

# NEWSLETTER



The Emmy-Winning Television Series  
**DISCOVERING ALABAMA**  
THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA®

*Prattville/Autauga* Documentary



## UNCOVER NATURE'S *Beauty*

Enjoy the natural beauty and history that surrounds our small town and county of *Prattville/Autauga*, a documentary produced by *Discovering Alabama*.

Scheduled June 27, 2019 APT





## Prattaugan Museum

### WORLD WAR I MEMORABILIA AUTAUGA COUNTY

June 28, 2019 will mark the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the signing of The Treaty of Versailles by Germany that would bring an end to World War I (WW I). Subsequently, volunteers have been working on displaying WW I memorabilia of Autauga County residents in the Dragoon Room. Please join us in the Dragoon Room at the Prattaugan Museum for a step back in time. Come on inside and view beautifully displayed items such as a WW I soldiers uniform, a WW I period Bugle and other items from this time period.

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### Prattville Library Donation

We are very excited about the recent donation from the Prattville Library of Prattville Progress newspapers, bound and unbound, dating back to as early as the late 1800's. We are looking for volunteers who would be willing to organize and display the newspapers as an expansion to our current inventory in the Archives room at the Prattaugan Museum.

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### APRIL WALKING TOURS

April Walking Tours begin on April 7 at 10:00. All tours start at the museum. There are 3 different routes that are used during the month, with the last Saturday repeating the first tour given. We need volunteers to help with this project. This is the 16th year of the state program and the 15th year Prattville has participated.

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### Prattaugan Museum Volunteers

We are currently in need of volunteers to come to the museum one day a month to be available to greet and give tours to visitors or to assist travelers with questions and to answer phone calls. Volunteers enable us to keep the museum doors open. Depending on individual interest, there are various organizational projects that can be worked on to include museum inventory, labeling of folders and photographs, re-shelving books in the library, properly storing artifacts, transcribing hand-written diaries, researching information for new museum exhibits and research requests that come in by email or phone calls.

**Call 334-590-6652 to volunteer!**



"Photo courtesy of Montgomery Advertiser "



## Daniel Pratt/Continental Gin Company Preservation Project

written by Ann Boutwell, DP/CGC Project Leader

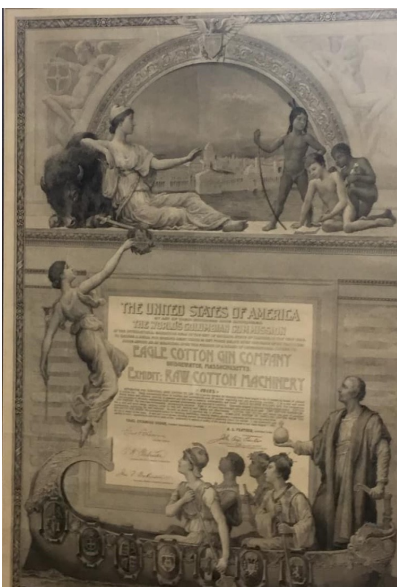
### The Day History Shut Down a Factory

Last Fall ACHA made a connection with the Cahaba Brewing Company by providing vintage photos and drawings of its location in the former Continental Gin Company complex in the Birmingham neighborhood of Avondale. The employees of the beer production company were excited to receive the photos from the 1930-40s and expressed interest in learning more about the gin company. A date was scheduled for a visit to Prattville in January. To our surprise there was so much interest, the company shut down production so all 15 employees could come on the field trip! That's right - the Founder/Brewmaster, the CFO, the Brewers, the Distiller, the Bartenders, the Canner, the Office Manager, the Graphic Designer, the Cellerman, etc. all came to spend the day in Prattville!

The morning was spent at our workspace at Hancock Whitney Bank, sharing the history of the company and buildings. Maps of the 1926 CGC complex were on display along with more photos & catalogs. The group progressed to the Creek Walk where Patty Vanderwal, director of the Prattville Chamber of Commerce, and the film crew from Discovering Alabama joined the tour of historic downtown Prattville. Everyone enjoyed lunch at the Pasta Pizzeria and then ended the tour at the Prattaugan Museum.

While ACHA and Prattville provided southern hospitality to our visitors, they did not come empty handed. The DP/CGC Preservation volunteers were just as pleased to receive a gift of four kinds of the Cahaba Brewing Company's namesake beer!

From the DP/CGC Archival Collection



This beautiful award certificate is approximately 2.5' x 3' framed and is an item in the DP/CGC Collection. Look closely and one can see it is an award to the Eagle Cotton Gin Company in Bridgewater, Massachusetts. The company won the award when their cotton ginning exhibit at the 1893 Columbian Exposition, Chicago's World Fair was judge best in the agriculture category. One might ask "Why is it in our collection?"

In 1899 the Eagle Cotton Gin Company merged with the Daniel Pratt Gin Company and 4 other gin companies to form Continental Gin Company and eventually the records, drawings, patterns, etc from Bridgewater came to the Prattville plant. We actually have the 1892 engineering drawings of this exhibit in the collection! So thankful CGC had the foresight to save these important historical items!

Another interesting note: The Columbian Exposition was planned for 1892 to commemorate the 400 year anniversary of Columbus' arrival in the Americas. The big event was delayed due to tornado destruction of some of the buildings requiring the builders to start over. You may read about this World's Fair in a popular book THE DEVIL IN THE WHITE CITY. There is also a documentary " Expo: The Magic of the White City".



## **Buena Vista** written by Darlene Leistner, Buena Vista Coordinator

My first year back at Buena Vista as coordinator was an exciting year for me, but the upcoming year of 2019 is even more exciting. Seeing the mansion painted once again is almost unbelievable!

The last painting of Buena Vista was about 13 years ago, and I was the coordinator then. So this is amazing that I'm back for the 2<sup>nd</sup> time watching the mansion's much-needed restoration – not only outside, but inside also! It is truly amazing! “The ole girl has not lost her charm”, but is regaining it again! I look forward to a great year serving the individuals who will be renting the house for baby showers, luncheons, family reunions, weddings, bridal teas, etc. If you get a chance, come out and visit Buena Vista. Maybe you know someone who needs an elegant and charming place to have their event.

We had an Open House on December 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> for guests to come and enjoy music by area homeschoolers and to meander around the house. We served light refreshments and drinks. It was a wonderful time! Thanks to everyone who helped out! I hope to do it again in 2019.

Buena Vista is open for Historic Tours Tuesday from **10am to 2pm** or other times by appointment. Donations are accepted. You may also contact us to find out how your wedding, personal or corporate events can become part of the unique history to take place within the walls of this gracious home.

**Contact Darlene Leistner**

**(334) 365-3690**

**Email: [buonavista@autaugahistory.org](mailto:buonavista@autaugahistory.org)**




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**We Love Our Volunteers**



# MANY THANKS TO OUR LOW COUNTRY BOIL TABLE SPONSORS



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**The Autauga County Heritage Association 1st Quarter General Membership Meeting  
on Sunday, February 17th at 2PM at the ACBOE Chapter One Bldg., (directly across from  
St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Prattville)**

**PLEASE NOTE THE LOCATION CHANGE** from past meetings.

The meeting will be held jointly with the Autauga Genealogical Society and will feature a presentation by **Tommy Brown**, who will provide an overview of the Continental Gin Company before Equipment Removal. Tommy has an active Facebook page (Pratt History) that has garnered much interest as he shares local history as well as many interesting facts and photos of our beloved community.

Help us spread the word about this opportunity with everyone you know. Encourage them to come out and get a sample of what preserving our history is all about.

Light refreshments will be served.

**VISIT US ONLINE @  
WWW.AUTAUGAHISTORY.ORG**

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