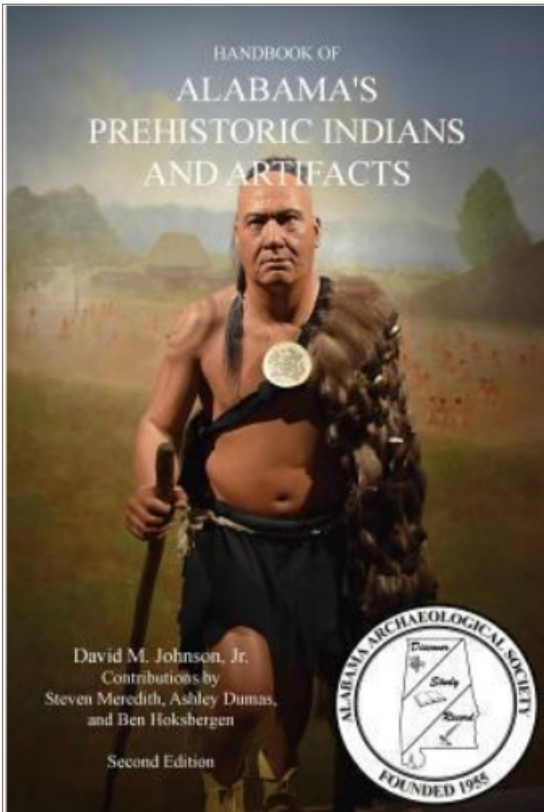


THE VOICE

of the *Chattahoochee Valley Historical Society and Cobb Memorial Archives*



Cover of *Handbook of Alabama's Prehistoric Indians and Artifacts* by David M. Johnson, Jr.

The Spring program of CVHS will be held virtually on April 28th, at 3:00 PM (EDT). Our presenter will be David Johnson. Mr. Johnson is an “avocational archaeologist,” meaning that he came to practice archaeology outside of the traditional profession. In spite of not being an “official” archaeologist, he works very closely with the Alabama Archaeological Society. His area of specialty concerns the prehistoric indigenous populations of Alabama. He has published several books over the years and given many presentations throughout Alabama (and also Mississippi and elsewhere).

he consulted local professional archaeologists. They showed him the proper ways of cataloging and recording their discoveries for the purposes of preservation and education. Through working with them (and learning how they carried out their practice), David became personally enraptured in the world of amateur (or as he calls it, “avocational”) archaeology. He began to realize that others like

"ARCHAEOLOGY FOR DUMMIES"

His presentation for us will be entitled “Archaeology for Dummies” (not an insult to those in attendance, but rather a play on the title of various media that break down complex fields and concepts for unfamiliar readers). David Johnson originally worked for the Alabama Department of Transportation. The discovery of prehistoric artifacts on his private property, however, led him to become fascinated by the field of archaeology. Realizing that he, a layperson with no previous experience or training in archaeology, was ill-equipped or prepared to handle these artifacts properly,

him (with no previous archaeological training or expertise) would need the same know-how and assistance should they also discover prehistoric artifacts. While continuing his work with ALDOT, he also began sharing this newfound passion with other “lay people.”

David has authored many books, most notably the *Handbook for Alabama's Prehistoric Indians and Artifacts* (Borgo Press, 2019). This work also saw contributions from many of the professional archaeologists in the Alabama Archaeological Society. The work contains many full-scale photographs, geographic distribution charts, and detailed descriptions of various artifacts (such as prehistoric projectile points). Due to the popularity of the book in Alabama, he was also asked to publish a similar catalogue for Mississippi as well (which he will be discussing in his presentation, as it has recently been published).

Retired from the Alabama Department of Transportation, David and his wife April volunteer working with different

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THE CHATTAHOOCHEE VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY QUARTERLY MEETING

Sunday, April 28th, 2024

3:00 PM Eastern (2:00 PM Central)

VIRTUAL MEETING

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE *by Jason Williams*

Spring is a time of renewal and hope. Over the last few years, we have all had to change our approach to connecting with our family, friends, and team members. The CVHS has been no different as we had to convert to remote meetings for a time. We hope to continue to hold more in - person meetings in the future but still offer remote/virtual options for those members outside the local area or who may be unable to travel. As always, we are open to your feedback on how we may better connect

and serve you all as fellow members. Please let us know if you have any suggestions as to topics for future meetings, locations for in - person meetings and how we may continue to improve the society. Please renew your CVHS Membership for 2024. We have enclosed a membership renewal form for those members who still need to renew. Thank you for continuing to preserve our local history, stories, and traditions!

**THERE'S STILL TIME
TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP!**

ARCHAEOLOGY FOR DUMMIES - *continued from front page*

archaeological projects and providing educational presentations to schools and other groups regarding archaeology and prehistory. He is also currently working with many Native American groups to help preserve various Native archaeological sites on Chandler Mountain in St. Claire County, AL from local developers' plans to create a massive dam project.

Our virtual presentation will last approximately one hour (with David's power points lasting approximately 45 to 50 minutes). The presentation will expound upon his work on the two archaeological works (for Alabama and Mississippi) as well as an overview of how "avocational" archaeological enthusiasts can participate and experience

the world of archaeology in an official, responsible manner (respectful of the cultures and peoples whose artifacts are being discovered). His is a tale that exemplifies the potential that exists when professional archeologists endeavor to include ordinary lay people through educating and mentoring nonprofessionals.

Join us for this very informative and interesting presentation on April 28th. To attend this virtual meeting email ccpowers02@gmail.com prior to 12:00 PM noon (EDT) on Sunday, April 28th. You will then be sent the Zoom link with instructions regarding how to join the meeting.

The VOICE is a quarterly newsletter of the Chattahoochee Valley Historical Society, Inc., P.O. Box 718, West Point, Georgia 31833

Editor: Ron Williams (hopewellroad@yahoo.com)

Find us on Facebook and visit our website at <https://cvhistoricalsociety.org/>

MISSION STATEMENT: As a non-profit membership organization, the Chattahoochee Valley Historical Society seeks to preserve and promote the history and heritage of Chambers County, Alabama, West Point, Georgia, and the greater Chattahoochee Valley area. CVHS produces and sells historical books and media, publishes a quarterly newspaper, and presents programs with speakers on historical topics of local and regional interest.

VISION STATEMENT: Having been in continuous operation since its founding in 1953, the Chattahoochee Valley Historical Society strives to uphold the vision of its founders while posturing the organization for growth in the 21st Century.

THE LEGEND OF THE STANDING ROCK

by Ron Williams

It is not hard to figure out where the little village of Standing Rock, in Chambers County, Alabama, got its name. The proof is right there alongside the road.

The large sandstone rock that lends the village its name is shrouded in legend. According to some, the rock was placed there by the Creek Indians as they moved West on the Trail of Tears.

All along the route, the story goes, the Indians marked the path, but at the place that would one day be called Standing Rock they did a little more. The Native Americans set this large sandstone rock upright with the command that it should never be



moved. Around that promise a legend grew—if the rock was moved disaster would follow.

Robert Gray, in an August 20th, 1987, article by Virginia Smith in the Columbus Ledger and Enquirer, stated that things began to pick up for the sleepy village of Standing Rock in the early days of the 20th century.

“Fuller Callaway Sr. toured the route and cooperated with local landowners for the incorporation of Standing Rock. Lots were established and business houses and homes increased. Then the Chattahoochee Valley Railroad came to Standing Rock to haul cotton to the Valley area. The railroad also brought the Sunday newspapers and the whole town would meet the train to get the papers,” stated Gray.

“Standing Rock then acquired a post office with Cornelius Hines as postmaster in 1899. There was a lot of traffic for the time on the Roanoke-LaGrange Road. Then things began to decline, and some said it was because the rock was moved. They said the rock should have been left in the original place...”

Was there something to the Indian tale that dated back 100 years? Should the rock that marked the path back to the native lands have ever been moved? We may never know.

It is said that the Callaways of LaGrange had big plans for Standing Rock. They were going about big business, and part of that business included moving the ancient marker. They moved the standing rock in 1929 and it wasn't long after this that the stock market crashed, and the time known as the Great Depression engulfed the little village of Standing Rock and the rest of America.

Needless to say, the Callaway's plans for the village were put on hold, never materialized, and the village once again became a quiet place. Coincidence? We may never know.

■

MY ROLE IN THE FILM “SELMA” HONORS BRAVE VALLEYANS

by James Patterson

Ten years ago, during Father’s Day weekend, I was in Atlanta filming scenes for the movie “Selma.” The exterior of the Georgia Academy of Medicine served as the State Capital in Montgomery. British actor Tim Roth was cast as Governor George C. Wallace. I was cast as a print reporter.

There were three marches in Selma in 1965. The first march, “Bloody Sunday,” ended in violence on the Edmund Pettus Bridge. The second march, “Turnaround Tuesday,” was called off to prevent violence. President Lyndon B. Johnson federalized Alabama’s National Guard for the successful and final Selma to Montgomery march.

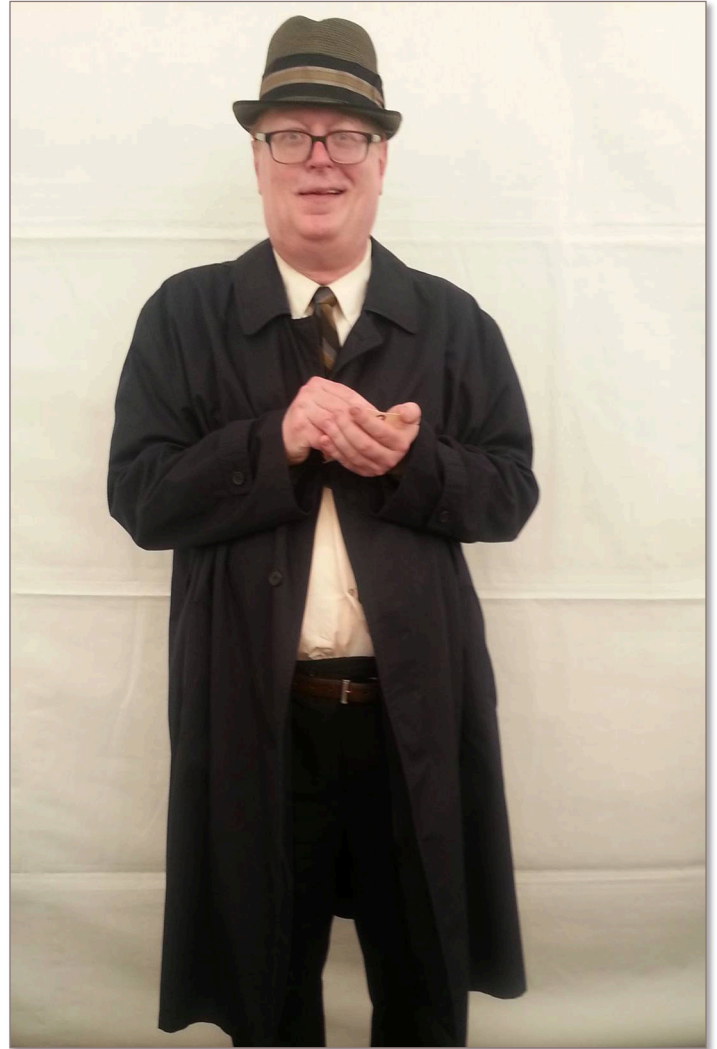
When I was offered a role in the award-winning film, I wanted to honor my late father. I wanted to be cast as a National Guardsman.

In 1965, Dad served with Alabama’s Army National Guard for the Selma to Montgomery march. I wanted to honor my dad for his courageous service to Alabama.

After several negotiations with the casting director, I was cast as a print reporter. This was fine with me.

Alabama’s Army National Guard played an important role in the third Selma march. In the film, the producers used actual 1965 black-and-white news footage of Guardsmen in Selma. These scenes were effective.

As a 10-year-old in 1965, it seemed to me that Selma was the biggest news story in America. Our small-town Alabama household subscribed to several newspapers, including our local newspaper, The Valley Times-News. Additionally, we subscribed to The Montgomery Advertiser, The Birmingham News, The Atlanta Journal, and The Columbus Enquirer. Relatives in Boston sent us clippings of editorials and op/eds from The Boston Globe and The New York Times. We read and discussed a variety of editorials and op/eds about the Selma march.



James Patterson in costume for his scenes in “Selma”, which were filmed in Atlanta on Father’s Day weekend in June 2014.

In June 1963, my father’s Guard Unit, located at Fort Harold Calhoun in small, unincorporated Fairfax (now Valley), Alabama, in Chambers County, was federalized by President John F. Kennedy to integrate the University of Alabama at Tuscaloosa (UA-T). Dad’s unit was called Dixie.

In Alabama’s segregation era, for a Guard Unit proudly named Dixie and comprised of all white men to go to Tuscaloosa to support African American students register for university classes is a reminder of our complicated racial history in Alabama.

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MY ROLE IN THE FILM "SELMA" HONORS BRAVE VALLEYANS - continued from previous page

To prevent the racial integration of his alma mater, then-Governor Wallace went to Tuscaloosa to physically prevent integration. He declared he would stand in the schoolhouse door to stop integration.

In a tense moment watched by the world, Wallace failed to save segregation. The powerful news footage of Wallace stepping aside to allow the Black students to register is as dramatic today as it must have been in 1963. It took brave, courageous, and patriotic students and Guardsmen to help officially end segregation without violence at UA-T.

In March 1965, at the insistence of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., President Lyndon Johnson issued an Executive Order titled Providing Federal Assistance in the State of Alabama. It authorized Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara "to use such of the Armed Forces of the United States as he may deem necessary" due to the "likelihood of domestic violence and obstruction" of the Selma to Montgomery civil rights march.

Johnson's order authorized "any or all of the units or members of the Army National Guard and of the Air National Guard of the State of Alabama to serve in the active military service of the United States until relieved by appropriate orders." Dad's Dixie Guard Unit was among those called into service for racial justice at Selma. Selma was one of the most dangerous domestic military actions in American history due to FBI intelligence that the KKK intended to violently end Dr. King's civil rights campaign in Alabama.

Several Guard and U.S. Army personnel who served at Selma told me over the years that their service in Selma was more dangerous than in Korea. The five-day, 50-mile march required participants with courage and faith. Dr. King and his followers had both, as did Alabama's National Guard.

My father died in 2003. In 2014, I wanted to honor him with a role in "Selma." My role as a print reporter honored my dad. It also honored many brave journalists, Black and White and male and female who courageously risked their lives to report from Selma. May they all have eternal peace.



James G. Patterson, US Army Korea

Alabama's Latin state motto translates to We Dare Defend Our Rights. Alabama's National Guard defended the rights of Alabamians to attend the University of Alabama in 1963. In 1965, the Guard defended the rights of Alabamians to march peacefully from Selma to Montgomery for voting rights. The era's journalists reported on Alabamians defending their Constitutional rights.

My father was proud of his Guard service. I am proud my dad dared to defend the civil and voting rights of all Alabamians.

James Patterson, a life member of the Auburn University Alumni Association, is a member of the Alabama State Society of D.C.



LANETT STADIUM CELEBRATES 50 YEARS: 1973-2023

By Wayne Clark

2023 was an anniversary year for the Lanett High football field. Now known as Morgan-Washburn Stadium, the outdoor sports arena opened in the fall of 1973. It was built right next to the high school at a cost of only \$225,000, an extraordinary low figure in today's dollars for any kind of decent football stadium. Even at a half-century of age, Morgan-Washburn would have to rate as one of the better stadiums in the state for a 2A high school.

Chambers County Attorney Skip McCoy was a member of the Lanett High team to have played for the Panthers that first season.

It almost didn't come about that year.

"Radford Siggers was the president of the Lanett High Quarterback Club at the time," McCoy recalled. "In January 1973 he approached the Lanett City Council about building a new stadium next to the high school. Looking back on it, it's amazing to me how you could do what was done in less than a year."

In the early to mid-1960s, the city had purchased some land from the Barrow family to build a new high school. That building opened in 1965 and still serves the community as Lanett High. There was ample room on the south side of that property to build a new football stadium to take the place of aging Jennings Field, the place where LHS teams had played for many years. From 1920 to 1946, the athletic venue was known as Lanett Park. Baseball was king in those days, and Lanett Park was home to the much beloved Valley Rebels. In 1946, the stadium was renamed Jennings Field in honor of Lanett Mill Superintendent Reuben W. "Rube" Jennings, a huge supporter of the Rebels, local Scouting, and community recreation.

It made sense for Lanett to build a new stadium next to the high school. The land was available, and it would be convenient to have everything in one location.

A key factor in getting it done in less than one year was the fact the city had a renaissance man by the name of Jack Henderson who was the street superintendent at the time. "He was the kind of man who could do anything," McCoy said.

Siggers met with the council on January 15, 1973 to tell them of the Quarterback Club's plans. He told them that fundraising was under way to cover the costs of building a new stadium and that they'd raised enough money to

have a new field, to crown it properly, to irrigate it and to have the needed fencing. He asked the council for their support and to provide the kind labor to help get the work done. Siggers told them that another \$30,000 would be needed to have an estimated 3,000 seats made of pre-cast concrete on the home side. Another \$50,000 would be needed to build the restrooms, concession stands and a press box. Mayor Reid Kent, who had been a star running back at Lanett High in the late 1920s, gave his enthusiastic support. "We commend the Quarterback Club for its efforts," he said. "We are behind this project 100 percent. Show us your determination to follow through with it, and we will do our part."

Siggers told the mayor and council that evening that he hoped the stadium would be ready by the start of the 1973 season; if not by then by 1974.

Much work was done over the spring and summer to have the stadium ready for the '73 season. "Our first game was to be against Opelika, who was one of our long-time rivals back then," said McCoy, who was a junior tight end on the team. "The stadium wasn't ready by then, and we were then hoping to have our first game in the new stadium a couple of weeks later versus Troy."

It looked promising for the first game when that week rolled around. A huge crowd was present for the inaugural game. No one paid much attention as the evening turned to twilight, but when the hour approached 8 p.m. kickoff time the lights had not come on and the big crowd was sitting in the dark.

"We weren't aware of what was going on outside," McCoy said. "It was daylight when we had gone outside to go through warmups. It was still daylight when we went back to the locker room. Our head coach (Tony Lunceford) went out to meet with the officials. He told us he'd soon be back to lead us out on the field. Ten, fifteen minutes, and a half hour later he had not come back. "It was past 8:30 when he came back and told us the lights would not come on and that we had to go over to Jennings Field to play the game," McCoy said.

That meant walking over to the old stadium and crossing Highway 29. "I will never forget doing that," McCoy said. "The first person I saw inside the old stadium was Isom Corley, the long-time custodian of Jennings Field. He was an old man by that time and was

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ready for bed. ‘What are all of y’all doing here?’ he asked us. We explained about the problem at the new stadium and that the Panthers would get to play one final game at Jennings Field.”

McCoy noticed a man out on the field hard at work. It was the city’s recreation director, Richard Ballard. “He was lining off the field,” McCoy said. “He was busy with the chalk machine. The field had to be ready for play for a game to start.”

Ballard had already worked overtime getting the new field ready for play and had done a superb job of it. “At midfield he had big, brown football with LHS in huge letters inside it,” McCoy said. “Later on when Morgan-Washburn Stadium was dedicated he had a big black and gold L in the middle of the field and had done a nice job with both end zones. We always thought a lot of Richard Ballard. He had a big influence on us when we were in youth recreation. He molded us when we were kids, and our high school coaches took the next step in turning us into young men.”

Ballard recently passed away.

Understandably, the game between Lanett and Troy got off to a very late start. “We were in a scoreless tie at halftime, and Coach Lunceford really lit into us in the locker room,” McCoy recalled. “He had us fired up when we took to the field in the second half”

A little bit in the way of motivation from the head coach did wonders. Lanett won the game 27-0.

“It must have been around midnight when the game ended,” McCoy said. “We were going to have a dance after the game, but it got canceled due to the lateness of the evening.”

The delays in getting to play on the new field caused Jimmy Johnson, then of the Opelika-Auburn News, to draw a cartoon depicting a disgusted-looking Panther in a football uniform lighting up the darkness with a candle. He was next to a sign with the new stadium’s schedule. The September 14th game with Opelika had been crossed out along with the September 28th game with Troy. Next on the schedule with an October 12th game with Sylacauga.

Johnson, a 1970 LHS graduate, is now nationally known for his “Arlo and Janis” comic strip. His younger brother Vic Johnson was a defensive end on that 1973 team.



Why was it the lights didn’t come on that night? “When the city was doing some final dressing up for the game,” McCoy said, “they were doing some work around the fence bordering the track around the football field. They accidentally severed an electric line that powered the lights. We had practiced under the lights the night before the game, and we were all excited about playing a game there the next night.”

Fortunately, it was a problem that could easily be fixed before the next scheduled home game against Sylacauga. Making the night extra special was that it was homecoming.

Everything would go off without a hitch in that game, and Lanett won, 10-7. The Panthers led 3-0 at the half before the visitors took a 7-3 lead in the third quarter. Lanett rallied late to win the first game in the new stadium.

“The first points scored in the new stadium were by Joe Lance,” McCoy said. “He was our fullback and our field goal kicker. He was the son of W.O. Lance, who had been a principal at Lanett High and later on the superintendent. The elementary school is named for him today.”

After Sylacauga had taken a 7-3 in the third quarter, the Panthers went back ahead 10-7 on a four-yard run by Lance and his extra point kick.

“Sylacauga was really good back then,” McCoy said. “We knew we’d be in for a tough game, and it meant a lot for us to come out on top in the first game in our new stadium. Joe Lance scored all the points for us in that game. He had a touchdown run, the extra point and had kicked a field goal in the first half. After beating Sylacauga, we went on to win another game in the new stadium. We beat Eufaula 13-8.”

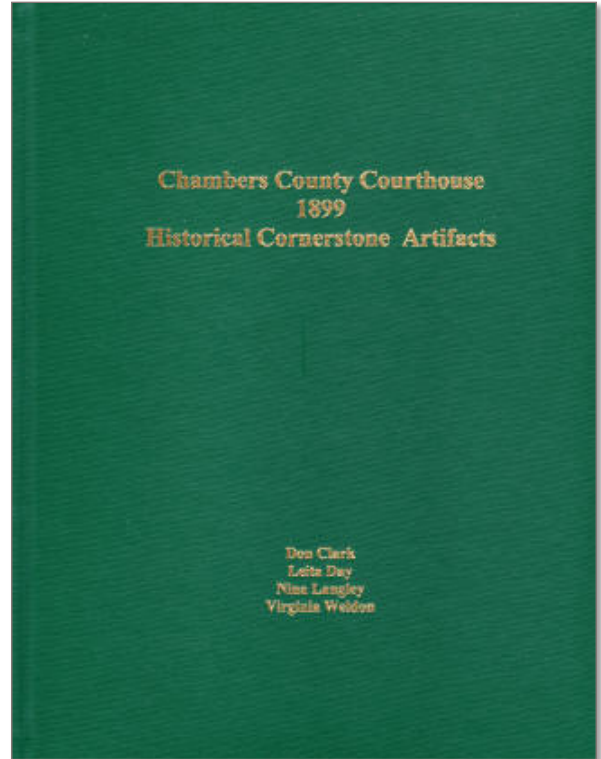


\$25 *Chambers County Courthouse 1899 Historical Cornerstone Artifacts*

Chambers County Courthouse, 1899: Historical Cornerstone Artifacts. Features artifacts removed in 2003 from time capsule placed behind the Masonic Cornerstone on the N.E. corner of the present Courthouse and sealed on June 24, 1899. Biographical sketches of individuals who placed items inside have been included in the book where information was available. Don Clark, Leita Day, Nina Langley, and Virginia Weldon, editors. Copyright 2004. CVHS Publication No. 25.

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