

ALABAMA SEAPORT

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE
OF THE ALABAMA STATE PORT AUTHORITY

2021 VOL. I



The new RO/RO facility opens at the Port of Mobile.

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ALABAMA SEAPORT

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ON THE COVER:

AutoMOBILE opens at the Port of Mobile, with a total investment of \$60 million.



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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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ALABAMA'S RICHARD SHELBY RETIRES FROM U.S. SENATE

After serving six consecutive terms in the United States Senate, Alabama Senator Richard Shelby announced in February that this current term will be his last.

"For everything, there is a season," stated Shelby in his public announcement. "Serving in the U.S. Senate has been the opportunity of a lifetime. I have done my best to address challenges and find ways to improve the day-to-day lives of all Americans. I have also focused on the economic challenges of Alabamians, increasing access to education and promoting facilities to improve the quality of schools. I have worked to enhance Alabama's role in space exploration and the security of our nation. Further, I have supported the utilization of Alabama's greatest resources, including its unparalleled river system and the Port of Mobile."

Shelby is currently the vice chairman and leading Republican on the Senate Appropriations Committee, where he recently served as chairman of the full committee and its subcommittee of defense. Senator Shelby also once served as chairman of the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration and the Senate Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee, of which he is the longest-serving member in history. He remains a senior member of each of those committees. Additionally, he was previously the chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, and also serves on the Senate Committee of Environment and Public Works.

"Few people have had a more consequential impact on our state than Sen. Richard Shelby. His legacy will be felt for generations to come," said Alabama Gov. Kay Ivey.

Born and raised in Birmingham, Alabama, Shelby is a fifth generation Alabamian and a graduate of The University of Alabama's undergraduate and law programs. He began his career as a city prosecutor in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, and went on to serve as a U.S. magistrate for the northern district of Alabama before working as a special assistant attorney general.

Following four terms in the U.S. House of Representatives serving Alabama's 7th Congressional District and eight years in the Alabama State Legislature, Shelby was first elected to the U.S. Senate in 1986. During his time in Congress, he has focused on expanding economic opportunities throughout Alabama and the country, in addition to his top priority - the security of the nation. Shelby has also worked to improve and advance education, medical research, space exploration, infrastructure, manufacturing and agriculture. He has been instrumental in deepening and widening the Port of Mobile, a project he believes will have a monumental and long-term impact on Alabama's economy.

Shelby's early work with then Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan successfully garnered congressional support to reduce the cost of money, cut interest rates and restore investment tax credits. The measures incentivized U.S. manufacturing and public/private infrastructure investments across the country and allowed U.S. businesses to compete in the global marketplace.

Shelby set out to improve programs that fostered investments in transportation and reduced public cost. For the port industry, he convinced Congress in 2014 to change the cost share formula,



Kay Ivey, Governor of Alabama

ALABAMA STATE PORT AUTHORITY

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Term expires July 31, 2023

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Southern Region
Term expires July 31, 2025

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Term expires July 31, 2023

Dr. Patricia Sims, Northern Region
Term expires July 31, 2025

Mayor Sandy Stimpson,
City of Mobile (Ex Officio)
Term expires July 31, 2021

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which made harbor modernization projects affordable for the non-federal sponsor, like the Alabama State Port Authority. He also used his seat to increase the Army Corps of Engineers' budgets to address deferred maintenance and accelerate civil works projects. Shelby tackled policies designed to improve performance-driven contracting and efficiencies in the Corps' contracting processes. An example of one of his many reforms included the groundbreaking regional dredge demonstration program for the Central Gulf Coast, which allows the Corps to contract for both O&M and construction work to deliver larger volume contracts, reduce mobilization and demobilization costs and provide better pricing. The program also allows for reasonable project delivery timelines and streamlines the contract award process. These initiatives foster dredger competition and better pricing.

For the Port of Mobile, Senator Shelby's leadership helped the Alabama State Port Authority achieve affordable landside infrastructure, as well as deliver a fully studied and fully funded channel deepening and widening in under 10 years. The senator has often noted the channel deepening and widening project is "a game changer" to the state's and region's shippers and economic development opportunities.

Shelby also understood the complex and long-standing issues tied to full use of the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund (HMTF). In 2014, his work began to free up the trust fund's collections for reinvestment in the nation's seaports. In March 2020, Senator Shelby masterfully negotiated and delivered the full use of annual HMTF revenues in the CARES Act supplemental package, and addressed HMFT authorization issues associated with funds distribution and unspent HMTF tax collections in the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2020.

"Personally, I am deeply saddened by Senator Shelby's desire to retire, so he can take up pursuits delayed by 60 years of public service to the American people," said John C. Driscoll, director and



chief executive officer of the Alabama State Port Authority. "Alabama's only seaport, as well as seaports across the nation, have never seen a better champion for the maritime industry."

Shelby served over forty years in the U.S. Senate, which is longer than any other Alabamian. Although the well-being of Alabama was always top-of-mind, his service and accomplishments bettered every American's quality of life and furthered the nation's prosperity.

"My service in the U.S. Senate would not have been possible without those who have encouraged me over the years. I am particularly grateful for the support of my wife, Annette, and my entire family. Additionally, my staff, whose determination and loyalty have been unwavering, has been absolutely necessary in achieving my goals," said Shelby. "Thank you again for the honor you have given me - the honor to serve the people of Alabama in

Congress for the last 42 years. I look forward to what is to come for our great state and our great nation."

The Alabama State Port Authority's board, management and employees, and Alabama's maritime industries salute his body of work and wish Senator Shelby and his family "fair winds and following seas."

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LEADERSHIP CHANGES AT THE ALABAMA STATE PORT AUTHORITY



Beth Branch
Chief Commercial Officer



Judith Adams
Vice President of Internal and External Affairs



Bill Inge
Vice President of General Cargo and Intermodal

In February, Beth Branch joined the Alabama State Port Authority senior management team as the new chief commercial officer, a recent hire by John C. Driscoll, director and chief executive officer of the Port Authority. “Beth stood out amongst a very impressive list of qualified individuals seeking to lead this critical position at the Port Authority,” said Driscoll.

Branch earned her Bachelor of Arts from Duke University and Master of Business Administration from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She brings to the Port Authority extensive commercial maritime experience at the senior level in both the public and private sectors. Prior to joining the Port Authority, Branch served as the head of business development and international marketing at the Port of Oakland. Her experience also includes more than 15 years with AP Moller-Maersk in both Europe and North America directing sales and marketing, business process and pricing initiatives. Branch will be responsible for all commercial activities involving sales, marketing and real estate development.

In another move, Driscoll named Judith Adams vice president of internal and external affairs for the Port Authority. In this new role, Adams will lead the Port Authority’s government relations and initiatives at the local, state and federal levels. She will also lead

port-wide administration for buildings services, service contracts, and internal policy development. Adams will continue to manage the Port Authority’s community and public affairs, internal and external communications, public policy, events and serve as the port’s economic development liaison.

Driscoll also realigned internal operations, as Bill Inge will continue to serve as vice president of general cargo and intermodal leading the general cargo and intermodal operations, with Driscoll adding Theodore Terminals and operating lease terminals management to Inge’s portfolio of responsibilities.

“These changes provide both business and administration management continuity for both our customers and employees, and better align with the Port Authority’s business objectives and strategies for growth,” said Driscoll.

The Alabama State Port Authority owns and operates the state of Alabama’s deep-water port facilities at the Port of Mobile, currently the 11th largest U.S. Seaport by total trade and generating \$25.4 billion in economic value statewide. The Port Authority’s container, general cargo and bulk facilities have immediate access to two interstate systems, five Class 1 railroads, nearly 15,000 miles of inland waterways and air cargo connections.

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ALABAMA JOBS ACT AND GROWING ALABAMA CREDIT REAUTHORIZED

In February, the Alabama Legislature passed HB 192, which reauthorizes the Alabama Jobs Act and the Growing Alabama Credit. In December of 2020, Gov. Kay Ivey signed an executive order extending these incentives until the legislature could reconvene in 2021. The governor signed the bill on February 12, once it passed through both chambers of the Alabama Legislature.

The bill was sponsored by Rep. Bill Poole and carried in the Senate by newly elected Senate President Pro Tem Greg Reed. These key economic development incentives have a proven track record of job creation and industry recruitment. This reauthorization extends the Alabama Jobs Act and the Growing Alabama Credit until July 31, 2023, and also increases the annual cap for both incentives.

“The Alabama Jobs Act and Growing Alabama tax credits are essential to the success of Alabama’s economy, and we’ve seen a great return on investment across our state,” Gov. Ivey said. “The state is currently negotiating potential economic projects that hinge on the availability of these tax-credit programs, and without an extension, we risk losing nearly \$3 billion in direct capital investment and over 7,000 new direct jobs.”

The Alabama Jobs Act is a tax incentive program that provides incentives to stimulate job creation and capital investment through two separate tax credits – the Jobs Credit and the Investment Credit. The Jobs Act was updated from the previous \$300 million incentive cap in 2020 to \$325 million in 2021, eventually rising to \$350 million in 2022. It also gives an opportunity for new market tax credits to women- and Black-owned companies, as well as small businesses located in low-income communities. Since 2015, the Alabama Jobs Act has provided \$2.3 billion in total tax incentives, created 29,279 jobs, and provided an estimated return on investment of 176%.

The Growing Alabama Credit is a tax credit provided to Alabama taxpayers who make contributions to Economic Development Organizations (EDO) for approved qualifying projects. These local organizations can use the funds to contribute to projects such as inland ports or intermodal facilities, industrial parks, and agricultural centers, among others. The Growing Alabama tax credit was updated from the previous \$10 million per year cap in 2020 to \$20 million. Established in July 2016, the Growing Alabama Credit has funded 17 projects including four tech accelerators, one STEM marketing program and 12 site preparation and public infrastructure improvement projects. The site preparation and infrastructure improvement projects have resulted in 2,361 new direct jobs with an annual new payroll of \$93 million and 3,609 new indirect jobs with a new annual payroll of \$199.2 million.



» Gov. Ivey signs bill extending state incentives.

“These economic development incentives that are being renewed and sharpened have proven to be essential tools in our toolbox when it comes to recruiting and expanding industry across Alabama,” said Rep. Poole. “And because these incentives are performance-based in terms of requiring the creation of new jobs and attracting new investment, our citizens can be assured that these incentives are a sound investment in Alabama’s economy and the future prosperity of our citizens.”

The bill also offers tax breaks to automakers who will ship vehicles out of the Port of Mobile, which is timely considering the Alabama State Port Authority recently completed a \$60 million automotive terminal that allows for vehicles to roll on and off of ships. The vehicle credit compliments existing credits issued to qualified shippers in the containerized, general cargo and bulk commodities sectors. The automotive logistics industry utilizes different units of measurement than other cargo sectors. With Alabama’s high growth automotive manufacturing shippers, along with other automotive manufacturers and ports in competing states, Alabama’s new automobile credit keeps Alabama shippers and the seaport in a competitive posture.

“The Growing Alabama, Jobs Credit and the Port Credit help level the playing field for our economic development community and the port,” said John C. Driscoll, director and chief executive officer of the Alabama State Port Authority. “Alabama and her only seaport compete with other states and seaports to recruit new investment and jobs. Governor Ivey, Secretary Canfield and our Legislature fully understand the landscape and we appreciate their efforts to keep our business lines competitive.”



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NEW RO/RO FACILITY OPENS AT THE PORT OF MOBILE

AutoMOBILE International Terminal (AIT), the new vehicle processing roll-on/roll-off (RO/RO) facility at the Port of Mobile, converted approximately 57 acres of a derelict bulk material handling facility into a state-of-the-art automotive processing and logistics terminal with an annual throughput capacity of 150,000 vehicles. The 40-foot ship draft facility is served by five Class I railroads serving all of North America and immediate, unencumbered access to two interstate systems. The overall project represents a total investment of approximately \$60 million.



“The Port of Mobile’s proximity to major southeast and gulf consumer markets, vehicle manufacturing industry and its unrivaled rail and interstate connectivity, makes it an ideal location for a dedicated RO/RO terminal and finished vehicle processing facility,” said Finn Roden, chief commercial officer for AIT. “A strong partnership has developed with the Port of Mobile and the AutoMOBILE International Terminal and we will make the AIT Mobile facility a world-class vehicle processing facility and RO/RO terminal together.”

The work to prepare the site included multiple demolition contracts, the relocation of existing facilities within the footprint of the new terminal, installation of more than 500,000 cubic yards of fill material, over 10,000 feet of retaining wall, more than 40,000 tons of asphalt, 50,000 cubic yards of base material, over 30,000 square yards of concrete pavement, more than 9,000 feet of rail track, over 11,000 feet of stormwater piping, rehabilitation of an 80,000-square-foot dock and the construction of the 40,000-square-foot vehicle processing center.

The RO/RO facility hosted a virtual grand opening in June. The facility provides:

- Vehicle processing center that includes pre-delivery inspection and an accessorizing facility, paint booth, body shop and car wash
- RO/RO terminal for receiving a multitude of cargoes from RO/RO vessels, including construction machinery, agriculture machinery, finished vehicles and various project cargoes
- Rail-ramp for loading vehicles to rail from international import shipment and rail unloading from domestic manufacture for local distribution and international export

“This new terminal offers the automotive industry a new, efficient gateway with some of the best inland rail connectivity in all of North America,” said John C. Driscoll, director and chief executive officer of the Alabama State Port Authority.

AIT is a joint venture of Terminal Zárate S.A, headquartered in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and Neltume Ports, headquartered in Santiago, Chile. The Alabama State Port Authority and AutoMOBILE International Terminal signed

a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in April 2018 in Buenos Aires, to develop and operate a vehicle processing RO/RO facility at the Port of Mobile.

“We are excited to bring Terminal Zárate’s finished vehicle and RO/RO logistics expertise coupled with Neltume Port’s extensive marine terminal expertise to the Port of Mobile and AutoMOBILE International Terminal,” said Roden.

The Alabama State Port Authority initiated a Request for Proposal process in late 2016 to identify a potential partner in the construction of the facility to meet the region’s growing demand for finished automobile import/export facilities in the Gulf of Mexico. ASPA selected the partnership between Terminal Zárate S.A. and Neltume Ports and began concession agreement discussions for the construction and operation of the new facility.

“This project is a significant component of our growth strategy and given our strong experience as a RO/RO terminal, we are convinced we will develop AutoMOBILE International Terminal into a world class RO/RO processing and handling facility,” said Robert Murchison, president of Terminal Zárate S.A.

Terminal Zárate specializes in port services, warehousing, equipment rental and other activities providing value to client logistic chains, economic sectors and overseas trade. Terminal Zárate is one of the largest RO/RO terminals in the Americas with a nine million vehicle throughput to date and operates as a processing and distribution vehicle facility with strong working relationships with automotive manufacturers and international RO/RO shipowners.

“We are very pleased to participate in AutoMOBILE International Terminal. This represents a very significant event for Neltume Ports AIT, as it marks our entry into the United States port industry,” said Richard von Appen, chairman of Neltume Ports. “We are also very excited that this will be at the Port of Mobile, which is a strategic location with efficient connections to all of North America.”

Neltume Ports is a leading port operator and developer in Latin America, with a portfolio of multipurpose bulk and container terminals entailing 16 port operations and two stevedoring companies in four South American countries. In 2018, it formed a strategic partnership with ATCO Ltd. with a focus on expansion and development of new port business in the Americas.

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» Co-founder, Mark, is the third generation of the Yeager family to own and operate this farm. The property is a true labor of family love. Photographer Credit: Stacie Kinney Photography

RED LAND COTTON

Grown and made in Lawrence County, Alabama, Red Land Cotton is a family-owned business that has been operating since 1983. Co-founder Mark Yeager took advantage of the opportunity in Alabama to combine his love of farming and business while identifying the ability to produce something unique from his high-quality crop. The red soil of north Alabama gave way to rain-fed cotton and sustainable farming, where Red Land Cotton was born.

Yeager named his farm "Red Land Farms" when he began farming in the early 80s. He named it after the rich, red clay soil that is unique to north Alabama and the family's 5,000-acre farmland, which is separated into fields of corn, cattle and cotton. In the early 90s, Yeager built his own cotton gin in order to have control over his cotton crop and give his family and farm a way to generate revenue. To this day, the family still gins their own cotton, which gives them the opportunity to control the amount of heat and moisture put on the cotton during the ginning process. The cotton is processed through two lint cleaners in the gin for a purer, cleaner product from the ground level.

Red Land Cotton is the only family-owned farm in the U.S. that operates by taking cotton from their own farmland and milling it into a finished textile. The ground-up quality, authenticity and family foundation is what makes this company so unique. Alabama's farming climate and agricultural community is a strong proponent of Red Land Cotton's success. It is common for Alabamians to have a family tie or connection to agriculture, and it is

this sense of community and mutual understanding that propels businesses like Red Land Cotton forward.

The company's growth took off in the fourth quarter of 2019. Yeager's daughter and co-founder of the business, Anna Brakefield shared, "We saw business really start to pick up steam. That Christmas season, we completely sold out of product. The pandemic of 2020, while troublesome to our supply chain and operations, did shine a light on the importance of American manufacturing and the fragile American textile supply chain. This allowed us an opportunity to talk about our supply chain and why we choose to do business in the United States. This commitment to being American made grew sales even during a very difficult year."

Their growth surge continues, with an expectation to double Red Land Cotton's workforce in 2021. With the ability to expand production efforts in their new



25,000-square-foot warehouse, distribution center and storefront in Lawrence County, Alabama, Red Land Cotton's business and commercial development will continue to soar. The company's growth and boost in production wouldn't be possible without the family's hard work, consistency and innovative processes, along with Alabama's ideal farming climate for their quality, hand-selected, home-grown cotton.

The process from the cotton's growth in the field to becoming a high-quality bed linen is quite complex, taking roughly six to nine months from cotton in the field to the finished goods and final products. This process is managed by the Yeager family from start to finish. Once the family harvests and gins the cotton, it is spun into yarn. From there, the yarn is woven into cloth, finished and cut and sewn. This process takes place in several states but begins and ends in Alabama. In total, the supply chain spans across nine states and in 12 factories, resulting in high-quality linens.

The Yeager family's farming method is what sets them apart from other cotton farmers. Their innovative approach benefits both the farm and the crop through meticulous management, which in turn, results in high-quality product. The family is constantly experimenting with new cover crops, farming equipment and methods for boosting soil health, with their ultimate goals being continued growth for Alabama's manufacturing environment and getting quality, heirloom linens into the hands of families across the U.S.

Though the luxurious array of linens is widely popular, Red Land Cotton's basic sheet set stands above the rest of their products in popularity. The simplicity and softness of the set combined with the affordability is what makes this a customer staple. According to Brakefield,



» Co-founder, Anna Brakefield, inspects the new cotton crop, ensuring it is to Red Land Cotton's standards. Photographer Credit: Stacie Kinney Photography

"It is common for customers to try our sheets first and then come back for more products like towels, quilts and blankets!" The quality of this sheet set stands the test of time, with the family's hope that Red Land Cotton customers will have the ability to pass these sheets and linens down for generations, giving way to the desired heirloom trait of their product line.

The Yeager family is particularly thankful for their Alabama roots and the rich agricultural history the state offers. "Alabama is a state that understands agriculture and has a history of textile production. This combined understanding and experience makes it an ideal place to grow a new type of farm-to-fabric business. We're proud to grow our e-commerce business on the same soil we grow our cotton crops. This is a new way of bringing textile manufacturing back to America, and we are proud to do it in the great state of Alabama," said Brakefield.

For more information on Red Land Cotton or to shop their products, visit redlandcotton.com.

PORT CALLS: ALABAMA LAKES



» Wind Creek Montgomery
Photo credit: Billy Pope

The Coosa River lakes, Black Warrior River lakes and Tennessee River lakes are the main sources of entertainment for water lovers and visitors to Alabama. Easily accessible all over the state, both locals and visitors will have a hard time choosing which lake to visit for spring and summer vacations!

With more than 21 state parks, and over 100 lakes, locals and visitors to Alabama can expect outdoor adventures of a wide variety when planning trips to visit the state. The Alabama State Parks Division exists to ensure tourists and guests are able to access all amenities to the parks, including boating ramp access.

“Our parks encompass approximately 48,000 acres of land and water in Alabama. The parks are located throughout Alabama, from the Gulf Coast beaches to the Appalachian Mountains,” said Jerry Weisenfeld, advertising and marketing manager of the Alabama State Parks Division at Outdoor Alabama.

Visited by over six million guests annually and considered some of the best in the nation, travelers can find access to these lakes all over the state of Alabama. From Lake Martin located on the Tallapoosa River outside of Montgomery to Lake Guntersville located on the Tennessee River, visitors are encouraged to see the diverse selection of wildlife species, natural landmarks and outdoor activities that exist in state parks all over Alabama.

“Visitors to any Alabama State Park can experience a variety of outdoor activities including hiking, camping, mountain biking and fishing,” said Weisenfeld. “We have more than 2,600 campsites, 250 miles of trails and a multitude of lakes, rivers, creeks and waterfalls to explore. In addition, our three golf courses, two cave parks, and our new Off-Road Vehicle (ORV) trails allow guests a chance to experience the beauty and wonder of Alabama in unique ways.”

Running through Guntersville in north Alabama, the Tennessee River provides over 900 miles of shoreline and nearly 70,000 acres of water surface for guests and visitors to enjoy. Lake Guntersville gives guests access to many waterfront activities, including easy access to boat ramps to enjoy time on the water. Boat launches give those the chance to head out on the water to fish for the largemouth bass, bluegill, striped bass, catfish and more on Lake Guntersville. Guests are also encouraged to explore the woodlands and try to spot the local wildlife, including bald eagles.

Located throughout the northeastern region of the state, the Coosa River lakes include Weiss Lake, Neely Henry Lake, Logan Martin Lake, Lay Lake, Mitchell Lake and Lake Jordan, which occupy five different regions throughout the state. The high diversity of geology provides a large variety of animals including fish, mussels, snails and crawfish. Around 90% of the Coosa River is located in Alabama alone and gives guests access to the water with boat ramps located throughout.



» Meaher State Park



» Wind Creek
Photo credit: Billy Pope



» Lake Guntersville

Oak Mountain State Park, located near Birmingham, Alabama, holds the title of the largest state park in Alabama. This 940-acre park sits on Double Oak Mountain and has the widest varieties of all outdoor activities of any state park. Guests can enjoy activities like a BMX course, cable skiing, basketball courts and even an 18-hole golf course and driving range. Winning the 2020 Travelers' Choice award from Trip Advisor, this state park is visited by people all over the world looking for a great place to escape to nature in Alabama. Visitors to Birmingham can find a quick detour to the top of the mountain to see the landscape's best view.

Oak Mountain State Park is also home to Double Oak Lake, which has white sandy beaches to enjoy and boat ramps that can be accessed by guests. Guests can bring electric trolling motors for time on the lake as they make the journey out of the water to catch the popular species like the largemouth bass, channel catfish and blue catfish. Gasoline motors are prohibited at Oak Mountain State Park so plan accordingly for any visit.

“We are blessed with an abundance of outdoor recreational opportunities and our agency strives to ensure these options remain available for future generations,” said Chris Greene, fisheries section chief of the Alabama Division of Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Division. “Alabama ranks first out of all 50 states in the number of freshwater fish, crawfish, snail, turtle and mussel species and our goal is to make sure our lakes, like Double Oak Lake, are taken care of so guests can enjoy them for years to come.”

From the Birmingham area, visitors can travel to the Tuscaloosa area, which is home to the Black Warrior River. Branching from the river include the Bankhead, Holt, Oliver, Warrior, Demopolis and Coffeenville lakes, providing boating ramp access to guests looking for time on the water. The watershed of the Black Warrior River covers over 6,000 square miles in Alabama and measures almost 200 miles from top to bottom, with a wide variety of boating ramp access throughout.

Southeast of Birmingham, Lake Martin was formed by the 1926 damming of the Tallapoosa River and offers more than 880 miles of shoreline. This lake is home to 18 boat ramps, giving families the opportunity to venture out on the water, whether on a slow ride on a pontoon boat, or a faster cruise with tubing or skiing.

Continuing south in the state, fishing enthusiasts can find boat ramps all over the coastline of Alabama.

Meaher State Park, at over 1,300 acres, is located in the wetlands of north Mobile Bay. Considered to be a hotspot for anglers locally and internationally, this location on Mobile Bay gives those looking for a boat ramp and fishing pier access to the Mobile-Tensaw Delta, which is home to an immense number of wildlife and creatures living below the water.

Located in Gulf Shores, Alabama, Gulf State Park gives guests and visitors access to more than 6,150 acres of dunes, marshes, pine forest and a freshwater lake. The variety of activities keeps avid fisherman and outdoor enthusiasts entertained.

“At Gulf State Park, the saltwater angler will find excitement in landing the big one from the pier or right from the beach. Everything from king mackerel, amberjack, cobia, flounder, bluefish, tuna and more is available to catch,” said Weisenfeld. “Many of our parks offer full marina services, including boat rentals, bait and tackle sales, as well as snacks and cold drinks.”

For Alabama Division of Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries, the goal is simple: welcome new visitors and keep them safe, while protecting Alabama's natural resources.

Find more information on Alabama lakes and amenities offered, like access to boating ramps, from the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, visit outdooralabama.org.

PROJECT CARGO POWERS THROUGH THE PORT OF MOBILE



In the first quarter of 2021, heavy lift project cargo dominated the waterfront with multiple project cargo shipments moving through the Port of Mobile.

Heavy lift project cargo loaded in Norrkoping, Sweden, arrived on the BBC DART. The Siemens gas turbine was destined for Ascend Performance Materials in Decatur, Alabama. The agent was Nord-Sud. Barging was done by Barnhart, and other transport services were provided by ATS Specialized, Inc.



Project cargo arrived from Thailand on the AAL BRISBANE. The cargo, which was destined for a combined cycle power plant in Alabama, consisted of non-pressure parts and will be installed with HRSG Bundles, which arrived on the AAL Singapore. Aries Worldwide Logistics and Guy M. Turner, Inc. transported the cargo. The agent was Norton Lilly, and the stevedore was Premier Bulk Stevedoring.



A heavy lift cargo for GE arriving from Germany was discharged from the FLORIJNGRACHT. The cargo, which included steam turbine static components, was headed for a project in Alabama. The stevedore was Tri-State Maritime Services. The steamship line was Spliethoff Transport B.V., and the agent was Norton Lilly. J. Supor & Son barged the components from Mobile to the customer.



The STAR JUVENTAS direct discharged a 304-metric ton gas turbine to the Arapaho crane barge at Pier 2 and shifted to Pier C North. The Arapaho loaded the gas turbine to the awaiting Siemens Schnabel railcar for transport to its final destination at the Morrow Generating Plant in Purvis, Mississippi. The agent was Norton Lilly. The carrier was G2 Ocean, and the stevedore was CSA.



A turbine gas manifold was discharged from the SEA SMILE and transported by Guy M. Turner, Inc. to Morrow Generating Plant in Purvis, Mississippi. The stevedore was Tri-State Maritime Services. The carrier was Clipper, and the agent was American Shipping & Chartering.



» Pictured left to right: Linda Paaymans, Maria Williams, Jennafer Way, Katreca Dixon-Geddie, Jim Berry

PORT WINS GOVERNMENTAL ACCOUNTING EXCELLENCE AWARD FOR 23RD CONSECUTIVE YEAR

Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA) awarded the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting to Alabama State Port Authority (ASPA) for its comprehensive annual financial report for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019. The report was judged by an impartial panel to meet the high standards of the program, which includes demonstrating a constructive "spirit of full disclosure" to clearly communicate its financial story and motivate potential users and user groups to read the report.

The Certificate of Achievement is the highest form of recognition in the area of governmental accounting and financial reporting, and its attainment represents a significant accomplishment by a government and its management.

"We are excited once again to be recognized for excellence in governmental accounting," said Linda Paaymans, chief financial officer at ASPA. "This is our 23rd consecutive year of receiving the award, and this is the 28th award the Port has received.

GFOA advances excellence in government finance by providing best practices, professional development, resources and practical research for more than 21,000 members and the communities they serve.

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RESOURCE FIBER ANNOUNCES PLANS FOR ALABAMA PLANT

In January, Gov. Kay Ivey announced that Resource Fiber, a national leader in manufacturing commercial bamboo products, plans to establish its first full-scale production plant in Sulligent, Alabama, as part of a project that will create 111 jobs. The company will invest \$3.6 million in the Lamar County facility, where it will produce engineered bamboo products such as bamboo nail laminated timbers used in the construction of multi-storied buildings.

“Resource Fiber’s decision to locate its production facility in Sulligent is great news for the city and for Alabama,” Gov. Ivey said. “This positions our state at the forefront in the commercialization of innovative bamboo products while creating good jobs in Lamar County.”

Founded in 2011, Resource Fiber has engaged in extensive research and development activities focusing on bamboo products, with six U.S. patents and five U.S. patent applications pending. It has developed bamboo railroad ties and a laminated timber system to replace steel roof and floor decks in commercial buildings.

Resource Fiber CEO David Knight said the company, which operates the nation’s largest commercial-scale bamboo nursery in Greene County, had been looking at nearby locations for its first manufacturing facility. Last year, the company analyzed seven buildings in four Alabama communities.

“We are grateful to have found the right facility and are honored to be a part of the Sulligent community. We also want to thank the Northwest Alabama Economic Development Alliance for the support and assistance they provided in our site selection process,” Knight said. “Achieving this milestone is the cornerstone of the U.S. bamboo industry. We look forward to growing the U.S. bamboo products industry starting with our Sulligent manufacturing facility.”



Resource Fiber relocated an experimental pilot facility in Oneida, Tennessee, to the Sulligent site in November 2020. The company launched manufacturing at the Alabama facility in the second quarter of 2021.

Marsha Folsom, co-founder and chief development officer of Resource Fiber,

said the company’s new production center will cast substantial ripple effects throughout Northwest Alabama.

“Other industries utilizing bamboo fiber will be attracted to locating here to be near the ‘bamboo fiber basket’ and to advance bamboo manufacturing technologies,” Folsom said. “Resource Fiber will serve as the catalyst for attracting bamboo-related jobs and industry to the region.”

To make the project possible, Resource Fiber received support from the state of Alabama, which is providing incentives under the Alabama Jobs Act, and the City of Sulligent, which purchased a building it is leasing to the company. The Houston-based Harry E. Bovay Jr. Foundation also provided a grant to facilitate the project. In addition, the company received a USDA Rural Business Development Grant, administered by the City of Sulligent, to apply towards the purchase of manufacturing equipment.

“The City of Sulligent is proud to partner with Resource Fiber to advance its groundbreaking bamboo products, and we look forward to helping the company find success and to make our city ground zero for a new industry,” Mayor Scott Boman said.

David Thornell, president and CEO of the Northwest Alabama Economic Development Alliance, hailed cooperation on a project that has major significance to Sulligent, a city with around 2,000 residents.

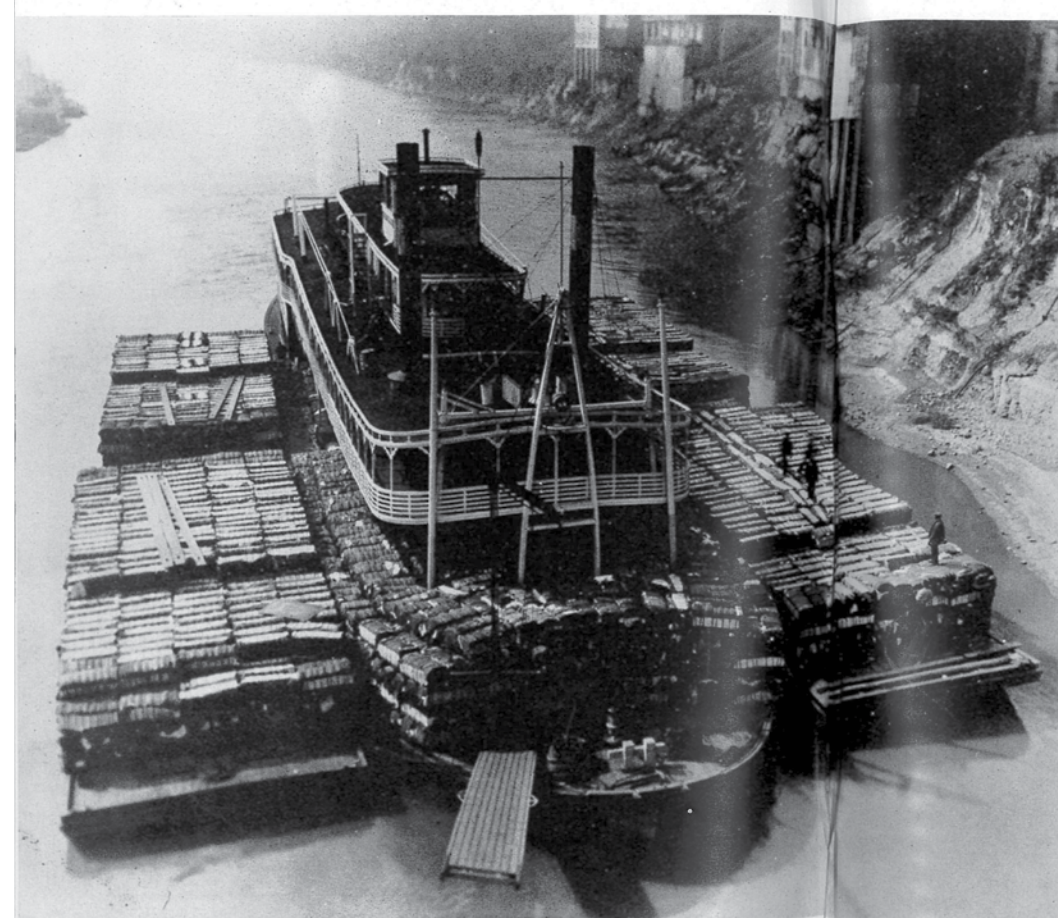
“The result of this team effort will bring over 100 new jobs to rural Alabama and create an epicenter for bamboo product research and development, manufacturing and sales for the U.S., if not the entire world,” Thornell said.

Greg Canfield, secretary of the Alabama Department of Commerce, said the Resource Fiber project advances the state’s goal of creating meaningful job opportunities in rural parts of the state.

“Alabama’s economic development team has embraced job creation in the state’s rural areas as a strategic priority, and the recruitment of Resource Fiber to Sulligent is a perfect illustration of that effort,” Secretary Canfield said. “Not only will the company bring new jobs to Lamar County, but it will also bring a high level of innovative thinking.”

For more information, visit resource-fiber.com.

» A bamboo rail tie produced by Resource Fiber undergoes testing in a lab. Photo credit: Resource Fiber



In the old days

WHEN COTTON WAS KING

River Steamboat HELEN BURKE loading 4,675 bales of cotton at Selma, Alabama, 1921, for a trip down the Alabama River to Mobile. This cotton was for tender on New York futures contracts.

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Back in the old days, cotton was practically the only export through the Port of Mobile.

From the plantations and towns along the Alabama rivers that flow into Mobile Bay, river packet boats piled their upper and lower decks high with bales of cotton. Sternwheelers or side paddlers slapping the water, these boats churned downstream to Mobile.

On to wooden platform piers along the river front, the cotton was unloaded and fleets of “duck-tail” drays, carrying three bales at a time, shuttled the cotton in rapid fashion across town to the cotton compress.

After compression, the little drays would carry the cotton bales back to the docks to be loaded on ocean vessels that would take them across the Atlantic to the textile mills of Europe, or coastwise to mills in New England.

Cotton is still an important export, though now one of many commodities moving through the Port of Mobile. Cotton now moves across the steel and concrete wharves of the Alabama State Docks and is compressed right at the Docks’ compress.

There is no coastwise movement of cotton now, for cotton grown in Alabama is used by textile mills in the state of Alabama. And cotton for export is not limited to that grown along the Alabama rivers, but comes by truck and rail from all of the neighboring southern states.

Neither does cotton move overseas solely to the mills of Europe. The industrial development in other countries throughout the world has produced new markets. Today, cotton leaves Mobile bound for countries that did not even exist in the old days—Indonesia, Yugoslavia, Formosa; new looms in South Africa, Colombia, Chile, draw cotton through Mobile.

In fact, cotton going to new markets contributes a part toward the diversity of steamship lines serving the world markets at Mobile.

And though the days of the old river packet boats are gone, the “color” is still here — a burst of steam from the exhaust of the compress, another bale of cotton is squeezed to one-third of its original size. Four men rush up and insert the shorter ties for the smaller bale; four men on the other side of the bale reeve the ties back for tying down. Simultaneously, two men on either end of the bale are quickly and skillfully sewing the heads. The jaws of the compress relax, the “killed” bale rolls out.

A line of five or six carts, each piled high with ten or twelve bales, pulled by a tractor, transfer the compressed bales to the various ship berths of the State Docks where ships flying the flags of many nations, their crews speaking the languages of many peoples, will fill their holds, slingful after slingful, with this important fiber.

In August 1957, the Alabama cotton industry continued to grow.



Events with a VIEW



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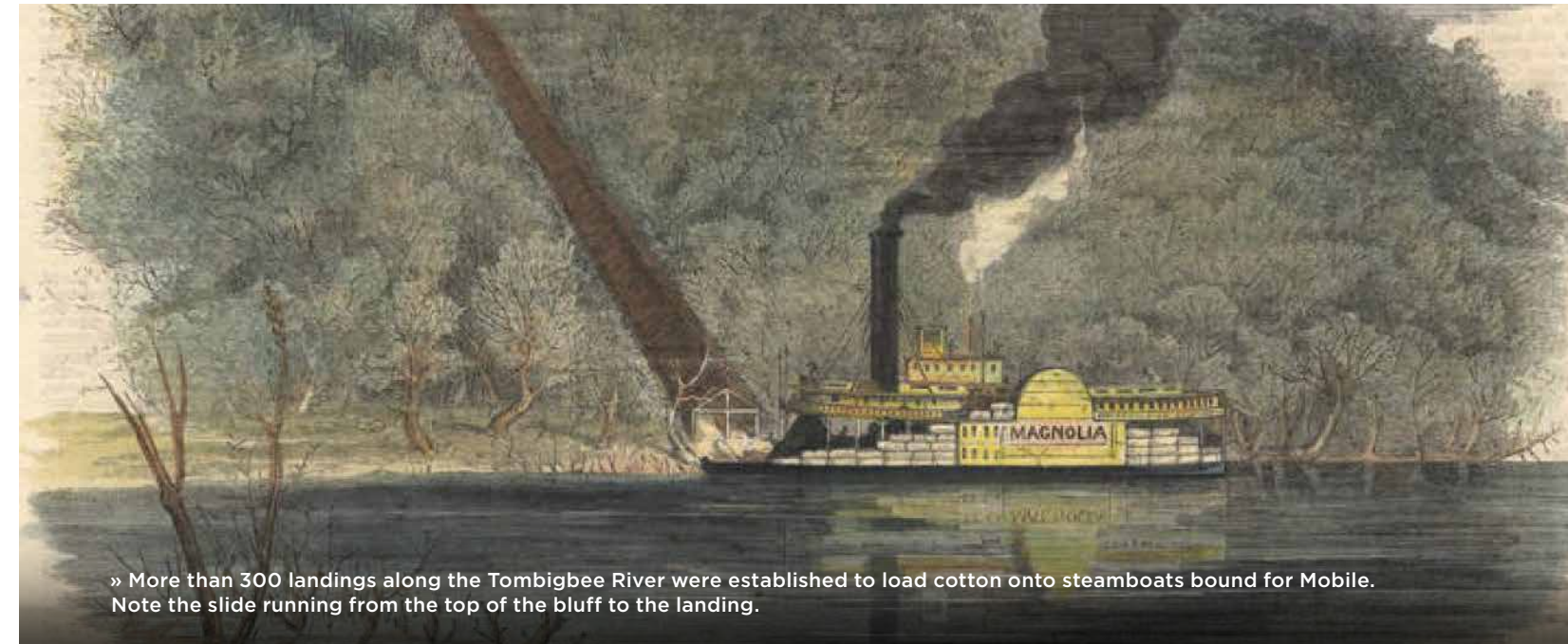
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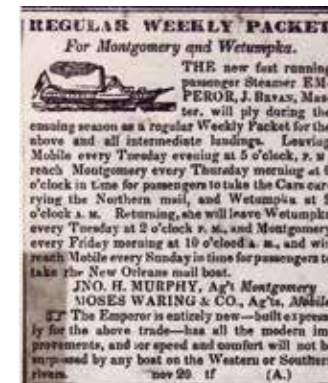
STEAMBOATS A-COMIN!



» More than 300 landings along the Tombigbee River were established to load cotton onto steamboats bound for Mobile. Note the slide running from the top of the bluff to the landing.

The Port of Mobile is the southern terminus of nearly 15,000 miles of inland waterways stretching from the Great Lakes to the Gulf of Mexico, and with 1,438 miles of navigable inland waterways of its own, the state of Alabama has more than any other in the United States. It is little wonder that these waterways have played such an important role the economic development of the state.

It was the steam engine that opened up Alabama's waterways for commerce. Prior to the advent of steamboats, travelers were relegated to a system of poorly developed roads in the territory—some were "roads" in name only, more like paths through the wilderness. To the west, flat boats made their way down the Mississippi River, but what little traffic that moved on Alabama's rivers consisted mostly of native canoes, the pirogues of colonists and small sailing craft of hardy traders. That changed with the coming of the steamboat.



» An 1849 advertisement for steamboat service from Mobile to Montgomery and Wetumpka.

We tend to think of steamboats as the elegant floating palaces of the latter 19th century, with their ornate saloons, intricate woodwork, calliope playing merrily as the boats made their way downriver with their decks piled high with bales of cotton, but the first steamboats to ply the waters of Alabama were pale comparisons to the elaborate paddle-wheelers that would follow. Essentially, they were long barges equipped with boilers that drove the wheels mounted amidships.

On Feb. 10, 1818, Messrs. David Files, Silas Dinsmore, B.S. Smoot, Henry Bright and others incorporated as the St. Stephens Steamboat Company. At that time, St. Stephens, located roughly 70 miles north of Mobile and at the fall line of the Tombigbee River, served as capital of the Alabama Territory. The frontier town was home to the Choctaw Trading House, a brick-built warehouse and an expanding population. By the following year, St. Stephens could boast of more than 500 residences, 20 commercial enterprises, lawyers' and doctors' offices, two hotels and even a theater to provide a little culture to the inhabitants who had been described by the late Ephraim Kirby, Superior Court Judge of the Mississippi Territory, as "illiterate, wild and savage, of depraved morals, unworthy of public confidence or private esteems..."



» “Rolladores” roll bales of cotton downhill to be loaded onto a steamboat on the Alabama River. A crowd of passengers watches from the hurricane deck.

The first boat built by the company was christened the ALABAMA, appropriately enough. The ALABAMA could navigate across and down the river, but her engines proved to be too feeble to get her back upriver—the current was too strong. The first steamboat to ply Alabama’s inland waters was dispatched to New Orleans for local service. A second steam-powered boat, rigged as a three-masted schooner, emerged from the boatyard, but her engine also was found to be lacking the power needed to ascend the river.

The first steamboat successfully to make the passage upriver was the MOBILE, built in Boston. The itinerary called for passage from Mobile to Demopolis, Ala., seat of the Vine and Olive Colony established by exiled Bonapartists in 1817. One of the passengers on the MOBILE’s first voyage upriver was a Madame Ré, wife of one of the French colonists. The arrival of the boat at Demopolis was recorded on May 18, 1819, and both the boat and Madame Ré were said to have been received “amid great excitement.” The Frenchwoman later recalled that vines and tree branches overhanging the river had to be cut away time and again before the MOBILE could proceed upriver. Demopolis was as far north as the boat could travel, due to the current. Cargo bound for Tuscaloosa was transshipped to barge for the rest of the journey.

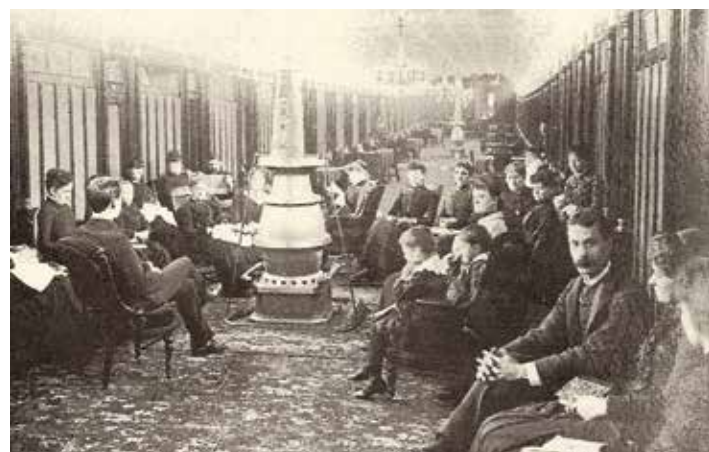
Following an internship in the New York City shipyard of Adam and Noah Brown, and having built the brigs NIAGARA and LAWRENCE on Lake Erie for Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry, shipwright Jacob Bell joined David Brown in establishing a yard in Blakeley, Ala., across the bay from Mobile. The Brown & Bell Shipyard constructed the 400-ton steamboat MISSISSIPPI as well as the 60-ton sidewheeler TENSAW, the latter built for the Steamboat Company of Alabama in 1821.

That same year saw the first successful ascent of the Alabama River by the 80-ton steamboat HARRIET, powered by a 30-horsepower engine. Captain Morril made the run from Mobile to Montgomery in 10 days, stopping a day each at the towns of Claiborne, Cahaba and Selma, arriving in the recently incorporated town of Montgomery on October 22, 1821. The city was growing rapidly and would be designated as the county seat the following year (Montgomery did not become the state capital until 1846). That same year saw the incorporation of the Mobile Steamboat Company.

fourteen.” Unlike the boats before her, the TENSAW was a stern-wheeler. She had no hurricane deck but “a shed” meant to protect the 200 bales of cotton that she could carry. Nine days later, the steamboat COTTON PLANT arrived at Montgomery, the third vessel to steam so far upriver from Mobile.

These early boats navigated only by day. They did not have enough steam for whistles; signals were made by firing guns, but their primitive nature did not deter the development of more boats. Suddenly, the Alabama waterways—specifically, the Alabama, Tombigbee, and Black Warrior rivers—came to life with an abundance of steamboats making their way up and downstream. Steamboats carried slaves upriver to the plantations; Montgomery’s Court Square became one of the largest slave markets in the country, and boats hauled cotton south to Mobile for export. Development in the northern part of the state was slower to follow due to a series of falls on the Tennessee River at Muscle Shoals that made navigation treacherous.

The additional traffic and commerce became a boon to Mobile’s economy. The first public wharf was established at the foot of Dauphin Street, and the waterfront between Dauphin and the Fish Wharf at the foot of Government Street became the city’s commercial hub. Marshy land was filled in, and the city established a wharf line. By 1823, no fewer than a dozen wharves could be found along the Mobile waterfront, where



» First class passengers warm themselves around a stove in the saloon of a riverboat. The saloons also served as the dining room.



steamboats nestled stem to stern and fast packets lay ready to weigh anchor for East Coast harbors and European ports of call.

The steamboat’s raison d’être was to transport the maximum amount of cotton to Mobile in the minimum amount of time. Cargo space and speed were everything. Prior to the Civil War, there were no fewer than 300 landings along the Tombigbee River and another 200 on the Alabama River where boats could stop to take on cargoes of the “white gold.” Long slides built expressly for the cotton trade connected bluff-top warehouses to the landings below. Slaves known as “rolladores” typically would send the bales plunging down the slide toward waiting stevedores—often Irish immigrants—who would wrestle the heavy cargoes on board the boats. Other landings offered firewood—fuel for the steamboats’ insatiable boilers. On return trips, steamboats brought foodstuffs and other goods for the planters, farmers, merchants and pioneers along the rivers. A typical cargo might include household goods, farm supplies, building materials, paint, horse brushes, saddles, nails, coffee, flour, sugar, coffee and whiskey. Eventually, an increasing number of luxury goods also found their way upriver, dresses from Paris, suits from London, sets of china from France and furniture from New York, Philadelphia and New Orleans.

As mentioned, the early boats were utilitarian in nature, built to haul as much freight as possible in the shortest amount of time, but as river travel increased in popularity, boat builders and owners began improving the comfort and amenities in an effort to attract additional passengers. In 1850, a journey between Selma and Mobile by stage coach took three days and cost \$8. The same journey by steamboat would shave off only a couple of hours and cost the princely sum of \$10 but was infinitely more comfortable. The boiler deck, usually the first deck above the open main deck, housed the first-class passenger cabins built along both sides of a long saloon that ran the length of the boat. The saloons were heated by means of wood-burning stoves, featured high windows and provided sofas, chairs and tables where passengers could relax, socialize, read or play cards. Some boats

» Life for deck passengers was anything but elegant—they brought their own food on board and bedded down wherever they could—between cargo or with the livestock.

offered fine dining, even entertainment in the saloons, which also doubled as the dining room. Above the boiler deck was the hurricane deck, which included the “Texas,” a row of cabins for the boat’s officers. The pilot house rose above the hurricane deck. Second-class or “deck” passengers had no assigned cabins. Instead, they slept on the open main deck, bedding down between or on top of cotton bales. These passengers often had to supply their own food, were exposed the elements and generally fared little better than the livestock being transported on the boats.

King Cotton reigned for years as Alabama’s number one crop and the Port of Mobile’s top export, and steamboats were the preferred means of getting cotton from upstate to Alabama’s seaport for movement to textile mills in the north and overseas. Mobile’s waterfront was stacked high with thousands of bales of cotton at any given time and stevedores and roustabouts came and went, ship chandlers, agents, inspectors and vendors of all stripes. Passengers crowded onto the boats for passage upriver, and many traveled from inland locations, especially at Carnival time to enjoy the diversions offered by the seaport. Eventually, though, the state’s economy became more diversified, and cotton became less important economically.



» The steamboat MARY at a landing on the Alabama River.

Steamboats remained an important means of transportation in Alabama into the 20th century but always had been susceptible to fire and to wrecks—caught by snags or run aground—and therefore had an average lifespan of only four to five years. The proliferation of train service—reliable, efficient, direct—in the latter half of the 19th century spelled the end of riverboats as the preferred means of moving cargo, bringing to a close a picturesque chapter in Alabama’s story of commerce.

PORT OF MOBILE DIRECTORY

PORT OF CALL	LINE	FREQUENCY	AGENT
MARTINIQUE FORT-DE-FRANCE	OSLO CARIBBEAN CARRIER	INDUCEMENT	SEACLIFF
MEXICO ALTIMIRA	CLIPPER STEEL SERVICES	INDUCEMENT	AMERICAN SHIPPING & CHARTERING NORTON LILLY NORTON LILLY NORTON LILLY
COATZACOALCOS TAMPICO	MAERSK MSC SEALAND CG RAILWAY CLIPPER STEEL SERVICES	WEEKLY WEEKLY WEEKLY EVERY 4 DAYS WEEKLY	AMERICAN SHIPPING & CHARTERING SEACLIFF NORTON LILLY NORTON LILLY
VERACRUZ	OSLO CARIBBEAN CARRIER MAERSK MSC SEALAND	BI-MONTHLY WEEKLY WEEKLY WEEKLY	NORTON LILLY NORTON LILLY NORTON LILLY
MONTERRAT PLYMOUTH	OSLO CARIBBEAN CARRIER	INDUCEMENT	SEACLIFF
NETHERLANDS ROTTERDAM	G2 OCEAN MAERSK MSC	BI-MONTHLY WEEKLY WEEKLY	NORTON LILLY NORTON LILLY NORTON LILLY
PANAMA COLON CRISTOBAL	OSLO CARIBBEAN CARRIER MAERSK MSC SEALAND MAERSK MSC SEALAND	INDUCEMENT WEEKLY WEEKLY WEEKLY WEEKLY WEEKLY WEEKLY	SEACLIFF NORTON LILLY NORTON LILLY NORTON LILLY NORTON LILLY NORTON LILLY NORTON LILLY
BALBOA			
PERU CALLAO	G2 OCEAN	INDUCEMENT	NORTON LILLY
POLAND GDYNIA	G2 OCEAN	MONTHLY	NORTON LILLY
SINGAPORE, SG	CMA CGM COSCO EVERGREEN OOCL	WEEKLY WEEKLY WEEKLY WEEKLY	NORTON LILLY NORTON LILLY NORTON LILLY NORTON LILLY
SPAIN MOTRIL	G2 OCEAN	MONTHLY	NORTON LILLY
ST. KITTS BASSETTERRE	OSLO CARIBBEAN CARRIER	INDUCEMENT	SEACLIFF
ST. LUCIA CASTRIES VIEUX FORT	OSLO CARIBBEAN CARRIER OSLO CARIBBEAN CARRIER	MONTHLY MONTHLY	SEACLIFF SEACLIFF
ST. MARTIN PHILIPSBURG	OSLO CARIBBEAN CARRIER	INDUCEMENT	SEACLIFF
ST. THOMAS CHARLOTTE AMALIE	OSLO CARIBBEAN CARRIER	INDUCEMENT	SEACLIFF
ST. VINCENT KINGSTOWN	OSLO CARIBBEAN CARRIER	MONTHLY	SEACLIFF
SURINAME PARAMARIBO	DAN GULF SHIPPING	INDUCEMENT	LOTT SHIP
TOBAGO SCARBOROUGH	OSLO CARIBBEAN CARRIER	MONTHLY	SEACLIFF
TRINIDAD PT LISAS PT LISAS	OSLO CARIBBEAN CARRIER DAN GULF	MONTHLY MONTHLY	SEACLIFF LOTT SHIP
TURKEY LIMAS	G2 OCEAN	BI-MONTHLY	NORTON LILLY
VIETNAM VUNG TAU	CMA CGM COSCO EVERGREEN OOCL	WEEKLY WEEKLY WEEKLY WEEKLY	NORTON LILLY NORTON LILLY NORTON LILLY NORTON LILLY
VENEZUELA GUANTA MARACAIBO	DAN GULF SHIPPING DAN GULF SHIPPING	MONTHLY INDUCEMENT	LOTT SHIP LOTT SHIP

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