

All Limestone Countians invited to County's 200th birthday party

By Rebekah Davis

Limestone County Archivist

On February 6, 1818, Limestone County founding father Frank Nixon might have celebrated the establishment of the brand-new Alabama county by inviting his friends and neighbors to a party at his cabin, festooned with his favorite decorations: Bear intestines, dried, stuffed, and strung around the cabin, complete with red peppers for a pop of color.

On February 6, 2018, the celebration spot will be the Limestone County Event Center instead of a log cabin, and the decorations will be historic photos and balloons instead of bear guts and peppers, but in the spirit of Frank Nixon and the generations that followed him, all of Limestone County's friends and neighbors are invited to celebrate the county's 200th birthday.

The Limestone County Bicentennial Committee invites everyone who lives in or loves Limestone County to join the party at the Limestone County Bicentennial Celebration, 5 to 8 p.m., Tuesday, Feb. 6, at the Limestone County Event Center.

The event will feature the sounds and sights of Limestone County, as area musicians play a free concert of some of Limestone County's native music, from Native American songs to African American gospel songs to bluegrass music.

At 6 p.m., master of ceremonies and Limestone County Archivist Rebekah Davis will share inspiring stories from the county's history, and then the musicians will gather and join the crowd in singing "Happy Birthday" to Limestone County before the Limestone-County-shaped cake and cookies are served.

Throughout the event, historic scenes of Limestone County will be shown on the screens, and attendees can view special exhibits on display, including:

- **Historic Limestone County Schools:** The Limestone County Board of Education will display historic photos from the Limestone County Archives of early schools, coordinated with a county map showing their locations.
- **Limestone County History Gallery:** Historic photos of Limestone County places and events will be displayed, gallery style, on the Event Center walls.
- **Native American Artifacts:** Local Native American tribe members will display artifacts and talk about their history and genealogy.
- **Time Capsule Contents:** In 1993, Athens and Limestone County celebrated their 175th anniversary by placing a time capsule in the Limestone County Courthouse, filled with more than 50 items that range from local club handbooks to letters from then-President Bill Clinton. The County retrieved and opened the capsule during the recent Courthouse renovation, and those contents will be on display at the Celebration.
- **Driving Forces: How Athens Got Here:** This exhibit, created by Girl Scout Troop 10338 and first displayed at the Limestone County Archives, shares the stories and the people behind some of Athens and Limestone County's best-known streets and landmarks.

For more information about the Limestone County Bicentennial Celebration, and to stay up-to-date as additional details are announced, like "Limestone County, Alabama, Bicentennial" on Facebook, or contact Bicentennial Committee Co-Chair Michelle Williamson at 256-233-6400 or Co-Chair Teresa Todd at 256-232-5411.