

ALABAMA

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE
OF THE ALABAMA STATE PORT AUTHORITY

SEAPORT

2019 VOL. II



Aker Solutions builds a new 12,000-square-foot Oscilay™ building.

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ALABAMA SEAPORT

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ON THE COVER:

Aker revolutionizes umbilical manufacturing.
 See story on page 4



ALABAMA STATE PORT AUTHORITY

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The ALABAMA SEAPORT Magazine has been a trusted news and information resource for customers, elected officials, service providers and communities for news regarding Alabama's only deepwater Port and its impact throughout the state of Alabama, region, nation and abroad. In order to refresh and expand readership of ALABAMA SEAPORT, the Alabama State Port Authority (ASPA) now publishes the magazine quarterly, in four editions appearing in winter, spring, summer and fall. Exciting things are happening in business and industry throughout Alabama and the Southeastern U.S., and the Port Authority has been investing in its terminals to remain competitive and meet the needs of shippers.

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AKER SOLUTIONS OPENS NEW BUILDING AT MOBILE FACILITY

Aker Solutions' facility in Mobile, Alabama, recently introduced the new Oscilay™ umbilical manufacturing building with employees and the local community at a grand opening held on August 8, 2019. The 12,000-square-foot building is in Middle Bay Port and adds to the existing 175,000 square feet of building space and more than 60 acres of land the company uses for manufacturing facilities, engineering and support function offices, storage and a service base. Over the past two years, Aker Solutions has been investing in its Mobile facilities and increasing its presence by relocating some employees and capabilities from offices in Houston, Texas.

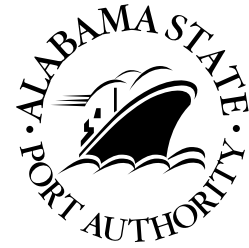
More than 12 years in the making, the Oscilay™ technology considerably speeds up the manufacturing process by reducing the number of splices required in long length umbilicals. In addition, the process is safer for employees and has a lower risk potential for failures on the seafloor. The first cables are scheduled to be produced in fall 2019 and be finalized in the first quarter of 2020.

The official ribbon cutting ceremony was led by Aker Solutions' representatives Karon McDonald, senior vice president of global manufacturing, and Vigeik Sexe, Mobile site director and vice president of products and projects North America. Joining them was Director and CEO of the Alabama State Port Authority, James K. Lyons, along with President and CEO of the Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce Bill Sisson.

"The new building and introduction of the Oscilay production method supports the strategy of transforming the Mobile site into Aker Solutions' global center of excellence for manufacturing of umbilicals and distribution equipment," said Sexe.



» Karon McDonald, senior vice president, global manufacturing Aker; Bill Sisson, president, Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce; James K. Lyons, director and CEO, Alabama State Port Authority; Vigeik Sexe, Mobile site director and vice president of products and projects, Aker North America



Kay Ivey, Governor of Alabama

ALABAMA STATE PORT AUTHORITY

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Term expires July 31, 2023

Algernon "Al" Stanley, Northern Region
Term expires July 31, 2020

Ben C. Stimpson, 2nd Vice Chair,
Southern Region
Term expires July 31, 2019

The Honorable Sandy Stimpson,
Mayor, City of Mobile (Ex-Officio)
Term expires July 31, 2019

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A stand-alone building for Oscilay technology increases the overall capacity at the site because it allows for multiple projects to be underway simultaneously. Aker Solutions can now complete an Oscilay-produced umbilical while simultaneously closing an umbilical using the conventional planetary machinery in the original building.

This new technology will be strategically important for production of power umbilicals utilized by offshore wind projects in the United States and abroad. Aker Solutions' patented designs for power cables are suitable for a wide range of offshore floating facilities, including floating foundations for offshore wind turbines.

Aker Solutions helps the world meet its energy needs. The Mobile facility engineers the products, systems and services required to unlock energy. With a goal to maximize recovery and efficiency of oil and gas assets, Aker deploys their expertise to develop the sustainable solutions of the future.

"Aker's innovation and investments at our Middle Bay Port facility have helped diversify our cargo base, while creating high skill jobs for the region. It's been a good partnership," said Lyons.

Since its opening in Mobile in 2003, the company's numerous expansions have totaled more than \$100 million. Increasing investment in the Mobile manufacturing facility has allowed Aker Solutions to continue to strengthen their world-class global manufacturing organization and increase cost efficiency to meet the future demands of customers globally.

To learn more about Aker Solutions and its facility located in Mobile, Alabama, visit akersolutions.com.



COOSA-ALABAMA RIVER IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

Established 129 years ago, the Coosa-Alabama River Improvement Association (Coosa-Alabama) is Alabama's oldest waterway association. Today, the Coosa-Alabama promotes the multipurpose use of waterways and advocates for the environmental protection of the Alabama, Coosa and Tallapoosa river basins.

Coosa-Alabama is a not-for-profit organization aiming to strengthen both Alabama's economy and ecology by developing waterways with balanced, reasonable approaches and understanding costs. The association also promotes the use of barges — the safest, most efficient, environmentally-friendly transportation — and provides recreational opportunities and other activities across Alabama rivers.

The Coosa-Alabama River Improvement Association was established by businessmen in 1890 who wanted to transport goods along the Coosa River between Gadsden, Alabama, and Rome, Georgia. The group was led by second-generation river pilot Williams Patrick Lay, who went on to found what would become Alabama Power Company in 1906.

The association worked to provide a navigable Coosa waterway in the first half of the 20th century, lobbying for Congress to authorize funds for dams. These efforts led to an expansion of the route, including a 9-foot navigation channel via the Mobile River and the Alabama River to Montgomery in 1945. Congress also authorized funding, in the 1950s, for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to construct three dams on the Alabama River at Jones Bluff, Millers Ferry and Claiborne, as well as a commercial waterway link between Mobile and Montgomery.

Since then, Coosa-Alabama has continued to advocate funds to maintain and operate the Alabama River navigation channel and its dams. The association has worked to fend off unwarranted environmental

regulations that could take away from the waterways' economic value for Alabama.

"Our members are focused on raising awareness of the benefits of the river system through contact with the general public, business community and government officials," said Blake Hardwich, Coosa-Alabama's executive director. "The association works diligently to promote a coordinated effort to create, develop and maintain economic advantages of the Alabama, Coosa and Tallapoosa rivers."

Inland and coastal waterways to Alabama provide billions of dollars in revenue for the state and more than 60,000 jobs across Alabama. Annually, over \$7.5 billion of cargo is moved on domestic water transportation and the value of domestic products shipped into Alabama by water is estimated at \$2.6 billion.

The inland waterways provide 2,800 jobs, generating \$18 million in state and federal payroll taxes. The economic impact of the Alabama State Port Authority in Mobile statewide is over \$22.4 billion. The Port of Mobile ranks No. 15 nationally in export tonnage and No. 9 in import, and No. 11 for largest U.S. seaport by total trade.

"The river system hosts many manufacturers that use the water as a feedstock in their manufacturing process," said Hardwich. "Hydropower, recreation and tourism play a large role in fueling the economy. For example, dams along these waterways contribute immensely to our shared economy through hydroelectric power generation."

On average, the annual energy produced by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' dams could supply \$90 million worth of electricity to 128,000 homes. Alabama Power has 11 dams located on the river system that combined, have the capacity of producing 1,316,200 kilowatts of electricity.



Coosa-Alabama recognizes that aquatic ecosystems play a critical role in providing a healthy environment and in helping to protect lives and property by providing natural barriers to both riverine and coastal flooding. Valuable wetlands, operating as part of more natural systems, are critical to water quality, flood damage reduction, sustainable economic development, diversity of species and overall quality of life. Dams located along the river system act as a buffer against economic loss that would result from rain-induced flood damage. Cities and towns located downstream benefit as well.

"The mutually rewarding relationship between the river economy and ecology is demonstrated by the 2014 Weiss Dam project," said Hardwich. "Water flow was restored to the original 20-mile Coosa riverbed, revitalizing habitat for endangered aquatic animals, while providing new waters for outdoor adventurers to float their canoes and kayaks."

With over 20 recreational opportunities, Coosa-Alabama considers recreation and tourism to be staples in its' benefits to Alabama's economy.

"Recreational opportunities bolster commercial economies; local businesses and industries grow, including home and resort construction, boat dock companies and shoreline landscapers," Hardwich said. "The reservoirs created by all of these dams also generate quite a bit of return. The lakes attract boaters, skiers, and fishers of bass and crappie. Local, state, regional and national fishing tournaments located on the river system reel in revenue and valuable exposure. More than four million party visits to Corps recreation sites also contribute over \$365 million, resulting in 8,000 Alabama jobs."



After more than 25 years of service to the Coosa-Alabama River Improvement Association, Jerry Sailors retired in 2019 and Hardwich took on the role of executive director.

"Growing up on the Coosa, I take great pride in this association and what it has accomplished over 129 years," said Hardwich. "That is appropriate, because even 200 years ago, when the great seal of Alabama was created, it was apparent that one of Alabama's most valuable assets was the state's abundant waterways. With more than 77,000 miles of streams and rivers and approximately 480,000 acres of publicly-owned lakes and reservoirs, Alabama is a water-rich state."

For more information on the Coosa-Alabama River Improvement Association, visit www.caria.org.



ASPA LEGISLATIVE RECEPTION RSA PLAZA TERRACE MONTGOMERY, AL | APRIL 17, 2019



- 1** Jimmy Lyons was presented a resolution by Sen. Jabo Waggoner from the Alabama State Senate recognizing ASPA for its exports and international trade.
- 2** Sen. Tim Melton, Alabama State Senate Pat Harris, Alabama State Senate Secretary Ben Stimpson, ASPA Board Member
- 3** Rep. Jim Carns, Alabama House of Representatives
Rep. Danny Garrett, Alabama House of Representatives
- 4** Brooks McClendon, Manufacture Alabama Rep. Chris Pringle, Alabama House of Representatives
Nick Lawkis, University of South Alabama Mike Foxhall, Alabama Rural Electric Association
- 5** Rep. Mike Jones, Alabama House of Representatives
Mac Gipson, Alabama ABC Board
Rep. Allen Treadaway, Alabama House of Representatives
- 6** Rick Pate, Alabama Department of Agriculture & Industries
Sen. Randy Price, Alabama State Senate

- 7** Jefferson Dunn, Alabama Department of Corrections
Rep. April Weaver, Alabama House of Representatives
Sen. Donnie Chesteen, Alabama State Senate
- 8** Ed Poolos, Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
Rep. Brett Easterbrook, Alabama House of Representatives
Rep. Shane Stringer, Alabama House of Representatives
- 9** Raymond Bell, Maynard Cooper & Gale Alvin Hope, ASPA Board Member
Rep. Sam Jones, Alabama House of Representatives
- 10** Baker Allen, State of Alabama Governor's Office
Susan Wilhelm, Alabama Department of Finance
Greg Cochran, Alabama League of Municipalities
- 11** Patrick Cagle, Alabama Coal Association
Ben Patterson, Fine Geddie & Associates

- 12** Paul Wesch, City of Mobile
Brian Doyle, APM Terminals
Rep. Chip Brown, Alabama House of Representatives
- 13** Rep. Chip Brown, Alabama House of Representatives
Beth Marietta Lyons, The Lyons Firm
Rep. Ed Oliver, Alabama House of Representatives
- 14** Sen. Gerald Allen, Alabama State Senate
Tommy Battle, Mayor of Huntsville
Fitzgerald Washington, Alabama Department of Labor
Horace Horn, ASPA Board Member
Darryl Dewberry, ASPA Board Member
- 15** Judith Adams, Alabama State Port Authority
Al Stanley, ASPA Board Member
Joe McCarty, ASPA Board Member
Linda Paaymans, Alabama State Port Authority
- 16** Ben Patterson, Fine Geddie & Associates
Judith Adams, Alabama State Port Authority
Bob Geddie, Fine Geddie & Associates
Mary Margaret Carroll, Fine Geddie & Associates

- 17** Jay Mitchell, Alabama Supreme Court
Rep. David Faulkner, Alabama House of Representatives
Rep. Danny Garrett, Alabama House of Representatives
- 18** Varrie Johnson, Rep. John Roger's Office
Walt Maddox, Mayor of Tuscaloosa
Rep. John Rogers, Alabama House of Representatives
- 19** Rep. Parker Moore, Alabama House of Representatives
Nicole Jones, Nicole Jones Development
Rep. Ginny Shaver, Alabama House of Representatives
- 20** Sandy Stimpson, Mayor of Mobile
Rep. Barbara Drummond, Alabama House of Representatives
- 21** Michael Briddell, City of Montgomery
Rep. Tashina Morris, Alabama House of Representatives
Isaiah Sankey, Montgomery County Commission

- 22** Mark Kenny, Southern Co.
Bill Inge, Alabama State Port Authority
Danny Barnett, Alabama State Port Authority
Chuck Camp, Millard Maritime
- 23** Sen. Gerald Allen, Alabama State Senate
Rep. Wes Allen, Alabama House of Representatives
- 24** Rep. Napoleon Bracy, Alabama House of Representatives
Mike Foxhall, Alabama Rural Electric Association
- 25** Greg Jones, The Jones Group
Randall Woodfin, Mayor of Birmingham
- 26** Bob Geddie, Fine Geddie & Associates
Rep. Margie Wilcox, Alabama House of Representatives
Sandy Stimpson, Mayor of Mobile
Rep. Chip Brown, Alabama House of Representatives
Rep. Napoleon Bracy, Alabama House of Representatives
Rep. Tashina Morris, Alabama House of Representatives

- 27** Rep. Bill Poole, Alabama House of Representatives
Jimmy Lyons, Alabama State Port Authority
- 28** Linda Horn, Pioneer Electric Cooperative
Rep. Alan Baker, Alabama House of Representatives
- 29** Jefferson Dunn, Alabama Department of Corrections
Rep. Howard Sanderford, Alabama House of Representatives
Rep. Rod Scott, Alabama House of Representatives
- 30** Martin Christie, Christie Strategy Group
Dalton Dismukes, The Jones Group
- 31** Rep. Becky Nordgren, Alabama House of Representatives
Dan Roberts, Alabama Brewers Guild
- 32** Kellie Hope, Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce
Alvin Hope, ASPA Board Member



MTC LOGISTICS EXPANDS FOUR-FOLD REFRIGERATED CARGO HANDLING CAPABILITY AT THE PORT OF MOBILE

MTC Logistics (MTC), along with officials from the Alabama State Port Authority, Alabama Department of Commerce and elected officials, broke ground on MTC's 12-million-cubic-foot international temperature-controlled distribution center in July. MTC is investing approximately \$61 million at the Port of Mobile, generating 50 to 70 direct jobs at the new facility.

"Our MTC Logistics team is extremely excited about this growth opportunity for our company. It is truly a collaboration and partnership with the welcoming community of Mobile, Alabama, MTC Logistics customers and our long-term partnerships helping to make this facility a reality," said Andy Janson, president of MTC Logistics. "We will be on the cutting edge of innovation in areas of refrigeration, material handling, and IT systems while providing best in class customer service. Mobile is a natural next step for expanding our service offering into the southeast."

Expected to be completed in the fourth quarter of 2020, the new facility will provide shippers with seamless supply chain solutions focused on global commerce. MTC provides shippers a comprehensive suite of services, including blast freezing, port drayage and LTL consolidation. MTC will expand the seaport's blast freeze capability by accommodating 30 truckloads per day and providing 40,000 racked pallet positions of storage.

The Alabama State Port Authority, with assistance from Alabama economic development officials, recruited MTC to expand blast freezing and refrigerated storage capability for Alabama and regional refrigerated cargo shippers of poultry and seafood. Located outside the gates of the port's container terminal with immediate access to I-10, the terminal will also handle a wide variety of refrigerated products for retail distribution.

"We're extremely pleased to add this high caliber company to our portfolio of port services. MTC will more than quadruple available capacity for our export poultry producers, as well as attract new shippers," said James K. Lyons, director and CEO for the Alabama State Port Authority.

"This strategic location on the Gulf Coast will allow us to expand our service offering and we will have a significant focus on import cargo to help balance refrigerated container supply in Mobile," added Ernie Ferguson, vice president of sales with MTC Logistics.

MTC Logistics is a wholly owned subsidiary of Hoffberger Holdings, Inc. (HHI), a diversified privately held investment company of the Hoffberger family of Baltimore, Maryland. With the expansion, MTC Logistics will operate four distribution centers with more than 40-million-cubic-feet of refrigerated and frozen space, serving the ports of Mobile, Alabama; Baltimore, Maryland; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; and Wilmington, Delaware.



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- Security Camera System
- Close access to Interstate 10, only 15 minutes from the Port of Mobile
- 35 Acre Laydown Yard
- 32,000 lb Lift Onsite
- Additional Space to Grow



40 Acre Future Expansion Area



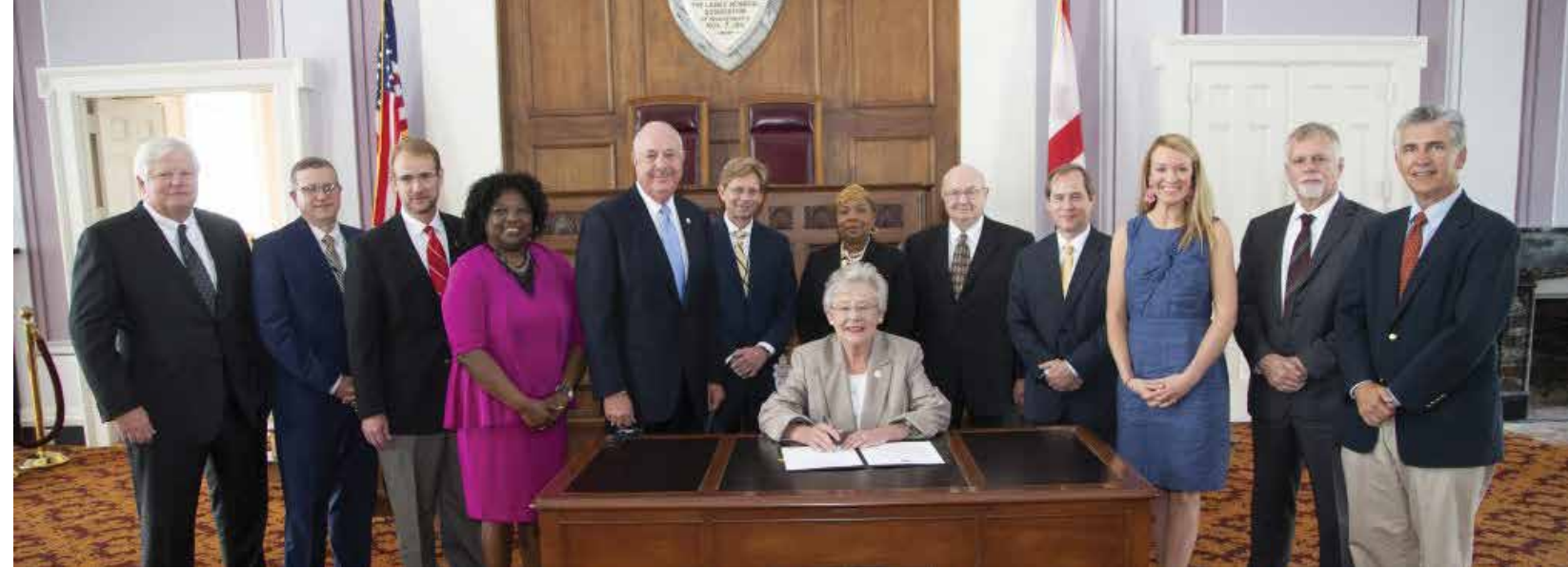
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ALABAMA COUNTS 2020 CENSUS



The U.S. Census Bureau conducts a census of the United States every 10 years, going all the way back to 1790. The data collected during the census is used in a variety of ways that affect decisions regarding community services provided to residents and the distribution of more than \$675 billion in federal funds to local, state and tribal governments each year. The funding supports local programs for schools, health care, community assistance, infrastructure and other important needs. The census also determines the number of representatives each state will have in Congress.

The 2020 census is vital to the well-being of Alabama and the community. Federal funds, grants and support to states, counties and communities are based on population totals and breakdowns by sex, age, race and other factors. This is important to the Alabama State Port Authority for several reasons, the first being the census is a foundation for measuring business activity across the United States economy. Secondly, the Alabama State Port Authority is charged by statute with promoting harbors, seaports and riverports within the state and acquisition or construction, maintaining and operating at seaports and riverports of harbor watercraft and terminal railroads, as well as all other kinds of terminal facilities. This charter is primarily directed to expedite and encourage commerce within the state and to support Alabama business engaged in trade.

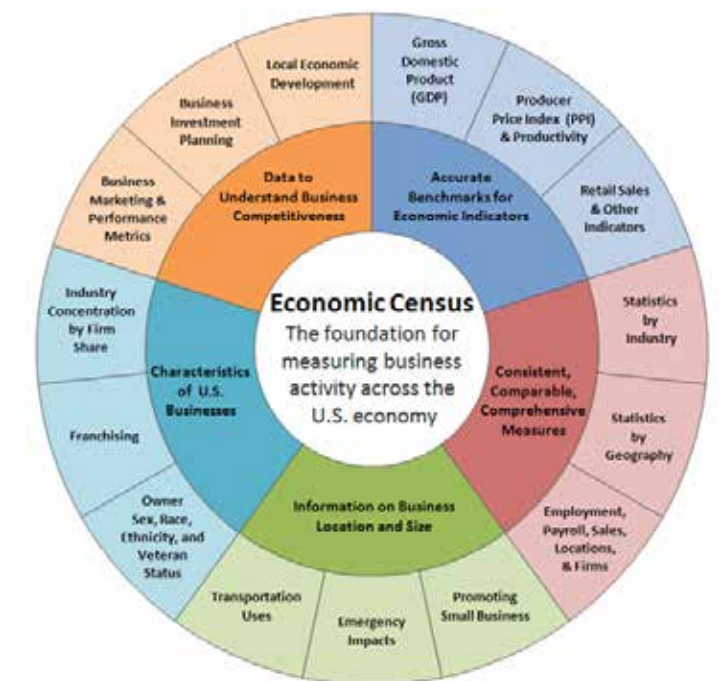
The Port of Mobile supports the state's economic development initiatives by providing waterborne transportation solutions, which supports economic development and fosters the movement of goods through investments in the seaport and port rail system. The Port also supports initiatives which improve the connectivity of the inland transportation network, foster business and ensure there are proper federal resources to handle emergency response/disaster situations.

The private sector uses census data as a business tool. The data is important to businesses looking at new investments or expanding current operations or assets in the state. This in turn ensures Alabama can compete with other states to either retain or expand existing business or recruit new business and jobs creators.

The data can also be used by economic developers and local government to pursue grants in support of workforce development, infrastructure and emergency response needs in the community.

"I hope every Alabamian takes time to participate in the census," said James K. Lyons, director and CEO of the Alabama State Port Authority. "It assures our voice in Congress, which is the constitutional body for establishing laws and annual spending. We want to be sure Alabama competes with the rest of the nation in securing federal dollars."

Part of the Port of Mobile's growth and the state's success in attracting new industries or expanding existing business is best achieved if Alabama has good measurements for business logistics and workforce components. To learn more about Alabama Counts and the 2020 census, visit <https://census.alabama.gov>.





GULF PORTS ASSOCIATION OF THE AMERICAS SPRING MEETING

The Gulf Ports Association of the Americas (GPAA) was established in the early 1940s in Louisiana as a trade organization whose members include a variety of port authorities located on the Gulf Coast of the United States. Stretching from Manatee, Florida, to Brownsville, Texas, the GPAA member ports are dedicated to enhancing economic development and encouraging commerce. They serve both deepwater and shallow-draft public port facilities.

The GPAA's mission statement is to promote progress in waterborne commerce through Gulf ports; to provide a forum through which member ports can address mutual concerns; to educate the public and elected officials as to the economic impact of Gulf ports; and, to provide users of ports in the Gulf with innovatively managed and environmentally responsible facilities.

Membership for GPAA consists of 37 corporate members, 25 associate members and 26 honorary members across the Gulf states of Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi and Texas. Corporate membership is composed of port staff from the ports in those five states, and associate members are a compilation of businesses who engage with the Gulf ports, such as attorneys, consulting companies, and public sector businesses. GPAA membership also includes retired port staff as honorary members.

GPAA is the only port association in the U.S. dedicated to the interest of publicly held U.S. Gulf of Mexico seaports. According to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Waterborne Commerce Statistics Center, U.S. Gulf of Mexico ports represent 11 of the 20 largest U.S. seaports in total commerce, or approximately 1.2 billion tons of cargo in 2017. Collectively, the GPAA members represent over 1.3 billion tons of import/export and domestic trade.

Member ports serve as caucus representatives for the American Association of Port Authorities, ensuring U.S. Gulf ports have a voice in legislative and policy matters before the administration and Congress. The GPAA biannual meeting includes a meeting of the Gulf Seaports Marine Terminal Conference. The conference is a Federal Maritime Commission approved association formed to establish rates, commodity descriptions, rules, regulations

and practices governing the use and operations of public wharves and terminals in the U.S. Gulf region as established by the Shipping Act of 1984. Such agreed upon rules, regulations and rates are then published in the ports' respective tariffs. In recent years, the conference has focused on establishing security fees for both cargoes and vessels calling public terminals to help offset the costs of federal homeland security compliance. The conference works together to ensure the price of port security – both in small and large public ports – does not become a competitive issue.

"We are a very active group of ports whose activities confirm the importance of joint efforts," said Pat Younger, executive director. "Our members stand together on a range of issues addressed on the hill in Washington, D.C., to enhance our position as a port range worthy of consideration."

GPAA members meet at least twice a year in a port location to discuss a wide range of issues facing ports, particularly in the Gulf, and offer suggestions to member ports to address those issues. Among the most pressing issues discussed at recent meetings include funding for maintenance dredging, which includes the use of the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund, channel improvement projects, security challenges, and maintaining a level playing field with ports in other ranges.

"It is imperative that our members meet to discuss these issues, as they affect all of our ports and speaking with many voices enhances our ability to be heard," said Younger. "The exchange of ideas is helpful in many areas – they serve as an opportunity for members to share ideas, discuss common issues facing the port industry and to simply communicate with each other. Meetings are also an opportunity for our associate members to visit with port staff. We invite people from government and industry to speak about relevant issues."

The Alabama State Port Authority hosted the first meeting of 2019 at Point Clear in the Spring. The next meeting will move westward to Lake Charles, Louisiana, in November.

GULF PORTS ASSOCIATION OF THE AMERICAS (GPAA) SPRING MEETING | MAY 1-2, 2019



- 1** Eric Gilmore, Red River Waterway Commission
Victor Martinez, Matagorda County Navigation District
Greg Seaman, Matagorda County Navigation District
- 2** Bill Inge, Alabama State Port Authority
Mark McAndrews, Port of Pascagoula
Tom Kornegay, Maritime Consultant
- 3** William Wachel, WSP
Robin Warrick, LJA Engineering
- 4** Dolly Gisclair
Rodney Gisclair, Port Fourchon
- 5** Greg Lovelace, Port Tampa Bay
Doug Dusini, LJA Engineering
- 6** Dana Durr
Chuck Hendrick, Weeks Marine
Cindi Heffernan, McGriff, Seibels & Williams Inc.
Robin Warrick, LJA Engineering
Eric Gilmore, Red River Waterway Commission
- 7** Celeste Southard
Eric Potts, Freese and Nichols
Inge Potts
- 8** Calvin Deshotel, Port of West St. Mary
Telia Deshotel
Dianne Prejean
Phil Prejean
- 9** Ron Lattier, Red River Waterway Commission
Tabatha Taylor
Eric Gilmore, Red River Waterway Commission
- 10** Eva Morris
Curtis Pierce, Port Fourchon
- 11** William Wachel, WSP
Ray Meyer, Paradigm Consultants, Inc.
Jim Murphy, MARAD
Bill Hanson, Great Lakes Dredge & Dock Corp.
Angie Hanson
Claude Taylor
Lorrie Taylor, Port of Orange
- 12** Sheri Collins, Alabama State Port Authority
Mark McAndrews, Port of Pascagoula
Bill Inge, Alabama State Port Authority
Betty Ann White, Port of Pascagoula
- 13** Greg Seaman, Matagorda County Navigation District
Judith Adams, Alabama State Port Authority
Jim Murphy, MARAD



AAPA ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE PORT TOUR APRIL 10, 2019

SSAB/BBC CHARTERING VESSEL ATTENDANCE

This past June, SSAB and Blastech employees attended a BBC Chartering vessel tour led by Maury Yokel, transportation supervisor for SSAB Alabama. Yokel oversees imports and exports for the Alabama facility in which transportation employees are cross-trained to give a better understanding of international shipping. Interest grew and representatives from other departments were added. Attendees were presented highly informative presentations and toured the Port of Mobile prior to touring the BBC VIRGINIA.



- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <p>1 Jason Jordan, Northwest Seaport Alliance
Sarah Garza, Port of Corpus Christi
Matt Arms, Port of Long Beach</p> <p>2 Giselle Aldrete
Sandra Kilroy, Port of Seattle
Debra Baker, Baker Wotring LLP</p> <p>3 John Pauling, Cardno
Walter Diancola, Anchor AE
Brenton Jenkins, Cardno</p> <p>4 Bob Summers, EcoLogix Group
Chris Cooley, Port Tampa Bay</p> <p>5 Hope Moorer, Georgia Ports Authority
Bill Richardson, Maryland Port Administration</p> <p>6 Charles Liou, Port of New York and New Jersey
Holly Miller, Port of Baltimore
Gretchen Barrera, Alabama State Port Authority</p> | <p>7 Rick Sheckells, EcoLogix Group
Amelia Pellegrin, Port of New Orleans</p> <p>8 Eleanor Kirtley, Green Marine
Regan Brown, Port of Lake Charles</p> <p>9 Kit Chope, Port of Virginia
Michelle Wharton, Kimley-Horn and Associates Inc.</p> <p>10 Mike Moltzen, United States Environmental Protection Agency
Heather Tomley, Port of Long Beach</p> <p>11 Sam Whitin, EA Engineering
Elizabeth Corona, United States Environmental Protection Agency</p> <p>12 Ross Thomas
Bill Precht, Dial Cordy & Associates</p> | <p>13 Jamie Bartel, GHD
Brenton Jenkins, Cardno</p> <p>14 Jay Jahangiri, TRE Consulting
Meredith Martino, American Association of Port Authorities</p> <p>15 Mike Moltzen, United States Environmental Protection Agency
Gretchen Barrera, Alabama State Port Authority
Alan Powell, United States Environmental Protection Agency
Dale Aspy, United States Environmental Protection Agency
Bob Harris, Alabama State Port Authority</p> |
|---|--|---|



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Wynne Fuller, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- 2** Alex King, Port of Panama City
Richard Ruchhoeft, Port of Houston
Randy Lewis, Port Grays Harbor
Bob Musser, Port Canaveral
- 3** Mark Vincent, Port of Houston
Hope Moorer, Georgia Ports Authority
Dana Cheney, GBA Inc.
- 4** Joe Hrametz, Port Galveston
Frank Hamons, GBA Inc.
Grady Bryant, GBA Inc.
- 5** Regan Brown, Port of Lake Charles
Mike Smith, Port of Pascagoula
Ross Thomas, ANAMAR

- 6** Joaquin Mujica, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Ivonne Mujica
Jim Walker, AAPA
- 7** Walter Diancola, Anchor QEA
Kristen Keene, Port of Baltimore
- 8** Sam Whitin, EA Engineering
Kit Chope, Virginia Port Authority
Zach Canody, Virginia Port Authority
- 9** Robert Pace, EcoLogix Group
Ross Thomas, ANAMAR
- 10** John Guidry, Port of New Orleans
Bob Harris, Alabama State Port Authority



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PORT CALLS: MAKING ALABAMA



Making Alabama: A Bicentennial Exhibit has been traveling across the state since March to celebrate 200 years of Alabama history. Presented by Alabama Humanities Foundation, with support from Alabama Bicentennial Commission and Alabama Department of Archives and History, *Making Alabama* showcases the evolution of Alabama over the past 200 years.

"This exhibit is an opportunity. It's a chance for local communities in each county to gather and celebrate their unique histories while considering their futures," said Laura Anderson, Alabama Humanities Foundation director of operations. "*Making Alabama* is a big show – heavy and durable. Simple and elegant in its design, and quite beautiful."

The historical display blends artistic collages, interactive computer tablets and an audio medley of songs and spoken word to tell the story of Alabama – from becoming a territory to receiving statehood.

"The artworks are coupled with interactive computer tablets on kiosks. The tablets are how visitors delve deeper into the eight periods of history into which *Making Alabama's* content is divided," Anderson said.

"Ultimately, the art and interactives combine to paint a picture of change over time in Alabama."

In addition to the main showcase, host communities are assembling their own historical exhibits, collateral programming and activities to put their own signature mark on the exhibit by featuring artifacts, storyboards, storytellers, festivals, vintage and antique photographs, music concerts and more.

"Hosts in 67 different places have stepped up to lead the *Making Alabama* experience with and for communities across each county," Anderson said. "It demands a great deal of work on the part of its hosts statewide."

At each location, hosts must travel for training, organize volunteers to perform physical labor, greet, unload, uncrate and set up the exhibit. In addition to these tasks, hosts were asked to publicize the exhibit locally, maintain the exhibit and serve as docents on-site. After the exhibit, they have to dismantle, re-pack and load the exhibit onto the truck for its next destination.

"In many places, *Making Alabama* is helping communities and municipalities come together across counties to learn about and appreciate each other more," Anderson said. "The eight divisions of history in *Making Alabama*:

PORT CALLS: MAKING ALABAMA

wonder, conflict, fever, convection, power, struggle, change and hope, allow visitors to discover the truth about Alabama and what that means to them. Visitors should experience *Making Alabama* to encounter a big picture look at our path to statehood, our diversity – ecological, cultural, ethnic, geographical, economic – and to figure out whether they know Alabama or just think they do."

The exhibit ends with a message of hope, encouraging visitors to consider the past and the present to determine what will happen in the next one hundred years.

"Alabama Humanities Foundation Executive Director Armand DeKeyser has called *Making Alabama* 'a catalyst for conversations,' and we hope that the exhibit will mean as much about the past – about how we got to where we are now as a state – as it does about the future," Anderson said. "We aim to compel Alabamians to ask questions about who we have been, who we are and who we want to be going into our next century of statehood."

Making Alabama will continue its trek through the end of the year and according to Anderson, the exhibit will likely continue into 2020 due to the volume of those interested in hosting. Post bicentennial and the extended tour, Alabama Humanities Foundation and its partners will work towards finding the exhibit a more permanent home for Alabamians and historians alike to enjoy for years to come.

"The community that has formed around *Making Alabama*, between supporters, content partners, exhibit visitors, educators and the network of hosts statewide, is a testament to the value of the overall Bicentennial Initiative. Alabama Humanities is proud to have played a role in that," Anderson said.

To learn more and view remaining dates, visit www.makingalabama.org.



ALABAMA

A BICENTENNIAL TRAVELING EXHIBIT

200



A BICENTENNIAL TRAVELING EXHIBIT 1819-2019

200

CUBAN AMBASSADOR VISITS PORT OF MOBILE

Miguel Fraga, First Secretary of the Embassy of the Republic of Cuba, visited the Port and met with Alabama State Port Authority Director and CEO James K. Lyons this past spring. During his visit, Fraga discussed continued opportunities to grow trade between the United States and Cuba, and the mutual commercial interest and sales of agricultural products to Cuba. A memorandum of understanding exists between the Alabama State Port Authority and the National Port Administration of Cuba. The five-year cooperative agreement, signed in 2017, is based on a mutual interest in facilitating trade growth. The Ports of Mobile and Cuba collaborate on port and cargo marketing strategies and share data that mutually benefits their respective seaports. Lyons explained demand for trade between the United States and Cuba continues to increase, and the Port of Mobile's goal is to maintain strong relationships between the ports and their maritime communities to facilitate trade and improve ocean carriage services.



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BAY STEEL CORP. EXPANDS

Bay Steel Corp. will expand its Mobile-based operations investing \$6.29 million to build a new facility and hire five additional employees. The new 76,500-square-foot-facility, which will be constructed on 7.5 acres across from Mobile Commerce Park, will provide office and warehousing space for the company and is scheduled to be operational in the first quarter of 2020.

“Our new operations will allow us to be more efficient with our space, triple the number of overhead cranes and give us room to grow, and we’re excited about that,” said Neal Collins, vice president of Bay Steel.

Bay Steel is a steel service center for carbon and galvanized steel and sells a variety of products primarily throughout the Southeast. The company’s customers

include manufacturers, fabricators and contractors, supporting industrial, commercial, transportation, marine, chemical and energy businesses. Bay Steel’s products are used to construct or repair chutes, conveyors, trailers, buildings, signs, boats, fences and lumber processing equipment.

A family-owned company, Bob Collins opened Bay Steel in 1988 after selling steel for another company.

Bay Steel is the only steel service center and metal wholesaler headquartered in Mobile.

MV GRANDIS AND MV ORANGE SEA SAIL ON MAIDEN VOYAGES

In May, the MV GRANDIS took its maiden voyage. A plaque was presented to celebrate the event. Shown from left to right are: Brad Clark, Norton Lilly; Capt. J.H. Kim, Norton Lilly; Capt. Kang Kyeongseob, Master of Vessel “GRANDIS”; Tyler Beck, CSA Stevedoring and James F. Nelson, Norton Lilly.

In August, the MV ORANGE SEA sailed on its maiden voyage to Mobile. Alabama State Port Authority Deputy Director Rick Clark presented the captain with a plaque to commemorate the occasion. Shown from left to right are: Jonathan Dotson, Maritime Endeavors Shipping Co.; Alberto Cabrera, Patriot Rail & Ports; Rick Clark, Alabama State Port Authority; Captain Dimitry Kopotilov, MV ORANGE SEA; Vladimir Kukarskiy, MV ORANGE SEA; Cole Shiver, Seaonus and David Reimensnyder, Seaonus.



WARRIOR-TOMBIGBEE WATERWAY ASSOCIATION FEATURES GOVERNOR AT ANNUAL MEETING

The Warrior-Tombigbee Waterway Association held its annual meeting this past spring at the Grand Hotel Golf Club & Spa in Point Clear, Alabama. The 69th annual meeting of the association, which connects business and industry on the Black Warrior River from Birmingham, Alabama, to the Port of Mobile and to the Tennessee, Cumberland and Mississippi rivers via the Tennessee Tombigbee Waterway, featured reports from federal partners and business leaders, along with a keynote address from Alabama Gov. Kay Ivey.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the U.S. Coast Guard and the Coast Guard’s bridge administration branch made presentations at the meeting. The Corps of Engineers’ presentation covered the agency’s dredge schedule and operations/maintenance program for the months ahead and touched on recent high water on both the Black Warrior-Tombigbee Waterway and the Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway. The Coast Guard discussed the status of aids to navigation on the waterway and bridge operations during hurricane season.

James K. Lyons, director and CEO of the Alabama State Port Authority briefed the group on the state of the Port citing fiscal year 2019 growth for both steel and Alabama metallurgical coal.

Ivey, instrumental in Alabama’s new infrastructure law, delivered the keynote address during the

luncheon. Ivey signed the Rebuild Alabama Act into law in March, and a portion of the revenue generated from the tax is slated to pay for channel improvements within the Port of Mobile.

Following Ivey’s address, conference attendees heard a report on Alabama’s economy from economist Reed Cummings as well as reports on the Port of Mobile, the state’s forestry industry and the state of coal and steel manufacturing.



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DAIKYONISHIKAWA ANNOUNCES NEW FACILITY, JOBS FOR ALABAMIANS

DaikyoNishikawa US (DNUS) and local leaders officially launched construction on the auto supplier's new \$110 million manufacturing plant in North Alabama at a groundbreaking event in September.

A Japanese auto supplier, DNUS announced in May it would build its first United States facility in Huntsville to provide parts to the Mazda Toyota Manufacturing USA plant and create 380 new jobs. The company will produce plastic automotive parts at the new facility for the Mazda Toyota Manufacturing U.S.A. (MTMUS) assembly plant. DNUS became the first supplier to announce plans to locate a facility on the site of the Mazda Toyota joint venture assembly plant, which will have the capacity to produce up to 300,000 vehicles annually.

During the groundbreaking ceremony, which was held at the site on the MTMUS campus where construction will begin on DNUS' first U.S. manufacturing plant, Alabama Gov. Kay Ivey said, "I'm proud to welcome another great Japanese company, DaikyoNishikawa, to Sweet Home Alabama, and I know that together we will build a lasting partnership. Today marks another pivotal moment for Huntsville as it becomes the next vital production hub for the global auto industry."



"As our first manufacturing facility in North America, DNUS is proud to serve Mazda Toyota and call Huntsville our new home," said Nariaki Uchida, president of DaikyoNishikawa Corporation. "Together with our business and community partners, our aim is to be a good corporate neighbor and a premier Tier I automotive supplier."

DNUS is the first on-site partner announced for MTMUS, a \$1.6 billion joint-venture assembly plant being built on a 2,500-acre site in Limestone County. Once the DNUS plant begins operations to coincide with the start of MTMUS vehicle production in 2021, its Alabama workforce will produce large resin parts such as bumpers and instrument panels.



METAL CONTROL ASSOCIATION'S 30TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The Metal Control Association held its 30th annual conference in Mobile in May, where conference participants toured the Port. Metal Control Association is a nonprofit organization for professionals involved in logistical functions of aluminum and other non-ferrous metals to network and discuss matters of mutual concern to the metals industry.



PERDIDO QUEEN IS PORT CITY'S NEW WATERFRONT ATTRACTION

Mobile's visitors and residents now have a new way to experience the area's scenic waterways - on a paddlewheel boat. Earlier this year, the Perdido Queen riverboat began offering lunch and dinner cruises departing from Cooper Riverside Park in downtown Mobile. While aboard, guests can enjoy dinner on the water while cruising along the coast. Cruises feature live entertainment and offer space for dancing and dining. Cruise options include a Dinner Cruise, Lunch Cruise, Murder Mystery Cruise, Jazz Brunch Cruise, and special events cruises including Valentine's Day and Mother's Day. The Perdido Queen can also be booked for corporate and private events. Cruises require advance reservations. For more information and reservations, visit www.perdidoqueen.com.



ASPA RECEIVES GREEN MARINE RECERTIFICATION

The Alabama State Port Authority received a certificate for its calendar year 2018 participation and performance in the Green Marine Program during the IEEE Green Technologies (GreenTech) Conference. Green Marine is the leading environmental certification program for North America's maritime industry, and engages ship owners, port authorities, terminal operators, shipyard managers and seaway corporations to benchmark their annual environmental performance. As part of the certification program, participants agree to have their results verified and commit to transparency and continual improvement to earn their Green Marine certification. Green Marine aims to lead worldwide conversations about how to identify emerging issues, set realistic but demanding goals for environmental improvement, and benchmark progress. Gretchen Barrera, the environmental section manager for the Alabama State Port Authority, is shown with Green Marine Executive Director David Bolduc, accepting the Port's certificate. The Port Authority was accepted into the program in late 2016 and received its proof and certification in May 2018 for calendar year 2017.



22ND ANNUAL GUMBO COOKOFF

The 22nd annual Gumbo Cookoff was held at Cooper Riverside Park this past spring. All proceeds from the event benefitted GulfQuest Maritime Museum. Winners for Best Gumbo were: Fresh Seafood Distributors (first place); Seabulk Towing (second place); and Armbrecht Jackson LLP (third place).

Awards for Best Decorations went to: Dauphin Island Sea Lab (first place); Alabama State Port Authority (second place); and Armbrecht Jackson LLP (third place).



1 Hiller Systems Cook Team
Marcus Porter
Jason Bedsole
Frankie Martin

2 Page & Jones Cook Team
Billy McAleer
Lee Kraus
Edward Shreve

3 Armbrecht Jackson LLP Cook Team
Earl Kellam
Matthew Kiszla
Bill Kiszla
Kathy Miller
Karen Williams
Emily Bachus
Blanca Wakefield
Angela Rowe
Lynn Tullos

4 Oil Recovery Co. Cook Team
Paul Jones
John Cole
Perry Studstill

5 APM Terminals Cook Team
Katie Morgan
Denson White
Austin St. Clair
Jarmarkus Garret
Richard Dodson
Geraldo Paz
Erin Thompson

6 Millard Maritime Cook Team
Bobby Wein

7 Catholic Maritime Club Cook Team
Joe Connick
Alma Braggs
John Sloke
Judy Archer
John Archer

8 McCarron Services Cook Team
James Rhodes
Tony Powell
Rusty McCarron
Russell McCarron

9 Crescent Towing Cook Team
Chris Walker
Robbie Thompson
Cody Denny
Kyle Tucker
Travis Stringfellow
Daniel Nicolaidis
Davin Tucker
Matt Aucoin



10 Alabama State Port Authority Cook Team
Corolene Anderson
Pete Olivero
Charlotte Sykes
Travis Hightower
Celia Appling
Alan Michaels
Anita Huff

11 EPIC Alabama Shipyards LLC Cook Team
Cornelius Davis
Clenon Williams
James Daigle
Thomas Godfrey
Rhonda Thompson
JJ Sharlow
Autumn Garmeson
Amy Fresh
Ed White
Dane Raley
Bruce Pettway
Tim Delong
Garey Griffin
Ryan Schnoor

12 Dauphin Island Sea Lab Cook Team
Bottom (L to R)
Darren Harbison
Lori Roberts-Angelo
Shelley Stephens
John Valentine

Top (L To R)
John Radford
Josh Yaeger
Lee Breittin
David England

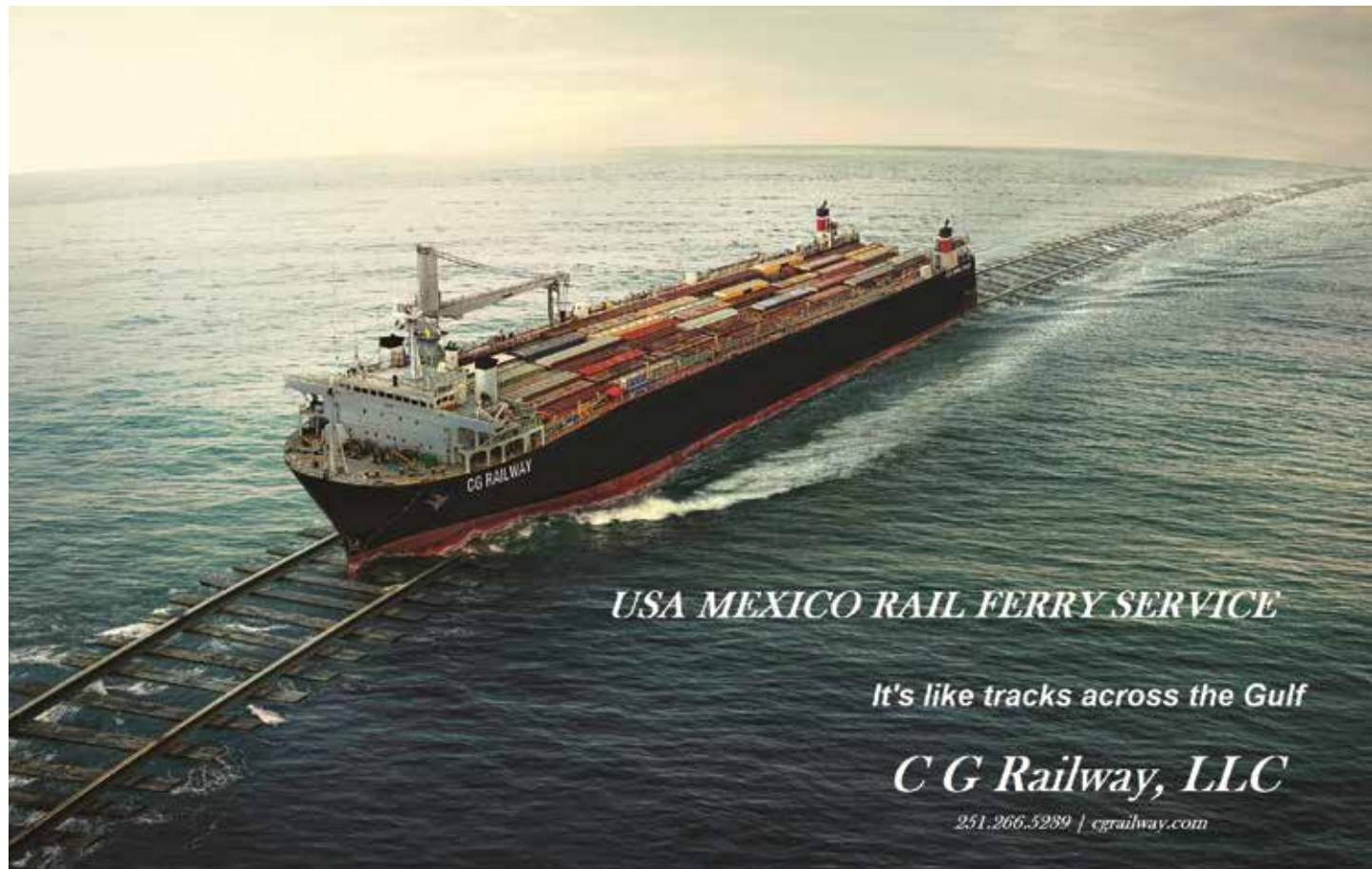
13 American Equity Underwriters Cook Team
Sidney Norris
Randi Beck
Matthew Hockman
Dean Bockerstett
Nick Arnold
Donna Browder
Jennifer Kimbrough

14 Seabulk Towing Cook Team
Michelle Ard
Ryan Pugh
Nikki Hocutt

15 Tri-State Maritime Services
Mike Stringer
Tracy Chadwell

16 Hand Arendall Cook Team
Nicole Weinacht
Patrick Ward
Alicia Steiner
Wes Hunter
Hawkins Hunter
Paul Beckman

17 Fresh Seafood Distributors Cook Team
Kenny Nichols
Alan Lewis
Tyler Welch



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ABOUT OUR COVER...



ALABAMA VOTERS APPROVE \$45 MILLION DOCKS BOND ISSUE

Alabama voters voiced their overwhelming approval of a constitutional amendment calling for the expenditure of \$45 million to improve and modernize the Alabama State Docks in one of the most significant elections in the state's long and colorful history.

The resounding victory margin amounted to better than three to one and came after Gov. George C. Wallace, virtually every elected state official, both of Alabama's U.S. Senators and all seven Congressmen threw their support behind the bond issue.



ALABAMA STATE DOCKS JOINS BICENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

The Alabama State Docks is pleased to join in the year-long celebration of the nation's Bicentennial. We felt it appropriate to introduce our Official Bicentennial Emblem in this, our July issue, and it has been reproduced on the cover.

The emblem contains a representation of the State of Alabama with its great river systems and shows location of the Port of Mobile, the inland docks and the

Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway link. The initials, U.S.A. and A.S.D., are linked together to symbolize the prominent role played by Alabama's port and rivers in the exploration and development of the nation.

During the coming year, we will reproduce the Official Alabama State Docks emblem throughout issues of the Port of Mobile magazine.

10

PORT OF MOBILE

JULY 1975

11

In 1975, Alabama voters overwhelmingly approved a \$45 million bond issue to improve and modernize the Alabama State Port Authority.

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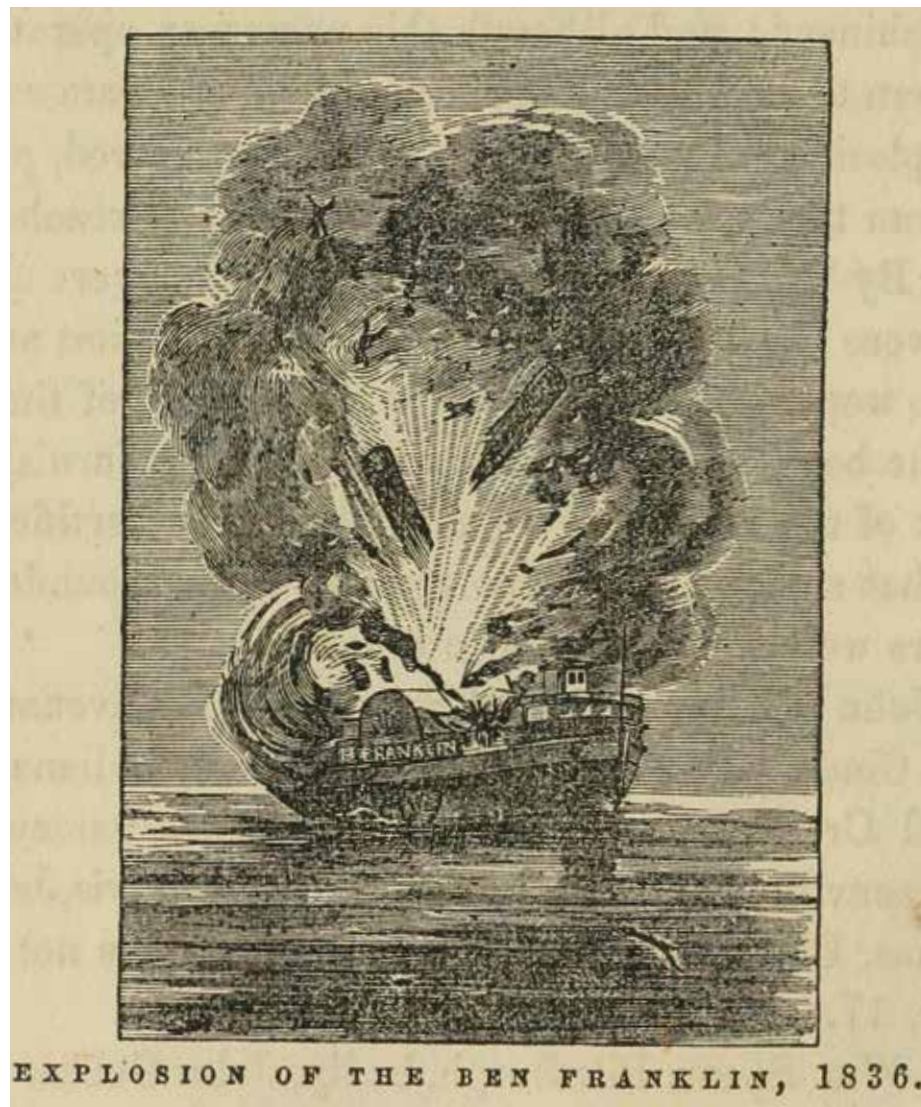
THE ELIZA BATTLE, GHOST SHIP OF THE TOMBIGBEE

“When the late winter rains send the Tombigbee River out of its banks at Nanafalia... there sometimes rises out of the muddy water a ghost ship...” so begins Kathryn Tucker Windham’s “The Phantom Steamboat of the Tombigbee,” included in her classic *13 Alabama Ghosts and Jeffrey*, first published in 1969. The story recounts the true-life tale of the steamboat ELIZA BATTLE.

Mobilians were no strangers to steamboat tragedies. As luxurious as steamboat travel could be, with its palatial saloons and on-board entertainment, the boats were not immune to tragedy. If a captain wasn’t vigilant, snags or “sawyers” could rip the bottom out of a boat’s hull and send her to the bottom. Strong currents could ground a steamer on a sandbar or send her crashing headlong into the riverbank, but the most terrifying fate of a steamboat was to suffer a fire, often caused by exploding boilers.

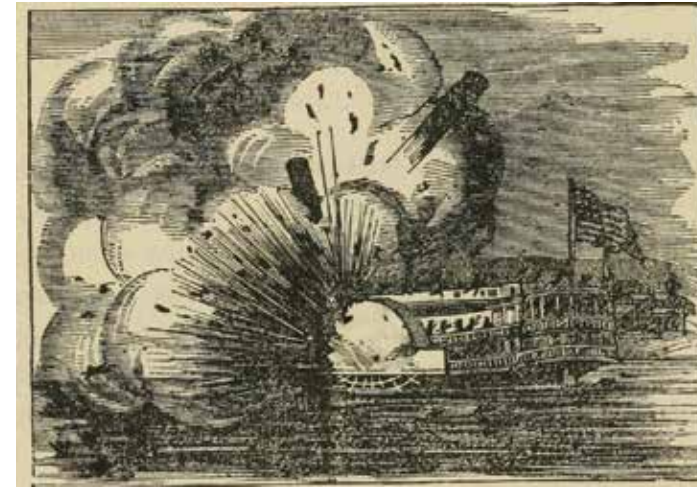
Most losses of steamboats occurred on the far reaches of the interior waterways, witnessed only by those on board or the occasional passer-by, but the citizens of Mobile had been directly exposed to the terrible scene presented by the loss of the steamboat BEN FRANKLIN in March 1836. Laden with luxury goods for inland ports and packed with passengers, the Montgomery-bound steamboat experienced problems almost from the instant Captain H. A. Slade attempted to back away from the wharf at the foot of Dauphin Street. As a crowd of well-wishers looked on, the FRANKLIN quickly became entangled with another boat’s anchor line.

Managing to free the boat, Slade gave the engineer the “full astern” order. The massive paddles on the side-wheeler bit into the muddy waters of the Mobile River, churning up foam, but they had barely made three full revolutions



EXPLOSION OF THE BEN FRANKLIN, 1836.

» The boilers on the steamboat BEN FRANKLIN exploded just after the boat backed away from the Dauphin Street wharf on March 13, 1836, killing at least 16 people.



» The riverboat TUSCALOOSA suffered a fatal explosion of her boilers some 10 or 11 miles above Mobile in January 1847.

before a series of tremendous explosions ripped through the boat, sending a concussion rolling across those gathered on the wharf and “which seemed to shake the whole city to its foundations,” according to a contemporary report.

The explosions blew the boilers, pieces of the boiler deck, the funnels and the pilot house into the air. Also witnessed was the body of passenger Isaac Williams being flung an estimated 100 feet in the air before striking the surface of the water 150 yards from the boat. At least 16 people were killed, including the pilot and a number of deck hands, and another dozen were badly injured, others less so. Bodies lay strewn across the decks of the FRANKLIN, dead or injured. Others struggled in the water while pieces of the boat rained onto the wharf and into the water. The exploded boilers were seen to sink, hissing, into the river. The crowd, stunned, at first seemed unable to determine what to do before regaining their senses and coming to the aid of the injured.

In late January 1847, Mobile was witness to yet another waterfront tragedy. Bound for Tuscaloosa, the steamboat TUSCALOOSA backed away from the Dauphin Street wharf at 8 p.m. in the midst of a winter storm. Pushing against a headwind and a strong current, the TUSCALOOSA had made her way about 10 or 11 miles upstream when two of her boilers exploded, instantly killing a number of those on board. The explosion was heard in Mobile, and observers could see the glow from the resulting fire. A passenger later told reporters that “the explosion completely tore up the boiler deck and shattered the after part of the boat (below deck) considerably.” As the TUSCALOOSA careened out of control toward the west bank, the fire spread to 20 barrels of gunpowder that had been stowed forward and which now exploded, further adding to the horrors on board.

The stern of the boat was made fast with a line, but the men on board were unable to pull the boat any closer to shore. Women passengers were lowered safely into the steamboat’s yawl and rowed to shore, although, with the river in flood stage, there was no dry ground available, forcing survivors either to stand neck-high in freezing water or climb into the exposed limbs of trees lining the bank. Some of the men managed to cobble together a rude craft from flotsam as the hulk of the TUSCALOOSA burned to the water’s edge. In this state, the victims of the explosion waited helplessly for three hours until the steamboat JAMES HEWITT could arrive from Mobile to take on survivors. At least eight men had been killed instantly, and several others were badly injured and not expected to live. Reports at the time numbered the dead and injured at around 40, and the following day, the steamer WYNOCA delivered 10 bodies her crew had picked up at the site of the accident.

Despite these occurrences, steamboat travel remained a popular method of travel and the best mode of commercial transport during the first half of the 19th century. The city’s wharves were crowded with steamboats at any given time, plying the waters between Mobile and the state’s interior and providing regular service between Mobile and New Orleans.

The largest steamboat company in Mobile was Cox, Brainard & Company, which had recently relocated its headquarters from 94 Commerce Street to 30 South Front Street. In 1855, the company proudly announced that it was initiating mail service between Mobile and Montgomery, with offices at numerous points in-between. The following year, partners Jessie J. Cox and James M. Brainard heralded their two newest steamboats built in New Albany, Indiana, the ST. NICHOLAS and the ST. CHARLES (the latter of which sank only two years later near Selma). The pride of the Brainard, Cox fleet, however, was the ELIZA BATTLE. Built in New Albany in 1852, the 316-ton ELIZA BATTLE had been selected as the site for a reception for former U.S. President Millard Fillmore in Mobile in April 1857.

Described as a “floating palace,” the ELIZA BATTLE’s initial run downriver in 1858 had been promoted for weeks as a special one. A new calliope had been installed, and two bands had been engaged to provide entertainment for the passengers during the passage to Mobile. The steamboat, festooned with bunting and flags from stem to stern, pulled away from Aberdeen, Mississippi, landing on Sunday morning, Feb. 28, making her first stop in Columbus shortly after noon to take on additional passengers and cargo. The day was bright but chilly as Captain S. Graham Stone watched excited passengers embark and roustabouts expertly wrangle massive 500-lb. bales of cotton onto the deck. With



» Despite the dangers, steamboats represented the most comfortable way to travel and the most efficient mode of transporting cargo, especially the cotton that represented the lifeblood of Mobile's economy in the 19th century.

a warning from the whistle and the calliope peeping shrilly, the ELIZA BATTLE pulled away from the wharf as townspeople waved their goodbyes.

The first of the bands took up its instruments within the hour, and passengers whirled about the dance floor, the ladies enjoying cups of punch, and the men helping themselves to stronger drink. The steamboat made additional stops along the river, calling at Vienna, Gainesville and Warsaw, where a large wedding party joined the merriment, which seemed to increase with every passing hour.

The fine weather of the day gave way to a dirty night as the temperature dropped more than 40 degrees in two hours, and heavy sleet began to fall. The change in weather had no effect on the passengers, however, who were in high spirits as they bid their goodnights and made their way to their cabins after midnight.

Sometime around 2 a.m., disaster struck. The cry of "fire" roused the passengers from their beds. Some of the bales of cotton located on the aft end of the boat and adjacent to the ladies' cabin had caught fire. A fierce north wind fanned the flames, causing the fire to spread quickly.

Men and women appeared topside wearing just their nightclothes, the women clutching their children close to them. Even as Captain Stone steered for the bank in an effort to land his passengers, the fire burned away the steering ropes, leaving the ELIZA BATTLE to

the mercy of the wind and current. Men heroically attempted to launch first the steamboat's yawl and then its lifeboat, but the heat of the flames forced them back, and too quickly the boats themselves were consumed by the flames. The passengers fled to the bow of the boat in an attempt to escape the all-consuming flames.

The steamboat plowed into the trees on the near bank, but, just as in the case of the ill-fated TUSCALOOSA, the river was in flood stage, the water extending some half-mile beyond the riverbank. A number of passengers quickly climbed into the trees as the wind tore at their night shirts and nightgowns. Some of the crew and passengers managed to shove a number of cotton bales overboard, and a few hardy souls climbed on board these fluffy rafts to make their escape. The burning boat remained with her bow buried among the trees until the engines failed, then the current tore the ELIZA BATTLE from the bank and sent her drifting across the river.

The mate and pilot had managed to scramble onto one of the floating bales and floated downriver some four miles, shouting for help the entire way until someone heard their cries. Meanwhile, a number of passengers who had taken refuge in the trees began to drop into the water, either from exhaustion or exposure. The first sign of aid was a lone man in a skiff, who began taking on survivors and rowing them to safety, a few at a time, shortly before dawn, March 1, 1858. It was reported that Captain Stone ordered the women and children to be rescued first, and he was the last man to be picked up.

Reports as to the number of dead vary greatly, but it is generally agreed that approximately 33 people—at least three of them children, along with several minors employed as cabin boys—lost their lives in what is described as the worst maritime disaster on the Tombigbee River. Several theories as to the origins of the fire have also been put forth over the years, including a story that professional gamblers started the fire in retaliation for having been removed from the boat, and another that claimed the fire was set by two Irish deckhands who had stolen a bag of money from a cabin and then set the fire to cover their crime. A third version has it that the fire started as a result of a cigar butt whose owner accidentally tossed it onto a bale of cotton rather than overboard as he had intended. The most likely reason, however, is that sparks from the funnels of the steamboat WARRIOR had been blown onto one or more of the cotton bales. The WARRIOR had passed the ELIZA BATTLE to windward half an hour prior to the fire's discovery.

Whatever the cause, the passage that had begun with such joy had now ended in sorrow. Most of those who died had remained in the frigid water for between three and four hours. All but 15 or 20 of the estimated 1,200 to 1,300 cotton bales on board were destroyed. None of the baggage, save one or two carpetbags, survived. As for the ELIZA BATTLE, the uninsured boat was a total loss, burning to the waterline before sinking in 28 feet of water.

It wasn't long before newspapers began publishing accounts of mysterious sightings on the Tombigbee of a burning steamboat, accompanied by the sounds of music. Fishermen, boat captains and residents along the river reported seeing the burning ship making her way down the river, especially on stormy nights. Sometimes, the flames were bright enough to illuminate the name of the boat on the big sidewheels: ELIZA BATTLE, and the tragic steamboat came to be known as the ghost ship of the Tombigbee, the sight of her usually interpreted as a harbinger of bad things to come.



» The ELIZA BATTLE caught fire in the early morning hours of March 1, 1858. Passengers climbed into trees or went into the frigid water to escape. An estimated 33 people died. Sightings of a ghost ship plying the waters of the Tombigbee River have been reported ever since.

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