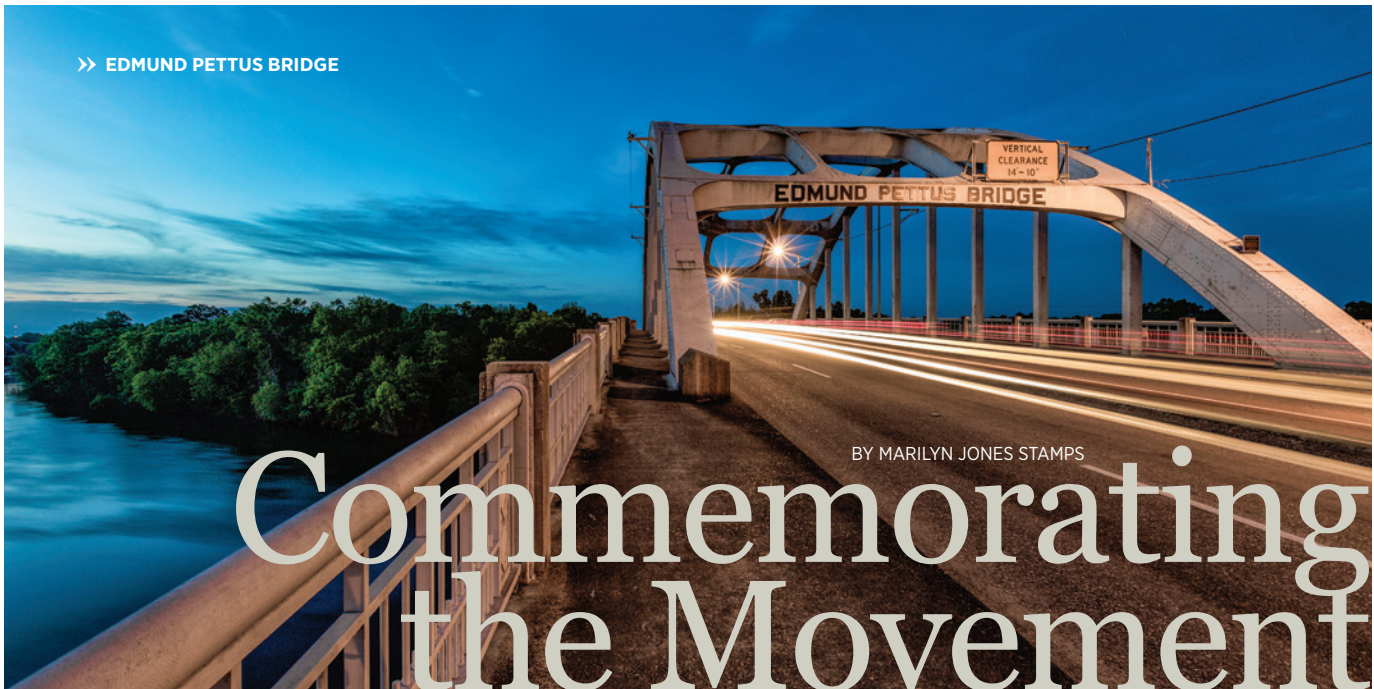


Sweet Home Alabama



ALABAMA HISTORY

» EDMUND PETTUS BRIDGE



BY MARILYN JONES STAMPS

Commemorating the Movement

On Alabama's Civil Rights Trail, visitors learn about the state's place in America's push for civil rights.

Visitors who wish to expand their knowledge of America's Civil Rights Movement and connect with inspiring stories of tragedy and triumph are invited to visit museums, churches, interpretive centers and other sites along the Alabama Civil Rights Trail.

The historic Selma to Montgomery March and the real-life, bloody confrontations that occurred on the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma on March 7, 1965, inspired the movie *Selma*. As revealed in the movie and historical accounts, the catalyst for that march was the death of activist and Marion resident Jimmie Lee Jackson, who was killed by an Alabama state trooper in February 1965.

In 2015, the National Park Service designated Marion as an official site on the Selma to Montgomery National Historic Trail. Signs, plaques and markers near Zion United Methodist Church not only pay tribute to Jackson but also recognize the place where Coretta Scott King, the wife of civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., was born.

In Selma, exhibits at the National Voting Rights Museum interpret the history of voting rights; a crossing of the Edmund Pettus Bridge ensures a hands-on connection as visitors envision what it must have been like for marchers to face hundreds of police in full riot gear. The bridge leads to the Selma Interpretive Center, Brown Chapel and First Baptist Church. From Selma, it's about 54 miles to Montgomery. Midway along the national historic trail in Lowndes County, a National Park Service Interpretive Center is situated near what marchers

used as a campsite during the Movement.

Montgomery's civil rights attractions include the State Capitol, Dexter Avenue King Memorial Baptist Church, the Rosa Parks Museum, the Civil Rights Memorial and the Freedom Rides Museum. Inside the Alabama Department of Archives and History, the recently renovated Museum of Alabama captures pivotal civil rights moments through historic photos, news clippings and exhibits.

From either Montgomery or Selma, many visitors travel south to Monroeville, where racial tolerance permeates Harper Lee's novels *To Kill a Mockingbird* and *Go Set a Watchman*.

East of Montgomery at the Tuskegee History Center, visitors encounter the stories of African-American history makers, such as Booker T. Washington, George Washington Carver and Rosa Parks. A short drive away lies the Tuskegee Airmen National Historic Site.

Drivers heading north to Birmingham discover the Civil Rights Institute and 16th Street Baptist Church, where Klansmen ignited a bomb that killed four girls on Sept. 15, 1963. History continues to unfold at the old Greyhound Bus Station in Anniston and in Scottsboro, home of the Scottsboro Boys Museum.

No matter which direction visitors take from Selma or Montgomery, civil rights heritage abounds.



USE THE ALABAMA CIVIL RIGHTS TRAIL APP to follow in the footsteps of the Civil Rights Movement and better understand the struggle for equality.



Confederate Alabama

BY BRIAN S. JONES

Discover Alabama's Civil War history, particularly in Montgomery, which was once the capital of the Confederacy.

Abraham Lincoln's election to the presidency in November 1860 brought a wave of Southern states voting to leave the Union. On January 11, 1861, Alabama voted to secede and invited delegates from other seceding states to convene in Montgomery at the Alabama State Capitol to form a new nation. Delegates from Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, Florida, Georgia, South Carolina and Texas met in the Senate Chamber of the State Capitol in February and drafted a constitution forming the Confederate States of America, choosing Jefferson Davis to serve as the new nation's first president.

A bronze star on the west portico of the Capitol marks where Davis was sworn in as president on February 18, 1861. Montgomery remained capital of the Confederacy until Virginia seceded and the capital moved to Richmond in May of that same year.

Down Dexter Avenue at its intersection with South Court Street stands the **Winter Building**. From the second-floor office of the Southern Telegraph Company in this building on April 11, 1861, Confederate Secretary of War L.P. Walker sent the telegram authorizing Confederate Brigadier General P.G.T. Beauregard to fire on Fort Sumter. The first shot by Confederate forces the next day began a bombardment that resulted in the fort's surrender and marked the start of the Civil War.

Across from the south side of the Capitol sits the **First White House of the Confederacy**. Davis and his family lived here during the city's tenure as the Confederacy's capital. Upon returning to Montgomery from Virginia in 1886, he set the cornerstone of the **Alabama Confederate Monument**, which honors the 122,000 Alabamians who fought for the Confederacy during the Civil War.

Located next door to the First White House of the Confederacy but inside the Alabama Department of Archives and History building, the **Museum of Alabama** opened in 2014. It is the only attraction offering a complete telling of the story of Alabama from prehistory to the present, including the Civil War.



WORTH YOUR TIME

BLUE AND GRAY MUSEUM, *Decatur*

Expansive display of weapons and artifacts used by the Union and the Confederacy.

CONFEDERATE MEMORIAL PARK, *Marbury*

Site of Alabama's only home for Confederate veterans.

FORT BLAKELEY,

Spanish Fort
Site of the final major battle of the Civil War.

FORT MORGAN & FORT GAINES, *Gulf Coast*

Played major roles in the Battle of Mobile Bay.

FORT TYLER, *Lanett*

Site of one of the last Civil War battles east of the Mississippi.

HISTORIC HUNTSVILLE DEPOT, *Huntsville*

Used as a Union hospital, prison and quarters for both black and white Union soldiers, who left graffiti on the third-floor walls.

OLD CAHAWBA ARCHAEOLOGICAL PARK,

Selma
Alabama's first state capital housed Federal prisons during the Civil War.

POND SPRING, GENERAL JOE WHEELER HOME,

Hillsboro
Civil War home featuring original furnishings, uniforms and military arms.

STEVENSON DEPOT MUSEUM, *Stevenson*

A vital Civil War rail link to major points throughout the Southeast.

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ALABAMA **HISTORY**

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