

PINTLALA HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

Next Meeting:

January 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 1

www.pintlalahistoricalassociation.com

January 2026



Crew from Montgomery County Engineering Department repairs a county road sign,
From Montgomery County Engineering Department website

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President's Message

As we begin a new year, I am excited and optimistic for what lies ahead for the Pintlala Historical Association. Our shared commitment to preserving and celebrating our rich history continues to grow, and the coming year promises meaningful programs, more chances to connect and new opportunities to learn about our past. Thanks to the dedication of our members and supporters, we are well-positioned to make this another memorable year for the association. A sincere thank you to those of you who made year end contributions. Your generosity is greatly appreciated. I also want to thank Alice, Ina and Jerrie for the work they did to add the email addresses into our system so we can distribute this newsletter electronically, leading to significant cost savings on postage.

With 2026 officially upon us, I would like to personally invite everyone to join us for our next quarterly meeting on Sunday, January 18. This is always a wonderful opportunity to reconnect after the holidays, welcome new faces, and look ahead to the plans and projects we have in store. Your participation and ideas are what keep our organization vibrant, and I look forward to seeing you there as we start the coming year with enthusiasm and a shared sense of purpose.

Thanks,

Frank Ellis



IN MEMORIAM

Mary Elizabeth (Butch) Marler Moseley, (1940-2025)
wife of Pat Moseley, long time members of PHA,
passed away at her home in Pintlala on December 15,
2025.

MEMORIAL CONTRIBUTION

A generous contribution in memory of Miss Lottie
Ree Garrett has been given by her former pupil at
Pintlala School, Mr. Laslie Hall.

FRIENDLY REMINDER

PHA dues are due in January. At the January meeting of 2025 the membership voted to approve a motion to change dues to \$25.00 per year. Many of you paid the new amount, however some paid at the 2024 rate. We did not drop anyone from the membership roles as we move through this transition. PHA needs your support. Ina Slade, treasurer, will be present at the January 2026 meeting to accept your payment. Thank you!

PHA January Program

Pintlala Historical Association will meet on Sunday, January 18th at 2:30 in the Fellowship Hall of Pintlala Baptist Church. Our program will be presented by previously scheduled Ryan Blocker, Museum Collections Coordinator at the Alabama Department of Archives and History. Ryan has served in various positions at Archives for the past fifteen years. As Museum Collections Coordinator she is responsible for the care and preservation of a diverse collection of artifacts. In addition to her responsibilities at Archives, Ryan is a past President of the Alabama Museums Association and was appointed by Governor Ivey to serve on the Governor's Mansion Authority Board.

Ryan is a graduate of Auburn University at Montgomery with a B. A. degree in History and was certified in Collections Care through the International Preservation Studies Center. Her focus for this program was on Textile Conservation and Preservation.

Ryan will discuss a quilt made by a Lee County resident using fabrics from clothing belonging to her extended family. It is great to have Ryan able to be with us on January 18th. A PHA member will bring her similar quilt for discussion.



Ryan Blocker

COUNTRY ROADS OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY, ALABAMA

By Alice Carter

The 1971 hit recording by singer, John Denver, *Take Me Home Country Roads* rings true for Montgomery County residents who live outside the Police Jurisdiction. In 2025 our journeys to “Home Sweet Home” take us collectively over 527 miles of paved roads plus 25 miles of dirt roads and over 200 bridges. These roads and bridges are well maintained by the Montgomery County Engineer’s office under the direction, since 1997, of George Speake. He currently supervises 124 personnel and manages a budget of approximately \$20,000,000.00 (FY 2025-2026).

Establishment of Montgomery County

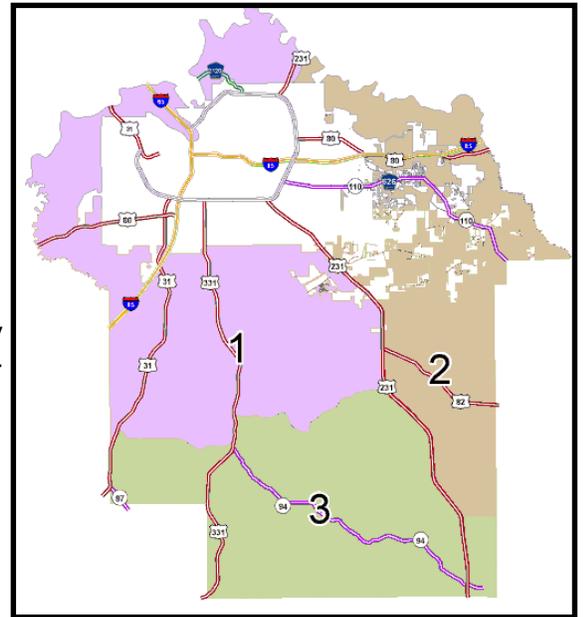
Montgomery County was created in 1816 by an Act of the Legislature of the Mississippi Territory. This Act was created one year prior to Congressional passage of the Enabling Act which permitted the separation of the Alabama Territory from the Mississippi Territory. In 1819 the Alabama Territory achieved statehood. Forty - five years later in Mt. Willing, Lowndes County, Alabama, James Madison Garrett, Jr. was born in 1864. By the time he reached 26 years of age, he became the first man to serve as the Montgomery County Engineer. He was followed by nine more gentlemen, who worked diligently to continue his initial progress for a system of rural roads and bridges.

Vision for Future Good Roads

There were many reasons to plan for more than the original horse paths created by indigenous cultures; more than Thomas Jefferson’s goal to create a postal route from Washington, D.C. to New Orleans, which became known as the Federal Road; more than early dirt roads for the newly invented horseless carriages and more than the eventual need for “farm to market roads” which would be designed for transporting agricultural goods to city residents.

The ten men who worked over the years to establish a system of county roads were fortunate to be introduced to newly developed construction materials and mechanical technologies. These strides aided Montgomery County Engineers, from 1890 to the present year 2025, to produce excellent roads and bridges for safe and pleasant travel in Montgomery County. The County Engineering Department has consistently received top ratings by Federal inspectors.

For management purposes the county is divided into three Maintenance Districts with a superintendent for each. Pintlala is located in District 1 (see map), with Dewayne Sankey as superintendent. The crews for the three Districts are continuously working to keep the pavement patched, repaired or completely resurfaced; roadway shoulders maintained; road right-of-ways mowed, ensuring proper roadway drainage and inspection, maintenance and repair of bridges and road signs. The Montgomery County Engineering Department will install driveway turnouts on a public county road right-of-way at no charge for a private land owner’s property access, as long as the land owner pays for the required drainage pipe, as described by the Engineering Department. Citizens may call the Engineering Department at 334-832-1310 for Districts to contact for the property in question.



Maintenance District Map
Montgomery County

Montgomery County Engineers

Name	Term of Service
James Madison Garrett, Jr.	1890-1909
See obituary, page: 6	
Jacob Thompson Bullen	1909-1910

Jacob Thompson Bullen was born in Louisville, Kentucky in 1872. He graduated from Alabama Polytechnic Institute (same as Auburn University) in 1892; fought in the Spanish American War of August- April 1898; served in 1909-1910 as Montgomery County Engineer ; became District Engineer with the U. S. Bureau of Roads, District 8 which included Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, South Carolina and Tennessee for years 1916-1920; became Parish Engineer in 1920 for Paddo Parish, Louisiana. He eventually became president of the Louisiana State Board of Engineering Examiners. Jacob Bullen died in 1965 and is buried in Arlington National Cemetery.

Thomas Henry Edwards**1910-1965**

Thomas Edwards was extolled by *Montgomery Advertiser* staff writer, Joe Azbell in the April 10, 1955 edition as a “pioneer of the Montgomery County road system, making it a model for other counties.” His vision for Montgomery County’s road system was forward thinking as he realized that the horse and buggy as a means of transportation was to be no more. Edwards had served as assistant engineer to James Madison Garrett, the first county engineer, in Garrett’s last year of service. County Engineers in Alabama were a new position with only one or two other counties trying this system of managing county roads. Joe Azbell wrote that there were no written job descriptions for these new jobs.

Edwards philosophy was “build permanent county bridges and roads “ to meet the transportation needs of mass produced automobiles. Citizens began to realize the need for good roads and bridges—ones that could get them over creeks, rivers, swamps, hills and rocky terrain, wrote Azbell in 1955.

Thomas Edwards’ plan was accepted and slowly his “build it to last” program produced roads and bridges for successful means of “getting there.” A modern road and bridge program for Montgomery County meant a source was needed from which top-quality materials could be dug. A gravel pit was the answer. Joe Azbell again described in the *Montgomery Advertiser* of April 10, 1955 that the county purchased 20 acres in the northwestern – corner of the County. It is my supposition that this purchase may have been around 1925.. The area is near the current Montgomery Police Department’s shooting range. It is not currently an active pit. The expression “one thing leads to another” proved true as the existing bridges were not strong enough to carry the gravel trucks. Rail spurs were used to get the gravel and sand around the county. The system of “build it to last” initiated by Edwards allowed the sturdier bridges to get the county gravel trucks to most areas of the county.

Thomas Edwards retired in 1960, after 55 years as County Engineer. He passed away in 1978 and is buried at Greenwood Cemetery, Montgomery. He contributed much to transportation in Montgomery County.

Harold Edward Meeks**1965-1966**

Harold Meeks graduated from Alabama Polytechnic Institute (Auburn University) in 1947 as a professional civil engineer and worked with the Alabama Highway Department and private industry in addition to his year of service at the Montgomery County Engineer’s Department. Meeks retired as a civil engineer in 1962. He was an active member of Dalraida United Methodist Church in Montgomery.

Joseph Ogburn Holloway (Acting Chief County Engineer)**1966-1967**

Joe Holloway was appointed as Acting County Engineer for a one-year term, 1966-1967 and then returned to the Montgomery County Engineer’s office as Chief Engineer for years 1971-1977, following Ray D. Bass. Holloway worked for more than 20 years with the Alabama State Highway Department.

Ray D. Bass**1967-1971**

Bass was born in 1933 and died in 2007. He was a 1959 graduate of Auburn University as a Civil Engineer and served his country in the U.S. Navy. Bass served in Governor George Wallace’s cabinet twice as Director of the State of Alabama Highway Department for years 1971-1979 and again in 1983-1987. His time as Montgomery County Engineer was prior to his time with the State under Wallace. He also worked as Chief Engineer for Lowndes, Dallas and Tuscaloosa counties. Ray Bass retired as Chief Engineer for the Alabama Department of Transportation in 2005. Bass was active in professional engineering organizations and with the Alabama Independent School Association. He was one of the founders of Lowndes Academy.

Joe O. Holloway**See entry following Harold Meeks****Percy Lamar Hall (Acting Chief County Engineer)****1974-1976**

Lamar Hall spent a total of 37 years of employment with the Montgomery County Engineer’s Office.

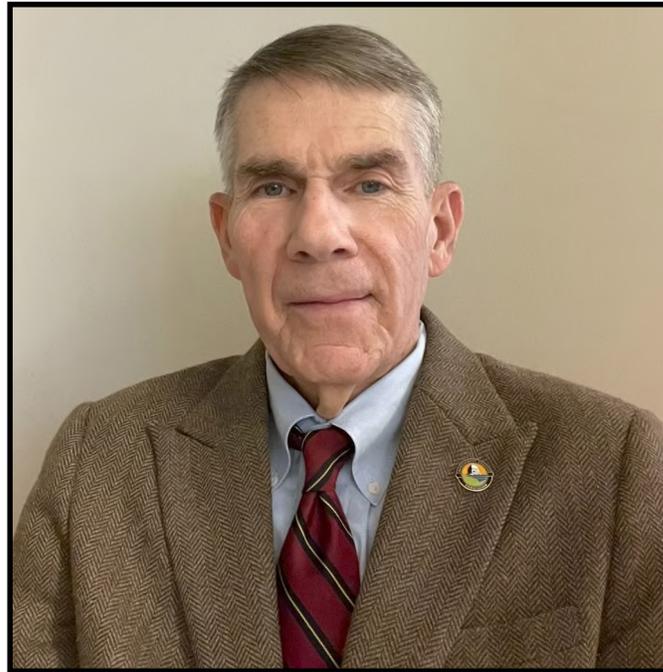
Julius H. (Buddy) Trotter, Jr.**1976-1997**

Trotter was a graduate of Auburn University as a Civil Engineer and was a native of Ramer, Alabama.

George Speake**1997 to Present**

The October 1997 *Montgomery Advertiser* announced the retirement of Julius (Buddy) Trotter, Jr. as Montgomery County Engineer and at the same time announced the appointment of George Speake, former City Engineer, as the Montgomery County Engineer to succeed Trotter. Speake was the City Engineer for 20 years (1977-1997). Speake is a 1975 graduate of Auburn University as a certified professional engineer and land surveyor.

George Speake is also a retired colonel having 38 years of combined military service with U.S. Army Reserve Units and the Alabama Army National Guard.



George Speake, current Montgomery County Engineer
Courtesy Montgomery County Engineering
Department, 2026

Sources:

Bridges, Edwin C. *Alabama : The Making of an American State*. Tuscaloosa, Alabama, The University of Alabama Press, 2016.

Find A Grave at Ancestry.com

Interview with George Speake, October 2025

Website for Montgomery County Engineering Department

Acknowledgements:

My thanks to—

George Speake, Montgomery County Engineer for his time for an interview, October 2025

Jessica Shaw, Administrative Officer in the Engineering Department for answering my follow-up questions

Dr. Tony Hopper for searching Newspapers.com for information regarding past Montgomery County Engineers



James Madison Garrett Jr.

Birth 2 4 Sep 1864
 Mount Willing, Lowndes County, Alabama, USA

Death 20 Dec 1943 (aged 79)
 Montgomery, Montgomery County, Alabama, USA

Burial Greenwood Cemetery
 Montgomery, Montgomery County, Alabama, USA

Plot Section 3, lot 182

Memorial ID 50879741 · View Source



Obituary of James Madison Garrett, II

"J. M. GARRETT, SR., PASSES AT 79, ILL TWO WEEKS
 PIONEER OF GOOD ROADS AND COUNTY ENGINEER HERE FOR MANY YEARS

J. M. Garrett, Sr., 79, a pioneer highway engineer in the southeast and former Montgomery County and City engineer, died at his home at 120 Catoma Street yesterday about 11:30 a.m. He had been in good health up until about two weeks ago, members of his family said.

Born in Mt. Willing, AL, Lowndes County, in 1864, Mr. Garrett married and moved to Montgomery in 1888. In 1890 he was named county engineer and served in that office for a ten year period. At the time he left office it was boasted that Montgomery County had the best roads in the south.

HIGHWAY SURVERY

Early in the 1900's, Mr. Garrett devoted his time to private business and in 1916 he made the first seven or eight Federal highway surveys in the Southeast under the Bureau of Public Roads, which was created under a bill passed by the Congress, and provided Federal funds for roads in State.

In 1924, the late Mayor William A. Gunter named Mr. Garrett city engineer and he held that post until (?). He again entered private business and retired in October, 1942.

By profession, he was a railroad locating engineer and helped to lay the Alantic Coast Line road between Sprague Junction and Luverne.

He was a graduate of Highland Home College and taught there for a year following his graduation.

ON SCHOOL BOARD

Mr. Garrett, besides carrying on his engineer duties for the city, was appointed a member of the School Board in the early 1920's by the late Mayor Gunter.

He was a former member of the Kiwanis Club and a member of the American Society of Civil Engineers and Montgomery Engineers Club.

Surviving are four sons, Col., James M. Garrett, Jr., Fort Leonard Wood, MO; Roy S. Garrett, Montgomery, Capt. George T. Garrett, now stationed in England, and Major Frank B. Garrett, Camp Shelby, MS; two brothers, Samuel Garrett, Detroit, MI, and Will E. Garrett, Lake Charles LA; a sister, Mrs. E. D. Scarborough, Hayenville, AL, and ten grandchildren.

Funeral plans will be announced by Memory Chapel."

REHABILITATION OF 1922 SCHOOL BUILDING

Auburn University hosted a gathering at the local Tankersley-Rosenwald School on September 23, 2025. The 1922 school building has been undergoing a major rehabilitation for the past several months through a Federal Grant provided through the National Park Service. This grant was secured by Alabama Congresswoman Terry Sewell and has been supported by Auburn University School of Architecture. Gorham Bird, Professor of Architecture, Planning and Landscape Architecture led the meeting referred to as a design charette. This charette brought together a diverse group of individuals who are interested in bringing the over 100 year old building up to date without destroying the original character of the building.

Participants in seeking solutions for modernizing the historic school building included students from Auburn University, Western Carolina University in Cullowhee, North Carolina, community residents, former students at the school and representatives of the Pintlala Historical Association. The WCU students have visited several Rosenwald schools in North Carolina, as well as in Alabama, seeking ideas on how other school buildings have been restored.

Issues considered by the charette participants included how to make the school building handicapped accessible, placement of restrooms, possible inclusion of a kitchen facility and multiple meeting rooms. Of major concern was the decision regarding a purpose for the Tankersley-Rosenwald School building, located on School Spur Road in Hope Hull, Alabama.



Alice Carter and Dr. Betty Palmer attended the design charette hosted by Auburn University School of Architecture at the Tankersley Rosenwald School, September 23, 2025. Courtesy Ina Slade



Community members, some of whom attended school in the 1922 school building, attended the design charette in September Courtesy Ina Slade

COMPLIMENTS TO PHA

A gracious message of thanks from Matrilla Hall, a descendant of the Duncan Walter family (See PHA Newsletters, Oct.2021, Jan. 2022, Apr. 2022) has been received and appreciated. Shared below:

Thank you Pintlala Historical Association for connecting me with Mr. Ricky McLaney of Sprague, Alabama.

While searching for my ancestral information, I came across several archived newsletters about the Walter family (my paternal ancestors) on the Pintlala Historical Association website. The newsletter was well formatted and very detailed -including mention of Ricky McLaney meeting with another Walter family member who was searching for family information as well.

I emailed the Association. The next day I received a call from Mrs. Alice Carter who was very pleasant in her conversation with me. Before I could ask about Mr. McLaney , Mrs. Carter said "you need to talk to Ricky McLaney. I will give him a call and ask him to call you." About 15 to 20 minutes later, I was talking to Mr. McLaney—who knew my family (past and present) personally. The call ended with me driving from Atlanta, Georgia to Sprague, Alabama to meet Mr. McLaney in person, on the following week-end. It was worth the drive.

Mr. McLaney is a wealth of information for Sprague and its surrounding area and a delightful person to talk with. Yes, I have taken the long route just to say the Pintlala Historical Association and its members were a valuable resource for their willingness to help with my search to fill the gaps in my ancestral tree.

Many thanks to the Pintlala Historical Association and its members (Mrs. Alice Carter and Ricky McLaney) for their willingness to help with my Alabama ancestral search.

Blessings, Matrilla Barnes Hall



Matrilla Hall and Ricky McLaney. Courtesy Matrilla Hall



**PINTLALA HISTORICAL
ASSOCIATION**

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



NEXT MEETING

JANUARY 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