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January 10, 2020

Bringing you information today on 200 years of statehood and beyond. Highlighting news and events celebrating Alabama.

Alabama's 200 years in 200 images

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Up & coming Events
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Alabama has been a state for 200 years, and its people are stepping up to commemorate its bicentennial. We’re here to keep you up to date on events and programs throughout the state and help you tune in to the state’s diverse cultural and historic heritage.

To stay on top of everything that’s going on, check out our community calendar at ALABAMA200.org or AL200finale.org and to get the full scoop, like us on Facebook and follow us on Instagram and Twitter. Encourage your friends and family to do the same.

Your participation helps us reach as many people as possible and is an easy and effective way to show pride for our state, from Bay Minette to Tuscaloosa, Huntsville to Old Cahawba.
Alabama's 200 years in 200 images

From the article by Jeremy Gray on AL.com:
AL.com has compiled two groups of amazing images from the first 200 years of our statehood. See the following links for images.


and

Alabama bicentennial finale honors history, looks towards future

From the article by Sean Ross on YellowhammerNews.com:

On the steps of the Alabama State Capitol on Saturday, elected officials, dignitaries and hundreds of members of the public gathered as one to celebrate the 200th anniversary of Alabama becoming a state.

The ALABAMA 200 bicentennial finale kicked off with a parade traveling from historic Court Square Fountain up Dexter Avenue to the foot of the Capitol, where Governor Kay Ivey personally greeted the participants with a trademark smile and wave as they paraded by.

The parade featured over 70 entries showcasing diverse Alabama communities and legacies, including marching bands from around the Yellowhammer State, floats, living history on wheels (such as the USS Alabama Battleship Memorial Park replica and a lunar rover replica from the U.S. Space and Rocket Center), elected officials and Alabama celebrities.

The more than 150-member Bicentennial All-Star Band concluded the parade, with an original composition entitled, “Something in the Water,” by Anthony Krizan, Cheryl DaVeiga, Jerry Foster and Robert W. Smith.

The parade was followed by the dedication of Alabama Bicentennial Park, spanning each side of Dexter Avenue nearest the capitol.
In a program beginning shortly before noon, State Senator Arthur Orr (R-Decatur), the chair of the Alabama Bicentennial Commission, gave a very thoughtful, frank history of Alabama’s capitol grounds. From the darkest days to its proudest moments, Orr eloquently outlined it all.

Governor Kay Ivey took the podium after Orr to a standing ovation.

In classic Ivey fashion, the governor gave a buoyant speech celebrating the state’s 200th birthday.

“73,000 days. 2,400 months. 200 years,” Ivey began. “That, my fellow Alabamians, is how long we have been a state.”

“It’s such a brief time in the history of the world, and, yet, during these many years that parallel the life of our great country, Alabamians have been at the forefront of so many pivotal events that have shaped not only America but the world,” she continued.

“Our is a state that is like none other,” the governor stressed. “We can be compared to those beautiful mosaic quilts from Gee’s Bend. Unique in their own special way, yet, when sown together, they are as beautiful as they are distinct.”

“As a daughter of rural Alabama, I grew up with a deep love for the diversity of our people, our state and even our shared history,” Ivey outlined. “Camden, my hometown, is in the heart of the Alabama Blackbelt, and it was there where the values of faith, family and the foundations of service were instilled in me as a young child. It was rural Alabama that taught me that your word is your bond. I also learned that the people of Alabama are hard-working, generous and always ready to lend a hand to someone in need.”

The governor explained that Alabama has come a long way just over the last 50 years, and much more so over 200. However, the state’s best days are still to come. Continued progress starts with each and every Alabamian working together in the present, she advised.

“I intend to leave our state better than when I started,” Ivey proclaimed.

She will be placing a letter to the future governor of Alabama of 2069 to open in the City of Montgomery’s time capsule, just as then-Governor Albert Brewer left such a letter in 1969 that Ivey read from on Saturday.
“I’d like to assure Alabamians of the future that we are carrying forward the legacy of the past and continuing to seek ways to make Alabama better,” Ivey remarked. “And one of the first, but most lasting, ways we acknowledge both our history and our future is through the unveiling of Alabama Bicentennial Park.”

“The park is the bicentennial’s legacy project as well as being a gift to generations to come,” she added.

The park features a total of 16 sculptures, each with a bronze plaque representing a different part of the state’s history — the good and the bad. Each sculpture was subsequently unveiled one-by-one, led by various elected officials, dignitaries such as NASA Marshall Space Flight Center Director Jody Singer and representatives from schools around Alabama.

Of the sculptures, Ivey detailed, “They focus on watershed moments in our history, but as often as not they show everyday citizens going about their lives and showing their commitment to hard work, innovation and doing what is right.”

“The images present stories of different places and times, but each region of the state is represented so that all who visit will see something that tells of his or her home,” she said.

After the unveilings, Ivey took the podium again for powerful closing remarks.

For the complete article please see https://yellowhammernews.com/7-things-trump-will-give-iran-a-chance-to-de-escalate-senate-democrats-ready-to-move-on-impeachment-ivey-winning-her-fight-against-cancer-and-more/
Gov. Ivey unveils Alabama’s Bicentennial Park

From the article by Dennis Washington on AlabamaNewsCenter.com:

Thousands of people visited Montgomery on Saturday as the state kicked off its third century with a celebration of the previous two.

The Alabama Bicentennial Commission hosted the Alabama 200 Birthday Celebration in the state’s capital. The morning began with a parade of more than 70 marching bands, city floats and living history on wheels. It concluded with a performance of the Bicentennial All-Star Band performing “Something in the Water,” an original composition written by Anthony Krizan, Cheryl DaVeiga, Jerry Foster and Robert W. Smith.

At noon, the new Bicentennial Park was unveiled. Located at the foot of the Alabama State Capitol on Dexter Avenue, the park tells the story of Alabama in 16 bronze plaques mounted on granite bases. Immediately following the dedication was the Alabama Bicentennial Festival, an afternoon full of exhibitions, performances and open houses in the Capitol Complex, up and down Dexter Avenue and throughout downtown Montgomery.

The day wrapped up with the Alabama Bicentennial Concert and Finale Presentation. The concert included performances from Taylor Hicks, Jett Williams, Eddie Floyd, Jimmy Hall, Allison Moorer, Dan Penn, Martha Reeves and the Vandellas, Candi Staton, John Paul White and the Muscle Shoals Allstars. Immediately after the concert was “Sculpting a State,” a 10-minute presentation projected on the front of Alabama’s
How do you tell the story of two centuries of art in Alabama? That was the mission behind the book “Alabama Creates: 200 Years of Alabama Art and Artists.” Released on July 2 by The University of Alabama Press, the anthology features 94 Alabama artists from 1819 to now.

Published this year to coincide with the state’s bicentennial, “Alabama Creates” was a project nearly five years in the making. Editor Elliot Knight-- executive director of the Alabama State Council on the Arts— says the compilation is an expanded follow-up to the 2008 book, “Alabama Masters.”
The book’s featured artists include the Quilters of Gee’s Bend, the collective of quilters whose masterpieces date back to the early 20th century, Spider Martin, noted photographer who documented the marches from Selma to Montgomery, and Kerry James Marshall, who became one of the most expensive living African-American artists in 2018 when rapper and music mogul Sean Combs bought his painting “Past Times” for $21.1 million.

“What does it mean to be an Alabamian? How do we see ourselves? How do we want others to see us?” Gail C. Andrews, the director emerita of the Birmingham Museum of Art, asks in the book’s introduction. “There are moments in our personal history and our shared history that call us to reflect on questions such as these.”

In the introduction to “Alabama Creates,” Andrews unpacks the distinction and burden of the state’s history. It’s an upfront and honest primer, explaining that while the book could not include every talented artist with Alabama ties, or fully document the history of the contributions of Native Americans and enslaved Africans brought to the state, it does begin the conversation about the depth of talent and range of creativity of the artists documented throughout the publication.

Another mission of “Alabama Creates” was to shed light on the extensive network of the state’s art institutions. A number of the images used in the book are also from museum collections around Alabama, including the Huntsville, Montgomery, Birmingham, and Mobile museums of Art, as well as the Jule Collins Smith Museum of Fine Art in Auburn and the Wiregrass Museum of Art in Dothan.

”We really thought about it as an opportunity to highlight more Alabama artists, but also the museums around our state and the collections that they have of those artists,” says Knight.

A team of curators and historians from museums around the state, some of whom worked on “Alabama Masters,” led the charge to complete the 247-page anthology. Together, the team nominated artists in Alabama, particularly those who weren’t included in “Alabama Masters,” and updated the bios for artists who were included in the 2008 book.

“That was really one of the most difficult things about [creating] the book. We had to realize at some point that we wouldn’t be able to include everybody who deserves to be included,” said Elliot. “It’s really kind of a sampler to kind of show the wide range of talent and styles over the years, rather than an encyclopedic volume of Alabama art.”
Technology, virtual reality, and computers are changing the cultural landscape of art. And the team worked to look beyond just painters to include artists in a broad range of disciplines including landscape design, fashion design, and architecture. The criteria for inclusion in the book: the artist must have had work displayed in a permanent museum and they must have a connection to Alabama, either by birth or by spending a significant part of their artistic career in the state.

“Alabama Creates” is divided into four sections: prehistory to 1868, 1869 to 1918, 1919 to 1968, and 1969 to 2018. The first section begins in 1819, marking the beginning of Alabama’s statehood. An essay at the start of each section lends more context to the period, illustrating the evolving art of Native Americans before their displacement, to the period immediately after the civil rights movement that laid a foundation for the contemporary art of the 21st century.

The anthology also tells the story of the birth of the state’s art institutions through colleges and universities and public arts. In the early to 20th century, no art museums existed in the state, nor was there a suitable place for the exhibition of art in Alabama. Exposure had to come from areas outside of the state. This century, the state’s museum landscape is drastically different, so much so that Governor Bob Riley declared 2007 “The Year of Alabama Arts.”

Anne Goldthwaite of Montgomery, Roderick MacKenzie and Louise Lyons Heustis from Mobile, and Clara Weaver Parrish of Selma were among the first to artists from Alabama to garner national and international attention. They intersected circles with artists such as Henri Matisse and had their work shown in New York, London, and Paris.

“Alabama has never been void of ‘fine art,’ especially as our definition of ‘fine art’ has become more expansive and inclusive. The depth of exceptional work within the state is now more widely recognized than ever before,” explains the book’s preface. “There are voices suggesting that Alabama is at the epicenter of art being produced that defies old and current labels.”

“Fine Art” has long been categorized into primarily Eurocentric schools of art, such as Romanticism and Impressionism, used as a method of “legitimizing” types of artistic expression.

However, many of Alabama’s artists live outside of these “traditional” categories, and the state is home to many of the nation’s most renowned “outsider artists,” a formal term in the art world referring to artists who are self-taught or have not had any formal
training. These ranks include Alabama artists Thornton Dial, Lonnie Holley, Quilters of Gee’s Bend, and Bill Traylor, all of whom have had work displayed at the most prestigious institutions in the nation and around the world.

In 2018, The Smithsonian Museum of Art opened the exhibition “Between Worlds: The Art of Bill Traylor,” the first major retrospective ever organized for an artist born into slavery, and the most comprehensive look at Montgomery-born Traylor’s work at the time.

In conjunction with the exhibit, Leslie Umberger, the curator of folk and self-taught art at the Smithsonian American Art Museum, released an in-depth examination of Traylor’s retrospective, also by the same name. With an introduction by Birmingham-born Kerry James Marshall, Umberger studied more than 1,000 pieces of Traylor’s work over seven years, drawing on historic records and interviews with family members and Montgomery locals to tell the story of how the late artist bore witness.

In October, Montgomery honored Traylor with a historic marker, and that same month, a second exhibition of his work went on display at the David Zwirner gallery in New York.

“The book is a creative way to explore visual culture and identity and the way Alabamians have shaped not only Alabama, but the world,” said Elliot.

For the complete article please see https://www.al.com/life/2019/12/alabama-creates-journeys-through-200-years-of-alabama-artists.html
State of Alabama celebrates bicentennial

From the article by Justin Walker on *AlabamaNews.net*:

It was a historic day in the Capitol City Saturday, as hundreds of Alabama residents came to downtown Montgomery for the state’s Bicentennial Celebration.

“Seventy-three thousand days, 24 hundred months, 200 years. That, my fellow Alabamians, is how long we have been a state,” Alabama Governor Kay Ivey said.

That was Ivey’s opening statement as she led the Bicentennial Park ceremony. The park’s dedication was one of many activities held along Dexter Avenue and throughout downtown to mark the special occasion.

“Let us use this commemoration to commit ourselves to that mission- working together as people to do all we can in our neighborhoods, our schools, our churches, our business and communities, and to build an even better and stronger Alabama in the next century,” Alabama senator Arthur Orr said.

Located across the street from the the Capitol steps, the park features 16 monuments. Each contains a brief description of major turning points and important figures in the state’s history.

For some, the Bicentennial presented a good learning opportunity.

“Well, my daughter Leah is just going into the fourth grade, and she’s going through Alabama history right now. So, we’re seeing some monuments depicting things she’s learned about. It’s kind of a reinforcement of what she’s getting in school and a chance for us to see some things that we wouldn’t have normally got to see and learn about,” Ben Webster said.

The Bicentennial Celebration was a special day for people like Wanda Battle. Battle is a tour guide at Dexter Avenue King Memorial Baptist Church. She says she is excited for the direction the state is headed.

“Today, as we celebrate 200 years, as a state and as a city, that we are becoming better, and we’re growing and we’re becoming a city of love and truly the capitol of dreams,” Battle said.

Events included a Bicentennial Festival that featured free tours, special performances,
and exhibits, all in celebration of the historic day.

“We can do nothing about our history. It is our history. But, we really can do a lot about shaping our future,” Henry Panion said.

A special concert finale and light show rounded out the festivities on Dexter Avenue. It featured singers and other well-known performers from across Alabama.

For the complete article please see https://www.alabamanews.net/2019/12/14/state-of-alabama-celebrates-200th-birthday/

Minerva sculpture

Sculpture’s dedication part of Tuscaloosa bicentennial celebration

From the article by Ken Roberts on TuscaloosaNews.com:
She’s 30 feet tall, she weighs more than 9,500 pounds and she’s almost ready for her debut.
Workers have been busy preparing the site along Tuscaloosa’s riverfront for a sculpture depicting Minerva, the Roman goddess of wisdom and strategy.

The Minerva sculpture, along with a timeline of key dates in Tuscaloosa’s history and a time capsule, will be dedicated at 10 a.m. Friday at the Park at Manderson Landing.

The dedication, part of Tuscaloosa’s yearlong bicentennial celebration, is free and open to the public.

“I hope each viewer will have a unique experience and see the sculpture as a symbol of progress through reflection, not only of our past but present and what we can do in the future,” said Caleb O’Connor, a local artist who created the Minerva sculpture. “The base of the sculpture is reflective so people can see themselves in the piece.”

The creation of the landmarks is meant to celebrate the city’s past, present and future on Tuscaloosa’s 200th birthday.

Caleb O’Connor and Craig Wedderspoon, who is also a local artist, have collaborated for two years on the sculpture and timeline. While O’Connor focused on the sculpture, Wedderspoon concentrated on the timeline.

The two elements are gifts to the residents of Tuscaloosa from the University of Alabama, with the sculpture being entirely funded from an endowed fund established by an anonymous donor.

Minerva is also depicted in UA’s official seal.

O’Connor produced the Minerva model in his downtown Tuscaloosa studio and the full-scale sculpture was cast in Italy.

Wedderspoon led the design and production of the bicentennial timeline, which will run 110 feet along Manderson Landing and lead to the Minerva sculpture. The timeline depicts the Black Warrior River with key dates in Tuscaloosa’s history etched in the concrete.

“Everything came down to the river for me because we wouldn’t be here if it wasn’t for the river,” said Wedderspoon, a professor of sculpture at UA. “When you look back at Tuscaloosa’s history, early settlers followed Native American trails that led to this area because it’s where you could cross the river. The Black Warrior River has also played a
tremendous role in transportation and the economy.”

Friday’s ceremony will include the burial of a time capsule with items representing everyday life in 2019. Items in the time capsule represents 12 themes, which include arts and entertainment, sports and athletics, infrastructure, education; and civil rights and diversity.

“We didn’t want to create a ‘chamber of commerce’ collection of objects,” said Bill Bomar, chairman of the Tuscaloosa Bicentennial Commission’s time capsule committee. “It’s going to be an honest representation that has an underlying message that the community is happy with Tuscaloosa, and while there are areas that need improvement, we’ve certainly come a long way in 200 years.”


Sloss Furnaces marks Alabama’s bicentennial with the Children’s Bell

From the article by Andrew Yeager on WBHM.org:

Industrialization is a major part of Alabama’s history and perhaps the most visible
reminder of that in Birmingham is Sloss Furnaces. The historic site is marking state’s bicentennial this month with an object in line with that past of iron and steel: the Alabama Bicentennial Children’s Bell.

Metal workers are putting the final touches on it, and next week they will install the bell and a bell tower in the pond near the entrance to the visitors center. Sloss Furnaces’ metal arts director Marshall Christie says it took a lot a research to make sure they got the acoustics right. They created a mold and about two weeks ago, they fired up the furnace.

“[It] is always impressive,” Christie says. “There’s an 8-foot flame coming out of the top of it. Sparks shooting out of every orifice it has. And a whole crew scurrying around working the furnace and manning it.”

He says the process of pouring the metal takes about two minutes. After that, it’s 24 hours nervously waiting to see if it worked. In this case, it did. The bell, made of iron from Alabama, is about two feet in diameter and 375 pounds. Christie says they also measured the bell with a guitar tuner and “a very solid E is our note.”

Part of a bicentennial is about the past, but this bell is about the future and the children who will inhabit it. That message rings out just looking at it. Across the bottom of the bell it reads “Leave it Better.”

For the complete article please see https://wbhm.org/feature/2019/sloss-furnaces-marks-alabamas-bicentennial-childrens-bell/

fbclid=IwAR2RDKnZ_bcin4JUwsOT_u4nNHR7YzLiKAYak30zOLiV9Vizzpg7ncvttHc
Alabama’s ‘white gold’ draws worldwide interest

From the article by Dennis Washington on YellowhammerNews.com:

Ruth Beaumont Cook’s latest book started 10 years ago as a brochure request from Sylacauga’s B.B. Comer Memorial Library in advance of the city’s first marble festival.

“They asked me to put together a brochure about the history of the marble,” Cook said. “It was overwhelmingly successful, so the next year they asked to me write a book.”

Nearly nine years and dozens of interviews later, Cook celebrates the natural resource that nurtures both the economy and the cultural heritage of Alabama’s “Marble City” in her new book, “Magic in Stone: The Sylacauga Marble Story.”

“Whenever you start working on a book, you have all of this information but you look for a story thread through it,” Cook said. “I had no clue when I started what that was going to be.”

Cook said the clues starting coming together as she started talking to people who grew up mining marble.

“There are so many people who grew up in Gantts Quarry,” Cook said. “Most people
have good memories of growing up there and work they are proud of. Telling those stories was the most interesting part of it.”

Commercial marble quarries began in Sylacauga in the late 1800s. Cook said the marble was initially used by sculptors such as Giuseppe Moretti, the Italian who created the Vulcan statue on Red Mountain in Birmingham.

“His Vulcan won the gold prize at the 1904 World’s Fair, but what most people don’t know is he also took another piece with him, ‘The Head of Christ,’ which he had carved from Sylacauga marble,” Cook said. “It won a silver medal.”

The marble caught the attention of construction managers around the world who were seeking dimension marble for their projects. By the 1930s, Sylacauga’s creamy white marble had been used in hundreds of buildings, including the U.S. Supreme Court building and the ceiling of the Lincoln Memorial.

“It was chosen for the Lincoln Memorial because it can be cut very thin and still be strong,” Cook said. “They cut it thin enough to be translucent and then rubbed it with beeswax and put it in the ceiling.”

Despite the marble’s beauty and strength, Cook said the demand for dimension marble in construction dropped dramatically by the 1950s.

“It became obvious that granite was much easier to withstand pollution than marble,” Cook said. “Marble is still great if it’s thick enough, but if you make a facade of it on a building, it’s probably not going to last because it deteriorates from the pollution.”

Instead of closing the mines and laying off employees, Cook said the Sylacauga marble companies survived and thrived thanks to a growing need for calcium extracted from marble deposits and used in hundreds of products, such as cosmetics, paints and glue.

“They turned to industry and began to grind up the marble into fine powder – called GCC, ground calcium carbonate – which industry had a strong demand for,” Cook said.

Cook said Sylacauga continues to be a rich marble resource more than 70 years later.

“I’ve been told there’s enough marble there for sculpture and industry for at least another 200 years,” Cook said. “The vein of marble is 35 miles long, a mile and a half wide and goes down quite a ways — 300 or 400 feet I believe. It’s a very valuable resource.”
Sylacauga Marble Festival
Since 2009, the city has celebrated its heritage through the Sylacauga Marble Festival, a 10-day event drawing sculptors from around the world to work alongside an Italian master sculptor. Visitors can watch, tour local quarries and purchase sculptures. Cook said the festival brings Sylacauga’s rich heritage full circle.

“It came from art, up through all of these others, and now you have this wonderful balance,” Cook said. “You still have major industry but you also have major art appreciation. It’s a great story.”

The 12th annual Marble Festival will be March 31 to April 11, 2020.

The 2019 Marble Festival was one of several events highlighted by the Alabama Bicentennial Commission.

For the complete article please see https://yellowhammernews.com/alabamas-white-gold-draws-worldwide-interest/
Alabama’s history leading up to statehood

From the article by Drew Taylor on CBS42.com:
Saturday marks 200 years since Alabama became a state.

On December 14, 1819, Congress passed a resolution making Alabama the 22nd state in the Union, a little over a year after Illinois became a state and a few months before Maine joined the Union.

However, the area that would become Alabama had a long, rich history before it became part of the United States of America. According to the Encyclopedia of Alabama (EOA), the Paleoindians are considered the first group of people to inhabit different parts of America, including Alabama, toward the end of the Ice Age. Over time, the Mississippian culture of Native Americans began to occupy what is now Alabama and other parts of the Southeast. One remaining piece from that period is the Moundville Archaeological Site in Hale County, which includes mounds built by the tribes of the day.

According to the EOA, the major tribes to inhabit the area before the arrival of European explorers in the area included the Choctaws, Creeks, Cherokees and Chickasaws, as well as the Alabama-Coushattas and the Yuchi.

In fact, it is believed that Alabama was a Choctaw word loosely meaning “thicket clearers,” according to Choctaw scholar Allen Wright, taken from the word “Alba” meaning “thick or mass vegetation” and “amo” meaning “to clear, to collect, to gather up.”

The 16th century is considered by historians to be the first time Europeans, mostly the Spanish, arrived in Alabama. In 1540, explorer Hernando de Soto arrived in Mabila, a fortress town of Chief Tuscaloosa located southwest of Selma. It was here where the Battle of Mabila took place on October 18, 1540, between the de Soto expedition and the town tribe, resulting in the deaths of many on both sides.

In the early 1700s, French settlers began arriving in Alabama, primarily in south Alabama in places like Mobile. By 1780, the Spanish captured Mobile during the Revolutionary War, according to the Alabama Department of Archives and History.

By 1817, Congress split up the Mississippi Territory to create the Alabama Territory. On December 14, 1819, Alabama was admitted as the country’s 22nd state with Huntsville serving as its first capitol.
And, as they say, the rest is history.

For the complete article please see https://www.cbs42.com/news/alabama-celebrates-200th-birthday-saturday/

Northport Elementary School

**Tuscaloosa County schools celebrate state bicentennial**

From the article by on TCSS.net:

Alabama is now 200 years old, and our students and teachers made some great memories celebrating this milestone in our state's history! Through art, music, stories, community projects, special events, and more, our schools celebrated the history of Alabama in many creative ways. Several of our students and teachers participated in Alabama's Bicentennial Celebration in Montgomery on Saturday, December 14.

Tuscaloosa County School System (TCSS) was also honored to have seven of our schools recognized through the Alabama Bicentennial Schools Initiative. These schools received grant funding for projects that linked the schools with their communities. Two of our schools were chosen as Bicentennial Schools of Excellence, an honor which only 21 schools across Alabama received. We look forward to seeing how our students will use what they have learned about the history of our state, to help create a bright future and keep writing the story of Alabama!
**Jan. 11 - Trussville to celebrate Bicentennial (Trussville)**

The Trussville Bicentennial Celebration events are planned to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the founding of Trussville, a time to celebrate the stories of Trussville’s people, places and path to becoming a city.

The event is slated for Saturday, Jan. 11 from 10 A.M. to 2 P.M. at Cahaba Elementary School and Heritage Hall.

**Feb. 8 - "Spirit of Our Ancestors" Festival February 2020 (Plateau)**

Dr. Deborah G. Plant is the keynote speaker at the second annual "Spirit of Our Ancestors," on Saturday, Feb. 8, from Noon to 4 P.M. at Mobile County Training School. The event is hosted by the Clotilda Descendants Association.

Dr. Plant will address how she took the notes of famed anthropologist and folklorist Zora Neale Hurston's 1927 interviews with Cudjo at his home in Mobile and turned them into what became a 2018 best-selling book, Barracoon: The Story of the Last “Black Cargo.”

**Feb. 20 - Dreams of Hope (Broadcasts on PBS nationwide)**

Birmingham's historic 16th Street Baptist Church welcomes Violins of Hope. Dreams of Hope is most uplifting with... "hope"... even through it's focused on the most terrible events in modern times. See video trailer here: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8IVyuCR6mo8&feature=youtu.be&mc_cid=4ccaf7d28f&mc_eid=%5BUNIQID%5D](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8IVyuCR6mo8&feature=youtu.be&mc_cid=4ccaf7d28f&mc_eid=%5BUNIQID%5D)
Making Alabama: A Bicentennial traveling exhibit


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