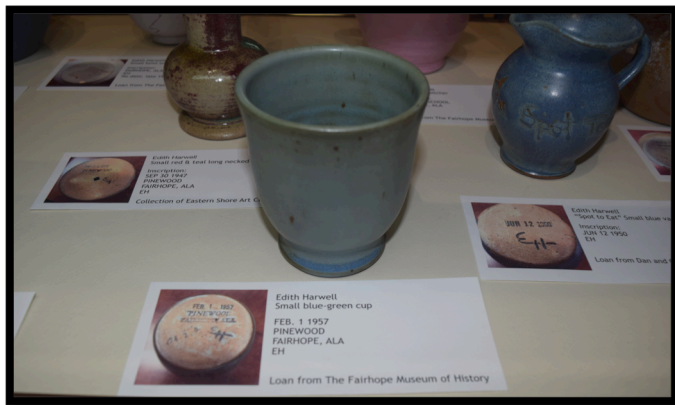


Friends of the Fairhope Museum of History

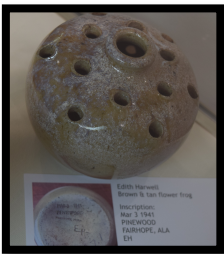
Vol 10 Issue 1 February - March 2019



History Exhibit on Display at the Eastern Shore Art Center



In 1931, Edith Harwell and husband Converse combined their creative skills and began Pinewood Pottery in Charlotte, North Carolina. In August 1938, they moved their business to Fairhope to utilize Baldwin County clays and enjoy the beauty of the area. They acquired property at Oak and Section



Streets where the Eastern Shore Art Center now resides. There they built a large kiln that was used until they closed their pottery business in 1964. Mrs. Harwell became the Ceramic Arts Instructor at the Marietta Johnson School of Organic Education in Fairhope in 1958

and continued until 1971. She lived in Fairhope until her death on February 10, 1988.

In a cooperative effort with Bryant Whelan, Director of the Eastern Shore Art Center, our Museum Director Phillip Bolin provided four Edith Harwell pottery vessels, with an agreement to share these

resources indefinitely. On January 4, 2019, the Art Center unveiled the clay artwork showcasing Harwell's treasures.

Painters, writers, sculptors and artists of all forms, seize the opportunity to portray Fairhope history in their medium. The legacy of fine art in our city began with the colonization of Fairhope and its appeal as a beautiful site for artists to ply their skill. As soon as the Single-Taxers got acquainted with their new home, they found that the clays in Rock and Fly Creeks were excellent for making pottery as a revenue source for the economic experiment with a "fair hope" of success.



Museum Director Bolin said, "We are proud to work in conjunction with the Eastern Shore Art Center. Together, we take all factors into consideration before launching an exhibit of our collections. These include environmental conditions, lighting, temperature, potentially damaging pests, traffic exposure, placement, insurance, and controlled handling, to ensure longevity and preservation of the collection."

The Eastern Shore Art Center has many impressive exhibits of painting, sculpture, pottery and creative works on display. It is only a short walk north up Section Street from our Museum. ~



Director's Note

Well, the past four months have been amazing! I'm getting to know more about this great Museum that Donnie and the volunteers have created, and I'm getting to know the *Friends* and docents more and more each day. The fact that I have not been floated out into the Mobile Bay on a raft designed to sink, is an encouraging sign. Darby has been instrumental in helping me get my sea legs, and we are truly lucky to have her skills and talents. She has been enthusiastic and positive about the future of the Museum and is currently creating special projects for the Museum's programming. We have already accomplished a lot, but there's much more to be done. And, I'm thankful for the enthusiasm of our *Friends* and volunteers who are poised and ready to tackle, pretty much anything I throw at them. I may be the director, but without all of you, there's no one to make me look good!

I've discovered in my 45 years of living, that freshwater is the ocean's peaceful sister. It calms the soul and quiets the mind. Salt water ignites the passions, wanderlust, and sense of adventure, all the while healing our elbow scuffs and knee scrapes. But, they're both good for the mental abrasions that happen along the way. I know somewhere nearby there's a salt water body with a freshwater convergence that gives us a nice balance of mind, body, and soul, and I think we can all take comfort in that. I'm looking forward to the future and seeing where this brackish brigantine is going to take us, and I'm looking forward to our motley crew of *Friends* and volunteers to move her forward.

Grab a hemp, me hearties, 'cause a smooth sea never made a skilled captain!

Bolin

2018 Achievement Award Presentation



Serena Gambino displays her Achievement Award presented by Museum Special Projects Manager Darby Wiik for her commitment to learning more about Fairhope

The passion for Fairhope comes in many flavors. For Serena Gambino, it is found in the collections of memorabilia at our Fairhope Museum of History. Ms. Gambino used her available time for over a year to make regular visits to the Museum to learn more about her hometown. She viewed the items on display and read all of the signage and ask questions. As time passed and noting the attention of Serena to each exhibit, Darby Wiik, Museum Special Projects Manager, seized the opportunity to use her skills and share more stories about the displays. A pleasant tutorial relationship evolved and Darby admired Serena's interest.

On Wednesday, December 5, 2018, the Museum held a ceremony to "graduate" Serena and honor her for her dedication to learning. Helping to congratulate Serena were several people close to her, including Rick Gambino and Josh and Christy Gambino.

The *Friends of the Fairhope Museum* funded the plaque for the event to share in the "Congratulations!" to Serena for her dedication and perseverance. ~

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*Helping Fairhope Tell its Story!*

**Look for the *Friends of the Fairhope Museum* Display in the City of Fairhope Volunteer Fair at the Nix Center - Thursday, February 7th**

## Battles Wharf Settlement –

### The Portal for Fairhope's Founders to the Eastern Shore



It was like as though a real estate developer arrived on the scene in 1849! Until then, the Eugenio LaValle Spanish Land Grant lay in wilderness. Spanish explorers in the 1500s reported sixteen Indian hamlets and hundreds of Indians who created the oyster shell middens nearby along the bays. Cotton was King in the early 1800s, as the area turned from the days of French, British and Spanish rule of the prior century. Almost until statehood, this “No-Man’s Land” of South Baldwin County was occupied by the Spanish. The U.S. boundary was up at Stockton at the Ellicott Line and this part of Spanish West Florida became fuzzy ownership. The United States annexed it in 1812, yet the Spanish didn’t move from Ft. Carlotta, better known by its French name Ft. Conde, in Mobile. President Madison sent U.S. General Wilkerson in 1813, to remind the Spanish that they were supposed to vacate and they reluctantly did. Then, American settlers felt at ease to use the Eastern Shore of Mobile Bay as home turf. Baldwin County was part of Mississippi Territory when founded in 1809 and was in the fuzzy-zone until it became Alabama Territory in 1817 and a part of Alabama, the 22nd State, in 1819. It was immediately after this turbulent period of ownership that Battles Wharf came into existence.

The settlement of Battles, as it was first described, was located where the shoreline became high enough to feel safe building cabins and homes on the shore. It also was the node from which Indian trails and wagon roads spread north and east to connect to Fish River and

Hunt and Fishing Clubs were in vogue for men in prosperous Mobile and the Eastern Shore was a natural refuge to hunt, fish, drink, gather and smoke cigars and be manly. The first cabin was built nearby south in 1820 on the Lavalle Spanish Land Grant, but camping for sport predated permanent construction.

The first settlement at the current Battles site, according to Florence Scott’s book, *Battles Wharf and Point Clear* and “P.J. Hamilton’s *Colonial Mobile*, refers to a place perpetuating the name of Durnford at the location now known as Battles”, north of the Eugenio LaValle Land Grant. The first land purchase traceable on U.S. records occurred when James Battle bought thirty-seven acres on the bay front at Pt. Clear in February 1849, prior to building the Battle House Hotel in Mobile. Two months later, he and his nephews John and Samuel Goodhue began to buy property, which met the legal location of current day Battles Wharf. This real estate is landmarked by the acreage at the end of Battles Lane on the bay and became know as Battles in their honor. By 1895, several summer homes were built at Battles. In 1902, that land, plus the Grand Hotel at Pt. Clear, was bought by Major James K. Glennon who occupied a home on the bay on the north side of Battles Lane.

Battles got a post office on September 9, 1875 but it was discontinued on January 8, 1877. A post office was reestablished on February 10, 1880 at Battles.

**Battles**, continued on page 4, column 1



This historic home on Moog Lane in Battles Wharf is now the residence of Ben and Loren McKibbens.

Mrs. Scott cites in her book, that the community was originally called Yarbrough, then Dadeville after Mr. R.R. Dade an early settler, and finally Battles, after Mr. Sam Battle, its oldest citizen. When the name Battles was chosen, Alabama already had a town named Battels and caused confusion in both places. The citizens of Battles took the matter under discussion and a prominent resident suggested “Narcissus,” after the beautiful flower, which prevailed from November 1903 until April 1, 1904. Then someone suggested to add “Wharf” to the old name and since then, the settlement has been identified as “Battles Wharf”.

In 1910, a wharf was built to accommodate growing traffic in goods and people coming east. Mrs. Scott, in her book on Battles Wharf, quotes Nell Curran to say, “From 1910 to the end of WWI, Battles Wharf was the most popular resort on the Eastern Shore. There were two fine hotels and two piers for boats to land; also two dance pavilions. I have seen as many as five big steamboats divided between the two wharves on Sunday, each one able to carry three to five hundred passengers.”

In 1894, the founders of Fairhope arrived on the bay boat *James A. Carney*. They boarded with Mobilians at Battles Wharf and camped nearby while building their town site a mile north. On November 15, 1894, the Single Taxers came together on their bluff for “Round Up Day,” to officially establish Fairhope. The *Fairhope Courier* was actually published at Battles Wharf for several months.

Battles Wharf never incorporated. Old family names of Mobilians and Baldwin County heritage families have been seen on gateposts of permanent residences and summer homes near Battles Road and Moog Lane for over two hundred years. ~

## Baldwin County Heritage Families Recognition Ceremony December 6, 2018



According to Felisha Anderson, Baldwin County Director of Archives and History, there are over five hundred families who came to Baldwin County before 1920, with descendants still living in the County. As an official part of the *Alabama 200* Anniversary Celebration, three hundred and twenty-six descendants of those pioneers were recognized at a countywide event held by the County Archives and History Department at the Robertsdale Convention Center on December 6, 2018.

Several of our *Friends of the Fairhope Museum of History* are on that honorable list. Some were recognized at the event, while others are currently in the qualification process. The recognized descendants received a pin noting them as a “Baldwin Co Heritage Family” and an impressive *Certificate of Recognition* with their name and that of their historic namesake.

The program continues. Descendant individuals are invited to apply for the distinction via the county website; go to [baldwincountyal.gov](http://baldwincountyal.gov) / Department of Archives and History. On that site, click on “Alabama 200 – Heritage Families” and complete and mail the application. For more information, call the Department at (251) 580-2572, or inquire at: [Fairhopemuseumnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:Fairhopemuseumnewsletter@gmail.com).

Baldwin County was created in 1809 while still a part of Mississippi Territory - ten years before Alabama was chartered as the twenty-second state in the Union. ~

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**Satsuma Blossom Festival Coming**  
**Saturday, April 13<sup>th</sup>!!**  
-- All Day Fun at the Museum --

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## Docents Christmas Party

Louie and Barbara Blaze again hosted the 2018 Docent Christmas Party on a chilly Sunday afternoon, December 16. Their home was beautifully decorated with a tall Christmas tree, and ornaments and decorations all around, including an impressive mantle of Christmas decor. Music, food and laughter filled the house.

After an hour of socializing, Louie became Santa and officiated over the traditional “dirty Santa” gift exchange.



Each attendee had brought a gift for the ‘tongue-in-cheek exchange with the understanding that an item could be stolen no more than two times. The favorite became a large red holiday hat, which Phillip Bolin donned on his head until Becky Brunson

asked him to surrender it! However, she only had it a moment. Linda Foster (pictured above) said, “I need that cute red hat to wear!” And that ended the jovial bickerfest of the evening! The exchange brought forth lots of laughter and cat-calls as gifts were opened and swapped.

Everyone was pleased to see Donnie and Lottie Barret venture out after a few weeks of retirement, to join the festivities. Phillip and Donnie each expressed their appreciation to all of the volunteers for their cooperation and continued enthusiasm at the Museum.

The Docent Party annually builds commeraradie and appreciation for all of the hard work done by the docents and volunteers throughout the year at the Museum. It’s a fun time! Thanks Barb and Louie..!!

## Memorial

### Allan Hoffman

Allan Hoffman, an early advocate and supporter of the *Friends of the Fairhope Museum*, passed away on Tuesday, November 27, 2018 in Montrose. In 2013, he was diagnosed with cancer and he maintained his smile and quiet demeanor while undergoing treatments and continuing to take an active part in our Museum activities. He was a familiar sight at all *Friends* events his health would allow, for the past eight years.



He was born in Seattle, WA. in 1951. As an adult, he moved to Fairhope and worked at the Grand Hotel in Pt. Clear until the late 1990s, when he began to work at a prestigious hotel in Orange Beach. He retired when he needed to commit time to medical treatments. As he could, he volunteered at the Museum of History, the Single Tax Corporation and League of Women Voters to stay involved in matters he enjoyed.

On May 24, 2013, the *Friends of the Fairhope Museum* held the premier of Cathy Donelson’s book, *Fairhope in the Roaring Twenties*. Attendees came in vintage attire and Allan came in his now famous, Zoot-suit and with his toy



machine-gun, that drew many smiles and comments. Everyone wanted their picture taken with Allan. He was a great sport! He also played E.B. Gaston in the Museum’s Founder’s Day productions in 2014 and 2015.

Allan’s funeral was held on December 3, 2018 at the Christian Church of Fairhope. The celebration of his life was well attended by his friends from our Museum and the other organizations where he offered his helpful services. During the service, several guests at the invitation of the pastor, told enjoyable experiences they had with Allan through the years. He had no family living in Alabama except for those of us who knew him for almost a decade. Everyone loved Allan! ~

# Tea for Two

**Each Thursday 2 p.m. in the Museum Council Chamber**

**February 7 - Michael Hutchinson**, Civil War historian and gunner for the Grand Hotel's afternoon firing of the cannon will give us a history lesson on the Civil War in Baldwin County.

**February 14 - Cindy Hatcher Warren**, President of Alabama Concerns of Police Survivors (C.O.P.S) will discuss the mission of rebuilding shattered lives of survivors and co-workers affected by line of duty deaths, through partnerships with law enforcement and the community.

**February 21 - Don Kilbourne**, of the Mind Performance Center, will discuss a comprehensive approach to brain disorders and brain restorative procedures and other solid research-based therapies.

## **New Docents and Members of the *Friends of the Fairhope Museum of History***

**are invited to join the fun and promote our local history!**

**Reminder: it's time to pay annual dues; get the simple renewal form at the docent welcome desk or from the Museum staff upstairs in the office.**

**\$20: Annual; \$10: If you can serve as a docent**

# Tea for Two

**February 28 - Jacca McLaren**, chairwomen of the Fairhope Arts and Crafts Festival will discuss volunteerism and how valuable volunteers are for the Museum, Welcome Center, Arts and Crafts Festival and the rest of the community.

**March 7 - Jo Ann Broadus**, Long time Director of the Dogwood Trail Program and Lagniappe's Volunteer of the Year (2016) will talk on the Dogwood Trail Maids Court in Baldwin County and how important the program is to the young members and the community.

**March 14 - Art Thomas**, of the Alabama Lighthouse Association will speak on lighthouses of Alabama, which includes past restoration efforts for the Middle Bay Lighthouse.

**March 21 - Kenneth Niemeyer**, Fairhope attorney and historian will talk about local history and the Moulton Horse Monument of Ingleside.

**March 28 - Arthur Bosarge**, Assistant Director of Fairhope Public Works will discuss how the City has changed and how we are adjusting to the change from a Public Works perspective.

## **Newsletter**

The *Friends* Newsletter is the official publication of the *Friends of the Fairhope Museum of History*, an Alabama Corporation organized exclusively for charitable, scientific and educational purposes within the meaning of Part 501 (c) 3 of the United States Internal Revenue Code.

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# Fairhope Museum of History

24 North Section Street (251) 929-1471

Hours: 9 – 5 Tuesday through Saturday

Admission: Free!

Like us on: [facebook.com/Friends of the Fairhope Museum of History](https://www.facebook.com/Friends-of-the-Fairhope-Museum-of-History)