

# The Altamaha Echoes

Lower Altamaha Historical Society Newsletter January 2000

LAHS Board of Directors Meeting, January 20, 2000, 4:30 P.M.

St. Andrew's Parish House

---

LAHS MEETING, JANUARY 20, 2000, 7:00 P.M.–

St. ANDREW'S PARISH HOUSE

HOSPITALITY: Ann Baggett, Linda Hawk, Joan Meyer, Diane Vaughn

DUTCH TREAT SUPPER, 5:45 P.M. AT ARCHIE'S

The program will be presented by Dr. Jon Traer. He will be speaking on Kite Aerial Photography. His topic will include historical comments regarding the origins of kites and cameras, the origin of kite aerial photography, and a review of the ways mankind has used kites over the years.

Dr. Traer is a native of Atlanta and received his specialty medical training at Emory University. He was a hospital commander during his tour of duty in the USAF and spent 21 years in private practice as a general surgeon in Sandersville, Ga. prior to his retirement to McIntosh County in 1991.

Starting "as a whim", his interest in kite aerial photography began in December of 1996. By March of 1997, Dr. Traer, had developed his first kite aerial photography system that worked; he now actively experiments with on-going improvements for his newer systems. He is a member of the American Kitefliers Association (AKA) and has published several technical articles regarding kite aerial photography in journals sponsored by that organization. In addition, he designs and builds kite aerial photography equipment used by other kite aerial photographers. Scientists using micro-topography to study wetlands and marshes in Pennsylvania also use custom made equipment designed and built by Dr. Traer.

During the course of field testing new system designs, Dr. Traer has taken numerous kite aerial photographs in the Coastal Georgia area, including the lighthouses at Sapelo Island and Tybee Island during their recent restorations. A selection of his slides will be included in the presentation.

---

LAHS MEETING, FEBRUARY 17, 2000– 7:00 P.M.

ST. ANDREW'S PARISH HOUSE

HOSPITALITY: Shirley Larson, Sally Smith, Orene Archer, Lou Nell Gibson

DUTCH TREAT SUPPER, 5:45 P.M. AT ARCHIE'S

FROM BEAUTIFUL ZION TO RED BIRD CREEK– *A History of Bryan County, Georgia*, will be the program presented by Buddy Sullivan. This is the latest publication from Buddy Sullivan. He will present this history through slides and story. The origins of Bryan County, Georgia go back much further than the actual creation of the county in 1793. Many of the lands that were to become Bryan were originally crown grants awarded during the colonial period to migrating settlers from South Carolina and England. Known as St. Philip Parish until the Revolution, Bryan County has had a uniquely distinctive and diversified history. Sullivan, is recognized as an authority on Coastal Georgia History. He became interested in the history of Bryan County partly because of the results of his research into the particulars of the nineteenth century rice industry in tidewater Georgia.

---

LAHS Board of Directors Meeting, March 16, 2000, 4:30 P.M.  
St. Andrew's Parish House

---

LAHS MEETING, MARCH 16, 2000, 7:00 P.M.  
St. ANDREW'S PARISH HOUSE

HOSPITALITY: Jeanne Klippel, Claudette Moorhouse, Lorraine Koehn, Ellie Legg  
DUTCH TREAT SUPPER, 5:45 P.M. AT ARCHIE'S

Action in the South Atlantic— *The saga of Esso Baton Rouge and SS Oklahoma off the Georgia coast on the morning of 8 April 1942*— by Michael Higgins will be the program that will be presented by the Author. — “In Brunswick, Tuesday evening, 7 April, was business as usual. The lights of the south Georgia coastal community burned brightly. *The Pittsburgh Kid* starring Billy Conn and Jean Parker was playing at the Ritz. The Bijou, which was only open on weekends, was advertising *The Great Dictator*, the new Charlie Chaplin satire about Hitler, co-starring Jack Oakie. During the next few hours, with the arrival of *U-123* in Georgia waters, the war would come to Brunswick.”

Michael P. Higgins, a vice president of the Propeller Club, Port of Brunswick; Was born in Chicago. He holds degrees from Oglethorpe University, Atlanta, Ga.; and The State University of New York—Maritime College, at Fort Schuyler, New York. He was a founder of the Confederate Navy Historical Society and served as Project Manager for the CSS *Alabama* project. He served as an advisor to the U.S. Department of State, Office of Ocean Law & Policy. His efforts resulted in a treaty between the United States and France, with France respecting U.S. title in the wreck of CSS *Alabama* and her associated artifacts, and the return of her artifacts to the United States. He sailed on oceanographic research ships for Columbia University and Duke University as scientific crew, and later for American President Lines on containerships and Military Sealift Command tankers. He served as a shore captain and port manager for Wallenius Lines. Michael Higgins is a resident of Darien. He will be autographing books, which will be available at the meeting.

---

[ EPILOG from *Action in the South Atlantic* by Michael P. Higgins ]

The Propeller Club of the United States, Port of Brunswick; in conjunction with SeaRiver Maritime; the AMO, a National Union of Merchant Marine Officers; and private citizens contributed funds for a tombstone for the five formerly unknown merchant seamen buried in Palmetto Cemetery, Brunswick, Georgia; which was dedicated, appropriately, on National Maritime Day – 22 May 1999.

The Propeller Club also worked in conjunction with the Glynn County Veterans Council to erect a monument to the twenty-two men killed on both ships during the attack, which was placed on the old Glynn County Court House square. The monument was dedicated on Memorial Day, 1999.

[ Georgia Historical Marker located on Ga.99, 0.8 miles east of US 17, and near Old Fort King George. ]

#### BIRTHPLACE OF JOHN McINTOSH KELL

Laurel Grove, at the end of this avenue, was the birthplace of John McIntosh Kell, 1823-1900, distinguished Naval officer. He was a member of the expedition of Commodore Matthew C. Perry to Japan in 1853, and was Master of the flagship *Mississippi* on the homeward cruise. When Georgia seceded from the Union, John McIntosh Kell resigned his commission to join the Confederacy. He

was Executive Officer of the *Sumter*; then of the *Alabama* throughout her brilliant career on the seas, and in her final battle with the *Kearsarge* off Cherbourg. Later in life, John McIntosh Kell served for several years as Adjutant General of the State of Georgia.

Living on the Georgia Tidewater—Robert Austin Young, Jr. (1900–1988) and Amanda Lloyd Harrison (1907–1982) were the parents of Lloyd Young Flanders of Darien and Meredith Young Rogers of Statesboro. Robert was descended from several generations which were born and reared in McIntosh County. Lloyd Flanders has written the following sketch of her father. She quotes some of his words as given to his grandson Robby Flanders in 1981 for *Ebbtide Magazine*.

Robert A. Young, Jr. was born in Darien on February 25, 1900. He was the third child of Austin and Rosalie Gardner Young. His elder brother was named for their maternal grandfather, Warren Gardner and his sister was Edna Rosalie, two years older. Rosa Young died in childbirth, when Robert was less than two years old. Austin Young arranged for housekeepers to care for his home. They lived for a time in Darien near the Presbyterian Church and at Ashantilly in the “Old Tabby”. Robert always said Ashantilly was where he first remembered himself. He learned to swim at a early age because Captain Dolbo took him out into the creek holding him on his back. Austin remarried in 1906, to Ruth Middleton. They had two daughters, Edith and Winnie.

*Ebbtide*-- “We had a pretty good little timber shipping business here from 1900 up until 1912 or ‘15. I remember as a boy seeing sailing ships come up into Darien. I remember four-masted schooners come into Darien, and down at Lower Bluff where the museum is now. Lower Bluff originally was the Fort there and that was originally the first mainland you hit. Later Pico Cut was cut and this river started to fill up. But I remember, as a small boy, a four-masted schooner could turn around because the river was large enough.”

Robert Young attended Darien Public Schools and then followed his brother Warren to Georgia Tech. It was 1918, WWI, and Robert enlisted in the Navy. When the Armistice was signed, there was a big Parade in Atlanta. Austin Young became ill and Robert came home to help his father. Austin owned the Meat Market on Broad Street across from the Adam Strain building. The cattle, which supplied the market were kept on the islands. Austin owned Egg Island, which was one of the islands used to raise cattle. Austin was Tax Receiver for McIntosh Co. from 1893 through 1928. In 1930 he became Darien’s first elected Mayor. Austin Young (1866–1967) lived 101 years.

In 1920, Robert went to work with the highway department constructing Highway 17. He was timekeeper and assistant paymaster.

*Ebbtide*—: “I worked one month and I got off every Saturday and ran my father’s meat market. And the boss told me....., “Young, we’ll have to let you go unless you can work on Saturdays.” I said, “Well let me go. That’ll be all right.” So he let me go and at the end of the first month he came back to me and said, “Young, if you’ll come back, we’ll let you off Saturdays.” So I stayed and completed the job.” The highway opened on June 15, 1921.

In 1927 a law was passed consolidating the offices of Tax Receiver and Tax Collector, making a full time job of Tax Commissioner. Robert Young was the first elected Tax Commissioner of McIntosh County. By re-election he served the people for 36 years, from 1928 until his retirement in 1965. He was always accessible in his office and was proud that he had advocated and helped in the passage of the Homestead Exemption Law, which reduced taxes for most of the people of McIntosh County.

Robert owned and operated Young Oil Co., the Gulf Oil Distributorship, from 1946 to 1974. He was an active member of St. Andrew’s Episcopal Church, having served in many capacities. He

donated the land for the expansion of St. Andrew's Cemetery.

Robert Young was adjutant of the Unknown Soldier American Legion Post #137 during most of WWII years. He donated the land for Live Oak Lodge # 137 F.&A.M. and was a continuous member of that Lodge from 1924 until his death on January 14, 1988.

Robert Young was well know and respected for his wealth of knowledge of local families –their ties and their properties. He was a rich source of information about McIntosh County and its history and was generous in sharing this information with other people.