May 16 – Historic Schools Tax Credit Success

Historic schools can be the ❤️ of a community. They can be a source of local pride. They are places where memories are made, but sometimes communities outgrow their historic schools and they are left vacant or worse.

This is where Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit Program comes in. Watch this short video for some success stories of historic schools here in Alabama that have been rehabbed back to their glory! 🛠️ 🏠

<https://youtu.be/R6X0fuWJ-r0>

May 17 – Bankhead Fire Tower



Bankhead Fire Tower

Recently, AHC staff attended a site visit to Talladega National Forest to see the historic Bankhead Fire Tower. The United States Forest Service invited AHC to attend along with the Friends of the Talladega National Forest, who have offered to rehabilitate the tower in efforts to preserve the remaining structure.

The proposed work will be to replace the treads on the stairway and also replace the fence around the compound as a way to continue preserving the tower. AHC staff encouraged the Friends group to apply for grant funding for financial assistance.

The fire tower is said to have been built in 1937 by junior African-American Enrollee Company 3477, which was housed near Heflin.

SITE VISIT HIGHLIGHT

AHC staff are out and about making site visits throughout the year from the Mobile River, to the Tennessee River, and everywhere in between, including Talladega National Forest. Our staff visited the Bankhead Fire Tower. Read up to see why!

May 18 – Headstone Cleaning and Genealogy Workshop

Instagram Video: [Alabama Historical Commission](#)
[\(@alabamahistoricalcommission\)](#) • [Instagram photos and videos](#)

May 19 – Fendall Hall



Fendall Hall

Fendall Hall, located in Eufaula, is one of Alabama's most outstanding examples of Italianate architecture, records the story of its residents and Eufaula's rise as a major shipping and trading point.

The exterior of the house remains mostly unchanged. The interior is restored to reflect the 1880-1916 time period. Striking features include the elaborate wall and ceiling murals in the entrance hall, parlor, and dining room.

An interesting architectural feature of Fendall Hall is the decorative grate in the 2nd floor ceiling. Before air conditioning, this helped cool the house by allowing hot air to rise to the attic and cupola.

For more information, visit ahc.alabama.gov

Fendall Hall, one of AHC's historic sites, is nestled in the heart of Eufaula with its Italianate architecture. Can we take a moment for those ceilings though? 😍 Also, Fendall Hall is listed as one of the sites for the photo contest - have you submitted your photo yet? Deadline is May 31! 📷

May 20 – Historical Marker Spotlight



Mt. Pleasant Methodist Church Historical Marker

Front Side

Captain Waller of Selma built Mt. Pleasant Methodist Church in the 1820s after he realized that no house of worship existed in the area. Captain Waller moved to the area to engage in the timber business and built the county's first sawmill on the banks of the creek that now bears his name. In constructing the church, he provided the community with a building that has stood over 200 years. During remodeling in 1890, the balcony where enslaved people had sat for church services was removed and a vaulted ceiling was added to replace the flat roof. In 1945, stained glass windows were added. The building has been home to Methodists as well as Baptists, and also served as a Reconstruction-era school, where Captain Waller's daughter, Marie Waller, taught. Although the structure has been repaired many times, its original foundation and Greek Revival style remains intact. The wooden pegs, which according to local history were carved out and pounded in by Captain Waller so long ago, still hold the church together. Since regular services ceased in the 1960s, the building now serves as home of the Mt. Pleasant Historical Preservation Society.

Mt. Pleasant Methodist Church Historical Marker

Back Side

Listed on William Bartram's 1775 travel route, the Mt. Pleasant community is older than the state of Alabama. The community was quite prosperous at its height. More than ten doctors and dentists and several businesses and stores were located here, including Alabama Apiaries, who bred and shipped Italian bees to northern states during the early 20th century. The timber industry also played an essential role in sustaining the citizens. Logging trains, camps, boarding houses, and family farms dotted the landscape. Steamboats provided transportation for settlers to receive goods and ship cash crops to market. Many families centered their lives around the two churches. Schools were established by families seeking a better education for their children. In addition to the Reconstruction-era school in the Methodist church, six other schools were located here. The old wooden pews in the church still bear the carvings of schoolchildren on them. In 1914, John T. Mitchell was appointed postmaster of the community. Mitchell named the new post office Eliska in honor of his young daughter. Today, Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church is located on the former site of the Eliska post office, just across the road from the Mt. Pleasant Methodist Church.



Historical Marker Spotlight 📍 Mt. Pleasant Methodist Church

This marker was erected in 2023 by Mt. Pleasant Historical Preservation Society and listed in the Alabama Register of Landmarks and Heritage on March 24, 2022. Read up to see the full marker text!

May 21 – Forks of Cypress



Forks of Cypress

The Forks of Cypress was a plantation and Greek Revival house near Florence, AL. Built for James Jackson and his wife Sally, it was likely designed by architect William Nichols. Constructed by enslaved laborers, it was completed c1830. These skilled artisans made the bricks on site, quarried limestone from the Tennessee River, and carved the column capitals from native cypress. The house burned in 1966, but the columns remain standing.

Surrounded by private property, the ruins can be seen from the road, or accessed as part of a scheduled tour.

For more information about this site or other AHC sites, please visit ahc.alabama.gov.



May 22 – National Maritime Day – AHC Announces Maritime Archaeology Program



It's National Maritime Day! 🗣️

We can't think of a better day for some exciting news! The Alabama Historical Commission Executive Director Lisa D. Jones is pleased to announce the historical commission's maritime archaeology program.

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

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

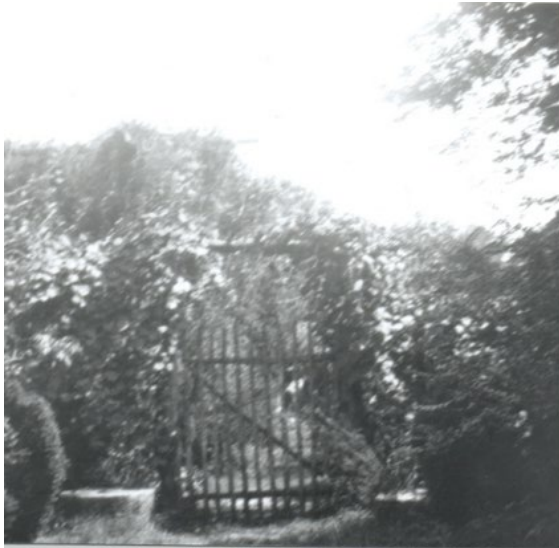
heritage of the state. Most of these waters have not yet been inventoried for submerged archaeological sites and shipwrecks.

This maritime archaeology program will concentrate on the remarkable archaeological resources in Alabama's waterways. It will be an extension of our 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 our upcoming job announcement with AHC!

May 23 – Pond Spring Historic Gardens



Pond Spring Historic Gardens

Did you know Pond Spring: The General Joe Wheeler Home has historic gardens?

After 1896, Miss Annie Wheeler, the general's daughter, along with her sister Lucy, turned the grounds into a pastoral garden. Annie and Lucy also planted daffodils, irises, roses, daylilies, ivy and wisteria, a practice that continued after Lucy's death in 1924. As an avid gardener, Annie planted approximately 500 English boxwoods on the grounds, some of which still thrive today, over 100 years later.

Today, we continue working towards preserving and recreating Miss Annie's beloved garden.

For more information about this site or other AHC sites, please visit ahc.alabama.gov.

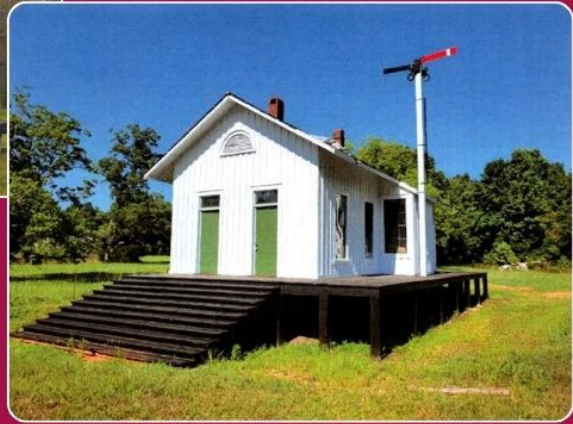
May 24 – Education Trust Fund Spotlight – Fort Davis Railroad Depot

Education Trust Fund Spotlight *Fort Davis Railroad Depot, Macon County*



Then

Now



Fort Davis Railroad Depot, Macon County

The Fort Davis Railroad Depot served as the cornerstone of the Fort Davis community for over 100 years. The Seaboard Savanna-Americus Railroad depot at Fort Davis was built in 1904 to replace the 1892 depot which had burned.

This depot served as a stopping point between Fort Davis and Montgomery.

The Depot was in active operation from 1904 – 1975, when the depot was deeded by CSX Railroad (the successor of the Seaboard Savanna-Americus Railroad). This railroad ran from east to west from Savannah to Montgomery.

For years, the railroad was the center of the community. People would gather every morning and wait for the train to come with the mail. There was also a passenger train in the morning and again in the afternoon, this would continue until sometime after WWII. During WWII the depot was used for soldiers who were traveling to either Montgomery or Savannah to leave for their tour of duty. The train station also served white and African-American passengers, but the waiting area was segregated. Integration occurred during the early 1960's, but by this time there were no longer any passenger trains stopping at the Fort Davis Depot.

The Depot operated from 1904 until 1975, when the Fort Davis Historical Group (a predecessor to the Fort Davis Alabama Historical Society) was deeded the building by CSX Railroad, the successor of Seaboard Savannah-AmericusMontgomery Railroad. In January 1986, CSX ceased operations on the railroad through Fort Davis, and the tracks were dismantled between 1987 and 1988. In the late 1980s, the Depot was repainted by members of the local Methodist Church.



Fort Davis Railroad Depot, Macon County

Over the years, the depot fell into a state of disrepair, and the Alabama Historical Commission (AHC) listed the building to its annual Places in Peril list in 2017. The AHC also listed it in the Alabama Register of Landmarks and Heritage on August 10 that same year. For many years, the Fort Davis Historical Group has been actively trying to save the Depot and restore it.

The depot is still a very well-known landmark for the South Macon and North Bullock County area. The Depot also serves as one of the last remaining artifact of the Seaboard Savanna-Americus Railroad. Restoring the Depot would provide an opportunity to educate the community on the rich railroad history of this area and its importance as a center of commerce in the early 1900s. Once restored, the vision of the Fort Davis Alabama Historical Society is to use the facility to educate students and the community.

Total ETF grant funds given = \$38,769



Education Trust Fund Spotlight - Fort Davis Railroad Depot 🚂

The Alabama Historical Commission, the State Historic Preservation Office, has the Education Trust Fund Grant Program with funds appropriated by the Alabama Legislature for improvements to and educational programming at historic sites or historical monuments in Alabama.

Grants are awarded to public or non-profit entities who own monuments that commemorate historical events and places, or operate sites in Alabama that

reflect a historical education-based mission and concentrate on historical educational programming.

For more information about grants, click below!

<https://ahc.alabama.gov/Resources/grants.aspx>

May 25 – Bottle Creek Indian Mound



Bottle Creek

Earlier this year, AHC Archaeologist Amanda McBride assisted with erosion control measures for the National Historic Landmark Bottle Creek Indian Mounds.

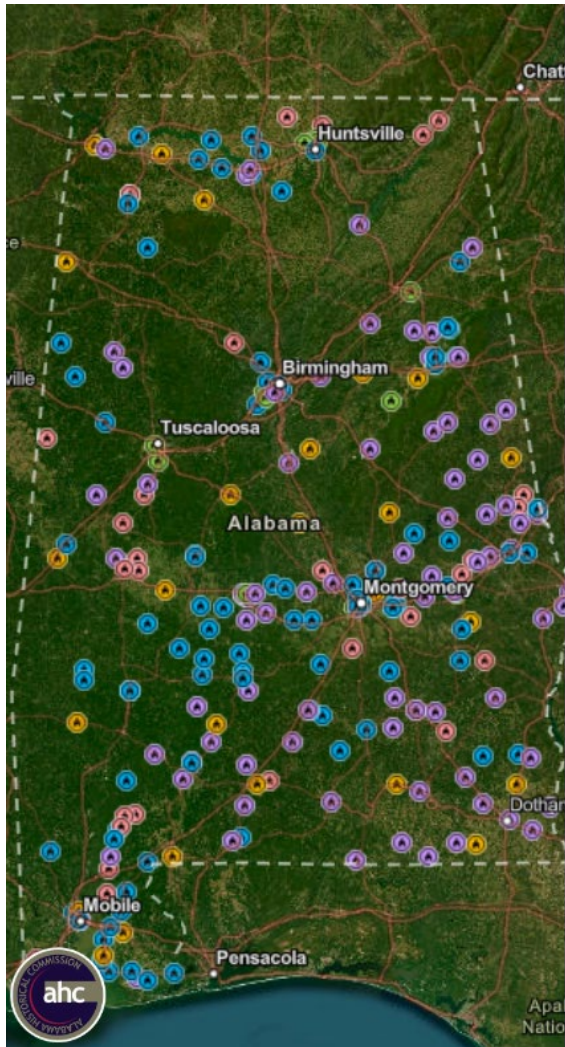
AHC contracted with Stantec Engineering to accomplish the work and were assisted by GulfCorps. This work was made possible by a Save America's Treasures grant awarded to AHC by the National Park Service. The goal of the grant is to address erosion along the trail leading to the mound complex on the island. The team deployed sandbags and log vanes, placed sand on the trail in eroded areas, as well as cleared fallen trees and brush from the trail. This will halt erosion and make access to the existing trail easier without ground disturbances and an impact to archaeology.

McBride monitored the activities to ensure that no cultural remains were disturbed in the process.

For more information about this site or other AHC sites, please visit ahc.alabama.gov.

Did you know that Bottle Creek is one of the most important prehistoric Native American sites in Alabama, second only to Moundville? Located on Mound Island, in the heart of the Mobile-Tensaw Delta, it is the largest mound complex on the northern Gulf coastal plain. Recently, AHC has been actively making site visits to help preserve the mound with a few conservation methods. 🌱

May 26 – African American Schools Map Layer



African American Schools Map Layer

The Historic African American Schools layer has now been updated to the AHC Historic Preservation Map. Approximately 150 new schools, both extant and non-extant, have been added along with Historical Notes, a brief history of a school. Google Street View has also been added to enable the public to see the schools or location via camera view.

If you know of an African American school in your city or county, please send the name, location, and any other relevant details to AHC's GIS Specialist Joseph Massey at: joseph.massey@ahc.alabama.gov



AHC has a variety of preservation programs and tools geared towards helping the public with preservation projects, including the historic preservation map. AHC continues to upgrade and improve the map, like new tools and layers. The African American Schools layer has now been updated to include 150 schools. Check it out now! 📌

[Alabama Historic Preservation GIS Portal \(arcgis.com\)](https://arcgis.com)

May 27 – Memorial Day

Honor & Remember



Memorial
Day



From The
Alabama Historical Commission



May 28 – Middle Bay Lighthouse



Middle Bay Lighthouse

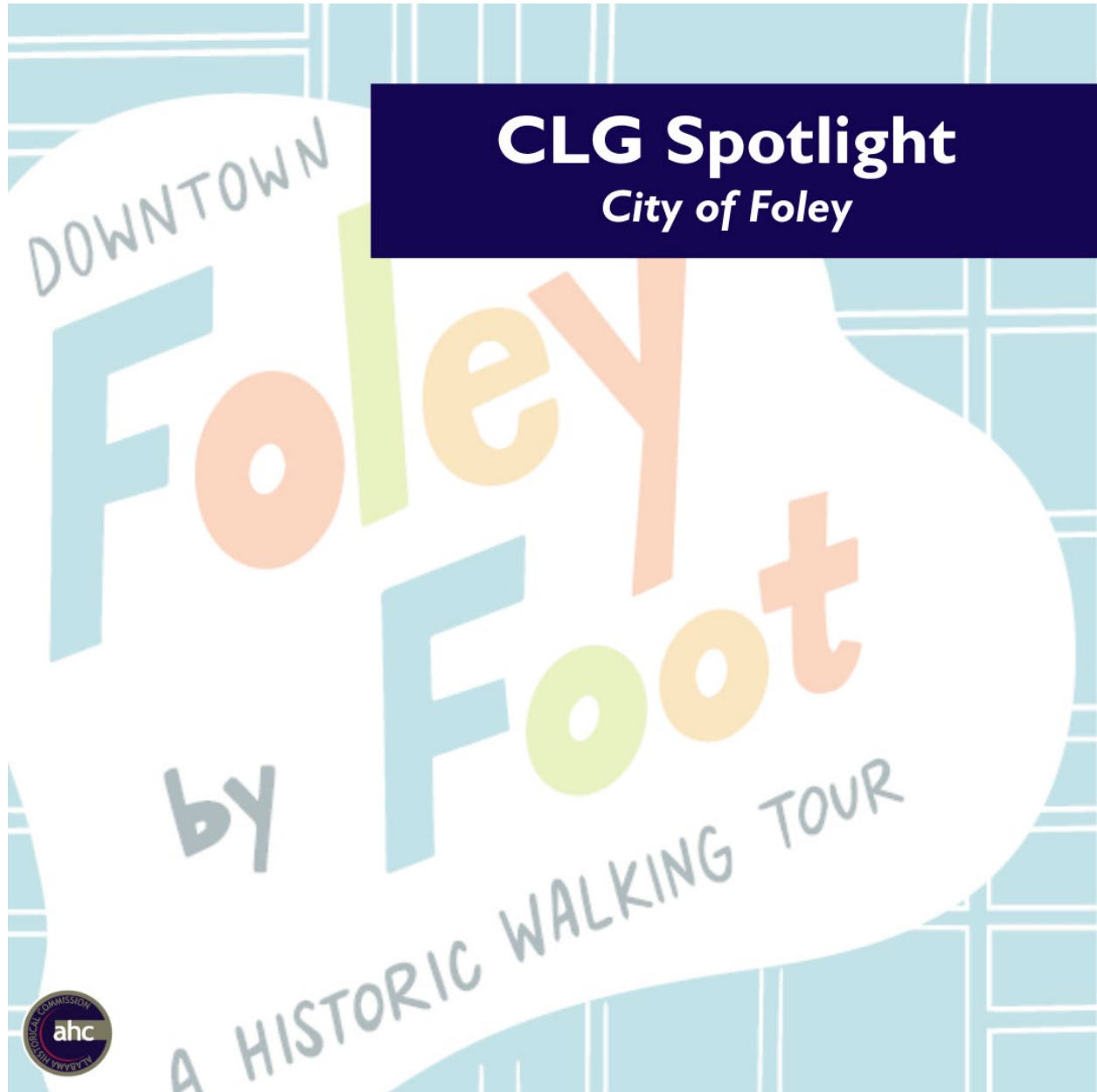
The Mobile Bay Middle Lighthouse, located in Mobile Bay, began operations on December 1, 1885, and Mobilians could observe a white light with red flashes every 30 seconds out in the bay.

The facility was built on an iron undergirding, and both the tower and the hexagonal keeper's house it supported were patterned after lighthouses operating in Chesapeake Bay. The Mobile Bay Middle light used a Fourth Order lens, and when fog covered the bay, a bell sounded every five seconds as a fog signal. The lighthouse was automated in 1935 and deactivated in 1967. After decades of neglect, the lighthouse underwent almost \$350,000 in renovations under the guidance of the Alabama Historical Commission. The original iron tower and light were replaced with a modest pole topped by a solar-powered red light.

This month the lighthouse recently had a new roof hatch installed to ensure protection of the roof and interior.

For those of you who enjoy a boat ride in the bay, you may have noticed the Middle Bay Lighthouse in the "middle".. Read up on how AHC preserved this site for those to see from the water! 🚤 ⚓ 🚢

**May 29 – Certified Local Government Spotlight
City of Foley**



Anyone up for a walk around the block? The downtown Foley block, that is! One of AHC's historic preservation programs is our Certified Local Governments program. The CLG program is for local governments to strengthen their local historic preservation efforts by achieving a CLG status from the National Park Service (NPS).

NPS and State governments, through their State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPOs), provide valuable technical assistance and small matching grants to hundreds of diverse communities whose local governments are endeavoring to keep for future generations what is significant from their community's past. In turn, NPS and States gain the benefit of local government partnership in the national historic preservation program.

Currently, Alabama has 34 CLGs and one of those is the City of Foley. Foley used their allocated CLG grant funds to create a booklet of a historic walking tour downtown Foley. The booklet allows for a self-guided tour featuring unique historical elements of downtown Foley for kids and adults or to take the full tour using the app. The funds allowed for the development of the walking tour booklet, copies of the booklet, as well as the app.

Next time you're in Foley, tell them we sent ya! 🙌 🙌

May 30 – Fort Mims



Fort Mims

Recently, Fort Mims Restoration Association (FMRA), Baldwin County park employees, and Grasshopper's Landscaping, planted 13 trees on the property at Fort Mims. The trees, selected by President of FMRA Claudia Campbell, included live oak, bay, and red maple, which are indigenous to the area. These trees will enhance the natural beauty of the park and provide much needed shade for park visitors and reenactors during the annual living history and battle commemoration in August.

The Society of the War of 1812 in Alabama, who held their annual 2023 State Meeting at the Fort Mims event in August, made a generous donation for trees to be planted to replace those lost at the site during Hurricane Sally.

State Archaeologist Stacye Hathorn monitored excavation during planting to ensure that no archaeological deposits were disturbed.

Fort Mims is one of the historic properties owned by the Alabama Historical Commission and operated by the FMRA.

May 31 – Full House “AHC Edition”

Instagram Video:

[Alabama Historical Commission \(@alabamahistoricalcommission\) • Instagram photos and videos](#)