

# FG/CCHS NEWS



Preserve, Protect, Promote

FORT GAINES/ CLAY  
COUNTY HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY

SPECIAL POINTS  
OF INTEREST:

- 78 Lifetime, new and renewed members strong.
- Plaques are in place on Bluff Fence
- Annual Dinner Planned
- 2023 Birthday Calendar planned

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Late Winter / Spring 2022

## Steamboat W.C. Bradley

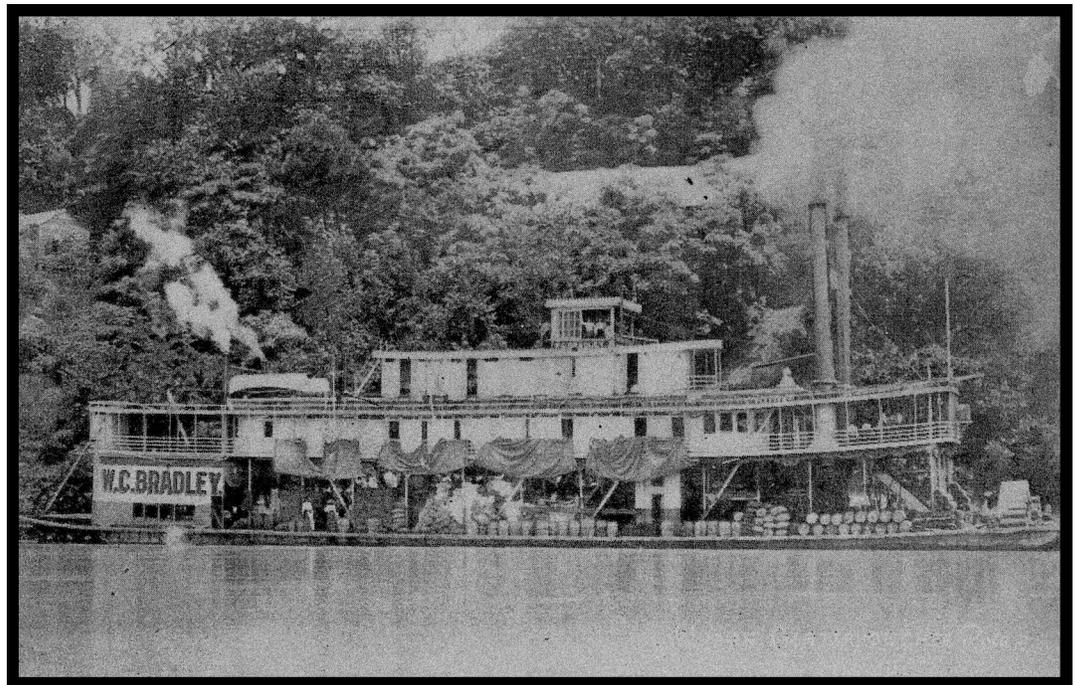


Photo from the files of J.E. Coleman

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### The W.C. BRADLEY at the steamboat landing in Fort Gaines

As reported in the New Georgia Encyclopedia, in 1885, W.C. Bradley (1863-1947) "left his father's cotton plantations in Russell County Alabama and moved to Columbus, Georgia and began his legendary rise in the annals of Georgia business."

Among his many ventures, he invested in steamboats that hauled groceries and fertilizer down the Chattahoochee and Apalachicola Rivers and returned to Columbus with loads of cotton for his textile mills.

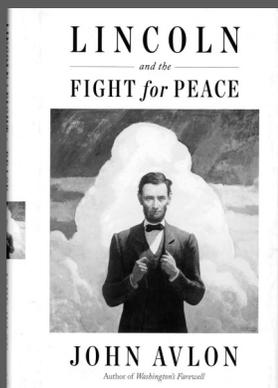
The sternwheeler W.C. BRADLEY was built in 1898 in Columbus. Its first home port was Apalachicola. After two decades of service, it sank in 1919 at Aspalaga Landing in Gadsden County near Quincy, Florida. According to Etta B. Worsley, the event occurred during the time of the "Pershing Flood" named for a coincidental visit to Ft. Benning and Columbus by Gen. John J. Pershing. (cont. pg.5)



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Douglas Brinkley



## News and Notes

- The next **Board Meeting** of FG/CCHS will be held at the Sutton's Corner Museum at 4PM on **Monday May 2, 2022**. All meetings are open to the public and we invite you to attend.
- Thanks to all who promptly paid their 2022 dues.
- If you would like to schedule an individual or group tour of the **Sutton's Corner Museum** please call **229-231-5498** or stop by the library and talk to Dustin.
- Linda Morgan would like information about the **communities of Killen and Pecan**. Can anybody help?

### GIFT ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Jerry Weaver	Betty Jane Mills	A <u>very special</u> thanks to all of Douglas William's kinfolks who donated to help defray printing costs for the 2022 calendar.
Norma Driebe	Larry Brown	
David Cooper	Linda Morgan	
Carol Binns	Allen Brown	
Betty Clewis	Penny Maestretti	

## 2022 FGCCHS Annual Members Dinner Meeting

**We are happily planning our annual meeting for Saturday May 14, 2022.**

**As always it will be a potluck supper with the Board providing fried chicken and beverages.**

**See the flyer in this issue for particulars.**



## 2023 Community Birthday and Event Calendar

We are planning next year's calendar and want to make sure all members have the chance to participate by purchasing calendars and listing birthdays. If you live in Fort Gaines or Clay County, someone will be in contact in late May or June. If you are a member and live out of the county, here is your chance for mail order purchase.

Price per calendar: \$10.00

Mailing and postage per calendar: \$3.00

Price per birthday entry: \$1.00

Included in this issue is an order form for the calendar with pertinent information. The deadline for mail orders is on that form.

### Steamboat FORT GAINES

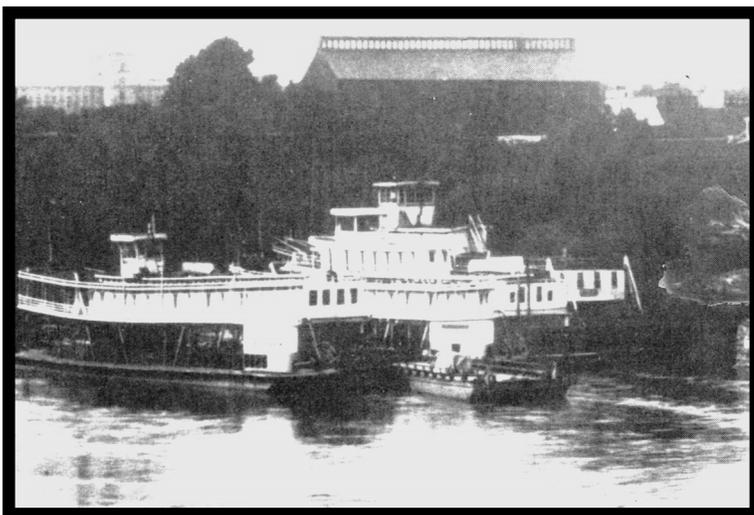


Photo from the files of J.E. Coleman

In this old picture at an unknown wharf, you see three steamboats. The one in the middle is the 114 ton sternwheeler FORT GAINES. (You can locate it by looking at the three pilot houses.) She was built in 1907 in Apalachicola and was used initially on the upper river between Columbus and Eufaula. In 1908, the Columbus Enquirer Sun reported that on April 26 the unmanned steamboats M.W. KELLY and THREE STATES floated away as derelicts after breaking their moorings during a spring flood. Watchmen notified the FORT GAINES to get up steam and she rescued THREE STATES where she had come to rest four miles south of Columbus at Kyle's plantation while the upbound W.C. BRADLEY took charge of the M.W. KELLY and brought her back to Columbus when floodwaters subsided two days later.

# Projects & Progress

## Sutton Museum:

The Omicron variant prevented a lot of activity at the Museum this past quarter. However, by late February and early March members were stirring and making plans for a long scheduled Camper's tour on March 6.

Board members Anne Lynn, Ken Johnson, Linda Morgan, Cyndie Coleman and Tim Shaver hosted a contingent of 28 campers for a tour of the museum. The campers made a donation of \$105.00 and bought \$30.00 worth of books while there.

We thank society member Joanne Helstrom for cleaning and dusting the museum prior to our having guests.

Linda Morgan took some time to clean up the landscaping in front of the museum. Her crew of three also re-oiled the sun faded grand front door to Suttons. Norris had valuable information about artifacts in the museum.

On Saturday March 26, 2022, Museum friend and consultant Trent Tye did a blacksmithing demonstration and free class at the museum. A grand time was had by all and several people took home "S hooks" they had forged under Trent's instruction.

## Frontier Village Fence:

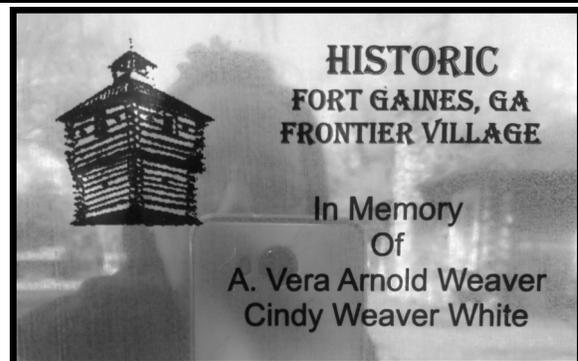
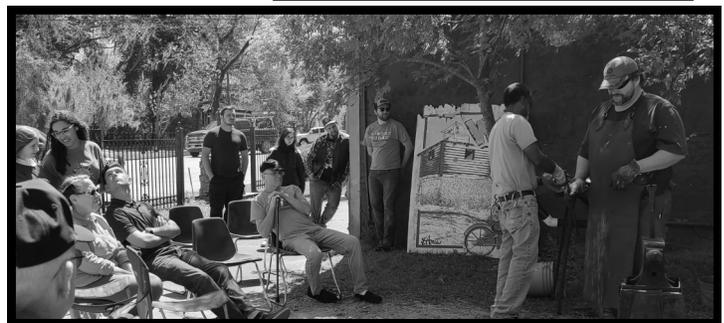
Sold Out!! We had some spells of warm weather which allowed Board member Ken Johnson to start putting the plaques on the fence panels at the Bluff. They are not all up yet due to weather and the fact that some plaques have to be redone, but they look wonderful! See example to the right. We have sold all 128 of the fence panels put up.



Kerwin Davis, Norris Spann, and John Spann

Right : Trent Tye and his portable forge.

Below: Roosevelt Prize (white shirt ) tries his hand at the forge.



The steamer broke away from its moorings and drifted down the river about five miles before going to its watery grave.

Sources for this article: [newgeorgiaencyclopedia.org](http://newgeorgiaencyclopedia.org); *Columbus on the Chattahoochee* by Etta Blanchard Worsley, 1951 unpublished; [genealogytrails.com](http://genealogytrails.com); *Perilous Journeys: A History of Steamboating on the Chattahoochee, Apalachicola, and Flint Rivers, 1828-1928* by Edward Mueller, published 1990, 2000, Historic Chattahoochee Commission.



**DISTANCES BETWEEN RIVER LANDINGS**

<u>Apalachicola to</u>	<u>Miles Between</u>	<u>Cumulative Miles</u>
Old Woman's Bluff	7	7
Fort Gadsden	18	25
River of Sticks	25	50
Iola	25	75
Stone's Landing	5	80
Richo's Bluff	10	90
Stiffnulgee	10	100
Blountstown	20	120
Ocheesee	20	140
Aspalaga	7	147
Chattahoochee	10	157
Brown's Ferry	15	172
Neal's Landing	20	192
Porter's Ferry	15	207
Columbia	12	219
Howard's Landing	20	239
Fort Gaines	20	259
Eufaula	35	284
Roanoke	20	304
Florence	5	309
Jernigan's Landing	5	314
Bickerstaff Landing	12	326
Bryant's Landing	12	338
Fort Mitchell	2	340
Woolfolk's Bar	8	348
Columbus	10	358

Source: Captain Stapler of the steamboat, FLORENCE, December, 1843, as published in the January 8, 1844 issue of the Apalachicola Commercial Advertiser.

Above is a picture of three steamboats at the Columbus landing in 1910. In the foreground is the QUEEN CITY. You can see the W.C.BRADLEY just behind it. The QUEEN CITY was built in Columbus in 1891 by the Merchants' and Planters' Line which was composed of merchants of Columbus for the most part and included businessman W.C. Bradley. Miss Mary Whiteside, daughter of steamboat Captain Tom Whiteside, christened her by breaking a bottle of champagne over the bow. The builder used the machinery and cabin of the dismantled steamer AMOS HAYS. It was common to salvage damaged, wrecked or sunken boats to build new ones.

To the left is an 1881 chart of distances between river landings between Apalachicola and Columbus, Georgia.

# FGCCHS FUNDRAISER FOR SALE SOON!

## Knives Hand Forged by Trent Tye



These blades are made right here in South Georgia, even sporting handles made from windfall Pecan trees. A 1075 blade makes for a durable and sharp tool, while the hand made leather sheath provides a handsome way to carry it. They are made by Trent Tye, former Host for the Discovery Channel and Forged in Fire Alumnus. The special edition knives are made to help support the work of the Fort Gaines/Clay County Historical Society and will even have a custom stamp!



# Sutton's Corner Artifacts

## Turpentine Hack and Collecting Cup



On display at Sutton's we have a complete turpentine hack, a single hack blade, and a metal collection cup.

During the 19th and 20th centuries, Georgia was the nation's leading producer of naval stores which is the industry of extracting products such as turpentine from rosin from living pine trees. As reported in *The Traditions of Turpentine in South Georgia* from the archives of Valdosta State, "the work of gathering and processing the raw gum was done chiefly by African American men, although countless European American small gum farmers turpented on their own land or on land leased from others."

A typical farm was divided into sections called "crops" which contained about 10,000 trees. After two or three years of working an area, laborers and the stills for distilling the turpentine would be moved to woods where "virgin dip" was more plentiful. Buddy Sullivan states in an article in the *New Georgia Encyclopedia*, "Cutover pine lands available for purchase or lease also attracted new settlers who farmed the lands as tenants or owners. Much of the acreage that had been tapped for turpentine was subsequently cut for timber and then turned over for a third commercial use, agriculture."

From the 1890's through World War II, Savannah and Brunswick were the worlds leading ports for the shipment of naval stores. According to the Georgia Folklife Collection at Valdosta state, the last bucket of gum for commercial turpentine was dipped by Major Phillips on August 9, 2007 outside Soperton in Treutlen County, Georgia.

Sources: Sullivan, Buddy, "Naval Stores Industry." *New Georgia Encyclopedia*, South Georgia Folklife Collection, Valdosta State University.



A man uses a turpentine hack to score a living tree. The rosin would flow into the rectangular box below a metal lip.



Around 1900, University of Georgia chemist Charles Herty improved production by designing a clay pot known as a Herty cup which could be suspended from a nail in the tree.

# Fort Gaines/Clay County Historical Society, Inc.

Fort Gaines/Clay County Historical Society, Inc.

159 Wilson St. Suite 7

Fort Gaines, GA 39851

## Want to Join Us?

This membership will entitle you to the following:

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- Annual Meeting & Dinner Invitation
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FYI: If you join as a new member in October, November or December of a given year, your dues cover the following year as well.