Welcome to the Banner

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

Alabama 200 Birthday Celebration

You’re invited!

Bicentennial celebration culminates with public events

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The 9 Trees
On this day in Alabama - December 12

Upcoming Events
Exhibitions

Alabama 200 Birthday Celebration

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

Go to al200finale.org for more information on these and other events.

This is sure to be the state’s biggest birthday party—at least in our first 200 years! Throughout the weekend, Alabama’s people, places and stories will be celebrated with concerts, parades and family activities.

Schedule of events

Friday, Dec 13
Music of the South with Bobby Horton - 7:30 p.m. - Capri Theatre

Saturday, Dec 14
Alabama Bicentennial Parade - 10 a.m. - Dexter Avenue
Alabama Bicentennial Park Dedication - noon - Alabama Capitol steps

Alabama Bicentennial Festival - 1 p.m. - State Capitol Complex, Department of Archives & History, and Downtown Montgomery
Additional Sites and activities:

Alabama State House
Alabama State Council on the Arts
Dexter Avenue King Memorial Baptist Church
Rosa Parks Museum
Old Alabama Town
Freedom Rides Museum
Alabama Cattlemen’s Association

Alabama Bicentennial Concert and Finale Presentation - 4 p.m. State Capitol Steps

Sunday, Dec 15
Encore Finale Presentation - 5:30 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. - Alabama Attorney General Building

Parking Locations:
RSA Headquarters Parking Deck - 201 South Union St.
RSA Plaza Parking Deck - 770 Washington Ave.
RSA Capitol Parking Deck - 101 S Decatur St.
Alabama Department of Labor (Handicapped Parking) - 649 Monroe St.
Paterson Field - 1215 Madison Ave.

Planned Street Closures:
Dexter Avenue between Bainbridge Street and S Hull Street.
Bainbridge Street between Monroe Street and Adams Avenue.
Washington Avenue between S Union Street and S Decatur Street.
Adams Avenue between S Union Street and Bainbridge Street.

For an updated list of events go to al200finale.org
Help us @ al200finale.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 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, 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!
You’re invited!

The biggest birthday party in Alabama’s history is taking place on December 14, and you are invited! Join us in Montgomery for the grand finale celebration of our state’s 200th birthday.

Watch the parade, listen to concerts and performances, visit open houses and much more.

This will to be a day you don’t want to miss. The event is free to the public and lasts all day starting with an elaborate parade at 10 a.m. The parade will travel from Court Square Fountain in downtown Montgomery up Dexter Avenue to the State Capitol. There will be marching bands, city floats and unique displays of Alabama history on wheels, such as representing the USS Alabama and U.S. Space and Rocket Center.

The parade is a great opportunity for families to enjoy the celebration together – and it’s only the beginning of a packed day. Following the parade, Governor Kay Ivey will dedicate the Bicentennial Park. The afternoon will offer performances, exhibitions and open houses throughout downtown Montgomery. The day will conclude with a concert featuring top musicians from Alabama many who helped shape American music.

Visit AL200finale.org for a complete rundown of the day’s events.
Bicentennial celebration culminates with public events

From the article by on ENewsCourier.com:
A number of public events will also be held next week to mark the bicentennial. They include:

• “Celebration of Alabama” concert featuring Bobby Horton — 7:30 p.m. Friday at the Capri Theatre, 1045 E. Fairview Ave., Montgomery. This special benefit concert will open the Alabama 200 Birthday Celebration weekend with Horton, a renowned musician and music historian. He will paint a musical portrait of life in Alabama from the earliest days of our statehood through the 1850s. Tickets are $12 and can be purchased at https://bit.ly/2rYNk4j. Proceeds will benefit the National Multiple Sclerosis Society Alabama-Mississippi Chapter.

• Bicentennial Parade — 10 to 11:30 a.m. from South Perry Street up Dexter Avenue in downtown Montgomery. Seventy entries representing communities, cultures, people and places from around Alabama will parade toward the state Capitol. The parade will conclude with the more than 150 member Bicentennial All Star Band performing an original composition.

• Bicentennial Park dedication — noon to 12:45 p.m. on the steps of the Alabama Capitol. The governor and other state dignitaries will unveil the 16 monuments depicting Alabama’s 200 years of statehood. Kirk Jay, joined by the Booker T. Washington Magnet High School Choir and the 151st Army Band of the Alabama National Guard, will perform.
• Alabama Bicentennial Festival — 1 to 4 p.m. at the state Capitol Complex. The event will offer exhibitions, performances and open houses in the Capitol Complex, up and down Dexter Avenue and throughout downtown Montgomery. The Capitol will play host to several cultural performances. Alabama’s exhibit of the state’s six constitutions, live music, reenactors and family activities will be featured at the Alabama Department of Archives & History. Downtown area attractions will also have special programming.

• Alabama Bicentennial concert and finale — 4 to 6 p.m. on the Alabama Capitol steps. Concert to feature more than a dozen top musicians from Alabama, sponsored by the Alabama Tourism Department. Many of these artists helped shape the history of American music. The concert will be followed by a finale presentation of Alabama history presented in laser lights, sponsored by the Poarch Creek Indians.

• Encore finale — 5:30 p.m. and 6:30 p.m Sunday at the Alabama Attorney General Building. An encore performance of the finale will be presented, sponsored by the Poarch Creek Indians.


Cullman Co. Bicentennial celebration set for Saturday
From the article by Amy Henderson on CullmanTimes.com:

The final Cullman County celebration of Alabama’s 200th birthday will take place on Dec. 14 and will feature appearances by some historic figures, fireworks, choirs and, naturally, singing “Happy Birthday” to the state.

The event at Depot Park begins at 5 p.m. and caps off a three-year celebration of the state’s bicentennial. Actors portraying Cullman founder Col. John Cullman, Ave Maria Grotto creator Brother Joseph Zoetti and Annie Lola Price, the first woman to serve on Alabama’s Appellate Court, will tell their stories.

Cullman County Bicentennial Committee Chairman Dale Green noted that Price, who was first appointed as a judge by Gov. Jim Folsom, “was a judge before women could serve on a jury.” She was also a pilot and a member of the Association of Women Pilots along with Amelia Earhart.

Choirs from Wallace State, St. Bernard Prep, and East and West Elementary Schools will perform, and a fireworks show will cap off the celebration, which is expected to last about an hour.

The observance of Alabama’s Bicentennial began in 2017, and Cullman County’s committee was one of the first local groups in the state to get involved.

Green said as chairman, “My goal was to include everybody in the county. We have people on the committee from all over the county and from different groups.”

Each year had a theme, beginning with “celebrating our places.” Bicentennial signs were placed all over the county featuring a brochure that invited people to explore all of the historical locations in the area. “You could start anywhere in the county and it would lead you to other stops in the county,” said Green.

The second year focused on the people of Alabama and the Cullman committee highlighted Cullman’s residents and focused on their diversity and accomplishments.

This year the theme has been the stories of Alabama’s history. Green said bicentennial activities serve two purposes. “Yes, we want to remember our past and what we’ve learned from it and where we’ve come from, but also look to the future and what we can accomplish.”

For the complete article please see https://www.cullmantimes.com/news/bicentennial-celebration-set-for-saturday/article_d7330114-1afc-11ea-bd56-1b4a7173f7fd.html
Gov. Ivey lights official Alabama Christmas Tree

From the article by Henry Thornton on Yellowhammer.com:
Governor Kay Ivey, Montgomery Mayor Steven Reed, Air Force General James B. Hecker, a children’s choir and several hundred of their fellow Alabamians gathered on the capitol steps Friday evening to light Alabama’s official 2019 Christmas tree.

The tree, standing 34-ft. tall, was decorated with tens of thousands of lights as well as special ornaments marking Alabama’s bicentennial.

“Christmas is a direct reminder of the hope we find in Christ,” Ivey said in her remarks.

Caroline Blades, age 4, talked to Yellowhammer after the event. She agreed with her dad that the tree was “really pretty” and that it “was cool to see other kids up there.”

At the event, Ivey made sure to remember the Americans serving in the armed forces, saying, “[T]his time of year it’s important to remember the brave men and women, away from home, protecting us.”

Lieutenant General James B. Hecker, commander and president, Air University at Maxwell Air Force Base, followed the governor in speaking. He said, “There is not a state in the country that welcomes their military members like Alabama.”
DeKalb Co. schools district band to perform at Bicentennial parade

From the article by Sierra Phillips on WAAY.com:

One hundred thirty-five students from across DeKalb County schools will head to Montgomery Saturday to perform at Alabama's bicentennial parade.

"It's a very good learning experience," said Sylvania High School's Lille Womack.

Womack will team up with other drum majors from across DeKalb County at the bicentennial parade. Band director Patrick Roszell said they applied to be a part of the parade and held district-wide auditions to pick band members.

"We decided to audition from each school so we could afford to go down there," he said.

"Since we all came together to make this big band we have started to get a lot of the support that we have wanted for a while," said Womack.

They've raised $17,000 for the trip.

"It's very shocking because normally with small band programs we don't get as much support," said Womack.

The parade kicks off the all day celebration in the capital city at 10 a.m. Dec. 14.
Free Tuscaloosa concert part of Tuscaloosa bicentennial celebration

From the article by Ken Roberts on TuscaloosaNews.com:

More than 200 singers will lend their voices to “Tuscaloosa Sings,” a free concert that is part of the city’s bicentennial celebration.

The concert will be held at 7 p.m. Thursday at the Moody Music Building, 810 Second Ave. on the University of Alabama campus. No tickets are necessary.

The concert will feature the debut of “Tuscaloosa Song,” a piece written by Kirsten Hicks especially for the bicentennial. The program’s songs will range from spirituals to contemporary country and seasonal selections.

Among the performers will be the University of Alabama University Singers, the Alberta School of Performing Arts Young Singers, the University of Alabama Afro-
American Gospel Choir, the Tuscaloosa City Schools High School Honor Choir, the Prentice Concert Chorale, the Crimson Pride Barbershop Chorus, the Ambassador Choir of the Alabama Choir School, the Sounds of Joy from Arc of Tuscaloosa County and the Stillman College Concert Choir.

The city’s yearlong bicentennial celebration will wrap Friday with the dedication of a bicentennial sculpture at 10 a.m. at the Park at Manderson Landing, the lighting of the Christmas tree at 5:14 p.m. in front of the Tuscaloosa County Courthouse and the West Alabama Christmas Parade, scheduled for 6:30 p.m. in downtown Tuscaloosa.

For the complete article please see https://www.tuscaloosanews.com/news/20191210/free-concert-part-of-bicentennial-celebration

Alabama Bicentennial Bell

5 reasons the Alabama Bicentennial Children’s Bell at Sloss is exciting

From the article by Sharron Mendel Swain on BhamNow.com:
It’s not every day Alabama turns 200, so it seemed only fitting to create something lasting to celebrate that milestone. The Alabama Bicentennial Commission and Children’s Hospital partnered to create a bell to honor both Bama’s big birthday and the children of our state.

I reached out to Jody Seal at Children’s of Alabama and Ashley Wingo of Sloss Metal Arts.

1. **Serious talent went into The Alabama Bicentennial Children’s Bell.**
Marshall Christie of Sloss Furnaces Metal Arts designed the bell and a beautiful stand where it will hang at Sloss. The Sloss Metal Arts Crew molded and poured the bell. They cast in Birmingham at Sloss Furnaces National Historic Landmark. Medical Properties Trust, Alabama Humanities Foundation, Sloss Furnaces Foundation, The Alabama Bicentennial Commission and Children’s of Alabama provided generous support for the project.

2. **Molten metal becomes a solid quickly.**
It takes roughly 1 minute for the liquid iron to cool from the pouring temperature of 2600 degrees to 1900 degrees and become a solid again. The casting remained in the mold for 24 hours, allowing the iron to cool completely as slowly as possible. This is necessary to achieve the desired metallurgical properties.

3. **Guess how much iron it took to make the 26″ diameter Alabama Bicentennial Children’s Bell.**
370 pounds’ worth. That is a lot of metal.

4. **The bell will leave a lasting legacy from Alabama’s 200th anniversary of statehood.**
If you were trying to come up with a way to commemorate 200 years as a state, why not pick a 370-pound iron bell?

Birmingham’s Sloss Furnaces—along with a generation of other blast furnaces which are no longer standing—played a huge role in the iron industry.

If you’ve been in Birmingham more than a nanosecond, you’ll know that the iron industry led to the development not only of the Magic City but also Central and Northern Alabama.

I learned at the unveiling of the bell that before iron and steel frames came along, it wasn’t actually possible to build buildings higher than 10 stories. Iron and steel made
skyscrapers possible, and Birmingham played a role in that. Birmingham’s Sloss Furnaces—along with a generation of other blast furnaces which are no longer standing—played a huge role in the iron industry.

5 The Alabama Bicentennial Children’s Bell aspires to inspire every generation to “Leave it Better.”
The Alabama Bicentennial Children’s Bell honors Alabama’s 200th birthday and recognizes the contributions of Alabama children and youth to the state’s history.

Mike Warren, President and CEO of Children’s of Alabama, said the bell “symbolizes the hope of what we can make together if we work together.” Dr. Donna Baker spoke of how they hope the bell will inspire today’s children and those of the future to leave Alabama better than they found it.

For the complete article please see https://bhamnow.com/2019/12/06/5-reasons-the-new-alabama-bicentennial-childrens-bell-at-sloss-is-lit/

State Capitol

Alabama bicentennial: Five facts about the Capitol

From the article by Brad Harper on MontgomeryAdvertiser.com:
Montgomery is Alabama's third capital city. Here are a few facts about the contentious and difficult journey toward the modern seat of Alabama state government, courtesy of
the state Tourism Department.

**The Alabama capital was almost Wetumpka**
The state capital was originally Cahawba in Dallas County and was later moved to Tuscaloosa. But the River Region had better water and rail access, and the rich cotton trade meant the Montgomery area was already home to much of the state’s wealth and power. In fact, local businessmen offered to cover the cost of building it in Montgomery. Another top contender was Wetumpka, which finished just behind Montgomery in one of the initial votes.

**Tuscaloosa and Montgomery feuded over becoming the capital**
Montgomery’s original Capitol building burned in 1849, only two years after it was built. The historical works, maps, books and journals in the state library went with it. The fire was ruled an accident, but people at the time suspected arson by those who were still loyal to Tuscaloosa. The current building was completed in 1851 despite another push to move it, and advocates warned it must be protected from sabotage by backers of other cities.

**Daniel Pratt proposed the design of the Alabama Capitol building**
Prattville industrialist Daniel Pratt came up with the original design for the new building, one that was bigger and combined several styles of architecture, but only parts of that design were used by architect Barachias Holt. The new building stood taller and more prominent — and overran its $60,000 budget by $4,527.

**Timing saved the Capitol from the Civil War**
After Robert E. Lee surrendered at the end of the Civil War, and with Union troops on the way, Gov. Thomas H. Watts quietly left town. Montgomery Mayor Walter Coleman was left to meet with federal forces. Those forces did not destroy the state’s Capitol building, as they had in South Carolina and Louisiana before Lee’s surrender. Still, it took eight years after the war for the Legislature to buy a United States flag to fly on the Capitol dome.

**An expansion almost claimed Martin Luther King Jr.'s church**
At one point, a plan called for the Capitol grounds to expand down Dexter Avenue, a plan that would have meant the demolition of Dexter Avenue Baptist Church where the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. would pastor decades later. The Depression forced the state to change that plan.

The 9 Trees

From the article on CourierJournal.net:

Tennessee Valley Museum of Art is pleased to present the Alabama Bicentennial sanctioned exhibition, Trees of Christmas, nine Alabama-themed 12’ live Fraser Firs exquisitely decorated by Tennessee Valley organizations and individuals. This annual show runs through Dec. 24. This year’s exhibition is accompanied by the baskets and quilts of Glenn Rickard and photography by Mary Carton.

Trees of Christmas contributors are: the Alabama Institute of Deaf and Blind; 5th grade students of Russellville Elementary with City of Russellville citizens and Alabama Bicentennial Master Teacher Carol Fretwell; the 6th-8th grade art students of E.O Coffman Middle School in Lawrenceburg, TN; The Muscle Shoals Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.; Girl Scout Service Unit 200; Shoals Master Gardners; Martha Couch; Nickie Campbell and Morgan Gunn; and Carolyn Willich.
Tennessee Valley Museum of Art holiday hours are Saturday, Dec. 14 and 21 from 10 a.m.-3 p.m., Sundays 1-3 p.m., and Dec. 24 from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. The museum will be closed on Christmas Day. Rates are $5 for adults and $3 for children. Sundays are free.

For the complete article please see https://www.courierjournal.net/this_week/article_c714a1cc-1aaf-11ea-8b62-37d7e811796f.html

December 12, 1942

Camp Opelika opened as one of four major prisoner-of-war (POW) camps in Alabama during World War II. The camp ultimately housed more than 2,700 German POWs during the war and followed parameters for humane treatment of prisoners outlined during the 1929 Geneva Convention. Prisoners often worked at nearby farms and businesses or at the camp itself, earning eighty cents a day. They also enjoyed several leisure activities, including organized soccer games, a camp newspaper, art studios, college courses, and even a camp orchestra featuring several professional musicians led by a professor from the Musical Conservatory of Hanover. Today, the Museum of East Alabama in Opelika preserves valuable artifacts and records from the camp.

http://www.encyclopediaofalabama.org/article/h-1418
Nov. 3-Dec 31 – We the People: Alabama’s Defining Documents (Montgomery)
Celebrate Alabama’s bicentennial with the documents that defined our state and shaped its history. All six of Alabama’s constitutions will be on view together in a special exhibition presented by the Alabama Department of Archives and History. The 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/.

Dec. 9-14 – Celebrating Asian Foods in Alabama (State-wide)
While no question Alabama has some of the most outstanding Southern American cuisines in all the Southern U.S., it's also true that over the 200 years, good food in Alabama has come to include foods from Asian countries — Chinese stir-fry, Japanese sushi, Korean BBQ, Indian curries, Vietnamese pho, Thai curries, Lebanese kebabs, etc. This event, in the last week of the Bicentennial celebration, is to recognize the goodness and diversity of Asian foods across the state of Alabama.

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.

Dec. 14 – Alabama Bicentennial Celebration in Old Alabama Town (Montgomery)
Join us in Old Alabama Town as we join the celebration of Alabama’s 200th Bicentennial. Crafts people, costumed interpreters, vendors, and more make this a day of fun. Free admission and public parking available on the corner of Columbus and McDonough Streets. Visit http://www.oldalabamatown.com/.

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

**We the People: Alabama’s Defining Documents**  
Nov. 3-Dec 31 – Montgomery Co., City: Montgomery, Venue: Alabama Department of Archives & History

**Unframed Images: Photography from the collection of P. H. Polk**  
Dec. 2 - 30  Jefferson Co., City: Birmingham, Venue: Springville Road Public Library

**Alabama Justice: The cases and faces that changed a nation**  
Oct. 30 - Jan. 5  Macon Co., City: Tuskegee, Venue: George Washington Carver Museum

**Making Alabama: A Bicentennial traveling exhibit**  


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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