



CHATTAHOOCHEE TRACINGS

Newsletter of the Historic
Chattahoochee Commission

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FLAME ELEMENT INSTALLED AT CHATTAHOOCHEE INDIAN HERITAGE CENTER



Kathy Hamrick, sculptor of SACRED FIRE

The flame element of the SACRED FIRE sculpture at the Chattahoochee Indian Heritage Center in Fort Mitchell, Alabama was installed by the fabricator, Branko Medenica on March 5. The sculptor was Kathy Hamrick, of Eufaula, who provided design services for the project. The Jaxon Company, also of Eufaula, has supervised the design and construction of this facility since its conception in 1987. The project was initiated by the Historic Chattahoochee Commission, which helped formed the Chattahoochee Indian Heritage Association, a 501 C (3) not for profit organization that has raised over \$1 million for the project.

The flame element is constructed of intertwined sections of bronze and stainless steel and measures about 21 feet high with an estimated weight of 4 tons. The SACRED FIRE represents unity and continuity throughout the thousands of years that the Creek Indians, or their ancestors, inhabited this land. The sculpture has horizontal marble pillars placed together so each points towards a cardinal direction, representing the four logs of the sacred fire. The four serpentine pillars represent the ears of corn which were placed upon the logs of the sacred fire. The flames of stainless steel and bronze rise from the center of the square. The \$100,000 flame element of the SACRED FIRE sculpture was funded by a special HUD Grant made available to the Historic Chattahoochee Commission by Alabama Congressman Bob Riley. The Chattahoochee Indian Heritage Center is nearing completion and will be formally dedicated October 4-5, 2002 at the Southern Indian Reunion. Additional information on the Indian Heritage Center is available by calling the Historic Chattahoochee Commission at 334-687-9755.

By Fred Fussell, *Folklorist*

It Was Gifted To Me

Ninety-one year old Marion Jones is perhaps best known around the lower Chattahoochee Valley for his frequent letters to the editors of the region's newspapers, but Jones is also one of the region's few surviving authentic old-time traditional fiddlers-and a fine one who still plays with great strength. Not so long ago, this part of the South was home to many fine fiddlers - Gene Jackson, Carter Rushing, Comer Grantham - to name just a few. But that's all changed now. A once thriving tradition has all but faded, except perhaps for Ellaville, Georgia's Marion Jones.

I was born in 1918. November the 9th. My father was Thomas Joseph Jones. He was born in Macon County, Georgia. My mother was Elizabeth Barnes. She was a native of Columbus. My daddy went up there to work in the mill in eighteen-something-or-other, met her up there and they married. My daddy was a farmer. We was sharecropping farmers. We was just poor people. Still are, as far as that's concerned. Just had cotton for a living, you know? We worked on halves. But we got by somehow or 'nother. We'd play music at dances 'til midnight some nights for a handful of nickels. That was big money though! Big money. We didn't have nothing else, 'cept farming. I did that until I joined the CC camp. Until then I stayed with my mama and daddy, trying to take care of them. Times was hard, you know, during the depression. There was nine of us from this county that went up to the CC camp. I stayed in there a year, then I joined the Army at Fort Benning in 1939, and the war caught me.

I wanted to make a career out of the Army. I was sent to North Africa and Sicily. I was in North Africa, where we met the Germans, and in the invasion of Sicily. We went from North Africa to Sicily on July the 9th, 1943. Then I went from Sicily to England where we was preparing for D-Day. I developed stomach ulcers there, bleeding stomach ulcers. The doctor told me I was nervous. From war stress and worry, he said, and that caused me to hemorrhage. As I was going up to supper one night, I passed out, so they took me to the hospital. They told me they didn't keep ulcer patients in the Army, but I wanted to be a soldier-I wanted to stay in.



Marion Jones, Ellaville, Georgia

Then they sent me to Fort Monroe, Virginia, to an MP outfit. I didn't want to be an MP, but you do what the government tells you to do. One of the fellows up there told me, "Up here, you may be riding a motorcycle one day and working in the kitchen the next." I said, "Well, I can't ride no motorcycle." That upset me, you see? After that I wanted to get out of the Army, so they discharged me.

I started playing music in 1924. I was 14. I had three brothers, and my oldest brother sold garden seeds enough to get a lil' old fiddle-and he learned to play on it. I learned to play on it, too. It was just a toy. Then in 1925 I bought a Sears and Roebuck fiddle for five dollars - a regular fiddle. We was all fiddlers except my youngest brother, and he picked a guitar. In 1931 me and Bill Harbuck played at a fiddlers convention in the courthouse over there in Buena Vista. It was just a local thing, you know, and we won the prize, a two-dollar-and-a-half gold piece - 'bout big as a dime.

I taught myself. Nobody taught me and I don't know how I'd tell anybody how to learn. If you're gifted with it, you just learn. My brother knew a bunch of old tunes and he would play 'em and later I learned a lot from the radio and from hearing other fiddlers. I play the old tunes of the '20s and '30s — Gid Tanner, Alley Puckett, John Carson - he played for Gene

Talmadge — and all of them. We played for country square dances. I improved more than my brothers did. I got ahead of them a-fiddling. I had a knack for it. I played by ear. It was gifted to me. Praise the Lord for that.

In the old days the fiddlers named their fiddle tunes after their girlfriends - *Black-eyed Susie, Sally Goodin, Sally Johnson, Katie Hill*, all them tunes. Named them after the women. And then there's the ones like *Old Joe Clark*.

*Old Joe Clark, he's dead and gone.
Left his old home town.
Every tooth inside his head.
Was a mile and a quarter 'round.*

*I went down to Old Joe's house,
I ain't goin' back no more.
Cause he slept on a feather bed,
And I slept on the floor.*

*I went down to Old Joe Clark's,
Found Old Joe in bed.
I rammed my hand down his throat,
And pulled out a chicken head.*

At the old time dances they always had a heap of 'shine liquor around, you know? And they'd drink and all. I was playing at a dance one night here in Ellaville and a fellow run in the place and said, "They're a-fighting out yonder!" Mr. Luce, the owner, said, "Let 'em fight! We're a-dancin' in here!" Dances like that went on around here until about ten years ago and they still have those bluegrass festivals around here and there, but I'm not a bluegrass fiddler. That's too fast. There's some good bluegrass fiddlers, though don't get me wrong. I'm just not of that age.

There are many people in this area that know me, and know me because I'm a fiddler. I'd like to say to them, I'm still living. I'm 91 years old. I can't hold out as long as I used to could. But that's natural. I have many memories of the ones who played with me and who are gone now. They've passed away. I would like to wish them a happy life with the Lord. Still today, I live them old days in my memory. Not all the days were good, of course, but the memories I have of friends I made, in music and personally, I appreciate them all.

GUEST COLUMN

LaVerne Wright,
Chattahoochee County, Georgia



LaVerne Wright

The Chattahoochee County Jail, located on Mt. Olive and Boyd Street in Cusseta, Georgia, Chattahoochee County (named for the Chattahoochee River), is a two-story square brick

structure with an original metal roof. Our historic society is in the process of restoring it for use as a museum and archives. Some of you may wonder where Cusseta is. Let me introduce you to it. The Chattahoochee County was created by the Act of February 13, 1854, by cutting a portion from Muscogee and Marion Counties. This necessitated the newly created county having its own courthouse and jail. A wooden, two-story log jail was completed on the lot by July 29, 1855. Mr. Asbury Bryan was paid \$1250 for the structure. It served as the county's jail until 1902, when Pauly Jail and Manufacturing Company of St.

Restoration of the Chattahoochee County Jail

Louis, Missouri, built the brick jail for \$5,000.

On March 13, 1986, the jail was placed on the National Register of Historic Places. The Chattahoochee County Historic Preservation Society, Inc., was formed in 1994, and since then has worked towards restoring the jail. The first step was to apply for a grant of \$1,000, plus matching funds from the county. This money was used to obtain a structural analysis of the jail, to see if it was savable. The jail was found structurally sound and the immediate need was to secure the roof and gutters, in order to prevent further leak damage. A second grant, from the Heritage 2000 Commission, for \$13,000, was obtained in 1997. One contractor was to commence work in 1998, but a year went by with nothing accomplished. Other contractors were contacted, but they felt it was too dangerous to have their employees work on the building. Finally, in late 1998 we were fortunate to obtain Mr. Larry Bussey, a preservation contractor in Columbus, to agree to a contract to stabilize the jail walls. Walls had to be stabilized before the roof could be replaced. The work commenced March 1999 and was completed about a year later.

The second phase of restoring the metal roof and gutters was completed in the year 2000. Our third phase was to hire an architect to design the interior of the jail. We have applied for a grant twice, but were not approved. In the meantime, we have held various fundraisers such as Bar-B-Ques, selling T-shirts, sweatshirts and travel mugs (with a picture of the jail on them). Another fundraiser is our memory quilts. We have completed two quilts, which are hanging in our courthouse. It took us about 670 hours to do the first two quilts. A third quilt is being worked on now. We still have a great deal to do to finish restoring our jail, but we shall eventually get it done.

Since our jail is 100 years old this year, we are planning a Centennial Celebration in September. We will have speakers, music, and food, so come join in the celebration. A historical marker has been ordered for the Chattahoochee County Jail. The dedication ceremony, for the marker, will be September 14, 2002 at 11:00 a.m. (EST).

If you have an opportunity to come to Cusseta, be sure to stop by to see our jail and the quilts hanging in our courthouse.

2001 CHATTAHOOCHEE TRACE VISITATION HOLDS STEADY

Visitation figures for selected Chattahoochee Trace attractions during 2001 showed that growth was slow but steady when compared with statistics from the previous year according to Historic Chattahoochee Commission (HCC) Executive Director, Douglas C. Purcell. Each year the Commission tracks attendance at nineteen sites to help gauge the health of the tourism industry in the eighteen county bi-state Chattahoochee Valley region it serves.

Eight attractions showed gains while ten attractions posted small to moderate decreases and one had no change. By comparison in 2000 nine attractions in the study had attendance gains. Eight attractions posted gains in 1999, ten in 1998, six in 1997, nine in 1996, ten in 1995, seven in 1994, three in 1993, five in 1992 and six in 1991. The average attraction visitation increase over the last ten years has been seven so 2001 was a typical year for this region.

Small decreases (under 12%) were recorded at six attractions while three sites showed moderate decreases ranging from 19.37% to 28.21%. Heading the list with

the largest increase was the Port Columbus Civil War Naval Center which had a 191.25 % attendance gain. However it must be mentioned that this facility was closed from September 2000 until March 2001 as preparations were underway to move into a new building. The largest decrease in attendance was on Lake Eufaula/Walter F. George.

After the Port Columbus Civil War Naval Center, Bagby State Park had the highest gain at 30.73%. Other increases included: Lake Seminole (26.77%), U. S. Army Aviation Museum (19.05%), Fendall Hall (4.09%); Eufaula National Wildlife Refuge (4.02%), West Point Lake (2.70%) and the Little White House (1.77%). Visitation numbers at The Columbus Museum were exactly the same as those recorded in 2000. The increase at Lake Seminole has been attributed to excellent fishing.

Small visitor decreases were reported at FDR State Park (.81%), Westville (3.78%), Providence Canyon State Conservation Park (5.40%), Landmark Park (7.60%) and Kolomoki Mounds State Historic Park (8.62%). Moderate visitation decreases

occurred at Shorter Mansion (19.37%), Florence Marina State Park (24.75%), Lake George W. Andrews (26.22%) and Lake Eufaula (28.21%). The recession and the tragedies that occurred on September 11 hurt tourism during the last quarter of 2001. But some area attractions reported seasonal spikes in visitation because people were taking shorter vacation and getaway trips closer to home.

Tourism expenditures continued to increase during 2000 in Alabama (\$6.1 billion - up 7% over 1999) and in Georgia (\$16.2 billion - up 7.6% over 1999). According to Purcell, tourism is the number two industry in Alabama and Georgia and the third largest retail industry in the United States. In 2000, \$584.3 billion was recorded in tourism expenditures in the United States, a 10.8% increase over 1999. These figures will continue to grow as the travel industry overtakes food stores and becomes the second largest retail or service industry in the next few years. The Chattahoochee Trace region continues to play a small but significant role in this industry growth in Alabama and Georgia.

PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

Barbara Spears is the new office manager/bookkeeper for Landmark Park in Dothan. She comes to the Park after having worked with Southeastern Performance Apparel for 21 years as bookkeeper/office manager.

Georgia Governor Roy Barnes presented Thornton Jordan, of Columbus, Georgia a "Governor's Award in the Humanities" on March 6, 2002. The ceremony took place at the adaptively restored Railway Depot in Atlanta at a luncheon ceremony. Jordan is a long-term Trustee of Westville Historic Handicrafts. He is a former Board Chair and is currently the chair of Westville's Executive Committee. The Governor's Award is a medallion, which recognizes Jordan's many contributions to the humanities in Georgia. He has assisted a number of organizations



Thornton Jordan with Governor Roy Barnes

including Westville, The Columbus Museum, and Columbus State University. In addition, has provided assistance to his hometown of Columbus in other ways. Jordan purchased the Carson McCullers Home in Columbus to assure that this great American writer should receive recognition in her hometown. He has also been active in preserving the historical integrity of several Columbus neighborhoods and in advocating a sane approach to tree care in the city.

Dr. Wayne Flynt, a prominent Auburn history professor active in drives to make Alabama's tax code and constitution more socially progressive, says he will retire out of disgust with Auburn trustees. Flynt, 61, said recently he will take retirement in three years, rather than teach until 70 as he had planned. "I'm just fed up with the trustees," he told the Opelika-Auburn News. "Senior professors don't generally like an atmosphere of continuous turmoil and conflict. I've just decided I don't need that in my life." Flynt, who holds the title of Distinguished Professor at Auburn, has

written histories of Alabama and the region, including the acclaimed "Poor But Proud," about the state's poor but hardworking white families. A Baptist, he also written about the state's largest denomination. A professor at Auburn for more than two decades, Flynt recently received the 2002 Clarence Cason Writing Award presented by the University of Alabama Journalism Department for his exemplary nonfiction writing. Flynt has voiced concern that some of Auburn's finest scholars and teachers may leave amid the turmoil over trustees who have received a no-confidence vote from the faculty senate.

Ruth Purdy Speake, 72, of Auburn died on February 13, at the East Alabama Medical Center. Mrs. Speake was known throughout Lee County for her work with the Lee County Historical Society. She served as chairman of the Lee County Historical Society board and was the official Lee County Historian. Over the years, she donated thousands of volunteer hours to a variety of causes. She worked



Ruth Purdy Speake

tirelessly for the Lee County Historical Fair and the Loachapoka Syrup Soppin' Festival. In addition, Mrs. Speake coordinated the relocation of a log cabin to the Lee County Historical Museum in Loachapoka. In appreciation for her efforts, the Society named the cabin for her. Mrs. Speake was appointed to the Historic Chattahoochee Commission's Board of Directors in 1997 and served the Commission with distinction. In 1988, the Commission presented her with its Achievement Award, "In recognition of her significant accomplishments in the promotion and preservation of Lee County's rich heritage."

BOOKS OF INTEREST

Ed Driggers, of Dothan, Alabama has recently completed a new book entitled "From Plow To Pen." In his book, Driggers writes about his life, but his storytelling has captured, for future generations, some colorful history. Driggers grew up in Houston County, Alabama during the Great Depression. At the age of 16 he dropped out of school to plow as a day hand on a farm to provide for his widowed mother and three siblings. He was 20 when he received a high school diploma under extraordinary circumstances because he spent all but three months of his senior year in the army. He grabbed at a chance to attend college with the GI Bill even though he was married with a son. A journalism graduate of the University of Alabama, Driggers spent 31 months with the Dothan Eagle. His writing ability and rural background helped him become the state's first full-time farm editor. He was managing editor and editorial writer when he retired in 1980 to become public relations director at Southeast Alabama Medical Center. The book sells for \$21.95 plus \$4 for shipping and handling. Orders may be directed to Ed Driggers at 1200 Magnolia Avenue, Dothan, Alabama 36301 or by contacting him at his e-mail address at eddriggers@aol.com.

"The Heritage of Barbour County, Alabama" book is now published and available for purchase. The 9 1/4" x 12 1/4" book contains 780 pages of history of families, the county, its beginnings, its cemeteries, churches, communities and much, much more. Books are available for \$70 each plus \$5 for shipping and handling by contacting The Heritage Book % of Mary Ann Richards, 58 Shady Lane, Clayton, Alabama 36016 or calling 334-266-5349. Copies are also available at the offices of The Eufaula Tribune and the Historic Chattahoochee Commission in Eufaula.

"A Historic Tour of Our Town, Columbus, Georgia—Coloring Book" will be reprinted through the generosity of the children of Mary White Coppage. Mr. and Mrs. O. Reese Coppage, Jr., Mr. and Mrs. James T. Coppage and Mr. and Mrs. A. J. Land donated this gift in honor of Mrs. Coppage. The Coppage Family originally funded this publication for the Historic Columbus Foundation. The Foundation has distributed 3,300 of these books to Muscogee County schools over the last two years.

Mr. Leonard Blanton, well known LaFayette, Alabama historian and long-time member of the Chattahoochee Valley Historical Society, has recently published **LaFayette, Alabama, Its People and Environs, A Pictorial History; A Continuance of the Book "LaFayette Heritage," Book II**. In his new book are pictures of local historical interest from the late 1800s to the mid-1900s. Included are images of buildings, individuals and school groups as well as programs from the former LaFayette College. Also available for sale will be "LaFayette Heritage," Mr. Blanton's first book. Orders should be directed to Mr. Leonard Blanton, 204 1st Street N.E., LaFayette, Alabama, or call 334-864-8635.

MUSEUMS AND BUILDINGS IN THE NEWS

The 148-year-old Whitesville Methodist Episcopal Church in Harris County, Georgia has been placed on the National Register of Historic Places. The church is a one-story wood-frame building with Queen Anne-style shingles and a bell tower added in 1900. It has about 12 active members. The church was actually incorporated in 1837, the same year as the town of Whitesville. The church structure and adjacent cemetery are included in the listing as an example of a country church from the 1854 era, when the current building was constructed. A basement was added around 1937 where the fellowship hall is located. Consultant Linda Straub, who lives in the community and prepared the nomination in 1997, said the church has been well kept by the membership.

The Mann Museum and Outdoors in Opelika, Alabama was recently honored by the Alabama Wildlife Federation with its Conservation Achievement Award as Conservation Organization of the Year.

The Georgia General Assembly has approved local assistance grants for the year beginning July 1 for the following organizations:

* Contract for services with the Springer Opera House in Columbus, Georgia, \$150,000

* Maintenance and operation of the Liberty Theater in Columbus, Georgia, \$150,000

* Contract for services with the Port Columbus National Civil War Naval Museum in Columbus, Georgia, \$100,000

The Army Aviation Heritage Foundation is bringing vintage wing aircraft to Ozark. The foundation is currently conducting a fundraiser to erect a 100' x 125' hangar at Blackwell Airport in Ozark, just off Highway 231, near the Aviation Campus. Plans are underway for a paved parking area and tie down ramp for 30-35 aircraft. Cost of the hangar will be around \$100,000 and should be completed by late summer 2002. Add-on buildings will contain office space, gift shop, museum, kitchen area and limited bunk space for out of town volunteers.

Georgia U.S. Senator Max Cleland is honorary Co-Chairman of a \$6 million capital campaign to build a new museum and visitor center at the Little White House in Warm Springs, Georgia. Museum exhibits were last updated in the 1970s. The proposed 18,000-square-foot museum will be seven times larger than the present facility and will include a modern auditorium; exhibits explaining FDR's

impact on Georgia, the nation and the world; and greater accessibility for the handicapped. Roosevelt, the only four-term president, died of a stroke he suffered while sitting for the famous "Unfinished Portrait" which is displayed in his den. The public can tour his rustic cottage, which is furnished just as it was on the day of his death, and the grounds and museum. The Little White House is the most visited state historic site in Georgia, attracting 110,000 visitors annually. State officials expect to raise the last \$1.5 million of their \$6 million goal by April 2003 so the groundbreaking for the new museum can take place on April 12, 2003, the 58th anniversary of the death of President Franklin Roosevelt.

Paying for preservation is an on-going challenge, even after a property has been "saved," as proven by the problems now facing Fendall Hall, the outstanding Italianate Antebellum house, known for its exceptional hand-painted murals. In the early 1970s, Eufaula citizens obtained state legislative appropriations for the purchase of Fendall Hall, along with annual funding for operation and maintenance. Today, however, the serious cuts and constraints in all aspects of state funding have led the Alabama Historical Commission (AHC) to take a hard look at the long-term future of its historic sites, to reconcile its mission in stewardship obligations with the reality of mounting costs and of the inadequacy of reliance on public funding. A yearlong appraisal of its properties undertaken with the assistance of an economic and tourism consultant led to the decision to consider alternative ownership and uses of some AHC sites. Faced with the possible change of Fendall Hall status, the Friends of Fendall Hall have rallied to meet the challenge of broadening support for the property by raising funds, visitation and volunteer hours. Their target is to raise \$100,000, which will be matched by the AHC, to secure a small endowment of \$200,000. Doug Purcell, Bill Neville, Calvin Wingo, Joel Smith, Sr., Charlie Crook, Mike Mahan, Lee Warner and Winston Smith T, among others, played important roles in developing this model for shared citizen-state responsibilities to save important properties.

A letter by George Washington and a copy of the royal charter for the colony of Georgia are among articles being prepared for a move from the Georgia State Archives Building in downtown Atlanta. By next March, the records are scheduled to be transferred to a new building next to Clayton College & State University in Morrow, south of Atlanta. The 37-year-old

Archives building's structure is failing, mainly because of vibrations from nearby downtown traffic. To renovate the building and upgrade its interior would cost \$40 million; construction of a new facility costs \$22 million. The new four-story building will be 177,000 square-feet, compared to 144,000 square-feet now. Archivists have nearly completed an inventory of records, said Archives Director David Carmicheal. For the first time, workers are recording the documents on a computer database. Some 50 staffers are transferring routine documents from 40,000 old boxes to new boxes, sturdy enough for the journey. The archives house 10,000 state and county maps, 20,000 books and periodicals, 80,000 rolls of microfilm, 100,000 photographs and 1.5 million land grants and property maps.

The Alabama Register of Landmarks and Heritage is an official list of buildings, sites, structures, objects, and districts worthy of preservation. It includes properties of national and state significance, as well as those of purely local importance. The Register is compiled and maintained by the Alabama Historical Commission. Properties recently listed in the Alabama Register from the Chattahoochee Valley Area of Alabama include: **Harmony Methodist Church, Lafayette (Chambers County)**-Dating from the mid-late-19th century, the church depicts an increasingly rare example of a front-gabled vernacular religious building. Together with two associated cemeteries, it remains as the earliest existing evidence of a Methodist congregation that dates to the settlement period of the state. **First Missionary Baptist Church, Dothan (Houston County)**-As the second post-Reconstruction African-American church in the city, First Missionary Baptist has served as a cohesive religious and social

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NEWSLETTER

The Historic Chattahoochee Commission (HCC), an agency of the states of Alabama and Georgia, is involved in the promotion of tourism and historic preservation throughout the lower Chattahoochee Valley.

Chattahoochee Tracings is published quarterly and is free to interested citizens. Requests for the newsletter and changes of address should be directed to HCC, P.O. Box 33, Eufaula, Alabama 30072-0033. (334) 687-9755 or P.O. Box 942, LaGrange, Georgia 30241, (706) 845-8440, e-mail hcc@alalinc.net, Web Page www.hcc-al-ga.org.

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Group tour operators who are looking for something different will be excited about the all-new G.R.I.T.S. Tour. G.R.I.T.S. (an acronym for Georgia/Alabama River Itineraries That are Special) is a tour itinerary designed to give tour operators a new and unique tour of, not one, but several destinations. The Dothan Area Convention & Visitors Bureau has teamed up with the Eufaula Chamber of Commerce, the Columbus (GA) Convention & Visitors Bureau, and the Greater Rome (GA) Convention & Visitors Bureau to provide an economical tour package. G.R.I.T.S. was first introduced to group tour operators at the National Tour Association trade show in November 2001. Group tour operators were very receptive of the G.R.I.T.S. Tour. Providing a variety of attractions to see and interesting things to do at a very good price, the tours start as low as \$100 per day. The G.R.I.T.S. Tour is a four-day/three-night tour and can start in Rome or Dothan, depending on where the tour group will originate. The attractions and length of the tour can be altered to suit a particular group's needs. For more information about the G.R.I.T.S. Tour, please call the Dothan Area Convention & Visitors Bureau at 888-449-0212.

Where to Retire magazine, the only magazine in America geared to helping people relocate in retirement, has selected Eufaula, Alabama, to profile as a top retirement town in its Spring Issue. According to **Where to Retire** editor, Alan Fox, Eufaula has many of the qualities and characteristics most sought after by today's retirees. "Eufaula is known for the recreational activities afforded by Lake Eufaula, such as fishing and boating, and its low cost of living. Retirees choose Eufaula

for its four season climate, small-town ambiance and lovely natural surroundings," Fox said. Each year nearly 380,000 people move across state lines to retire. Generally healthier, better educated and more affluent than retirees who stay put, relocating retirees bring significant economic benefits to their new states and hometowns. Nationally, two dozen states and hundreds of towns seek to attract retirees as a source of economic development.

Nearly 93 million Americans say they included a cultural, arts, heritage, or historic activity while traveling in the past year according to a new report from the Travel Industry Association. The study found this group of travelers spend an average of \$631 per trip compared to \$457 for all U.S. travelers (does not include transportation to the destination).

Ten students in Troy State University's geomatics program spent part of their break in Florida and Alabama, but they did not visit the beach. These students devoted three days of their holiday break, March 25-27, to participate in a grant project that combines surveying and archeology in a search for the original survey mounds that marks the Alabama-Florida border. The students, accompanied by Dr. James Elithorp, associate professor of mathematics and physics, were recruited for this project by Gregory Spies of Mobile. Spies, an engineer and archeologist, is also an adjunct instructor in TSU's geomatics program. Geomatics combines traditional land surveying methods with modern technology. Spies said the project is funded by a grant from the National Society of Professional Surveyors Foundation. The project was commissioned, Spies said, to

find evidence of the survey marker mounds created by Andrew Elliott in his historic survey of 1798-1800. "This is a significant project, because this is the first major historical survey project to receive a grant from this foundation," Spies said. "This was the first actual survey of the United States border with Spanish Florida." Spies said the project is also practical, as there are numerous land disputes-some of them long-standing-that could be settled if the Ellicott mound line is documented.

Museums and Buildings in the News *(continued from page 5)*

institution since its organization in 1889. The current building dates from 1912. Its construction date, formidable size, and style reflect the rapid growth and prosperity of the community during this period. **Ridge Grove Missionary Baptist Church, Opelika Vicinity (Lee County)**-Erected in 1913 by a congregation dating to the Reconstruction period, this African-American religious building served as a church and school until school consolidation in 1957 led to its closing. With bimonthly services and the addition of a fellowship hall in the 1990s, the one story wood frame building continues to serve the community as a place of worship. **NBCAR Historic District, Dothan (Houston County)**-Located in the northeastern area of the city, the district encompasses 74 primarily residential buildings comprising a historic African-American neighborhood. The large majority of houses date from the early twentieth century, forming the nucleus of a once-thriving professional-and working-class neighborhood. The district is significant for its concentration of historic structures associated with the establishment of the black community.

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