

Early Limestone County communities remembered on markers

By Rebekah Davis

Limestone County Archivist

It's time for more stops on the historical marker tour of Limestone County, hitting 25 markers in all.

I'm spending a few weeks sharing the information about these markers. If you want to go ahead and check them all out, you can get maps and GPS coordinates to each one by searching for Limestone County's historical markers on www.lat34north.com.

Today's markers are:

- **Lucy's Branch/Legacy of the Little Elk Community:**

Lucy's Branch – This site is named for Lucy Bedingfield, daughter of a slave and a Cherokee Indian. She was born 1832, and her Indian name was Finch. She married Meredith Bedingfield, a slave and had 9 children. Lucy was an astute and avid storyteller. She purchased 170 acres in June 1888, for \$600, recorded by U.S. Paten #43463. One of the last known Indian Chiefs in the area formerly occupied this land. Lucy mortgaged the farm several times by making her mark. She used "Gold Coins of the present standard of weight and fineness" to make payments. Lucy and her descendants farmed this land until the TVA purchased it in 1935 for the creation of Wheeler Lake. Lucy relocated to Oklahoma in later years and is buried there.

Legacy of the Little Elk Community – This was Chickasaw Indian land until it was ceded to the United States in 1816. Existing Earthen mounds give testimony of earlier Indian presence. The land was then settled by a heterogeneous society of Blacks, Whites and Indians. African-American children were educated at Little Elk M.B. Church est. 1874 until a school was built on Snake Road in 1930. Located nearby are some old home sites and Lucy's cemetery containing over 60 graves. The descendants of these early settlers have spread the unique culture and strong principles of the Little Elk community through but the U.S. Lucy's legacy span the acts of slavery, Indian removal, Civil War, reconstruction, segregation and women's right to vote.
Marker is on Snake Road, Athens.

- **Mooreville:** Incorporated in 1818

Post office contains original call boxes
Old tavern, 1817 used as stagecoach stop
Red Brick Methodist church 1817
U.S. Gen. James A Garfield was stationed here 1862
White frame church is more than a century old
Andrew Johnson was apprenticed tailor here
Neoclassic architecture

Marker is at the intersection of Old Highway 20 and Mooreville Road, Mooreville.

- **Mooreville Brick Church:** Completed by 1839, this Greek Revival Structure was probably under construction for several years. On November 18, 1838 Alabama's 2nd Governor, Thomas Bibb and his wife Pamela deeded this property to William K. Adams, Monroe F. Moses and James Allison trustees of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. This denomination retained title but over the years permitted the Baptist and Methodist to meet here. Outstanding religious leaders who preached here were Cumberland Presbyterians "Father" Robert Donnell, the early leader and Constantine Blackmon

Sanders, the "X+Y=Z Preacher" as well as Methodist Clare Purcell, later Bishop of the North Ala., West Fla. and Central Conferences.
Marker is at 4792 Broad St., Mooresville.

About the Archives:

Limestone County Department of History and Archives

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