

PINTLALA HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER

Next Meeting:

October 18, 2026 at 2:30 p.m.
Pintlala Baptist Church

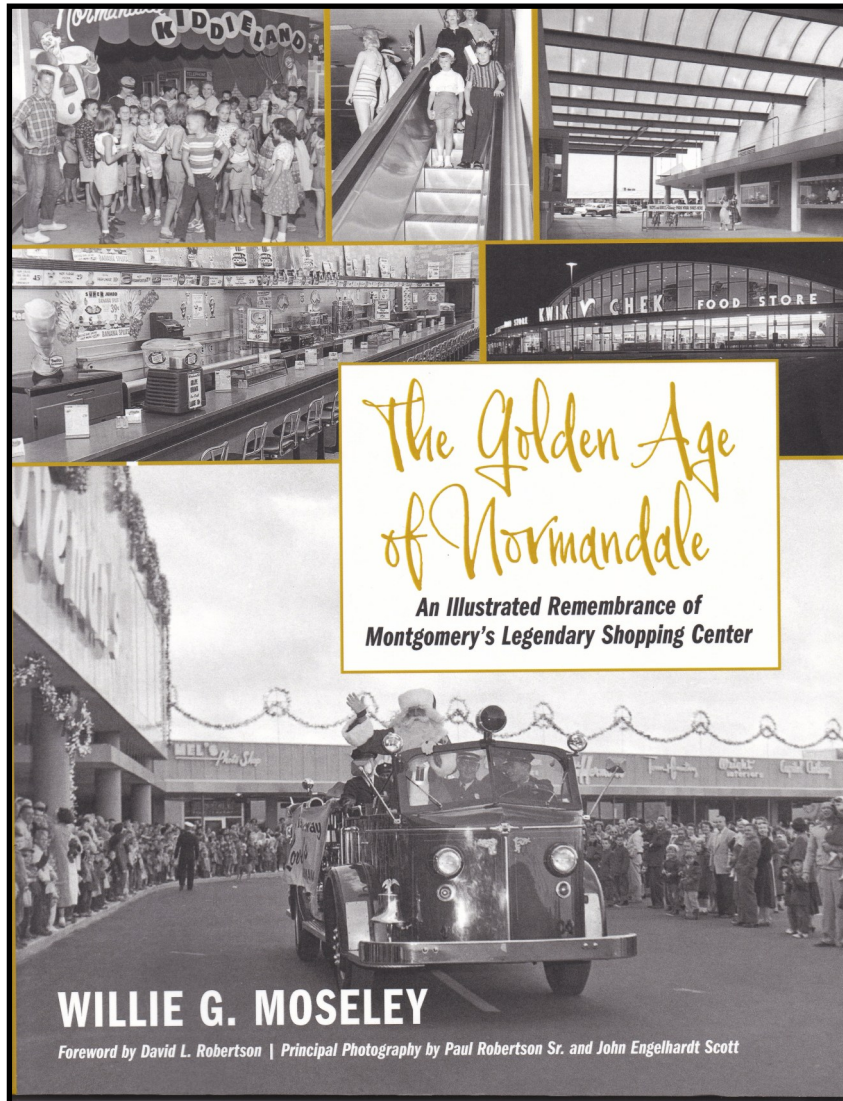


c/o Pintlala Public Library
255 Federal Road
Hope Hull, Alabama 36043

Volume XL, Number 4

www.pintlalahistoricalassociation.com

October 2026



2026 OFFICERS

President Frank Elis (334)315-8927
Program Chairperson. Alice T. Carter (334)281-3708
Secretary Karon Bailey..... (334)224-9631
Treasurer Ina Slade..... (334)284-0337
Parliamentarian &
Place 3..... Jerrie Burton (334)328-6661
Members at Large
Place 1..... Patsy Davis..... (334)220-7004
Place 2..... Daisy Anne Brady .. (334)398-0636
Place 4..... Alan Davis (334)270-8657

TABLE OF CONTENTS

President's Message Page 2
October PHA Program..... Page 2
The Brewer Mausoleum: Montgomery's Hidden Treasure Page 3

President's Message

I hope you all have had a great summer! I know you are looking forward to the fall weather that is coming soon. I am delighted to invite you to our October 18th, 2026 meeting where we will gather once again to celebrate the rich history of our community, this State and region and the people and places that shaped it. Whether you are a longtime PHA member or a first-time guest, we hope you will join us for this memory packed meeting at Pintlala Baptist Church Fellowship Hall at 2:30 where we will learn the history of Normandale Shopping Center.

Frank Ellis
President

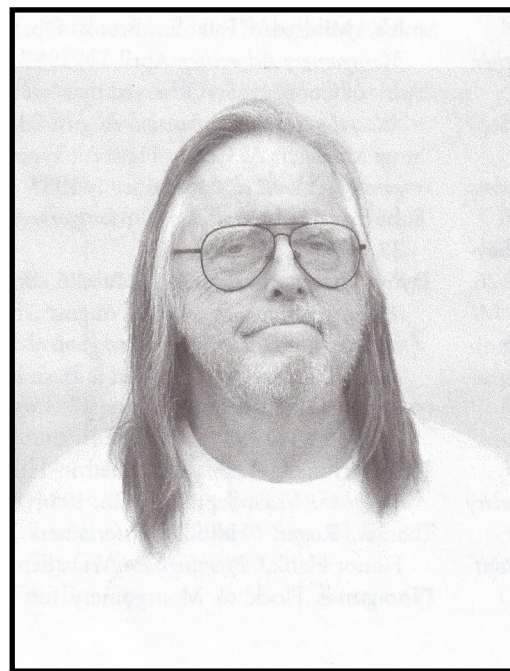
PHA October 2026 Program

Pintlala Historical Association will meet on Sunday, October 18th, 2026 at 2:30 in the Fellowship Hall of Pintlala Baptist Church. Our program will be presented by Montgomery native, Willie G. Moseley, Senior Writer for Vintage Guitar Magazine and author of eighteen books. His topic for PHA will be his current book, *The Golden Age of Normandale*.

The new shopping venue, Normandale Shopping Center, held its grand opening on September 10, 1954. Where were you in September, 1954? I was in Miss Kittye McIntyre's fourth grade class at Pintlala School, likely anticipating a trip to Normandale with my Mom to shop at Loveman's Department Store and lunch at the Francis Cafeteria (lemon ice box pie, no doubt!). So many memories for me, what are yours?

Come learn the history of Normandale Shopping Center from Willie G. Moseley. Also attending will be David Robertson, childhood friend of Moseley and originator of the idea for the book! His Dad was the very well-known Montgomery photographer, Paul Robertson, who has many photographs reproduced in the book along with those taken by another Montgomery photographer, John Engelhardt Scott.

Please attend and bring a guest or two!!.



Willie G. Moseley

Reprinted courtesy of Montgomery County Historical Society

The Brewer Mausoleum: Montgomery's Hidden Treasure

By Richard H. Allen. Nestled behind a large oak tree in the middle of a cow pasture near Montgomery Regional Airport sits one of Montgomery's most beautiful, yet nearly unknown, monuments. According to a 1912 article in the *Montgomery Times*, the Brewer mausoleum was "perhaps the most magnificent



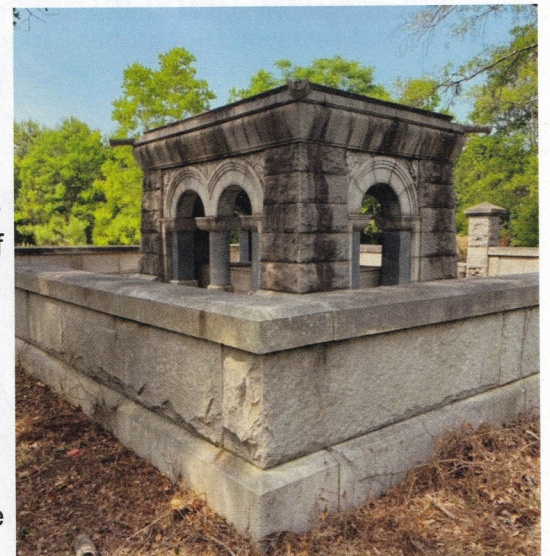
The Brewer Mausoleum. Photograph by Richard H. Allen.

tomb ever erected in the south." The granite and marble Romanesque mausoleum is "about forty by thirty feet of grey granite and costliest Italian marble. The floor of the tomb is of solid, highly polished marble" and "at the center of the tomb are three receptacles for the dead, hewn in solid granite." The mausoleum was designed and constructed by Colonel Willis Brewer. Brewer was one of the most prominent Alabamians of his time. He was a 19th century version of a Renaissance man,

being an accomplished statesman, journalist, planter, author and philosopher.

Thaddeus Constantine Willis Brewer was born on March 14, 1844, on the family plantation in Sumter County, to Robert Willis and Jane Hadden Brewer. Brewer was raised on the plantation and attended the local schools. At age 16 he moved to Milton, Florida, to edit a weekly newspaper. He joined the Confederate Army and served on the staff of General Wirt Adams, but never rose above the rank of private. Because of poor health, he was ultimately assigned post duty, where he performed administrative tasks, including that of enrolling officer and deputy provost marshal. After the war, as an aide to Alabama Governor Robert M. Patton (1865-1868), he was granted an honorary colonelship, by which title he was ever afterwards known. In 1868, he married Mary Baine; the couple would have three children.

During Reconstruction, Brewer became an influential newspaperman and Democratic political figure. In 1865, he became editor of the *Wilcox Times*, a semi-weekly paper in Camden. In 1868, he moved to Hayneville, and established the *Hayneville Examiner*, which he edited until 1880. Under Brewer, the *Hayneville Examiner* stood firmly opposed to Reconstruction policies. The slogan of his paper was "Against the Fools and Thieves in Power". According to his obituary, "[h]is talents as an editorial writer and the fight which he inaugurated in his country to overthrow the rule of the 'carpet-bag' government attracted the attention of the entire State."



The Brewer Mausoleum.
Photograph by Richard H. Allen.

Brewer's status as a well-known anti-Reconstruction editor led to political opportunities. Governor Robert B. Lindsay appointed him treasurer of Lowndes County in 1871. In 1876, he was elected state auditor and was reelected again in 1878. During his term as auditor, he gained a reputation for fighting corruption in state government and for his good stewardship of state funds. When his term as auditor ended in 1880, Brewer was elected to the Alabama House of Representatives, where he chaired the Ways and Means Committee. In 1882, Brewer was elected to the Alabama Senate for the district encompassing Lowndes and Autauga Counties. After another term as senator, from 1886-1890, during which he was



The Brewer Mausoleum. Photograph by Richard H. Allen.

chairman of the Committee on Finance and Taxation, Brewer served another two terms in the lower house of the legislature. During his 18 years in the state legislature, Brewer was known as "The Watchdog of the Treasury" because "not a penny of Alabama's public funds left the State's coffers without being subjected to the closest scrutiny." Governor W.W. Brandon said of Brewer that, "[h]e was the most careful man I ever knew in public life with other people's money. Colonel Brewer was my ideal of a Southern statesman." In 1897, he won the first of two terms to the U.S. House of Representatives, serving Alabama's Fifth Congressional District until 1901.

In addition to his political and editorial roles, Brewer authored books of history and fiction. His daughter, Miriam Brewer Richardson, described his writing style as "crisp, terse, luminous, condensed, cast in the classic mold." His 1872 two-volume history of the state, *Alabama: Her History, Resources, War Record, and Public Men, from 1540 to 1872*, was one of the first comprehensive histories of Alabama and garnered positive reviews. Biographer Thomas M. Owens described this work as "the most valuable general contributions to the history of the state." In 1884, he turned to historical fiction, penning *The Children of Issachar*, a novel that condemned the period of Reconstruction. The novel is set in the fictional town of Granby (which was Hayneville) and compares the plight of southerners choking under the yoke of Reconstruction to that of the supporters of King David who helped drive the Philistines from the land of Israel.

Brewer's later writings touched on subjects ranging from science and philosophy (*The Secret of Mankind with Some Singular Hints Gathered in the Elsewhere of After-Life*, 1895), to ancient history (*Egypt and Israel: An Inquiry into the Influence of More Ancient People upon Hebrew History*, 1910). His metaphysical work, *The Secret of Mankind*, garnered international attention upon its publication. A 1921 *Montgomery Advertiser* article described this book as "so terse and clear as to be almost severe in style" and was "the last word in sociology." In a 1987 article in the *Montgomery Advertiser*, AUM history professor Ben Williams stated that there had not been much research done on Brewer, but that "[y]ou can learn more about him from reading his books. The novel is an excellent book on reconstruction. But you can get some strange notions from the two weird books about his mind. They just threw me. I remember him really being an enigma to me. I could never figure him out." Contemporary critics seemed to agree. One reviewer said of *Egypt and Israel* that "[i]t will do the educated man no harm, but probably much good to read it, while the uneducated man will not be able to read it." Another reviewer wrote that the "years of



The Brewer Mausoleum.
Photograph by Richard H. Allen.

delving and painstaking research evidenced in this book is almost appalling” but that the “portion of the scholarly world that is devoted to the hidden and obscure will find the volume not only valuable but interesting.”

By the end of his public career, Brewer was esteemed as one of the state’s foremost figures. In a 1907 article, the *Montgomery Journal* wrote that “[n]o man in the state has a more distinguished personality or a more distinctly southern one, and there is none whose brains and intellect, culture and learning so forcibly remind of the old South.”

In 1901, Brewer was defeated in his campaign for a third term in Congress. In 1902, Brewer purchased the Cedars plantation, just south of Montgomery.¹ There, he devoted the remainder of his life to literary achievements and looking after his extensive business interests. Although he was known as a formal, reticent man, Brewer would greet visitors to his plantation sitting on the floor, smoking a water-cooled Turkish pipe and

would spend hours corresponding with political figures and newspapermen across the state.

In 1909, Brewer designed and constructed the “Brewer mausoleum” at a cost of \$16,000, which translates to over \$500,000 in 2023 dollars. Approximately 40,000 tons of Stone Mountain granite and marble shipped from Italy² was used in the construction. The mausoleum was adorned only with the name “Brewer” and a winged sun, the Egyptian symbol of eternal life. Brewer must have hired outstanding builders, since today the mausoleum remains in remarkable good structural condition. The entire structure and surrounding wall have remained precisely level, with no signs of settlement or cracking. Brewer chose one of his cotton fields as the location for the family mausoleum. Regarding his choice of location, Brewer’s daughter stated that “[m]y father loved his cotton fields as he loved his family and country. Col. Brewer was offered some of the most choice lots in Montgomery as a place to build the family mausoleum, but he wanted to be buried near his fields and his home.” In a 1935 article in the *Montgomery Advertiser*, Brewer’s daughter wrote that the mausoleum was “Montgomery County’s most famous literary shrines and is annually visited by hundreds.”

¹ In a 1935 article written by Brewer’s daughter, Miriam Brewer Richardson, the Cedars was described as “one of the most famous antebellum reminders in Montgomery County.” Prior to 1865, it was owned by the Knox family, whose home was burned in 1865 by Union soldiers. After the Civil War, the plantation was purchased by Warren Reese, who served several terms as mayor of Montgomery. Brewer purchased the Cedars from the heirs of Reese in 1902.

² While contemporary newspaper articles describe the marble as coming from Italy, one surviving family member, Mr. John Russell of Montgomery, believes the marble was actually shipped from Maine.



The Brewer Mausoleum. Photograph by Richard H. Allen.

Brewer died on October 30, 1912, and was interred in the mausoleum. In an interesting sidenote, Brewer exercised his "terse" literary skills when disinheriting his son. Brewer's will made the following provision for his only son, Willis Brewer, Jr.: "To my inhuman son I bequeath and leave \$5. The law of Christ and Moses is more severe than disinheritance." Brewer may have been justified in his opinion of, and warning to, his son. According to contemporary newspaper articles, in 1904 Brewer's son was indicted on charges that he provided false affidavit testimony in connection with a murder investigation. Those charges were ultimately dismissed. In December 1912, just a few weeks after his father's death, Brewer, Jr. was arrested and "charged with using abusive language in the presence of women." In 1912, Brewer, Jr. was shot and killed by a local storeowner with whom he had an ongoing dispute. The killer was not charged with any crime based on a finding that he had acted in self-defense when killing Brewer, Jr.

In 1940, Brewer's son-in-law, Frank Richardson, was interred in the mausoleum. In 1954, Brewer's daughter, Miriam Brewer Richardson, was also interred.

Brewer's beloved old South, the Cedars plantation, and even his cotton fields, are long gone. No longer do hundreds of people annually visit the mausoleum. Indeed, today the cows are the only regular visitors. Yet, the beautiful monument Colonel Brewer built for the remembrance of himself and his family remains, hidden away and mostly forgotten, like a buried treasure.

The Golden Age of Normandale books
will be available for purchase at the
October Meeting
\$30.00

*Please attend the
PHA Meeting
October 18, 2026*

**PINTLALA HISTORICAL
ASSOCIATION**

*c/o Pintlala Public Library
255 Federal Road
Hope Hull, AL 36043*

NEXT MEETING**OCTOBER 18, 2026****2:30 P.M.****PINTLALA BAPTIST
CHURCH**

Join the Pintlala Historical Association

Please mail completed form & dues to:

Pintlala Historical Association

Ina Slade, Treasurer

15212 Highway 31

Hope Hull, Alabama 36043

Name _____

Address _____

City, State Zip _____

Phone (Home & Office) _____

E-Mail Address _____

Areas of Interest _____

If you are interested in genealogy, please indicate family surnames _____

\$25.00 Annual Dues