

# YORE LORE

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

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## Baldwin County Genealogical Society's Holiday Potluck Social Celebration "Around the Table at Christmas Time" December 11, 2021

Music by the Eastern Shore Ukulele Group  
10 a.m. Foley Public Library, Meeting Room,  
319 East Laurel Avenue, Foley AL.

RSVP by December 9, 2021, email your name to  
[BaldwinGenealogy@gmail.com](mailto:BaldwinGenealogy@gmail.com) or call Barbara Thompson 251-424-4681

Bring goodies, recipes, family stories and good cheer to share.  
The Eastern Shore Ukulele Group, lead by Carl Couret, will  
entertain from 10:30 am. to 11: 00 a.m.



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

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:

**January 8, 2020** – "Plantations in Baldwin County" program by Jeanette Bornholt, Librarian, Alabama, Local History & Genealogy Collections, Foley Public Library.

**Obit Committee** meets 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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## NEED HELP IN YOUR FAMILY TREE RESEARCH?

Beginning **October 28, 2021**, **NORMA DeBROW** has volunteered and will be available to assist in researching family trees on regular basis on **Thursday afternoons, 1 p.m. until closing time**, in the **Alabama, Local History & Genealogy Collections** of the **Foley Public Library**, 319 East Laurel Ave, Foley, AL 36535

Come in or if you wish to set up a time, you may contact Norma at her email: [debrowgn@gmail.com](mailto:debrowgn@gmail.com) or call: 318-422-7681.

A member of the Baldwin County Genealogical Society, Norma has been researching two decades and is knowledgeable with DNA results. There are no charges for Norma's expertise in assisting with research.



**BALDWIN COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY GENERAL MEETING, October 9 , 2021**

**New Additions to Alabama, Local History & Genealogy Collections, Foley Public Library**

**Memorial: Dorothy Jean Skipper Brown** by Fort Bowyer Daughters of American Revolution:

*Sketches of Virginia* by William Henry Foote.

**Donation: Baldwin County Genealogical Society:**

*Laura's Family's Letters* Paperback –by Alice Coleman Griffin (Author), Paul Maluccio

*Laura's Letters* by [Alice Coleman Griffin](#)

*Laura's and Her Children's Letters* by Alice Coleman Griffin

**Alabama, Local History & Genealogy Collections grant (partial listing):**

*Family Maps of Dale County, Alabama* by Gregory A Boyd, J. D.

*Mobile,*

*Alabama's People of Color: a tricentennial history, 1702-2002 v. 1* by Shawn A Bivens

*Cemeteries of Dale County, Alabama, 2002* compiled, edited by Mononia Snell

Positive Possibilities Matthew Jenkins, DVM (son of the Jenkins Family Plantation, Loxley, AL)

*Alabama Scoundrels* by Kelly Kazek & Wil Erick

*Alabama Lore, the Choccolocco Monster, Huggin' Molly, the lost town of Cotton Port & other mysterious tales* by Wil Erick

*An Irresistible history of Alabama Barbecue from wood pit to white sauce* by Mark A Johnson

*Lost Towns of Central Alabama* by Peggy Jackson Walls

*Alabama Frontiers and the Rise of the Old South* by Daniel S. Dupre c2018

*Hidden History of North Alabama* by Jacquelyn Procter Reeves c2010

*Claybank Memories, a history of Dale County, Alabama* by Val. L. McGee c1989



**DISCLAIMER:**

The following feature of *Christmas Traditions From Beyond To Here ... Baldwin County, Alabama*, does not begin to cover the many ethnic groups who call Baldwin County home. Thank you, Editor

## CHRISTMAS TRADITIONS FROM BEYOND TO HERE .... BALDWIN COUNTY, ALABAMA

It was coincidence but within two days, two different people used the word ‘Krampus’ in mentioning German Christmas traditions.

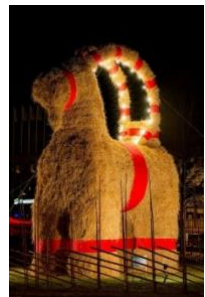


Being of German lineage myself and never hearing the word, naturally I “googled” it, which in turn led to this feature for *Yore Lore*. Christmas traditions from the “old countries” have been passed down generations in Baldwin County, and they are of an ethnic diversity to stagger the mind.

One of the best examples of ethnic diversity is the upcoming “Christmas Celebration,” (previous years called “Christmas Around the World”) exhibit at the **Baldwin County Heritage Museum**, Elberta, Alabama. Christmas decorations, traditional heritage themes from a wide variety of cultures, trees decorated with traditional ornaments are on display from **December 1, 2021 to January 7, 2022**. Decorations spark memories and inspire stories to be shared.

A BCHM tradition this time of year is the Angel Memory Tree, a tree filled with tributes in memory or in honor of friends, family and loved ones, right along with family genealogy. For a donation of \$10 each, an Angel is named and placed on the tree for the one you want to remember or honor with proceeds going directly to the museum to help with operating costs. **Open House will be 10 am to 3 pm on Saturday December 18, 2021**, with a special Facebook live presentation to announce the names honored on the Angel Memory Tree at 2 p.m.

*BCHM Vintage Room*



**SWEDEN** ~ The **Swedish Christmas** symbol has been the Gävle Goat (Yule Goat) dating back to ancient pagan festivals. But, in 1966, the tradition got a whole new life after someone came up with the idea to make a giant straw goat. The massive goat, more than 42 feet high, 23 feet wide, and weighs 3.6 tons, is constructed in the same spot. Since 1966, the 13-metre-tall Yule Goat has been built in the center of Gävle’s Castle Square for the Advent, but this Swedish Christmas tradition has unwittingly led to another “tradition” of sorts – Since 1966 the Goat has been successfully burned down 29 times. While we may not have the Yule Goat in Baldwin County, Swedes keep their holiday decorations natural and rustic, wreaths on doors, hyacinths on tables, candles in every room and straw ornaments. Swedish *smorgasbord* are traditional, and on Christmas Eve Swedes celebrate with a *julbord*; fish features heavily (smoked salmon, pickled herring and lye-fish), plus ham, sausages, ribs, cabbage, potatoes, and, of

course, Swedish meatballs.

*Swedish Yule Goat*



**THE NETHERLANDS** ~ *Sinterklaas*, the **Dutch** name for **Saint Nicholas**, is recognized by children by his long white beard, red cape, and red mitre. The children leave their shoes filled with hay, carrots and sugar for **Sinterdass’s** horse. In the morning, they wake to find treats like gingerbread men, marzipan, and chocolate letters, gifts inside. Lavish dinners on *Sinterklaas Avond* typically include venison or roast goose, roast pork, vegetables, and homemade breads. Boiled chestnuts, fruit, an almond paste bread (*kerststol*) similar to marzipan, and cookies are also popular. Many families bake letter cakes shaped like first letter of each member’s name. Currant buns and rich breads with fruit and nuts (*stollen*) are also popular.

*Netherlands’ St. Nicholas*



**ITALY** ~ In what is a very traditional tradition, the Italians don’t eat meat on Christmas Eve, or *la Vigilia*. Instead they eat a variety of fish dishes – sometimes up to seven courses of seafood! In various Italian cities, and especially in Rome, men known as ‘*zampognari*’ dressed like shepherds, play bagpipes in the squares across town. This was based on the story of the shepherds who visited **Jesus** on the night of his birth and played the bagpipes for him. *Panettone* and *pandoro*, both sweet breads, are popular across the country. But in **Siena**, you’ll find *cavallucci* on offer: cookies decorated with the image of a house - and on a tour of Rome city you’re

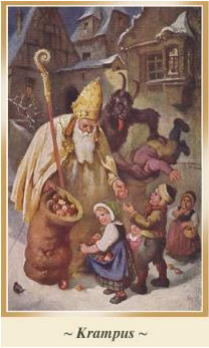
bound to spot someone eating spiced nut pastries known as *mostaccioli*. Many Italian families such as **Guarisco, Allegri, Corte, Bertolla**, in the **Daphne, Fairhope** area, carry on many of the traditions and in past, held open house in churches with an array of Italian pastries and foods, *Biscotti Tostata* or *Torta Tostata* (Anise Toast Slices), *Amaretti* (Macaroons, of course, also Sicilian *Caponata* (eggplant salad or Antipasto) and Chicken *Cacciatore*.



*Vizovické Pečivo*

**CZECH-MORAVIANS** ~ first came to Baldwin County in 1897, first settler being **James Valasak** in Silverhill. In following years, about 250 Czech and Moravian families also settled in and around communities of **Fairhope, Summerdale, Foley, Robertsdale** and some in **Loxley**. On Christmas Eve, the tree is decorated with traditional ornaments, but some families hand make decorations out of flour, water, and vinegar, these ornaments are called *Vizovické Pečivo*. A traditional Czech Christmas dinner, eaten on Christmas Eve, consists of fish soup (carp), fried carp and potato salad. Children will eat in another room away from the Christmas tree so **Ježíšek** (Baby Jesus) will deliver presents to them. Christmas bread known as *Vánočka*, is a beautifully braided sweet bread commonly made with raisins and almonds. It is said that the finished product

of the braided bread is supposed to represent **Baby Jesus** wrapped in cloth. The Czech wife of family friend in Elberta and her daughters would make mouthwatering *Kolach* and *U Dolky* (fruit filled pastry) as well as *Smazeny Zeli* (fried Cabbage) and Potato Dumplings. Awesome friends to have!



~ Krampus ~

Austria/Germany

St. Nicholas & Krampus

**AUSTRIA , GERMANY** ~ Alpine countries have a legend that a devil-like creature called **Krampus** joins their **St. Nicholas** festivities on St. Nicholas Day, (Christmas) December 6. Children are asked for a list of their good and bad deeds: good children are rewarded with sweets, apples, and nuts, and bad children worry what **Krampus** might bring in the morning . (The word **Krampus** derived from German meaning ‘claw’). **From hand-carved wooden nutcrackers to scrumptious stollen, there are many German Christmas traditions, including the hanging of stockings to be filled with treats and the Christmas tree.**

**Heiliger Abend** (Christmas Eve) is day of celebrations for Germans and in **Elberta** which was settled by predominately **Romania, Hungarian and Austrian Germans**. My immigrant grandparents **Jacob and Katharina Frank** family gatherings celebrated on Christmas Eve. I remember my grandmother making **stollen**, typically known in Germany as **Weihnachtsstollen** or **Christstollen**, a fruit bread made with nuts, spices, candied fruit and powdered sugar, much like fruitcake my mother’s southern **Underwood** side would make. **Kiphels** (pecan filled pastry), cabbage rolls with half each of ground pork and beef. Goose was our “turkey” and **streudel** filled with grated apples, or cabbage or sweet potato. **Lebkuchen**, also known as **Pfefferkuchen**, is a delicious honey-sweetened German cake with a tasty sugary top. They go splendidly with an afternoon or morning, or midday, cup of coffee.... or tea. Decorative **nutcracker** figurines, generally made to resemble a toy soldier, is a common German Christmas tradition which according to folklore, were given as good luck keepsakes to the family to protect their home.

Unlike Christmas Day celebrations in England, the Germans know 25th December as '**Erster Feiertag**', which means first celebration day. While the presents will have all been opened on Christmas Eve, the 25th is a still a day where families gather, good food is eaten and people enjoy well-deserved time off work. In my family it is still tradition today, 2021.



**AFRICAN-AMERICAN** ~ The first slaves were brought into Baldwin County at Spanish Fort. Not all slaves worked in fields, some were house servants, cooks, men and women also served in raising and sometimes education their master’s children. Reverend Bracey was one of the main founders of first Black school on Eastern Shore while Florence Mathis was organizer and principal of first Black school in south Baldwin. While the traditions vary by region and culture, in South Africa, most families come together for a cookout, called **braaing** on the holiday. Marinated steaks and **boerewors** sausages serve as the main course, followed by a customary dessert of **malva pudding** (pictured) served with a custard. **New Hope Fellowship Diner,**

Michigan Ave, **Foley, Alabama**, is known for its southern **soul food**, recipes passed down generations such as as the staple southern fried chicken, rice and gravy, and collard greens flavored in bacon or ham or sausage. Cornbread is an original soul food in the south that could pass for dessert. Even the biggest holiday in the south being Christmas would not be without southern fried catfish. Traditional fir Christmas trees are decorated with a variety of baubles included hand-beaded African ornaments.



Swiss' **Räbeliechtli**

**SWITZERLAND** ~ This unique country born in 1291, had some of its citizens immigrate to Baldwin County, a few here before 1920, others later. Familiar names **Lechti, Stucki, Ruegg, Fell, Buchholz, Salzmann, Steiner, Burkahler Rudin, and Baumann**. Among these were bakers, cooks and farmers. Almost every Swiss family bakes several batches of Christmas cookies. And almost every family has a **Swiss Cheese Fondue** recipe which originated as a practical necessity. Cheese and bread, the staples of the Swiss diet, got dry and hard during the long winter months which some inventive Swiss tried to remedy by dunking in hot milk or wine and eventually adding cheese; the delicious mix called '**Fondue.**' **Adventsfenster** or Advent windows are used to count down the days to Christmas Eve.

Advent wreath, **Adventskranz** is usually a decorated circular wreath made of fir branches with four large candles fastened on it. In the end of November, you can see small parades of **Räbeliechtli**, beetroot lanterns, all over Switzerland. Children carve them at school with their teachers and parents, and walk around with them while singing through the villages.



Traditional poinsettias in churches

**HISPANIC** ~ The **Hispanic** ethnic group makes up 5.4 % population from 'Race and Ethnic 2020' for **Baldwin County**. Their holiday celebrations are firmly rooted in **Spanish** and indigenous culture. **El Dia de la Inmaculada Concepcion** honors the Virgin Mary on December 8, the official start of Christmas season in many Spanish-speaking countries including here in Baldwin County. There are luminaries (paper bags with sand and candle), elaborate nativity scenes, dancing and fireworks. **Misa de Gallo** is midnight mass and celebrates the birth of Jesus, often churches are decorated profusely with poinsettias, a Mexican shrub with large scarlet bracts. Foods are as colorful as decorations: **tamales** or tamal-making parties form as making tamales can be pretty time consuming. There is also

roasted turkey, roasted pork leg, **pozole** (traditional soup or stew made with shredded port with hominy.. Also popular, **champurrado**, a chocolate-base atole, warm and thick Mexican beverage prepared from masa de maize, masa harina or corn flour; **piloncillo** (water or milk with cinnamon,, anise seed or vanilla); and **rompope** ( an eggnog-like drink made with eggs, milk and vanilla flavouring) **Pesebres** or **belenes** (manger or nativity) are out in full force. Pinatas, originally introduced in Mexico for religious purposes, as far back as Aztec. Christmas Eve is the biggest feast of the season where everyone gets together, share stories and recap the year.

