

# Press Conference Announcement

Contact: Steve Murray  
Phone: (334) 353-4692  
E-mail:  
steve.murray@archives.alabama.gov

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
September 28, 2010

**STATE OFFICIALS AND HISTORICAL ORGANIZATIONS ANNOUNCE  
BECOMING ALABAMA, A STATEWIDE EFFORT TO COMMEMORATE THE  
CREEK WAR, CIVIL WAR, AND CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT**

A press conference will be held at 10:00 AM on Wednesday, October 6, in the Old House Chamber of the Alabama State Capitol to announce the launch of *Becoming Alabama*, a statewide partnership for the planning and promotion of commemorative activities over the next five years. The anniversaries to be observed include the bicentennial of the Creek War, the sesquicentennial of the Civil War, and the fiftieth anniversaries of major events in the civil rights movement. The press conference will also feature the unveiling of a *Becoming Alabama* logo commissioned by the Alabama Tourism Department and made freely available for use by organizations throughout the state.

*Becoming Alabama* is the product of a partnership of more than forty historical, cultural, educational, and travel organizations throughout Alabama. Planning began in early 2009, when ongoing budget cuts threatened organizations' ability to prepare for the upcoming sequence of historical anniversaries. By approaching the three historical periods collectively, the partners were able to stretch limited resources. They also realized that these three periods collectively tell the major stories in the creation and shaping of Alabama statehood and society, hence the theme and name "Becoming Alabama."

Officials and guests speaking on October 6 include:

- Ed Bridges, Director, Alabama Department of Archives and History
- Lawrence Pijoux, President and CEO, Birmingham Civil Rights Institute
- Donna Cox Baker, Editor, *Alabama Heritage* magazine

-End-

**Becoming Alabama**  
**Partnering Agencies and Organizations**

Becoming Alabama has no formal leadership structure, but these partners have lent resources and guidance in the early phases of planning:

Alabama Department of Archives and History  
*Alabama Heritage Magazine*  
Alabama Tourism Department  
Birmingham Civil Rights Institute  
EarlyWorks Museums of Huntsville  
Museum of Mobile

Other partners include:

Alabama Folklife Association	National Center for the Study of Civil Rights & African American Culture, Alabama State University
Alabama Historical Association	
Alabama Historical Commission	
Alabama Humanities Foundation	Rosa Parks Museum
Alabama Indian Affairs Commission	Tannehill Ironworks Historical State Park
Alabama Museums Association	University of Alabama History Department
Alabama Public Library Service	University of Alabama Press
Alabama Public Television	
Alabama Shakespeare Festival	Numerous local historical organizations and libraries
Alabama State Council on the Arts	
Auburn Montgomery Archives	
Auburn University History Department	
Birmingham Public Library	
Black Heritage Council	
Caroline Marshall Draughon Center for the Arts & Humanities, Auburn University	
Encyclopedia of Alabama	
First White House of the Confederacy	
Gadsden Museum of Art & History	
Horseshoe Bend National Military Park	
Jule Collins Smith Museum, Auburn University	
Mobile Visitors' Center	
National African American Archives & Museum, Mobile	

## Becoming Alabama Events List

*Events in italics are largely national in scope*

### 2010

- February 1960 - Lunch counter sit-ins in N.C. spread to Alabama
- February 1860 - Alabama legislature adopts a resolution instructing the Governor to call for a convention if a Republican were to be elected in November
- March 1960 - Alabama State University students protest at state Capitol.
- November, 1860 - election of Abraham Lincoln*
- December 1860 - Alabama elects delegates to Secession Convention

### 2011

- Jan. 11, 1861 - Alabama Ordinance of Secession
- Feb. 1861 - CSA organized in Montgomery, Jefferson Davis inaugurated
- March 1861 - Confederate flag and permanent Confederate Constitution adopted
- April 12, 1861 - firing on Ft. Sumter
- May 14, 1961 - Freedom Riders attacked in Anniston and Birmingham and bus burned in Anniston
- May 20, 1961 - Freedom Riders beaten in Montgomery
- May 21, 1861 - Confederate Congress meets in Montgomery for last time
- September 30, 1811 - Tecumseh speaks at the Council Oak at Tukabatchee

### 2012

- Feb. 11, 1862 - Huntsville occupied by Federal troops
- May 2, 1862 - burning of Athens
- April 1862 - Confederate conscription act*
- June 1812 - U.S. declares war on Great Britain*
- Summer 1862 - Confederate arsenal moved to Selma
- August 1862 - CSS Alabama commissioned

### 2013

- Jan. 1, 1863 - Emancipation Proclamation issued*
- April 11, 1813 - U.S. troops seize Mobile from the Spanish
- April 12, 1963 - Martin Luther King and Ralph Abernathy and other arrested in Birmingham
- May 1813 - Creeks make first of three visits to Spanish-held Pensacola to obtain supplies
- May - June, 1863 - Streight's Raid
- May 2-3, 1963 - Birmingham Children's Crusade marches
- May 19, 1963 - Martin Luther King's Letter from Birmingham Jail
- June 11, 1963 - Wallace's stand in the schoolhouse door
- July 1863 - Battle at Gettysburg*
- July 27, 1813 - skirmish at Burnt Corn Creek
- July 27, 1863 - William Lowndes Yancey dies
- August 30, 1813 - Ft. Mims

Sept. 1, 1813 - Kimball-James Massacre  
Sept. 2, 1813 - Attack on Ft. Sinquefield  
Sept. 2, 1963 - Wallace postpones opening of Tuskegee High to prevent integration  
Sept. 9, 1963 - Huntsville schools successfully integrated  
September 15, 1963 - 16<sup>th</sup> Street Baptist Church bombing  
*October 1813 - Gen. Andrew Jackson and Tennessee volunteers depart from Fayetteville,  
TN for the Mississippi Territory*  
November 12, 1813 - Canoe Fight  
November 3, 1813 - Battle of Tallushatchee  
November 9, 1813 - Battle of Talladega  
November 18, 1813 - Hillabee Massacre  
November 29, 1813 - Battle of Autossee  
December 23, 1813 - Battle at Holy Ground

## 2014

Jan. 12, 1814 - Battle of Emuckfau Creek  
Jan. 24, 1814 - Battle of Entichopco  
Jan. 27, 1814 - Battle of Calabee Creek  
Feb. 17, 1864 - CSS Hunley sinks  
March 27, 1814 - Battle of Horseshoe Bend  
April 1814 - Andrew Jackson establishes Ft. Jackson  
June 11, 1864 - CSS Alabama sunk by Kearsage  
July 1864 - Rousseau's Raid  
August 1814 - Jackson moves headquarters to Mobile to prepare for British attack  
August 5, 1864 - Battle of Mobile Bay  
August 9, 1814 - Treaty of Ft. Jackson  
Sept. 15, 1814 - British attack on Ft. Bowyer repulsed  
Sept. 15, 1964 - 1<sup>st</sup> black elected officials since Reconstruction elected to Tuskegee City Council  
*December 24, 1814 - Treaty of Ghent signed*

## 2015

*Jan. 8, 1815 - Battle of New Orleans*  
Feb. 11, 1815 - British capture Ft. Bowyer  
Feb. 26, 1965 - Jimmie Lee Jackson killed in Marion  
March 1865 - Croxton and Wilson's "raids"  
*March 3, 1865 - U.S. Congress establishes the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and  
Abandoned Lands*  
March 7, 1965 - Bloody Sunday  
March 21-25, 1965 - Selma to Montgomery March  
April - May 1865 - news of emancipation reaches most Alabama slaves  
*April 9, 1865 - surrender at Appomattox Court House*  
May 4, 1865 - Confederates surrender at Citronelle  
May 25, 1865 - powder explosion at Mobile

May 30, 1965 - Vivian Malone becomes first African-American graduate of the University of Alabama

July 1865 - Wager Swayne arrives in Alabama as assistant commissioner of the Freedmen's Bureau

*August 6, 1865 - President Lyndon Johnson signs the National Voting Rights Act of 1965*

August 20, 1965 - Jonathan Daniels killed in Hayneville

September 7, 1865 - 1<sup>st</sup> circular issued by Freedman's Bureau Montgomery headquarters



## THE *BECOMING ALABAMA* LOGO

By Steve Murray

THE *BECOMING ALABAMA* partners are pleased to unveil our new logo in this issue of *Alabama Heritage*. Development of the logo was made possible through the support of the Alabama Tourism Department, which will use the design as the basis for a series of commemorative medallions. Historical and cultural organizations across the state will be able to use the logo in their publications, web sites, and promotional materials beginning later this summer.

Former Montgomery resident Susan Gamble, an artist who has done extensive work for the U.S. Mint, crafted the logo and medallion design with input from several *Becoming Alabama* partners. The image features a prominent individual representing each of the three *Becoming Alabama* periods.

Chief Menawa was a principal leader of the Red Stick Creeks, who fought against U.S. forces and their Indian allies in the Creek War. He commanded Red Sticks in the culminating battle of the war at Horseshoe Bend, where he was wounded seven times and escaped capture by feigning death. Menawa remained a leading advocate for the rights of the Creek people until his death during the Indian removal of the late 1830s.

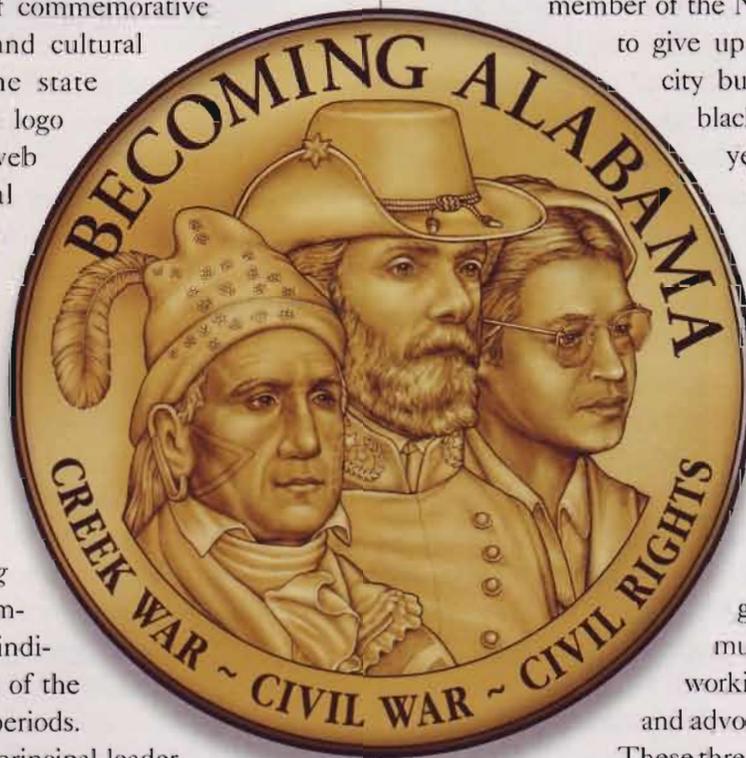
Joseph Wheeler gained the attention of Confederate superiors while commanding the Nineteenth Alabama Infantry Regiment at the Battle of Shiloh, and by late

1862 he was named commander of cavalry for the Army of Tennessee. Wheeler's innovations in the use of mounted infantry had lasting effects on cavalry tactics. After the Civil War, Wheeler settled in north Alabama and represented the area in Congress, where he advocated the reconciliation of North and South. When war with Spain broke out in 1898, Wheeler again commanded U.S. troops.

Rosa Parks was a Montgomery seamstress and active member of the NAACP. When she refused to give up her seat on a segregated city bus in December 1955, the black community launched a year-long bus boycott and legal challenge. The effort ended the segregation of Montgomery buses and inaugurated a decade of civil rights advances driven by mass demonstrations. Parks was present at the signing of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and the conclusion of the 1965 Selma-to-Montgomery march. She spent much of the rest of her life working as a congressional staffer and advocate of young people.

These three individuals are not simply well-known figures from our state's history. They also epitomize the principled determination shown by countless Alabamians during periods of crisis that altered the social and political landscape. During the commemoration period covered by *Becoming Alabama*, they serve as useful focal points by which we can better understand the events and motivations that shaped the Alabama we know today.

In the coming weeks, the logo and other information on *Becoming Alabama* will be available at [www.becomingalabama.org](http://www.becomingalabama.org).



## About the Artist

Susan Gamble is a graduate of the Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts and has over 20 years of experience as a graphic designer and illustrator. She has worked in graphic design, illustration (both traditional and digital), Web design and animation. Her design work includes posters, product labels, brochures, illustrations for national magazines, logos and advertising art. Her illustrations and animations are featured in books and pilot training courseware and on Web sites. Gamble's work is displayed all across the U.S. Much of her work has been done for foundations that exist to preserve America's history and its natural beauty.

Special projects have included portraits of President Ronald Reagan, President George H.W. Bush, Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger and Adm. William J. Crowe Jr. for a book about the U.S. Navy Memorial. Gamble recently had the honor of rendering the design for the new Air Force Combat Action Medal for the U.S. Air Force.

Gamble is a former resident of Montgomery.

### Design Credits

2010 Presidential \$1 Franklin Pierce obverse 2010 First Spouse Abigail Fillmore reverse

2009 American Eagle Platinum (A More Perfect Union) reverse

2009 Presidential \$1 James K. Polk obverse

2009 First Spouse Letitia Tyler reverse

2009 Lincoln Bicentennial One-Cent (Presidency in DC) reverse

2009 Louis Braille Bicentennial Commemorative silver reverse

2008 First Spouse Louisa Adams obverse

2008 Bald Eagle Commemorative gold obverse

2008 Bald Eagle Commemorative clad obverse

2008 Oklahoma Quarter reverse

2008 Alaska Quarter reverse

2007 First Spouse Martha Washington reverse

2007 Washington Quarter reverse

2007 Jamestown Commemorative silver reverse

2007 Jamestown Commemorative gold reverse

[http://www.usmint.gov/about\\_the\\_mint/artisticInfusion/?action=designers](http://www.usmint.gov/about_the_mint/artisticInfusion/?action=designers)

# BECOMING ALABAMA

## A TIME RICH IN HISTORICAL REMEMBRANCES

THREE GREAT CONFLICTS SHAPED ALABAMA AS WE KNOW IT. NOW, AS THEIR MILESTONE ANNIVERSARIES LOOM, WE CELEBRATE OUR “BECOMING.”

By EDWIN C. BRIDGES

**F**OR THE NEXT FIVE YEARS, Alabamians will pass through a remarkable period of commemorations. Two hundred years ago, settlers were moving in on the Indian-occupied territory that is now Alabama, setting the stage for the Creek War (1813–1814). A hundred and fifty years ago, white Alabamians stewed over the possible election of a Republican president who they feared would be fundamentally hostile to their interests. The election of Abraham Lincoln and the South’s secession would lead to the Civil War (1861–1865). And fifty years ago, organized protests by black Alabamians against racial discrimination spread across the state. From 1960 to 1965,



Alabama was a major battleground in this national conflict. As Alabamians celebrate anniversaries in these great struggles, citizens and visitors will enjoy new opportunities to tour sites, see artifacts, hear stories, and reflect on how the past has shaped who we are today as Alabamians and Americans.

---

*Left: Menawa was a leader of the Red Stick Creek Indians, who resisted the incursions of white settlers during the Creek War. (Alabama Department of Archives and History) Opposite page: This statue of a soldier is part of the Confederate Memorial on the grounds of the Alabama State Capitol in Montgomery. (Robin McDonald)*

## CIVIL WAR

An interesting aspect of these commemorations is the way key anniversaries will coincide in almost dizzying juxtaposition. Consider, for example, some of the events we will remember in the summer of 2013:

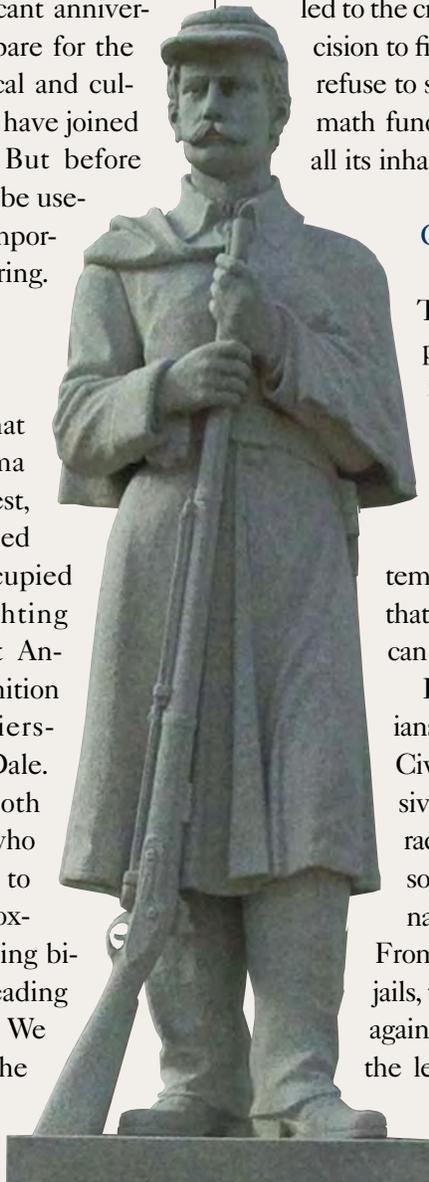
- June 11 will mark fifty years since George Wallace's "Stand in the Schoolhouse Door."
- July will bring the 150th anniversaries of Gettysburg, Vicksburg, and the death of William Lowndes Yancey, the architect of secession.
- August will be the bicentennial of the Red Stick Creeks' attack on Fort Mims, one of the most devastating Indian attacks in American history.
- And on September 15, we will remember the deaths, fifty years earlier, of four young women killed in the bombing of the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church.

These are a few of the highlights from only a four-month interval. A list of all the significant anniversaries would run on for pages. To prepare for the commemorations, a number of historical and cultural organizations from across Alabama have joined together to coordinate their efforts. But before reviewing some of their plans, it would be useful to consider more closely the larger importance of the stories we will be remembering.

### CREEK WAR

The Creek War opened most of what would become the state of Alabama for settlement. In this unequal contest, the surging new United States crushed the native Indian tribe that had occupied most of central Alabama. The fighting was dramatic and brutal. It brought Andrew Jackson his first national recognition and included other famous frontiersmen like Davy Crockett and Sam Dale.

At its conclusion, the Creeks—both those who had been hostile and those who had been Jackson's allies—were forced to surrender huge tracts of their land, approximately 22 million acres. In the upcoming bicentennial, we will remember events leading up to the Creek War and the war itself. We will also reflect on the consequences of the war for Alabama's original inhabitants and for the creation of a new state.



The Alabama land opening for settlement after the Creek War brought extraordinary opportunities for wealth. As the Industrial Revolution called for ever more cotton, planters and their slaves poured into Alabama to meet the demand. In a short time, they built a prosperous and wealthy society, extending slavery deep into the interior South and giving it new economic vitality. But this "peculiar institution" was out of step with both the time and the principles on which the United States had been founded. Conflict between an economic system that relied on slavery and one based on free labor spiraled finally into the Civil War.

Alabama's Ordinance of Secession included a provision inviting other seceding states to meet in Montgomery and consider their future. That meeting, in the state capitol, led to the creation of the Confederacy and to the decision to fire on Fort Sumter should Federal forces refuse to surrender the site. The war and its aftermath fundamentally changed life in Alabama for all its inhabitants—black and white, rich and poor.

### CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

Though the Civil War did bring emancipation, it did not secure the rights of former slaves in the post-war society. After the ten-year struggle of Reconstruction, federal officials gradually backed off efforts to protect the rights of African Americans. In the late 1800s a new system of legalized racial separation emerged that was not slavery but clearly treated African Americans as second-class citizens.

In the early 1960s, while white Alabamians were celebrating the centennial of the Civil War, African Americans rose in a massive struggle against the system of legalized racial segregation. As during the Civil War, some of the most dramatic episodes of this national struggle took place in Alabama. From the Freedom Riders, to Birmingham jails, to the Voting Rights March, Alabama was again a battlefield. At the end of this struggle, the legal underpinnings of segregation were crushed as completely as the Red Stick Creeks had been at Horseshoe Bend.

**T**HESE three conflicts—the Creek War, the Civil War, and the civil rights movement—are dramatic chapters in American history, but they were formative for Alabama. Their places, artifacts, and stories are still part of our lives.

Because these events were so important for Alabama, historical and cultural organizations across the state are joining together to plan for the commemorations. Combining their efforts will help these organizations make the best use of limited resources and will also create new opportunities for telling the broader story of Alabama. While each anniversary is important in its own right, all can be far richer when seen as part of the larger story of how we became who we are today.

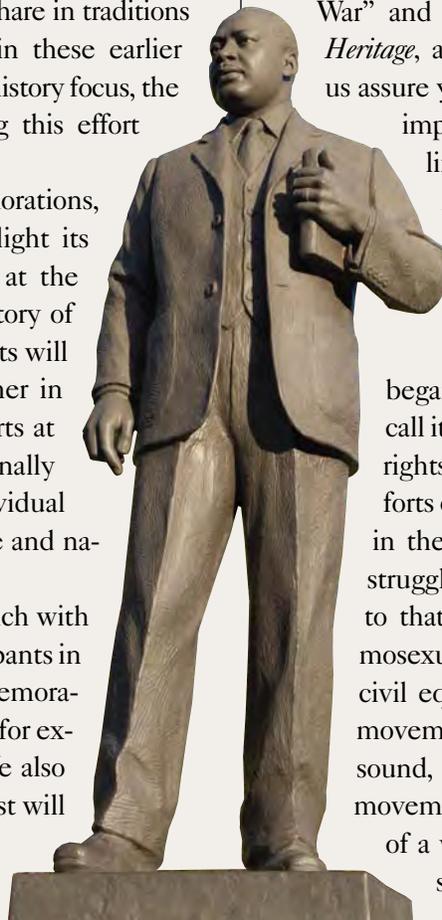
Another benefit of a coordinated effort is that it emphasizes the common past in which all Alabamians have a stake. All citizens of Alabama now share in traditions and institutions that were formed in these earlier struggles. Reflecting this larger, state-history focus, the participating organizations are calling this effort *Becoming Alabama*.

In the *Becoming Alabama* commemorations, each organization will seek to highlight its own programs and resources while at the same time pointing to the broader story of which they are a part. The participants will also look for ways to assist each other in their programs, to develop joint efforts at promotion, and to take time occasionally for activities that show how the individual pieces fit together as part of our state and national history.

The coming years will be a time rich with historical remembrances. The participants in *Becoming Alabama* hope these commemorations will open interesting new paths for exploring Alabama's incredible past. We also hope this time of reflection on the past will help Alabamians today as they chart their course for the road ahead.



*Above: In September 2009 the Museum of Mobile hosted the third quarterly meeting of the Becoming Alabama initiative. (Steve Murray) Below: This statue commemorates Martin Luther King Jr. in Birmingham. (Robin McDonald)*



EDITOR'S NOTE: You might be wondering why "Creek War" and "Civil War" are capitalized in *Alabama Heritage*, and "civil rights movement" is not. Let us assure you that capitalization is not a measure of importance, in this case. We follow the guidelines of the *Chicago Manual of Style*, which mandates this rule for what we think are authentically good reasons. It can take a great deal of time and debate for historians to come to consensus on how to define an event or movement—when it began, when it ended, and especially what to call it. Our current commemoration of the civil rights movement focuses on the organized efforts of African Americans to gain civil equality in the early 1960s, but the African American struggle for civil liberties began far earlier. Add to that the struggles of women, children, homosexuals, immigrants, and the disabled to win civil equality, and the concept of a civil rights movement grows ever broader. So, odd as it may sound, we will use the lower-case "civil rights movement" to honor the scope and complexity of a vast historical phenomenon—one that is still unfolding.

# THE *BECOMING* *ALABAMA* INITIATIVE

## PRAGMATISM TO INNOVATIVE PARTNERSHIP

By STEVE MURRAY

**T**HE CONCEPT FOR *Becoming Alabama* began with a pragmatic assessment of the financial and logistical challenges posed by a rapid succession of major anniversaries over the next several years. Given the budgetary restraints faced by nearly every historical and cultural organization in today's economic climate, it made sense to seek efficiency in planning public programs, designing publicity, and developing educational resources.

A funny thing happened on the way to finding efficiency, however. When viewed from a broader perspective, the three periods under consideration offered a unified theme for understanding the political, social, and economic forces that shaped—and continue to shape—Alabama.

The resonance of this theme became clear last spring during discussions of a possible collaboration. In early April, representatives of twenty organizations gathered at the Department of Archives and History in Montgomery and endorsed the concept of a broad, informal partnership that would use a common logo and publicity effort. Participants agreed to begin identifying programs that their respective institutions could sponsor in association with the *Becoming Alabama* theme and possibly in conjunction with other organizations.

In late June a second meeting in Birmingham advanced the discussion further. The growing network of partners authorized an ad hoc committee to guide the development of a logo, and the group formally adopted the name *Becoming Alabama*. Announcements from two of the partners gave legs to the effort. The Alabama Tourism Department committed to providing support for the logo design and for a central web site. *Alabama Heritage* announced its plans to make *Becoming Alabama* a standing department in the magazine, beginning with the issue you are reading and running through the duration of the commemoration period, thereby introducing the partnership to the general public.

In the weeks since, planning has continued apace. Preliminary concepts for the logo have taken shape, and participating organizations have found promising grounds for partnership. As reported at a September planning meeting in Mobile, for example, three entities are collectively applying for federal grants to support a project that likely would not have developed in the absence of *Becoming Alabama*. And thanks to the partnership's innovative approach, other states and national organizations have expressed interest in learning more about Alabama's plans.

We enter an important period of development in 2010. In the next few months, a logo will become available for any interested organization to begin using in its publications. Shortly thereafter, a *Becoming Alabama* web site will provide timelines of historical events, information on commemorative activities, and links to relevant educational resources. Discussions are also underway for an inaugural symposium that will explore the larger questions associated with understanding how we became Alabama.

Now is the perfect time for organizations of every size to get involved with *Becoming Alabama*. To do so, begin discussing with your staff or leadership how your organization can promote a better understanding of Alabama history through commemoration of the Creek War, the Civil War, or the civil rights movement in the upcoming years. Join the *Becoming Alabama* e-mail list by visiting <http://groups.google.com/group/becoming-alabama>, and make plans to attend one of our meetings in 2010. **AH**

---

*Steve Murray is assistant director for administration at the Alabama Department of Archives and History. Prior to joining ADAH in 2006, he was managing editor of the Encyclopedia of Alabama and The Alabama Review: A Quarterly Journal of Alabama History.*

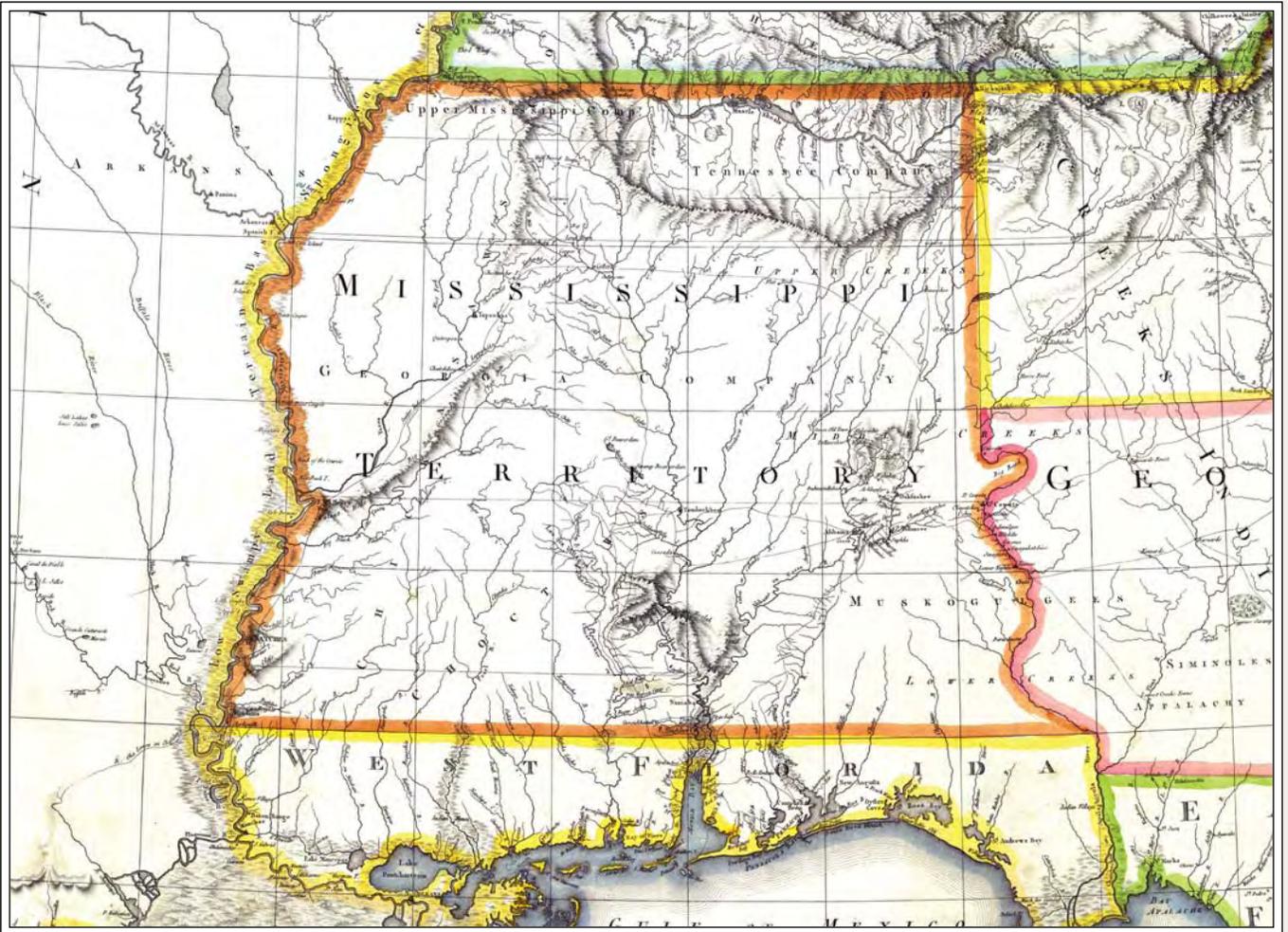
Q U A R T E R   B Y   Q U A R T E R

EDITOR'S NOTE—*To commemorate Alabama's experiences related to the Creek War, the Civil War, and the civil rights movement, Alabama Heritage has joined with the Summersell Center for Study of the South, the University of Alabama Department of History, and the Alabama Tourism Department to create this special department. Quarter by quarter we will take you to the corresponding seasons 200, 150, and 50 years ago—sometimes describing the most pivotal events, sometimes describing daily life, but always illuminating a world in flux. We will wait for the ultimate outcomes as our forebears did—over time.*

W I N T E R   1 8 1 0 :   N E W   A R R I V A L S  
I N   C O N T E S T E D   T E R R I T O R Y

By Joseph W. Pearson

AS THE NEW YEAR BROKE IN 1810, the territory we now call Alabama stood on the knife-edge of empire. White settlers clung to the forts along the Federal Road, because the Indians living in the cradles of the Coosa, Tombigbee, and Black Warrior



Rivers were not about to yield their ancestral lands without a fight. Places such as Fort Mims, Tallushatchee, Hillabee, and Horseshoe Bend would soon be carved in local legend. Caught between the declining fortunes of Spanish Florida to the south and British intrigues within their midst, white settlers and increasingly desperate Creeks and Chickasaws faced escalating conflict over the future of the Mississippi Valley.

Like many newly established territories and states in the early nineteenth century, the Mississippi Territory—encompassing most of present-day Mississippi and Alabama—was a product of a surging spirit of national expansion, white settlement, and Native American removal. After the Revolutionary War, the new nation

had been granted territorial rights to the land from the Atlantic Ocean to the Mississippi River. British authorities had made provisions for their independent Indian allies living west of the Appalachian Mountains before acknowledging American independence. After the British departed, however, those claims began to fuel racial tensions as whites ignored the treaties signed by their government and settled anyway.

Restless Americans were pulled westward by dreams of economic profit and greater autonomy on the frontier or pushed by shrinking opportunities in the coastal



*Above:* In 1808 Thomas Jefferson appointed David Holmes of Virginia as the fourth governor of the Mississippi Territory, where he wrangled with the perpetual troubles between the Native Americans and the newcomers. (Library of Congress) *Opposite page:* This inset of an 1812 map titled, *Carte des Etats-Unis de L'Amérique Septentrionale*, by Antoine Francois Tardieu of Paris, reveals the borders of what was then the Mississippi Territory. (Birmingham Public Library Cartography Collection)

regions. After hard-won negotiations with the Creeks, Thomas Jefferson had authorized a federal road from Athens, Georgia, to Mobile, Alabama, in 1805, and though it was little more than a horse path by 1810, American settlers were pouring into the burgeoning territory. A hard life of clearing trees, cultivating crops, and surviving perpetual border conflicts awaited those brave or foolish enough to attempt the journey.

But come, they did, in swelling numbers—and most without legal title to Alabama lands. On February 7, 1810, David Holmes, governor of the Mississippi Territory, sent a frantic letter to U.S. Secretary of War, William Eustis, saying, “From good information I learn that from four to five thousand white persons are settled within the Indian

Boundary and that they are determined to remain there in opposition to the law of the United States until removed by force.” Governor Holmes spent the early months of 1810 buying time with the few troops he had and assuring the Indian tribes that the settlers would be removed from Indian lands in the spring or early summer. But along the road from Georgia, the wagons kept coming.

*Joseph W. Pearson is pursuing a graduate degree in history at the University of Alabama. His research interests include the nineteenth-century South, antebellum politics, and political culture.*

## WINTER 1860: PREPARING FOR A PRESIDENTIAL DISASTER

By Megan L. Bever

IN THE EARLY MONTHS OF 1860, presidential hopefuls emerged, parties maneuvered, demagogues exhorted, and white Alabamians grew anxious. The rise of the Republican Party in the North and the popularity of its antislavery platform were creating quite an uproar in the slaveholding South. Should

a Republican win the presidential election that fall, white Alabamians feared he would imperil the region’s most profitable institution. And a Republican president seemed increasingly possible.

Sectional tensions had been brewing for the past thirty years—though there had never been political consensus among the state’s citizens as to the best plan to protect the rights of slaveholding states. Many Alabama Democrats favored compromise, but the more radical politicians continually tried to thwart sectional conciliation. Alabama politician William Lowndes Yancey had

long promoted the idea that the federal government had no constitutional authority to limit a citizen's right to hold slaves or to move with them into federal territories—the core tenet of what became known as the “Alabama Platform.” Under Yancey's leadership, these radicals insisted that national compromise could not ensure the protection of slavery. Over time they called more and more loudly for secession in order to ensure southern independence. And as the election of 1860 neared, more Alabamians were listening.

Faced now with the imminent prospect of a Republican president and the presumed disastrous repercussions, state legislators declared it “their solemn duty to provide in advance the means by which they [might] escape such peril and dishonor, and devise new securities for perpetuating the blessings of liberty to themselves and their posterity.” In February of 1860, members of the General Assembly—the joint body of Alabama's Senate and House—passed a vital resolution: Should a Republican win the presidential election, the



*William Lowndes Yancey was the leading proponent of secession in Alabama. This portrait hangs in the Alabama State Capitol, where secession became a reality. (Alabama Department of Archives and History)*

governor of Alabama would be required to call a Convention of the State to discuss the preservation of Alabama's independence—a secession convention.

By choosing to wait to discuss secession until after the presidential election in the fall, Alabama's elected officials exercised pragmatic restraint. In fact, most Alabamians remained skeptical about the idea of secession, despite all the efforts of Yancey and the radicals. Nevertheless, by 1860 most white men in Alabama were concerned that the growing Republican Party, with a victory in the presidential election, could threaten the institution of slavery. As they prepared for the national

Democratic convention and the looming election, they expected the worst.

---

*Megan L. Bever is currently a PhD student in the Department of History at the University of Alabama. Her research interests include the nineteenth-century South and the Civil War in American culture.*

---

## WINTER 1960: THE SIT-IN MOVEMENT SPREADS TO ALABAMA

*By Matthew L. Downs*

ON THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 1960, thirty-five African American men and women entered the Montgomery County Courthouse snack bar and asked to be served. White Alabamians had been waiting for such protest activities in the city's public spaces. Several weeks earlier, on February 1, black students from North Carolina Agricultural and Technical College sat at the segregated lunch counter of Woolworth's in Greensboro and tried to order coffee. In the fol-

lowing weeks, the protest spread across North Carolina, neighboring Virginia, and by late February, into the heart of the Deep South. In Montgomery, the white snack bar owner acted quickly to halt the protest, closing the lunchroom, turning off lights, and asking the patrons of the all-white establishment to leave. When one observer asked the demonstrators if they could not eat at the college instead, a student replied, “Sure, but we think we're American citizens and we like to shop around.”

The Montgomery sit-in was largely the work of students from Alabama State College (now University), an all-black, publicly funded school founded in 1867. Fearing that student leaders would organize the campus for widespread protest, Alabama governor John Patterson demanded that the state college's president

identify and expel any student involved, and he threatened to remove the school's public funding. City leaders denounced the protest, blaming "outside forces" and promising to "preserve the time-honored traditions and customs of the South." On Saturday violence spread to the streets. White men, carrying "small baseball bats concealed in paper sacks," patrolled Dexter Avenue, ensuring that the city's department stores and lunch counters remained segregated. One African American woman was assaulted after "bumping" a white pedestrian, and local authorities scrambled to restore order. Alabama State students assembled at First Baptist Church, the pulpit of Rev. Ralph Abernathy, a veteran of the bus boycott. Abernathy cautioned the students to avoid downtown Montgomery where "a real state of terror had developed." They filed a petition with Governor Patterson, protesting the planned expulsion and warning that "we shall not yield our rights...without an extreme effort to retain them."

By Sunday protests temporarily cooled. The *Montgomery Advertiser* warned citizens to avoid the acts of a

---

*Students at Alabama State College stage a protest march on campus in 1960, the same year that students from the college helped organize a sit-in at the snack bar in the Montgomery County Courthouse. (Howard University)*



"small, aggressive minority" and chastised the students for "idly and absurdly playing follow the leader." However, the demonstrations occurring in Montgomery, in Nashville, in Chattanooga, and across the South presaged the coming storm. From Montgomery, sit-ins spread to other Alabama cities, particularly Birmingham, and remained an integral weapon in the fight for civil rights. Sit-ins gave politically minded students an opportunity to combat the South's pervasive social inequality, yet as events in Montgomery soon proved, the protests also created a visible target for the growing resistance to civil rights activism.

By "sitting-in" at the Montgomery Courthouse, the students of Alabama State helped to usher in a new phase of the civil rights movement. African Americans across the South had long protested racial discrimination in public spaces, but until the 1950s, their actions were sporadic and disorganized. Beginning in 1955 those disparate acts of protest coalesced in Montgomery where the African American community, led by Martin Luther King Jr., boycotted the city's public bus system. In 1956 the Supreme Court struck down the city's segregation laws, and the boycott's leaders formed the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) in 1957 to maintain the momentum won on the streets of Alabama's capital. However, as King and the SCLC focused on raising

money and garnering support, the movement lagged. Thus, when sit-ins rocked southern cities and towns in early 1960, the students re-energized the struggle for civil rights. Their determination encouraged activists young and old, black and white, to organize in order to claim equal rights for all Americans.

---

*Matthew L. Downs is a PhD student in the Department of History at the University of Alabama. His dissertation investigates the federal government's role in the economic development of the Tennessee Valley.*

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**FEBRUARY TO AUGUST 2010  
GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS**

THE ALABAMA HUMANITIES FOUNDATION (AHF) will incorporate one or more *Becoming Alabama* (BA) themes or commemorated time periods as elements in their ongoing programs in 2010: (1) SUPER (School and University Partners for Educational Renewal), (2) SES (SUPER Emerging Scholars), and (3) Road Scholars Speakers Bureau. Organizations submitting grant applications in 2010 and teachers applying for Jenice Riley Memorial Scholarships are encouraged to incorporate BA themes and time periods in their projects. AHF will consider ways to relate BA to its next Museum on Main Street (MoMS) Smithsonian exhibition in 2011, entitled "Journey Stories." See ahf.net for details.

**CIVIL WAR EVENTS**

**April 15, 12:00 p.m.**

**WILLIAM LOWNDES YANCEY AND THE  
COMING OF THE CIVIL WAR**

By Eric Walther. ArchiTreats: Food for Thought at the Alabama Department of Archives & History in Montgomery. Bring a sack lunch and enjoy complimentary beverages. Free admission.

**April 22, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.**

**FIRST WHITE HOUSE OF THE  
CONFEDERACY FUNDRAISER**

Alabama Archives Building. Sponsor: First White House Association of Alabama. The great-great grandson of Jefferson Davis, Bertram Hayes-Davis, will attend. Contact: Anne Tidmore, 334-215-0078.

**April 23 to 24**

**LIVING HISTORY AND CONFEDERATE  
MEMORIAL DAY**

Confederate Memorial Park will hold a Civil War living history [mainly for school groups but the public is invited as well] on Friday, April 23, followed by a Confederate Memorial Day ceremony on Saturday, April 24. 437 County Rd 63, Marbury, AL 36051. Contact: Bill Rambo, Site Director, 205-755-1990, alacmp@bellsouth.net.

**April 22 to 25**

**145TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE  
BATTLE OF SELMA**

Living History school tours April 22 and 23. Battle on April 24, followed by Grande Military Ball at Sturdivant Hall, 7 p.m. April 25, 9 a.m. gates open, 2 p.m., Battle of Selma Re-enactment. www.battleofselma.com; 800-45-SELMA.

**CIVIL RIGHTS EVENTS**

**January 30 to April 11**

**381 DAYS: THE MONTGOMERY BUS  
BOYCOTT STORY—AN EXHIBITION**

Birmingham Civil Rights Institute, Odessa Woolfolk Gallery. 520 Sixteenth Street North, Birmingham. Admission charged. www.bcri.org.

**February 5, 3:00 p.m.**

**NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF ARTISTS AT  
HBCUs EXHIBITION OPENING**

The National Center Annex, 1345 Carter Hill Road, Campus of Alabama State University, Montgomery. Gwen Boyd: gboyd@alasu.edu; (334) 229-4824.

**February 12, 2:00 p.m.**

**ARCHIVES SYMPOSIUM**

In conjunction with the publication of *Foot Soldiers for Democracy: The Men, Women, and Children of the Birmingham Civil Rights Movement*, coeditor Dr. Horace Huntley will lead a discussion with foot soldiers. Free. *Birmingham Civil Rights Institute*. (866) 328-9696, ext. 215; [www.bcri.org](http://www.bcri.org).

**February 18, 12:00 p.m.**

**ALABAMA STATE UNIVERSITY STUDENT SIT-IN PROTESTS OF 1960**

By Joe L. Reed. ArchiTreats: Food for Thought at the Alabama Department of Archives & History in Montgomery. Bring a sack lunch and enjoy complimentary beverages. Free admission.

**February 18, 6:00 p.m.**

**BLACK HISTORY MONTH PROGRAM  
THE 55TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE  
MONTGOMERY BUS BOYCOTT**

Featuring Georgette Norman, Executive Director of the Rosa Parks Library and Museum. Free. *Birmingham Civil Rights Institute*. (866) 328-9696, ext. 234; [www.bcri.org](http://www.bcri.org).

**February 25, 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.**

**50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE STUDENT  
SIT-IN, ONE DAY CONFERENCE**

Campus of Alabama State University, Montgomery. Gwen Boyd: [gboyd@alasu.edu](mailto:gboyd@alasu.edu); (334) 229-4824.

**March 4, 12:00 p.m.**

**BROWN BAG LUNCH PROGRAM  
THE 55TH ANNIVERSARY OF  
MONTGOMERY BUS BOYCOTT**

Features Jeff Drew. Free. *Birmingham Civil Rights Institute*. (866) 328-9696, ext. 215; [www.bcri.org](http://www.bcri.org).

**March 4 to 8**

**BRIDGE CROSSING JUBILEE**

Celebrating Selma-to-Montgomery March, Bloody Sunday, and Voting Rights Act. Contact: Selma-Dallas County Tourism & Convention Bureau; [www.SelmaAlabama.com](http://www.SelmaAlabama.com).

**March 16, 11:00 a.m.**

**A COMMEMORATIVE PROGRAM  
THE SELMA TO MONTGOMERY VOTING  
RIGHTS MARCH**

Campus of Alabama State University, Montgomery. Gwen Boyd: [gboyd@alasu.edu](mailto:gboyd@alasu.edu); (334) 229-4824

**March 18, 6:00 p.m.**

**WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH PROGRAM  
THE 55TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE  
MONTGOMERY BUS BOYCOTT**

Features program about the groundbreaking work of the Women's Political Council of Montgomery. Free. *Birmingham Civil Rights Institute* (866) 328-9696, ext. 215; [www.bcri.org](http://www.bcri.org).

**April 8, 11:00 a.m.**

**THE ROBERT AND JEAN GRAETZ  
SYMPOSIUM ON HUMAN RIGHTS  
AND RECONCILIATION**

The National Center Annex, 1345 Carter Hill Road, Campus of Alabama State University, Montgomery. Gwen Boyd: [gboyd@alasu.edu](mailto:gboyd@alasu.edu); (334) 229-4824.

**April 22, 11:00 a.m.**

**E. D. NIXON INSTITUTE FOR RESEARCH  
AND CULTURAL ENRICHMENT  
SYMPOSIUM**

The National Center Annex, 1345 Carter Hill Road, Campus of Alabama State University, Montgomery. Gwen Boyd: [gboyd@alasu.edu](mailto:gboyd@alasu.edu); (334) 229-4824.

**August 28 to November 21**

**LET YOUR MOTTO BE RESISTANCE:  
AFRICAN-AMERICAN PORTRAITS—  
AN EXHIBITION**

Collaboration of the Smithsonian's new National Museum of African American History and Culture with the National Portrait Gallery. Admission charged. *Birmingham Civil Rights Institute*. (866) 328-9696, ext. 234; [www.bcri.org](http://www.bcri.org).

## ABOUT THE MAGAZINE

Each quarterly issue of *Alabama Heritage* brings to life the people, places, and events that helped shape the history of Alabama and the South. With its lively articles, handsome design, and generous use of illustrations—including rare archival photographs—the magazine takes you back in time where you'll meet aviators and architects, fiddlers and fashion designers, bank robbers and blacksmiths, and many others. Well-researched articles on a variety of topics offer something for almost every interest. From Civil War history to folk art, from archaeology to architecture, *Alabama Heritage* uncovers the stories you may never have a chance to read anywhere else.

To learn more about *Alabama Heritage* please visit our web site at [www.AlabamaHeritage.com](http://www.AlabamaHeritage.com) . If you do not currently receive a complimentary subscription, please notify Sara Martin at [smartin@bama.ua.edu](mailto:smartin@bama.ua.edu) and she will make sure you receive the magazine.



We will be celebrating our 25<sup>th</sup> year of publishing  
with our 100<sup>th</sup> issue to be released  
in Spring 2011.