

YORE LORE

Baldwin County Genealogical Society
P.O. Box 108, Foley, Alabama 36536

Volume 29 No 10

October 2021

Baldwin County Genealogical Society Presents

Presents Guest Speaker

LOU VICKERY

October 9, 2021

**10 a.m. Foley Public Library, Meeting Room,
319 East Laurel Avenue, Foley AL.**



RESERVATIONS ARE REQUIRED for all members for each meeting you wish to attend, deadline dates given for each meeting. Email: BaldwinGenealogy@gmail.com with your name. Confirmation email will be sent. Maximum seating: 50.

Lou Vickery, author, will feature his book, *Alabama Creek Indians*, at the October 9, 2021, meeting of the Baldwin County Genealogical Society, beginning at 10 a.m. He is an Alabama Creek Indian through the Moniac lineage, one of the original of the Poarch Band of Creek Indians Reservation, Atmore, Alabama.

Vickery will present his work on how to “navigate the historical, genealogical and biographical base of the Alabama Creek Indians.” He draws his information from first person accounts, letters, government reports, and records to “paint a beautiful and honorable picture of the Alabama Creek Nation.”

Vickery, a professional baseball player over ten years, graduated from Troy State University, Alabama, afterward spending next thirty years in several business careers. Changing directions, he spent fifteen years as radio host, retired in 2017, then began and is presently hosting a weekly TV show entitled UP TALK.

A family of five children and five grandchildren, Vickery and his wife Dana live in Fairhope, Alabama, where he is captain of the defending state champion Lower Alabama Senior Combo Tennis Team of state teams.

All meetings are open to all interested public.

Web site: <http://baldwingenealogy.org> or Baldwin County Genealogical Society – Home/ Facebook

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Upcoming programs:

Nov 13, 2021 – Jeanette Bornholt, Librarian, Alabama, Local History & Genealogy Collections, Foley Public Library: “*That Lady at the Library’s Genealogy 10*”

Dec 11, 2021 – BCGS Christmas Potluck: “Around the Table at Christmastime”

Obit Committee meet every Wednesday, 1 p.m. in Genealogy Collections Room

BCGS Board Meetings will continue to meet at 9 a.m. Board Room.

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Dorothy Jean Skipper Brown, known to all as “Dot,” died at age of 93 Sept 26, 2021, at her home in Foley. A native of Highlands County, Florida, Dot wore her Florida Cracker heritage as a badge of honor; one of her missions in life to preserve Southern folklore.

In 1970, Dot went to work for the Pensacola News Journal where she was employed as clerk, reporter, editor and finally, columnist. She won first place *In-Depth Reporting* in the Florida Newspapers Editors and Publishers 1984 competition for her series “In Search of Golden Pond”; the series for which she was also nominated for a Pulitzer Prize.

Dot retired from the Pensacola News-Journal in 1984 as a reporter but continued to write her columns, “Dotted Eyes,” and “Family Quest: until 1992. Some of her humor/lifestyle columns were published as “A Cracker Crumb Trail.” the best-selling book in Pensacola in 1986. The

“Family Quest” column led to the organization of the West Florida Genealogical Society of which Dot was honored a Life Member in 1992.

Dot credited the newspaper for opportunities to fly with a Blue Angel, wing-walk on a Super Stearman, land on a British carrier, fly with stunt pilot Byrd Maypoles and thousands of other unusual experiences. She was a member of numerous historical and patriotic organizations including the Daughters of the American Revolution and United Daughters of the Confederacy

In 1987, Dot and her friend, Berdine Rittenhouse were the founders of the Baldwin County Genealogical Society in which Dot was honored as Life Member. Their goal was to introduce genealogical research to anyone who would listen. Today the results of their efforts are seen and used by many in the Foley Public Library's Alabama, Local History & Genealogy Collections which is the largest in the county.

Before her move to Foley, Dot claimed to lead a "quiet life" on Soldiers Creek with her husband, Tom, who preceded her in death. She leaves behind daughter Christa Lea, son Steven Skipper Brown, one grandson and one great-grandson.

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BALDWIN COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY GENERAL MEETING September 11, 2021

MEMBERS/GUEST : 18/5 TOTAL 23 present

GUEST SPEAKER: Paula L. Webb 'Such a Woman-The Life Of Madame Octavia Walton LeVert'

CALL TO ORDER: The General Meeting BCGS was called to order on 11 Sept 2021 at 10:02 am by acting President Barbara Thompson due to the resignation of President Peg Power.

A moment of silence was held in memory of Sept 11, 2001 the 20th anniversary of the attack on the World Trade Center. Barbara introduced the guest speaker Paula L. Webb. After the speaker there was a brief intermission. The meeting resumed at 11:32a.m.

MINUTES OF PRECEDING MEETING- were published in "Yore Lore" and were approved as published.

TREASURE'S REPORT: Tina Graham reported the Aug 1, 2021 beginning balance of \$1,028.31. Deposits for month \$148.00, Expenses \$229.04, leaving a remaining balance of \$942.27 ending Aug 31, 2021.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Membership: Maureen stated we have 5 new members since the August meet. Paula Clements, Diane Irwin, Hahni Jones, Carol Sendal and Jan Sidorovich.

Sunshine: Maureen sent 2 cards, to Evan Strohl informing him of his Lifetime Membership status and a Get Well card to Dot Brown.

Obituary: The obits are up to date

GENEALOGY MINUTE: The Genealogy Minute was presented by Billie Nardell on "How To Write Genealogy Dates"

OLD BUSINESS:

- Reservations may now be made following the monthly meeting for the next month event.
- If you are interested in helping with the Foley Library Halloween Extravaganza to be held on October 23 from 5 to 8 PM please check with Tina Graham.

NEW BUSINESS:

- Peg Power resigned as President due to personal reasons. Barbara will be acting President for September & October, at which time Pat Brummett will finish out the term.
- Life members will be recognized at the December get together as there will be no formal meeting or speaker.
- West Florida Genealogical Society will have its conference Nov. 6, 2021 via zoom meeting. Cost is \$30.00 Registration forms are available in the Genealogy & History room.

UPCOMING EVENTS: The October speaker Janell Duxbury on researching "German Heritage Tracking Down A Family Legend in Mecklenburg-Schwerin" has been canceled for health reasons. The new program scheduled is Lou Vickery, author, "Alabama Creek Indians."

November speaker Jeanette Bornholt "Genealogy 101"

There will be No Board Meeting or General Meeting in December. We will have a Members Potluck with music provided by The Eastern Shore Ukulele Group. The theme will be Christmas around Table.

HOSTESSES: Tina Graham and Pat Brummett were the hostesses for the meeting.

DOOR PRIZES AWARDED: There were 5 door prizes awarded.

ADJOURNED: The meeting was adjourned at 11:45 am to meet again on 09 October 2021 at 10 AM in Foley Public Library meeting room.

Respectfully submitted: Billie Nardell, Recording Secretary

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“WWI & WWII – Memories of Baldwin County”

Baldwin County Heritage Museum presents their annual exhibit honoring men and women of Baldwin County, AL, that served in WWI and WWII. Storyboards featuring letters home, diaries, and other personal articles collected from

individuals and families connect the viewer to the service and sacrifice made during wartime.

The Annual Exhibit is on display from the 2nd Wednesday in October thru the 2nd Saturday of December of each year.

Civilians served as “observers” for the Army Air Corp, worked for the *Office of Price Administration*, and the Relief Effort in foreign countries.

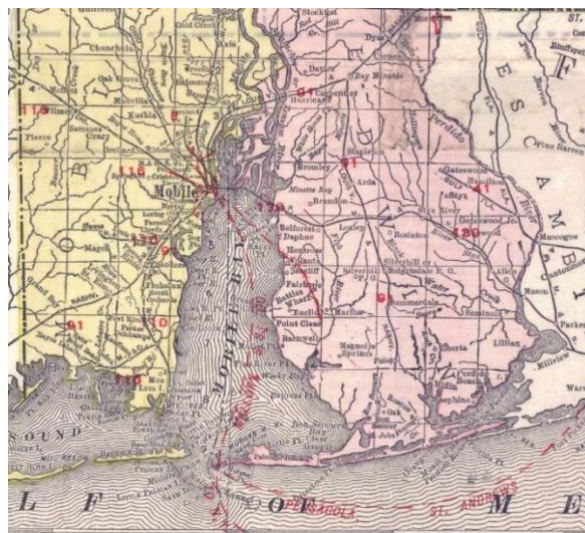
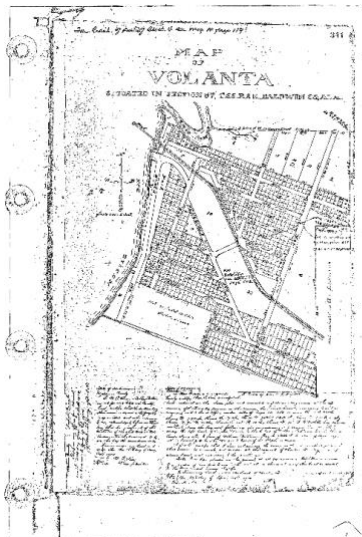
The Home front section features Baldwin County’s Outer Landing Fields (OLF), the Top Secret ‘*Operation Ivory Soap*’ held at the Grand Hotel, POW Camps, and Germany’s ‘*Drumbeat Operation*’ in the Gulf of Mexico.

Baldwin County Heritage Museum was founded by a group of citizens who wanted to preserve the history of the farming community of Baldwin County, AL. John Haupt (of Elberta) donated 5 acres of land for the future museum. Funds were raised by core members and BCHM opened their doors on 31 Oct., 1987, as a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization, and is ran by its Board of Directors elected by its members.

The Heritage Museum is located at 25521 U.S. Hwy. 98 E, Elberta, AL, 3.5 miles east of the Foley Beach Express.

Courtesy of Coletta Bailey

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Volanta, Seacliff,
twin villages in
Baldwin County.

Located nearly side by side, the twin villages, **Seacliff** overlooking Mobile Bay, and **Volanta**, on the mouth of **Bayou Volanta** or **Fly Creek**, are located about a mile north of Fairhope Single Tax Colony.

Volanta map, Section 57, T6S,R2E, note in both village map and above the line goes through Volanta

In May, 1904, articles of incorporation were filed of the **Mobile, Volanta and Pensacola Railroad Co.** partnering of **Charles Barclay, Prescott A. Parker** and **Ira B. Jones** in a proposal to build a railroad from **Volanta** at the mouth of **Fly Creek** to **Pensacola** connecting with **Mobile** by a fast ferry across the bay. Prior in April, a parcel of land had been purchased consisting of 225 acres, beginning of home sites sold to those who chose to live outside the utopia of Fairhope Colony. One of first houses built at “Volanta” as a residence was for **Ira B. Jones**, President of the Mobile, Volanta and Pensacola R.R. Co. **Louis Baldwin** would take charge of the Volanta wharf and a store in connection being built at the land end of the wharf.

In January, 1905, a ‘protest of tenants’, lease holders of the Fairhope Colony dissatisfied with rent rates, presented a petition with “memorial and resolutions” adopted at a mass meeting where grievances were stated; to pressure the Fairhope colony the reassessment of rents. With an exchange of published letters between **E. B. Gaston, Joseph Fels** and **Prescott A. Parker**, **Fels** said he would give **Parker** \$500 if he could prove someone would not be admitted as a member if they signed the proper papers and paid the required admission fee. Parker in turn refused the money stating he could provide affidavits of resident Fairhope individuals who had been denied admission. **Parker** was already a partner in the development of Volanta village just north of Fairhope Colony land.

The hurricane of 1906 that completely destroyed Navy Cove to the south of Mobile Bay, did little damage at Volanta; “wharves were uninjured,” although wreckage was strewn along the beach with a large iron ship beached on western shore (of Mobile Bay) in plain sight. No channel lights visible at night and Mobile was as black as the rest of the horizon. Turpentine interest were ruined as 75% of the timber was down.

Real estate was being sold by the **Mobile, Volanta & Pensacola R. R. Co.** of certain lots or parcels of ground in town of **Volanta**; one of those sold to **Mildred L. Baldwin**. A gasoline launch was built by Mr. **Olson** of Fairhope for **P. A. Parker**. “The

faithful old *Heroine*", built in Glasgow in 1861 for a blockade runner, considered the best boat which ever ran on this route, was able to make time over "the flats" (Mobile Bay) as no other boat ever had, (but) was relegated to the bone yard by inspectors and the fight was between *James A. Carney* and the *Pleasure Bay*. Then the *Fairhope* burned and as a "war measure", the **Carneys** put the big iron *Louis Dolive* into run direct to **Fairhope** and **Volanta**, carrying the mail for these places so as to keep the business of **Fairhope** away from the **Pleasure Bay** and so the **Carney** would not have to stop here in her race for the business at **Battles** south and **Daphne** further north.

By 1910, an article "More Than Location Necessary" in the *Fairhope Courier*, comparison was made between Fairhope and Volanta. While both occupied sites as "beautiful and desirable," there was alarm by Fairhope that the seat of business would transfer to Volanta. Quoting the article, "Nothing came of it." Despite ambitious plans for building a railway with terminals, portion of right of way cleared, wharf and warehouse built, town site platted, post-office secured, turpentine operation, nice dwellings, wagon road opened for farming country, it stated it appeared "Volanta was traveling backward."

In September, 1912, the post office established in 1903 was discontinued with mail going to further south to **Montrose**. Early in 1913, a "company of Chicago people" purchased the Volanta tract of land, incorporated, planned a large hotel, some cottages, golf links, and to build a railroad from Volanta to Bay Minette.

In the *Electric Railway Journal* 'Construction News', it stated in recent incorporations, Mobile, Pensacola Railway & Navigation Company of Mobile, Alabama, incorporated to take over the Mobile, Volanta & Pensacola Railroad. Capital stock \$10,000 Officers: **Charles Barclay, M. H. Miller, W. D. Stapleton**. "The Interurban Rail Road"/ **the Mobile-Baldwin Electric Line** construction under supervision of M. H. Miller, drew interest. The new line would touch practically all eastern shore resorts and the resorts of South Baldwin.

Volanta with its beautiful site along the water continued to attract folks. **Mr. and Mrs. A. A. Wilder** and children, **Mr. and Mrs. Geo. H. Thornton** and children, **Mr and Mrs. James Edward, Mrs. E. L. Wood, Misses Olive Wood, Nettie Pohlman and Irene Bell;** Mssrs **George Staude, H. J. Beranek, Raymond Wood, Erick Larson, Axil Johnson, Sid Jackson,** picnicked at Volanta Sunday on ice cold watermelon, chicken pie and other delicacies so stated the newspaper on July 23, 1915. The weather was great in September as Mrs. **E. L. Jacobson** and Miss **E. Wilkes** chaperoned a party of "youngsters" to Volanta for a week's outing. Those attending were **Caroline, Emma, Reuben and Grace Norman, Walter, Tom and Chas. Hoiles**. The young daughters of Mr. and Mrs. **Mahler of Loxley** joined them for the weekend. The "**Working Band**" class of the Mission Sunday School picnicked at Volanta on Friday.

Today, the village of **Volanta** itself has been absorbed in the subdivisions and suburbs of surrounding towns. Fairhope has a street and park carrying the name **Volanta**. There is a **Seacliff Drive** leading to the bay along Fly Creek, a section that intersect with a lake called Devil's Hole, popular with fisherman for variety of fish. Otherwise it is old postcards such as one mailed on August 24, 1912 postmark "Volanta, Ala.", its picture front shows "Sea-Cliff Alabama, Mobile Bay." With a one-cent stamp, the card was sent by "**Helen Z.**," to Miss **Hazel Rowe** of Bainbridge, Ohio. Hazel's message could be from today: "*We have certainly had a glorious vacation. We are not on the coast. Having a glorious time. Our cottage is right up on this bluff. This was taken in front of our cottage. Have learned to swim and do wonders ...*" Helen wrote.\



Volanta Hotel with twin village of Sea Cliff (overlooking Mobile Bay), both north of Fairhope today the hotel is private home owned by Mashburns

Pensacola & Atlanta passenger station, opened in Pensacola, August 1882, proposed to connect with Mobile, Volanta and Pensacola Rail Road.

Sources: Baldwin County Courthouse Deeds and Records, Bay Minette, AL; University of Alabama Historical Maps, <http://alabamamaps.ua.edu/historicalmaps/alabama/>; "Steamboats to and from the Eastern Shore of Mobile Bay by Kay Nuzum, 1979 to Alabama Historical Association Meeting; Baldwin County Historical Society quarterly; Fairhope Single Tax Corporation Archives: <https://fairhopesingletax.pastperfectonline.com/archive/>; Fairhope Courier newspaper, 1904, 1905, 1908; Baldwin Times newspaper, 1906; Electric Railway Journal, vxlix, 1917, pg 761; <https://app.waterrangers.ca/locations/1705>; <https://www.hookandbullet.com/fishing-devils-hole-fairhope-al/>. Compiled by Jeantte Bornholt, Librarian, Alabama, Local History & Genealogy Collections, Foley Public Library