Welcome to the Banner

Bringing you information every Thursday on 200 years of statehood. Highlighting news and events celebrating Alabama.

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Help us @ ALABAMA200.org

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, 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, and the many other towns and communities joining in the celebration. Don’t miss out on this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to celebrate with us. Join the party!
Gov. Ivey to visit DeKalb County

From the article by Marla Jones on SouthernTorch.com:
Governor Kay Ivey will make a stop in Dekalb County Friday, November 15 at 9am.

Ivey will be making a stop at the Little River Canyon Center as part of her 67-county tour during the Alabama Bicentennial. John Dersham, President of the DeKalb Tourism, will host the 20-minute event.

The visit will include an introduction from the Alabama Band's Randy Owen and a Presentation of Commendation for Seth Maddox and the Tourism Board.

The event is free and open to the public.

For the complete article please see http://southerntorch.com/politics/ivey-to-visit-dekalb-county/
Chuck Leavell performs for Bicentennial

The Poarch Band of Creek Indians will be closing out their Alabama Natives Concert Series with Rolling Stones keyboardist Chuck Leavell and special guest Dan Penn at the Capri Theatre on Wednesday, Nov. 20. Doors open at 5:30 p.m. Showtime is at 6 p.m. Tickets are $40 and are available here: https://www.capritheatre.org/ or at the Capri Theatre box office. Seating is limited. Proceeds benefit the Capri Community Film Society, a non-profit organization.

Chuck Leavell was born in Birmingham, Alabama and at age 15, moved to Muscle Shoals where he started his music career. He has been pleasing the ears of music fans for many years now. His piano and keyboard work has graced the albums and/or stages of The Rolling Stones, Eric Clapton, The Allman Brothers, The Black Crowes, George Harrison, The Marshall Tucker Band, Hank Williams Jr. and a long list of others. He also formed jazz/rock band Sea Level in 1976 with other former Allman Brothers members.

Opening for Chuck is Vernon, Alabama native, Dan Penn. Penn has helped shape the development of Southern soul music with his legendary songwriting, musicianship and production. In 1962, when he moved to Muscle Shoals, he was hired as the first resident songwriter and recruited the first house band at FAME Studios. To enumerate his accomplishments, it would take a retrospective of everyone’s favorite song lists, but just a few of his hits are "Dark End of the Street," "The Letter," "I'm your puppet" and "Cried Like a Baby."

The Poarch Band of Creek Indians is proud to present this exciting performance.
showcasing Alabama’s top artists in an intimate setting. Seating is limited to only 200 guests.

**CMS holds Alabama Bicentennial Birthday Bash**

From the article by Emily Sparacino on ShelbyCountyReporter.com:

Students at Columbiana Middle School celebrated Alabama’s 200th birthday with a Bicentennial Birthday Bash on Oct. 29.

Students sang the state’s song, “Alabama,” before listening to a presentation from Dr. Susan DuBose, Alabama Bicentennial Education Coordinator for the Alabama Department of Archives and History in Montgomery.

“Thank you very much for the kind invitation to be here today,” DuBose said. “You’re an important part of the future of our state.”

DuBose shared background information on the state’s bicentennial activities, including the themes for each year of the three-year celebration: 2017 – Exploring Our Places, 2018 – Honoring Our People and 2019 – Sharing Our Stories.

DuBose read the poem “Daybreak in Alabama” by Langston Hughes.

Student Bishop Taylor was awarded a commemorative coin for having the same birthday, Dec. 14, as the state.
Every student received a copy of the Alabama Bicentennial PastPort book, along with a cupcake made by teachers Samantha Pursley and Stephanie Boyd and Family and Consumer Sciences students.

Prior to the birthday bash, students had participated in other Alabama-related activities in their art, history and social studies classes.

“Our state has been richly blessed with students like you,” DuBose said. “Everybody in this room has something to offer for our future.”

For the complete article please see https://www.shelbycountyreporter.com/2019/10/31/cms-holds-alabama-bicentennial-birthday-bash/

Homeschoolers celebrate Alabama’s Bicentennial

From the article by Carren Joye on ElmoreAutaugaNews.com:

Native Americans, explorers, pioneers and pirates set aside their differences to celebrate Alabama’s Bicentennial at Academy Days Homeschool Co-op recently. Pictured are the male and female costume contest winners from each history class.

During the feast, the homeschoolers and their parents sampled a vast assortment of
dishes featuring ingredients available in Alabama before it became a state in 1819. The Academy Days Co-op, held weekly during the school year at Coosada Baptist Church, is designed for preschool through high school students to learn subjects difficult to teach at home or best taught in group settings.

Visit www.AcademyDays.com for more information if you are interested in homeschooling.

For the complete article please see https://elmoreautauganews.com/2019/11/01/academy-days-homeschoolers-celebrate-alabamas-bicentennial-with-feast-costume-contest/

Sister Cities, Tuskegee and South Berwick

Sister cities engage in joint project

From the article on SeaCoastOnline.com:

Residents of South Berwick are joining residents of their sister city in Tuskegee, Ala., to recognize the 200th birthdays of both states with a joint project that is focused on registering voters and interviewing 200 people in their communities about why it’s important to vote.
The project, called “Together We Vote - Two Communities, One Nation,” will culminate with a booklet and video featuring the citizens of the two towns, which became sister cities in 2017.

Video interviews will begin in South Berwick on Election Day and will continue through the fall until 100 people have been interviewed. In Tuskegee, videographers will also do 100 interviews in the months ahead.

“We wanted to come up with a way to celebrate together with Tuskegee and also to focus on election year and the importance of voting in our democracy,” said John Klossner, of South Berwick, who is one of the many volunteers doing interviews for the project.

Two centuries ago when Alabama and Maine became the 22nd and 23rd states, women and the vast majority of African Americans were not allowed to vote in this country. Maine was among a handful of states that allowed African Americans to vote.

“This 200th birthday project recognizes that our states and country have come a long way over the years but that we also have a long way to go,” Klossner said.

Alabama became a state on Dec. 14, 1819, followed three months later by Maine on March 15, 1820. Maine was created as a free state to balance out the introduction of Missouri as a slave state.

At the time, voters in South Berwick opposed the creation of Maine by a 2-to-1 margin saying “inhabitants of this town view with concern and abhorrence the existence of slavery in this country; and consider it a disgrace to a free and Christian land- that it should be not be tolerated.”

The 200 interviews will be included in a book, with an introduction talking about Alabama and Maine voting laws. Maine allows same day voter registration, voting by incarcerated people, in-person absentee voting and absentee-voting by mail without a reason. These laws are considered part of the reason Maine has the second highest election turnout in the country, after Oregon.

Tuskegee’s voting history includes launching the lawsuit on redistricting that led to the Voting Rights Act. This federal law outlawed discriminatory voting practices after the Supreme Court ruled that an electoral district’s boundaries could not be created to disenfranchise certain voters. They ruled that Tuskegee lines had been drawn to exclude blacks, which violated the Fifteenth Amendment. In the last decade, parts of the Voting
Rights Act have been struck down.

“When I think about Tuskegee as the battleground for legal court cases that moved this country closer to its democratic ideals, I also think about freedom fighters in other Alabama cities like Selma and Birmingham,” said Karin Hopkins of Tuskegee, a longtime journalist who is working on the voting project. “I am a chronic voter because of that history.”

South Berwick and Tuskegee created the Sister City relationship nearly three years ago in recognition of ongoing challenges in racial relations across the nation. The mission of Common Ground: the Tuskegee-South Berwick Sister City is “to afford the opportunity for the citizens of two communities, one predominately black and the other predominately white, to talk with each other, listen to each other and share with each other with the goal of broadening understanding between people.

The Together We Vote booklet and video will be released in South Berwick at a 200th birthday party celebration this summer. At this event, Common Ground will also host a table where residents will have a chance to informally renew their citizenship.

“New citizens go through a ceremony to become Americans, so we thought why not give US-born citizens a chance to say what being American means to them,” said Karen Eger, town librarian and an organizer of the Sister City. “We also like the idea of joining with our Alabama sisters and brothers to declare our mutual interest in being part of a nation that honors the voices of all of its citizens.”

For the complete article please see https://www.seacoastonline.com/news/20191103/together-we-vote-south-berwick-sister-city-engage-in-joint-project
Former Alex City resident publishes book on state bells

From the article by Gabrielle Jansen on AlexCityOutlook.com:
Preserving history and bells themselves is former Alexander City resident Thomas Kaufmann’s mission with his new book “Historic Alabama Bells.” Kaufmann’s book published Monday, and he wants readers to understand the importance of the preservation of bells.

“There are a number of bells that are really in the way they sit in towers is not safe,” Kaufmann said. “They can’t be rung but they could be preserved. They could be preserved and used beautifully.”

Kaufmann began writing the book seven years ago and researched about 25 bells throughout the state from different time periods.

“The idea for a book through the years after practicing architecture and historic preservation, I think I finally realized I should be researching or looking into this and trying to satisfy this desire to learn more and know more about historic bells,” Kaufmann said. “I felt it was important to write about the bicentennial in honor of the (Alabama) Bicentennial.”

Bells mentioned ranged from the founding of the state, the Civil War and the Civil Rights movements. Kaufmann said there are not a lot of Civil War bells left due to making weapons and the Union taking bells.
“The distinction for those is they survived the Civil War because at that time the bells were being melted down to make munitions,” Kaufmann said. “The South was donating bells to the Confederacy for this very reason.”

With the Civil Rights movement, Kaufmann tracked down the Brown Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church bell, which rang on Bloody Sunday in Selma during the freedom march. A Bloody Sunday witness confirmed to Kaufmann what happened.

Kaufmann remembers being captivated by bells since he was a child. When he lived in Alexander City and his family attended First Methodist Church, he was captivated by the bell.

“When we became members of that church, the bell didn’t ring,” Kaufmann said. “I could see the rope.”

When the church finally got a rope for the bell when he was 11 he was excited to see it after helping raise money for the rope.

Kaufmann wrote about his memories and impression of local church bells.

Kaufmann remembers going into an abandoned church on Christian Street when he was riding his bike and remembered seeing the bell hang there. He also looked at the bell for Alexander City’s First Presbyterian Church.

The one he still hasn’t seen in the city is First Baptist Church.

“I was constantly asking (a parishioner) about the bell in First Baptist tower and he said that there was (a bell),” Kaufmann said.

First Presbyterian Church in Wetumpka was mentioned in the book for its bell, which was salvaged following a January tornado.

Kaufmann went through Auburn University archives and state archives for his research.

“A lot of my information came from internet research too,” Kaufmann said.

In addition to preserving bells, Kaufmann also had to be wary of exploring churches when trying to view them. There was one case when stair railing broke while he was climbing it.
“One time I had a ladder straight up come off the wall on one side,” Kaufmann said. “Because of my experience in construction I hugged the side that was bolted firmly just like climbing a pole. I hugged that side and climbed.”

The author is currently working on a second book about Alabama striking clock towers and other state bells including the one at Alexander City First Methodist Church.

“I was so wanting to see (the Alexander City First Methodist) bell and tried to include it in this book, but then I realized it was probably better to include it in my second book I’m working on,” Kaufmann said.

“Historic Alabama Bells” is available at major books stores such as Barnes and Noble and Amazon.

For the complete article please see https://www.alexcityoutlook.com/artsentertainment/former-alex-city-resident-publishes-book-on-state-bells/article_7a09911a-ffe11-e9-a4b8-1fb596691ba7.html
The Wiregrass Museum of Art (WMA) is pleased to announce it was awarded a bronze medal in the Southeastern Museums Conference (SEMC) Technology Competition for digital marketing. Award winners were recognized at the organization’s annual conference, held this year from Oct. 20-23 in Charleston, South Carolina.

“The Southeastern Museum Conference Technology Competition features the top digital projects in the field, and recipients of these awards represent the leading museum institutions in technological accessibility and innovation,” said Anna Tucker, SEMC Technology Competition chair and curator at the Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience.

The award was given to WMA for its Stories of the Wiregrass website and digital archive. The project was created with support from the Alabama Bicentennial Commission in celebration of Alabama’s 200th anniversary of statehood. Recognizing the year’s theme, “Sharing Our Stories,” the website invites current and former residents of the Wiregrass to submit stories about their everyday lives in the form of prose or poetry, a simple memory, photographs, video, or audio files.

“Our staff and board recognizes that technology is an important tool for the museum to connect with new audiences, and we’re committed to providing innovative experiences for our visitors. ‘Stories of the Wiregrass’ was created to provide a platform for members of our community to contribute stories and memories that provide a living history of our region, in their own words, or photographs, or video work. This digital archive is one example of how WMA is using technology to tell stories and to connect with our neighbors,” said Dana-Marie Lemmer, WMA’s executive director and curator.

Each story submitted will be archived on the website, and area residents will be able to contribute to the website even after the bicentennial year has ended. Participants can choose to provide their name or submit their story to the site anonymously, but everyone is asked to include the county they live in and their age.

“This year’s award pool was notably competitive, and Wiregrass Museum of Art’s project impressed the SEMC Technology Jury due to their effective use of technology to address community involvement,” said Tucker.

Other winners in the digital marketing category were Crystal Bridges Museum of America Art in Bentonville, Arkansas, which won a gold medal for its #ArtistAtCB series of artist interviews, and an honorable mention recognition for its
Art in Space program. The Georgia Museum of Art at the University of Georgia was awarded a silver for a redesign of its website.

“We couldn’t be more excited to be represented with such a great group of colleagues in this award category. We hope that our ability to compete with our peers at larger institutions is a sign of WMA’s commitment to excellence and professionalism in the work we do,” said Lemmer.

During the 2018 conference, WMA won several awards including a gold medal in the publishing competition for the 2017 Yard Party for Art poster, which was designed by local design firm PushCrankPress and hand-screen printed by Green Pea Press in Huntsville, Ala; a bronze award for its 2016-2017 annual report design; and an honorable mention in the technology competition in recognition of the museum’s newly launched online educator resources.

For the complete article please see https://www.wiregrassmuseum.org/wma-receives-technology-award-at-southeastern-museums-conference/

Silhouettes & Such at Old Alabama Town

Enjoy free admission to the museum and and have your holiday silhouettes cut in person, during Old Alabama Town's Alabama Bicentennial Celebration.
Golden returns to family home

From the article by Barrett Edge on BrewtonStandard.com:
William Lee Golden, Country Music Hall of Fame member of legendary vocal quartet The Oak Ridge Boys, returned home this past weekend.

Many community leaders, friends, and family gathered at his home, welcoming the star back to his roots.

Growing up in Brewton, the community holds a special place in Golden’s heart. Sharing his intentions with those present on Sat., Golden said, “We wanted to open our home and share about this place.”

The meeting was a special way to celebrate Alabama’s 200th birthday. The event was in
collaboration with the LaRae Harvest Festival held directly across from the Golden home. During the time, Golden shared memories of living and growing up on the farm. Along with Golden, Alan Messer, Golden’s photographer made a special presentation of art taken over the years of Golden and other artists.

Many celebrations are taking place statewide over the next few months. This past weekend, Brewton was happy to welcome Golden home.

In a recent press release, Golden stated, “I love going home and spending time on our family farm. I am proud of my Alabama heritage and to be a part of the Bicentennial Celebration.”

For the complete article please see https://www.brewtonstandard.com/2019/11/06/golden-returns-to-family-home/

On December 14, there is only one place to be: Alabama's Capital City for the Grand Finale of Alabama's Bicentennial Commemoration.

Go to http://al200finale.org/ for more information on these and other events.
November 14, 1805

The First Treaty of Washington was signed between the United States and the Creek Nation. The agreement allowed the United States to build a horse path from the Ocmulgee River in Georgia to the Mobile River. The road was meant to function as a portion of what became the Federal Road, a route that connected Washington, D.C., to New Orleans. In return, the federal government agreed to pay the Creek Nation $12,000 annually for eight years and $11,000 annually for the following ten years. The road opened present-day Alabama to thousands of white settlers but also caused tensions among the Creeks that eventually led to war and removal.

http://www.encyclopediaofalabama.org/article/h-3070
exhibition will also highlight intensive conservation work recently completed on the constitutions and the 1861 ordinance of secession, which declared Alabama’s separation from the Union on the eve of the Civil War. The ordinance will also be included in the exhibition. Visit https://www.wethepeoplealabama.org/

**Nov. 14-16 – Bearing Witness: Art of Alabama (Montgomery)**
On the occasion of the bicentennial, the Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts will hold a symposium that will celebrate the rich visual arts traditions of the state—from the creations of Alabama’s native peoples to those of today. Free to attend, but you must register. Visit https://mmfa.org/discover/adults/bearing-witness/

**Nov. 20 – Alabama Natives Bicentennial Concert Series (Montgomery)**
Chuck Leavell with special guest Dan Penn will perform at the Capri Theatre on Wednesday, Nov. 20. For more information visit Capritheatre.org

**Dec. 8 – Bicentennial Pioneer Holiday Homes Tour (McCalla)**
The West Jefferson Co. Historical Society will celebrate with a Bicentennial Pioneer Holiday Homes Tour. There will be a Bicentennial historic marker dedication, blessing & ribbon-cutting of the new roof on the Sadler Pioneer House. Come and enjoy period decorations, music and refreshments.

**Dec. 13 – "Music of the South" A Concert with Bobby Horton (Montgomery)**
The Alabama 200th Birthday Celebration weekend will open with a special benefit concert with renowned musician and music historian Bobby Horton at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 13, at the Capri Theatre.

Horton, widely recognized as one of the country’s leading authorities of music from the Civil War period, will paint a musical portrait of life in Alabama from the earliest days of our statehood through the 1850s. Tickets are $12 for general seating and $10 for Capri members. They can be purchased here. Visit Capritheatre.org or Alabama200.org for more information.

**Dec. 14 – Alabama 200 Birthday Celebration (Montgomery)**
On December 14th, there is only one place to be: Alabama’s Capital City for the grand finale of Alabama’s three-year bicentennial commemoration. This is sure to be the state’s biggest birthday party—at least in our first 200 years! Visit https://alabama200.org/alabama-200-birthday-celebration/ for a full schedule of events.

Go to Alabama200.org/events for more information on these and other events.

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Exhibitions

**We the People: Alabama’s Defining Documents**
Nov. 3-Dec 31 – Montgomery Co., City: Montgomery, Venue: Alabama Department of
Unframed Images: Photography from the collection of P. H. Polk
Nov. 1 - Nov. 29  Dale Co., City: Dothan, Venue: Troy University Dothan Campus Library
Dec. 2 - 30  Jefferson Co., City: Birmingham, Venue: Springville Road Public Library

Alabama Justice: The cases and faces that changed a nation

Making Alabama: A Bicentennial traveling exhibit
Nov. 3 - Dec. 12  Tuscaloosa Co., City: Tuscaloosa, Venue: Tuscaloosa Co. Public Library
Nov. 4 - Dec. 20  Washington Co., City: Chatom, Venue: Washington Co. Public Library
Nov. 6 - Dec. 14  Morgan Co., City: Decatur, Venue: Alabama Center for the Arts

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