

# Robertsdale

# 100



1921  
2021

## Centennial Celebration

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# 1921-2021

## Robertsdale celebrates Centennial

## Join us in celebrating 100 years of our 'Wonderful City'



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

Robertsdale Hall of Mayors

By JOHN UNDERWOOD  
john@gulfcoastmedia.com

ROBERTSDALE — The City of Robertsdale kicked off its Centennial celebration, celebrating the 100th anniversary of its incorporation on Sunday, July 4.

The town was initially established in 1905 by the Southern Plantation Development Co. of Chicago. The community was named for Dr. B.F. Roberts, an officer in the company.

Robertsdale was founded along the newly established Louisville and Nashville rail spur, which was extended north from Bay Minette in 1904.

By 1916, a rural route was established in Robertsdale and the town was incorporated in 1921 with William Andrew Hammond serving as the town's first mayor.



Robertsdale's first mayor

Hammond was born in Ontario, Canada, in 1862, son of Edward and Mary Hammond, immigrating to the United States sometime between 1881 and 1892 with his mother.

While working for a newspaper in Crookston, Minnesota, Hammond married Blanche Jennings in 1893 and moved with his family to Wells, Minnesota in 1898, where he was editor of the Wells Forum newspaper. He purchased the paper from E.E. Beard in 1898.

After his first wife died in 1902, he remarried and due

to health problems, he sold the newspaper in 1905 and was traveling with his family to the Isle of Pines, a small island off the coast of Cuba, when he landed in Mobile.

While in Mobile, he heard of Fairhope and decided to visit. While inquiring about boat schedules, he heard of Roberts, who was introduced to Roberts, who would eventually encourage him to become established in the town and set up a store, which would eventually become the iconic Hammond Store.

Hammond would rebuild twice, once after the store was destroyed during a 1906 hurricane and again after being burned to the ground by a competitor.

He would eventually sell the store to his son, Walter "Pop" Hammond, who would run the family business for decades, establishing Spaceway Shopping Center in 1960.

William Hammond was also instrumental in obtaining Robertsdale's first post office and became Robertsdale's first postmaster. He held this position for 20 years.

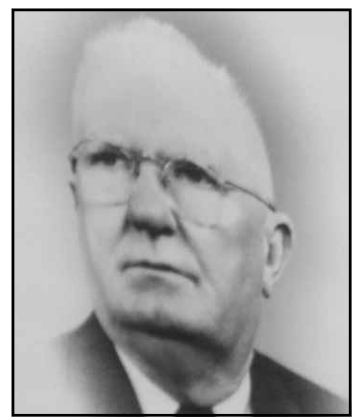
Hammond served as mayor from the time the town was incorporated until October of 1922, at which time city clerk George Strong took over for a short period before F.A. Mulack became mayor, serving from 1922 to 1924.

R.G. Pearson was elected to a four-year term from 1924-1928, followed by Louis Glendinning from 1928-1932 and Harry Wilters Sr. from 1932-1934.

### Dr. Amos Garrett

Robertsdale's first long-term mayor was Dr. Amos Garrett, who served the town for more than 14 years from 1934-1948.

Born in Conecuh County on St. Patrick's Day 1893, Garrett graduated from the school of dentistry in 1923 and after working for a few months with his uncle in Evergreen, he came to Robertsdale and opened his dentist



office.

It is believed that Garrett, along with Dr. William Holmes in Foley and Paul Anderson in Silverhill, were instrumental in getting Highway 104 built from Robertsdale through Silverhill. The road was paved as far as the Franklin Smart property located west of Silverhill and work ceased until about two years later when it was paved to Fairhope.

Garrett took office as mayor of Robertsdale in 1934 and brought the town through the depression years, getting Merchants National Bank to lower the interest rate on the town's waterworks and purchasing land for a city park, which would later bear his name.

When he left office as mayor in 1948, the city was out of debt and had \$78,000 in the bank.

### J.D. "Josh" Sellers

Garrett was followed as mayor by J.D. "Josh" Sellers, who served as the town's mayor for 28 years from 1948-1976.

During Sellers first term in office, the town purchased the electrical and gas systems from the town of Foley, which had been supplying power and gas to Robertsdale through Riviera Utilities.

Also during his first four years, all the streets in Robertsdale were paved and the town council convinced Vanity Fair Mills to locate in Robertsdale.

In 1967, the town of Robertsdale built and paid

for the cost to build a new fenced football stadium with concrete bleachers, a press box and score board at Robertsdale High School. The stadium was named J.D. Sellers Stadium and continues to serve Robertsdale High School to this day, even after the high school moved to a new campus in 1992.

Robert M. Tyson Jr. served as mayor from 1976-1980, followed by George P. "Pervy" Thames, from 1980-1988.



### Pervy Thames

A native of Baldwin County, Thames was born in 1933 in Rosinton, graduating from Robertsdale High School in 1951 and playing football, basketball and baseball for Livingston State University.

While in college, Thames married his high school sweetheart, Joyce Caldwell, in March of 1955.

Thames would drop out of college six months short of graduation, expecting a draft notice that never came.

After marriage, Thames worked at the creosote plant in Robertsdale and sold insurance in Milton, Florida, before returning to Robertsdale to operate a service station and the first ambulance service in town.

He was elected Justice of the Peace in 1968 and served in that capacity out of his service station until 1972.

He was elected mayor in 1980 and served until 1988. During his time as mayor, the city received a \$385,000 grant to improve sewage and drainage, a \$24,982 grant for the pavilion at Garrett Park, and a \$140,000 grant for street improvements.

He also led the city to purchase a 60-acre tract of land in northwest Robertsdale to

Greetings,

As 2021 has greeted us, we have achieved a great milestone for our "Wonderful City," and it is the celebration of our 100th birthday. The City of Robertsdale was incorporated back in February of 1921, and I am sure the founders of our city had a vision to create a community that offered promises and hope in achieving a better standard of living for their inhabitants. They wanted to establish a community that was safe, provide employment opportunities, and foster an environment for their families and neighbors where they could build a better life.

If we had a crystal ball and could view our city's past, it would look quite different than it does today. I can certainly attest in the 44 years that I have been with you, the many changes that we have witnessed in our changing community. But, even with all the changes I believe we have the same feeling about our community as those that founded our city back in 1921. We want a brighter future for all; that our children will flourish and seek to create meaningful dreams that will bring them joy and security and do even more in their accomplishments, than we were able to obtain; that our neighbors will prosper, and we can all have meaningful lives as our seasons continue to change.

We certainly hope you will join us in our celebration plans in recognizing our Centennial, that are being planned out for the rest of 2021. To also remember that even with our changing community we will always remain the same, to seek out hope for the future and pray for an even brighter horizon for our "Wonderful City" and to stay focused that even better times are ahead for each of you.

Bless you,  
Charles H. Murphy,  
Mayor

### Up next

The next event will feature a chili cook-off and memorabilia booth set up during the annual Honeybee Festival, hosted annually by the Central Baldwin Education Foundation, which is scheduled for Nov. 6 at Honeybee Park.

Information will be available, and tickets will go on sale for the Centennial Ball, which is set to be held Feb. 26 at the Baldwin County Coliseum. The ball will follow the theme "Roaring 20s" and attendees are encouraged to dress accordingly, Kroll said.

The week prior, a Centennial Parade will be held through the streets of Robertsdale on Saturday, Feb. 19.

It is also hoped to have an exhibit with Centennial-themed artwork from local students at Robertsdale High School and surrounding schools following the start of the school year in August, but the event will have to be approved by school officials.

be used as an industrial park and won a \$150,000 grant for utilities at the park. Baldwin County E-911 and UPS opened offices on the site while Thames was mayor. Robertsdale also upgraded its water system and got a new water tank while he was mayor

Also during his tenure, Baldwin County Mental Health opened offices on property set aside for doctor's offices on U.S. 90; the Park and Street Trees Committee was formed; and Baldwin National Bank donated an ambulance to the City of Robertsdale.

The city also received a \$190,000 grant for the construction of a Senior Citizen's Center and Park during Thames' tenure, which were both established on East Chicago Street. Shortly before his death in 1991, the center was named the George P. Thames Senior Center in his honor, which would later be renamed the George P. Thames Adult Activity Center. The park across the street from the center would later be named for longtime Senior Activities Director Anna Bell Beverly.

Two months after being elected mayor, Thames got a

job at the Robertsdale Cattle Auction, served as president of the Baldwin County Cattle Association and was the auctioneer for the Cattlewomen's benefits. He was also an honorary lifetime member of the Alabama Cattle Association.

He became assistant manager of the livestock auction and served from 1980 until he resigned in 1991 for health reasons.

Following his death, Thames was inducted into the first Robertsdale High School Hall of Fame.

C. Gordon Coley followed Thames as mayor in 1988 and the present mayor, Charles H. Murphy, was elected in 1992 and recently passed Sellers as the longest serving mayor of Robertsdale.

*(Information for William A. Hammond is from "Descendants of Edward Hammond written by the Hammond family. Additional information is from "Pig Trails and Open Roads" written by Jeanette Ryan, who served as a columnist for The Independent newspaper; and The Heritage of Baldwin County, Alabama, published by Heritage Publishing Consultants Inc.)*

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JOHN UNDERWOOD / STAFF PHOTO

The new Robertsdale Public Works main facility on Chicago Street was slated for completion by the end of July. The entire complex should be completed by the end of 2021.



FILE PHOTO

City officials cut the ribbon at the pavilion at Honeybee Park in July of 2019.

# City nearing completion of centennial project

By JOHN UNDERWOOD  
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The first two phases of a nearly five-year project are nearing completion with plans to complete the final phase early next year as the city of Robertsdale celebrates its Centennial in 2021.

Phase 1 of the project which called for improvements to Honeybee Park began with a series of public meetings conducted in September and October of 2016.

Plans for the project were presented in 2018, which included the installation of new sidewalks, designed to increase booth space for the annual Honeybee Festival. Sidewalks which surround the park were also removed and replaced.

Brick columns surround the park, along with a brick entranceway at the south end of the park and the pavilion, which is located on the east side in the middle of the park. Additional improvements include landscaping, additional parking and restroom facilities.

Improvements also called for the closing of Michigan Street between East Chicago and Alabama 59 Northbound.

Phase 1 of the project was completed and dedicated in July of 2019. Hurricane Sally



Coming Soon  
Honey Bee Park Amphitheater

FILE PHOTO

Artist rendering of a new amphitheater, which will be built on the site of the old Public Works building, is slated for early 2022.

last September caused some damage to the fencing around the park that has since been repaired.

Phase 2 of the project, a new Robertsdale Public Works Complex on Chicago Street north of the police station was set for completion by the end of July, officials said.

In December 2019, the council approved bids for the structure, pushing the cost of the project from an estimated \$3.8 million to around \$4.7

million.

In addition to the administration building, the project includes two warehouses, a mechanic shop, equipment shed and maintenance shop. The project will also include coverings for the two fuel pump stations.

The entire complex should be completed by the end of 2021 and be able to start Phase 3 of the project, which will include an amphitheater, parking and restroom

facilities, which has been scheduled as a \$1 million cash capital expenditure project, in early 2022.

The council voted to solicit bids on the project in March. David Adams and Jason Shipp with Adams Stewart presented plans for the amphitheater at the council's March 1 meeting, which included artist renderings and site plans for the structure, which will include an approximately 5,000-square-foot



JOHN UNDERWOOD / STAFF PHOTO

The entrance to Honeybee Park.



JOHN UNDERWOOD / STAFF PHOTO

The pavilion at Honeybee Park.

metal roof structure with an additional 6,200 square feet

of ground space and 2,700 square feet of restroom space.

# Baldwin County Fair celebrates seven decades in Robertsdale

By JOHN UNDERWOOD  
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For more than seven decades, the Baldwin County Fair has been a mainstay of life in Baldwin County. After last year's fair was postponed because of concerns over the Coronavirus, organizers are back to celebrate the 70th Annual Baldwin County Fair, slated for Sept. 21-25.

After beginning life in Silverhill in the late 1940s, the Baldwin County Cattle and Fair Association took over the fair and built its first coliseum on Palmer Street in Robertsdale, where they



hosted their first county fair in 1950.

From that point, the fair was held every year for 69 years, standing as the longest running county fair in the state, now under the management of A.B. "Sonny" and Melinda Hankins.

Sonny Hankins, whose father was a founding member of the Baldwin County Cattle and Fair Association, has served on the board since 1958 and has served as fair manager since 2004.

In 2007, the fair moved to its new 50-acre facility while construction was being finished on the 38,000-square-foot Baldwin County Coliseum. Exhibits were moved outside under the



FILE PHOTOS

Baldwin County Coliseum

78,000-square-foot, 2,200-seat arena at the fairgrounds. The transition was completed with the opening of the coliseum in 2008.

The fair draws thousands of residents from throughout Baldwin County and the surrounding area each year, and this year organizers hope for bigger and better crowds with a wide variety of activities.

Each year, the fair features more than 1,000 competitive exhibits, including antiques,

art, crafts and hobbies, environmental art, scrapbooking, sewing, food preparation and preservation, horticulture and agronomy, photography and livestock exhibits, along with environmental exhibits, featuring schools and civic organizations.

The fair has also had a long-standing relationship with Arnold Amusement, featuring games and rides on the fair's expansive midway.

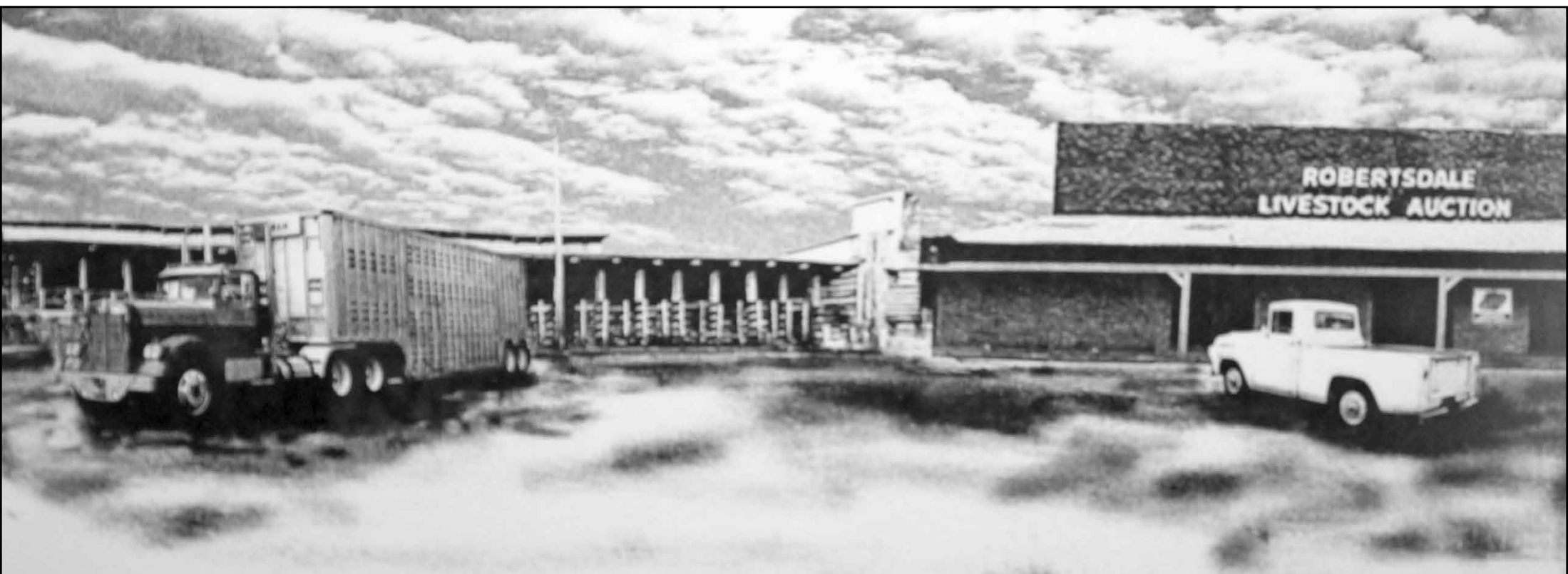
In addition to numerous exhibits inside the coliseum,

other annual exhibits include a Baldwin County museum exhibit, as well as livestock exhibits, a duck pond and baby chick exhibit, petting zoo, a circus and antique tractor shows outside, along with a youth sweet potato contest sponsored annually by the FCCLA.

Another huge draw for the fair is the annual rodeo, hosted by Robertsdale's own Bo Campbell, founder and president of the Professional Cowboy Association.







FILE PHOTOS

# Livestock Auction serves Robertsdale for nearly seven decades

The iconic Robertsdale Livestock Auction served Baldwin County and the surrounding area for nearly seven decades.

The auction was built and run as a cooperative beginning in 1949 and served as a hub of activity for local cattlemen for more than six decades.

After running weekly for nearly 65 years, the auction was cut back to twice a month in 2013. The final sale at the stockyard was conducted in May of 2014.

Nearly three years after the final sale, a salvage operation was conducted over a four-month period to repurpose materials from the barns and stall space behind the main office structure of the building beginning in March of 2017.

The remainder of the structure was demolished in September of that year. Four years later the property remains unsold.

Following are excerpts from the Foley Onlooker pertaining to the establishment of the Auction Association and the first sale, which was conducted in April of 1949:

## Livestock Ass'n To Incorporate

(The Foley Onlooker, Jan. 27, 1949)

The Baldwin County Livestock Auction Association now has enough cash to incorporate and the articles of incorporation have been drawn up, Odin Thomas, secretary, announced this week.

A three and one-half acre site has been purchased in Robertsdale and building plans have been decided upon, Mr. Thomas said. Building is expected to begin soon.

Senator Hill said the bill, which fully preserves state control and administration of health programs, allocates a large share of the funds to the low-income states where the need is greatest, a principle enacted for the first time in any federal legislation in the Hill-Burton Hospital and Health Center Construction Act.

The Public Health Service Bill has been given bi-partisan support from other senators who joined in sponsoring the measure.

## R'dale Livestock Auction To Build In Near Future

(The Foley Onlooker, Feb. 3, 1949)

The meeting of the Roberts-



The remainder of the structure was demolished in September of 2017 and the property where the Robertsdale Livestock Auction sat for nearly 70 years remains for sale.



Cars lined the streets for the final sale at the Robertsdale Livestock Auction in May of 2014.

dale Livestock Auction, Inc., held Monday night at the Robertsdale Town Hall, was attended by about 150 people, it was announced by Secretary Odin Thomas.

Stock certificates were given out at the meeting and many stockholders doubled their shares, Mr. Thomas said. There are now over two hundred stockholders.

Plans for a metal roofed building, 100x150 feet, with a concrete block office, were approved at the meeting. Bids are now being received, said Mr. Thomas, and anyone wanting to bid on the construction of the building may see the plans at Hammond's store in Robertsdale.

According to Secretary Thomas the progress of the corporation is exceeding expectations. Anyone interested in purchasing stock should contact Mr. Thomas in Foley. He emphasized that the Robertsdale Livestock Auction, Inc., includes all of Baldwin County and part of Florida.

Horace Driver, Loxley, is president of the organization.

## R'DALE AUCTION NOW BUILDING

(The Foley Onlooker, March 10, 1949)

The Robertsdale Livestock

Auction announced this week that its original issue of \$15,000 stock has been over-subscribed and that an additional 500 shares has been issued at \$11 per share.

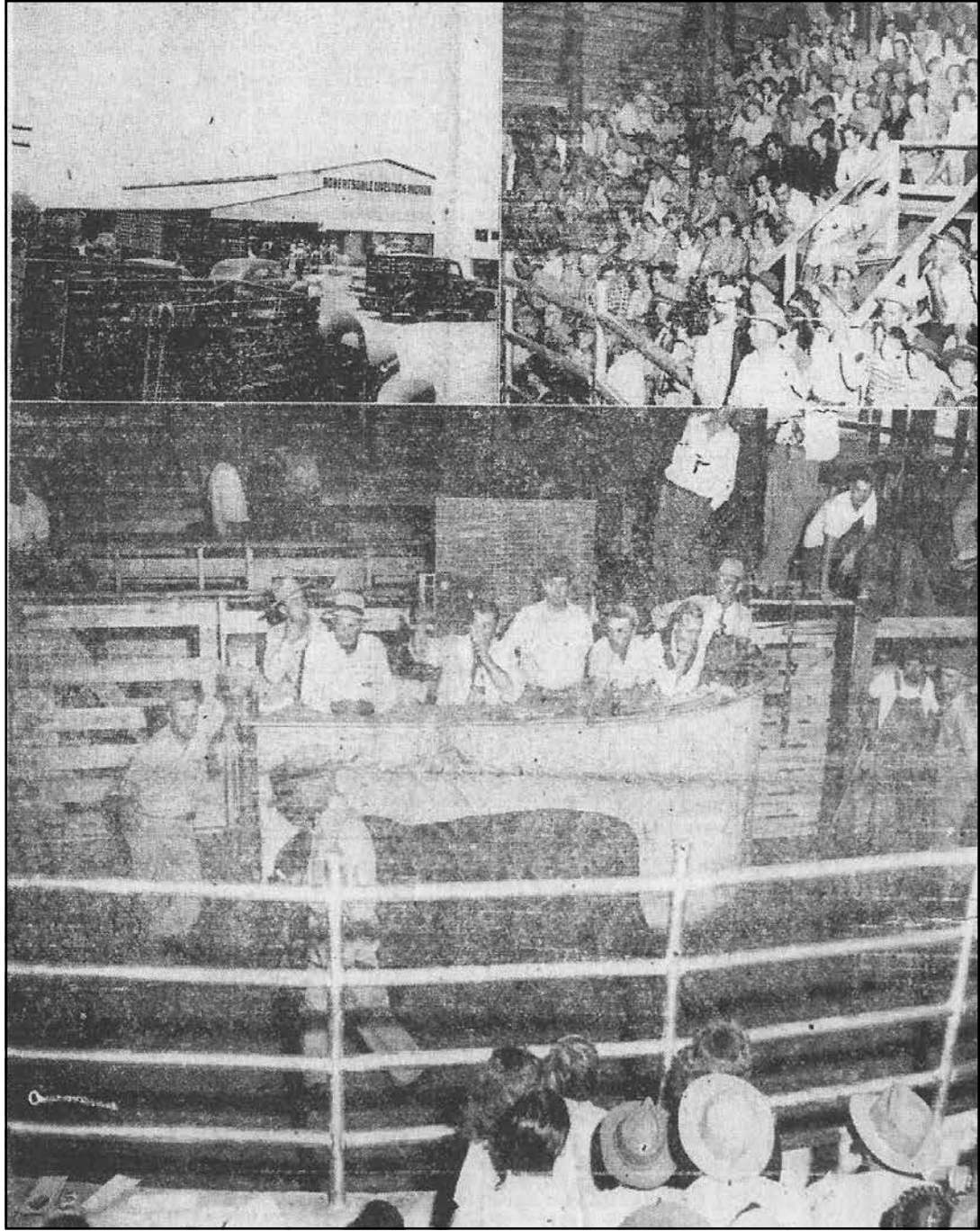
It was pointed out that the original subscribers would get first chance at purchasing the new stock.

The new building, which has been under construction for two weeks, is expected to be completed by April 1, and the first auction is expected to be held shortly thereafter.

The new construction will be 100 by 150 feet and will consist of all creosoted poles and all outside boards will be pressure creosoted. Only galvanized nails are being used and the roof will be embossed aluminum, rustproof.

The main office will be 12x17 feet and of concrete block construction. Seats will extend bleacher fashion over the office and facing the rear of the building. The show ring will be in front of the seats, then the auctioneer's block and scales in the rear.

Cattle pens will be located on both sides of the building with the hog pens located in the rear of the building and in the center. Loading and unloading ramps will be on both sides and a veterinarian's of-



COURTESY FOLEY PUBLIC LIBRARY

Photos from the first sale of the Robertsdale Livestock Auction, printed from the Foley Onlooker, April 28, 1949.

office will be included.

Horace Driver, an experienced livestock buyer and president of the organization, is supervisor of the job, assisted by Odin Thomas, secretary. Willard Barginer is acting as architect.

## Robertsdale Livestock Auction Opening Sale Totals \$65,000 Almost One Thousand Head Of Livestock Was Handled

(The Foley Onlooker, April 28, 1949)

Sales totaled between \$65,000 and \$68,000 at the opening sale of the Robertsdale Livestock Auction, Inc., which opened at noon Monday and closed at 1:00 o'clock Tuesday morning. Leading out was completed by 5:30 a.m.

All available parking spaces were filled, the highways were lined with cars and the building was so full of buyers, farmers and spectators that the opening was delayed until the runways could be cleared.

The first bull was bought by Pat Brock of Loxley at

\$22.30 per hundred pounds, and weighed 1545 pounds. It was sold by Elzie Hankins.

A total of five hundred cattle were sold. One bull owned by F.C. Lacey, Rosedale Farms, Robertsdale, which weighed 1370 lbs., was sold to the Bertolla Loxley Farms for 35 cents a pound. This was the highest price received.

Four hundred fifty hogs were sold at prizes ranging as high as \$18.50.

The auction opened with a welcoming address by Mayor J.E. Sellars (sic) of Robertsdale, who was introduced by J.C. Mitchell, Robertsdale. Mr. Mitchell was one of the organizers of the auction.

## Many Speakers

The benefits of having a livestock sales company in the county were pointed out in an address by County Solicitor Kenneth Cooper who was the next speaker on the program.

Harry Haas of the Haas-Davis Packing Company of Mobile spoke on the qualification of good hogs. Mr. Haas

said that a weight of from 180 to 200 pounds is the best weight for hogs.

Walter Hammond introduced J.C. Mitchell as the organizer of the Robertsdale Livestock Auction, Inc. Mr. Mitchell discussed the work of the auction.

Horace Driver, president of the Auction, explained that the yard fees covered loss from any injury the livestock might sustain after being removed from the owner's truck. If any animal was injured in any way, he said, the owner would receive the full market price for it. The Auction charges three per cent of all sales.

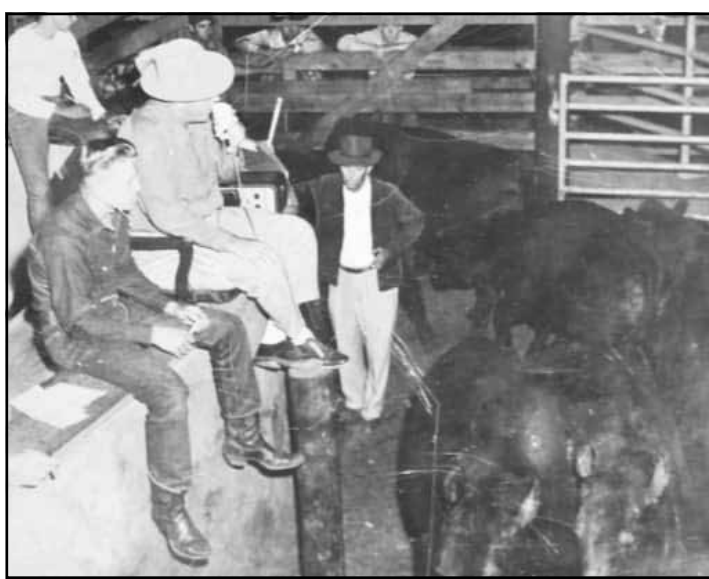
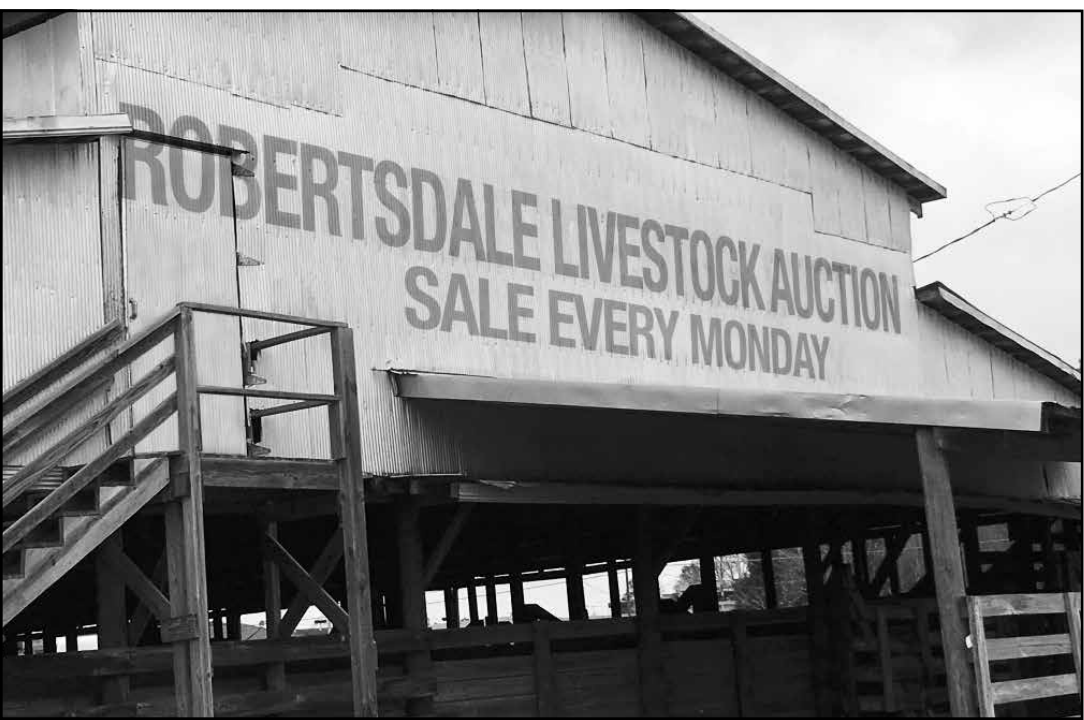
The 20 or more buyers present at the auction were instructed by Mr. Driver.

Ted Lidikay of Hattiesburg, Mississippi, and J.C. Mitchell of Robertsdale, served as auctioneers. A permanent auctioneer has not been selected.

Odin Thomas, secretary and office manager of the Auction, said that he believed one could safely say that this was the largest livestock auction ever held in Baldwin or Mobile County. Mr. Thomas, who was in charge of selling the stock shares, said that the last share in the corporation was sold Monday morning.

During the shipping season sales will be held every other Monday. Afterwards a sale will be held on Monday of each week. The next sale will be Monday, May 9.

Officers of the Auction are: Horace Driver, president; Odin Thomas, secretary and office manager; rectors are the officers and the following: A.F. Smith, Loxley; Hubert Hall, Bay Minette; and E.C. Lacey, Robertsdale.





# Meet the Centennial Queens:



JOHN UNDERWOOD / STAFF PHOTO

Mayor Charles Murphy introduced the Centennial Queens during opening ceremonies July 4 at Garrett Park. Pictured, in no order, are Ella Brewton, London Lace Brill, Adalyn Lyles, Addison Kucera, Matalyne Kroll and Morgan Kroll; not pictured are Virginia Boseck and Emma Kate Lynn.



**Kyla Carpenter**

**Kyla Carpenter** is the daughter of Zack and Alana Carpenter. She is 18 years old and recently graduated Robertsdale. She was an active member in National Honor Society, English Honor Society, Mu Alpha Theta, Key Club, FCCLA, Principals Advisory Council, Senior Elite, Teenage Republicans and Peer Helpers. She plans to attend the University of South Alabama, majoring in elementary education.



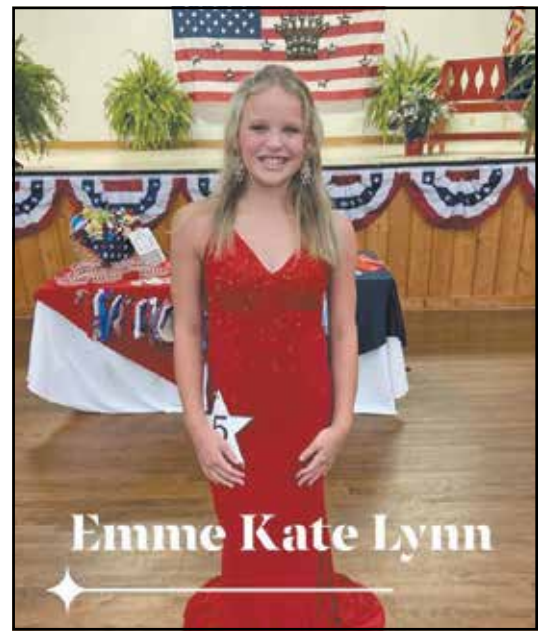
**Ella Grace Brewton**

**Ella Grace Brewton** is the daughter of Randy and Blair Brewton. She is 8 Years old. She's a member of Leader in Me and Holiday Club. She hopes to be a doctor for kids when she grows up.



**Holly Steelman**

**Holly Steelman** is the daughter of Daniel and Donna Steelman. She is 15 years old. She is an RHS cheerleader. She hopes to attend Troy State and pursue a career within the medical field.



**Emme Kate Lynn**

**Emme Kate Lynn** is the daughter of Jonathan and Andrea Lynn. She is 12 years old. She is a member of Driven Dance Co. She loves to be on stage and is also on the CBMS cheer squad. She hopes to pursue a career in modeling, maybe one day working in the medical field.



**London Lace Brill**

**London Lace Brill** is the daughter of Michael and Deborah Brill. She is 9 years old. She is a member of Central Christian School cheer, 3 Circle Kids and Bayside Belles. She hopes to own her own pet shop or become a teacher or a doctor.



**Addison Kucera**

**Addison Kucera** is the daughter of Michael and Ashley Kucera. She is 12 years old. She is a member of Peer Helpers, NEHS and CBMS cheer. She hopes to attend Julliard School to pursue her dream of becoming a professional ballerina and a dance teacher.



**Adalyn Lyles**

**Adalyn Lyles** is the daughter of Jared and Christie Lyles. She is 12 years old. She is a member of CBMS cheer, Peer Helpers and NEHS. She hopes to attend Julliard in New York and make her way to Broadway.



**Matalyne Kroll & Morgan Kroll**

**Morgan and Matalyne Kroll** are the daughters of Matt and Stephanie Kroll. They are 15 years old. Morgan is a member of Peer Helpers, SGA, FCCLA, varsity cheer, recently selected All-American cheerleader for her fourth year, and an American Royal Miss state ambassador. After high school she hopes to pursue a career in nursing or education. Matalyne is a member of FFA, Peer Helpers, varsity cheer, a Pin it Forward recipient, American Royal Miss and Student Government. After high school she hopes to pursue a career as a zoologist.

# Virginia Boseck 'honored to serve' as Centennial Queen

By JOHN UNDERWOOD  
john@gulfcoastmedia.com

You could say being crowned Centennial Queen by the city of Robertsdale was an honor nearly eight decades in the making for Virginia Dawson Hoiles Boseck.

A native of Birmingham, the daughter of Leila and James Hoiles moved with her family to Baldwin County when she was in the seventh grade. She attended Loxley School before coming to Robertsdale High School beginning in her ninth-grade year.

At age 96, she is the oldest living Robertsdale resident to have graduated from Robertsdale High School, one of two remaining members of the class of 1943.

She was crowned Centennial Queen by Robertsdale Mayor Charles Murphy during a special ceremony held by the Robertsdale High School Alumni Association on Feb. 27 and participated in a ceremony to crown seven additional Centennial Queens in June at the PZK Hall in Robertsdale.

"I am so honored," Boseck said. "I never thought any-



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

**Robertsdale Mayor Charles Murphy crowns Virginia Dawson Boseck as Robertsdale High School Alumni Association Queen Saturday, Feb. 27 at the George P. Thames Adult Activity Center in Robertsdale.**

thing like that would happen to me."

Boseck said she has fond memories of attending dances at the PZK Hall and has vivid memories of being on stage for a pageant her junior year of high school.

Nearly eight decades later, Boseck still has her school newspaper, the "Robertsdale Reflector," from April 22, 1942,

in which her name appears as a contestant in the "Miss Robertsdale" pageant of 1942, sponsored by Walter Hoiles Jr. and John L. Davidson.

Boseck did not win that pageant. It was won by Dorothy Wilson, a senior from Summerdale, according to the newspaper.

She also participated in the May Queen pageant



**Virginia Boseck as "May Queen" in 1943.**

her senior year and just a short time later, she married Hoiles, her sponsor from the 1942 pageant.

Owners of Hoiles Center in Robertsdale, Hoiles joined the military shortly thereafter and the couple traveled the world, spending time in Japan and Germany.

When she wasn't traveling with her husband, she said, she stayed with his family in Robertsdale, working at the store and in other places around town.

"It took us seven years to start a family," she said.

While in Germany, the couple adopted a daughter. Another daughter, Brenda, was born shortly thereafter.

When Hoiles died in a car accident while stationed at Fort Benning, Georgia, in 1959, she moved with her young family to Foley, before marrying Carl Boseck in 1961, moving out to the family's farm in Elsanor where she had another daughter who lives near the family farm

today.

The couple would live there for nearly 40 years until Boseck's death in 2001 at which time she moved back to Robertsdale. Her daughter, Brenda Hoiles Codish, retired and moved back from Florida to lives next door.

"I pretty much live by myself," she said. "I cook for myself and take care of myself. I just need a little help remembering things."

She is a member of St. John's Episcopal Church in Robertsdale where she has been actively involved for many years. She is an avid reader and is known to read many books each week. She is a wonderful storyteller of events long ago.

She has many good memories of school field trips to Fort Morgan, dances and tasting sprees at the PZK, going skating in Fairhope, attending basketball games and going to different businesses around town.

"I have good memories of school life," she said. "It was a good life then. I've lived a simpler life, it was a whirlwind life, but I wouldn't have it any other way."





**ROBERTSDALE CENTENNIAL BOARD**

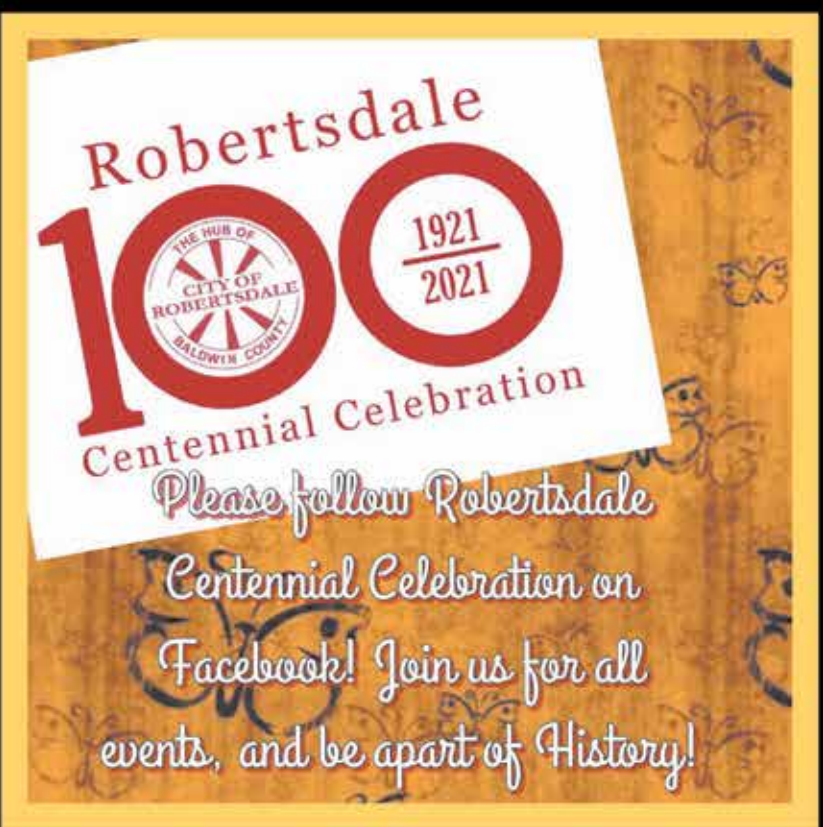


Queen Virginia Bosech & Mayor Murphy



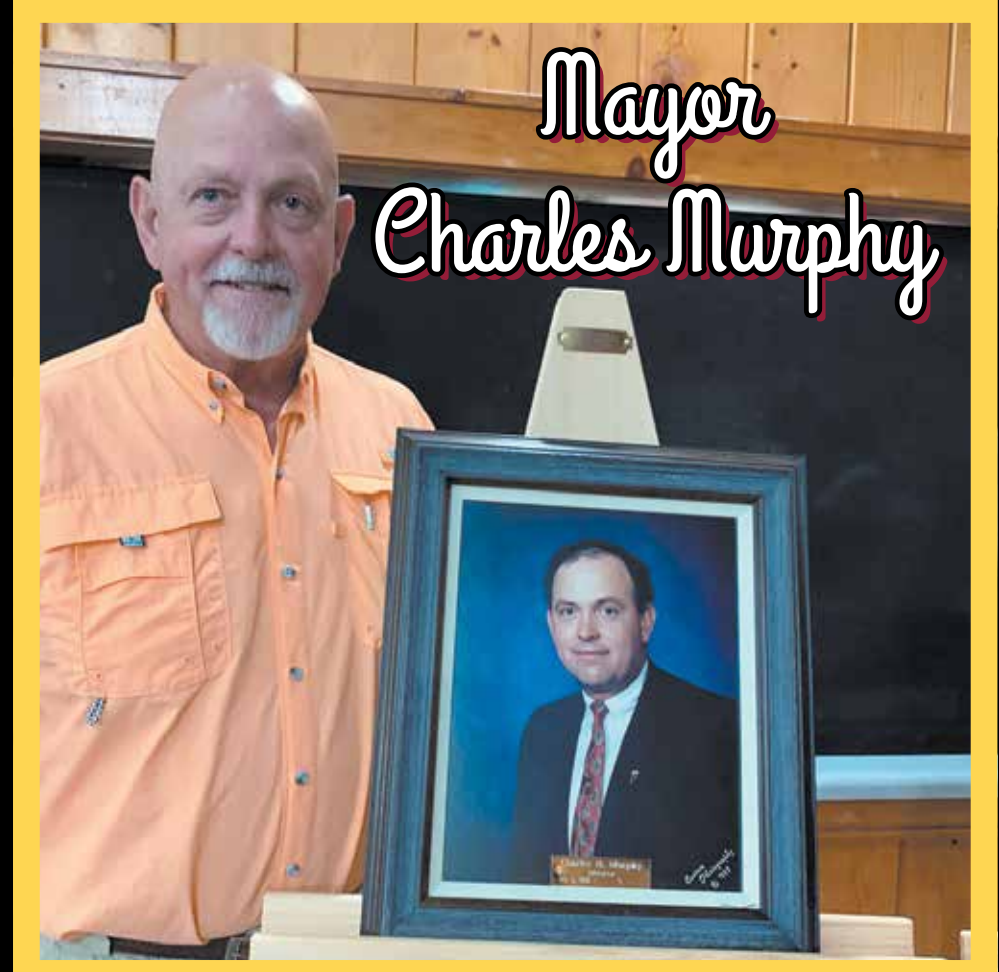
**Centennial Queens**

Adalyn, Addison, Emme Kate, London Lace, Ella, Morgan, Matalyne, Kyla, Holly



**Saturday, Nov. 6**

We will hold a chili cook-off in Honeybee Park. Prizes will be won for first, second and third place. We will also have Robertsdale centennial merchandise available to purchase. Feb. 19 there will be a huge centennial celebration parade through town. Hopefully this will get people excited about the Centennial Ball to follow on Feb 26. The theme is "Roaring 20's." We want everyone to dress the part! It will be a joyous occasion and guaranteed to make its mark in history! Tickets will be available to purchase at the Honeybee Festival on Nov. 6.



**City Council:**  
**Sue Cooper, Joseph Kitchens, Ruthie Campbell, Russell Johnson, Paul Hollingsworth**

**City Clerk: Shannon Burkett**  
**City Attorney: Ken Raines**  
**Chief Financial Officer: Joe Driver**  
**Chief Of Police: Brad Kendrick**  
**Public Works Director: Scott Gilbert**  
**City Engineer: Greg Smith**



# 100 years of Robertsdale celebrated with museum at kickoff



Visitors to the city of Robertsdale's Centennial Kickoff held Sunday, July 4 were invited to step back in time with a museum celebrating "100 Years of Robertsdale" inside the PZK Hall. A slideshow display featuring the history of Robertsdale and iconic structures was also on display during the kickoff celebration.



JOHN UNDERWOOD / STAFF AND SUBMITTED PHOTOS

The temporary museum, which was open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., celebrated the city's incorporation in 1921, along with other iconic businesses and landmarks dating back to the city's founding in 1905.



On the east side of the building, the Wall of Mayors greeted guests with displays from the potato shed and train depot.



The city's history was also explored, including town hall, library, fire and police stations, parks, senior center, the Robertsdale Livestock Auction which stood as an icon in the city for more than 60 years, the Baldwin County Fair, which celebrates 70 years in Robertsdale in 2021; the Robertsdale Masonic Lodge, and the PZK Hall itself.



The middle of the museum featured iconic families and businesses through the years including the Hammond Family who owned and operated Hammond Grocery and built the area's first shopping center in the 1960s; historic buildings and homes, including the Baldwin home, which has served the community for decades as Mack Funeral Home; Ard Printing, Farm Fresh Meats, Robertsdale Feed Store and founder J.W. Clark, along with subsequent owners, John Lassitter and the Johnson family; Robertsdale Hardware Company, Hoiles Store, Gulf Telephone Company, Grant Tractor Company, WoodHaven Dairy, Sanca Brothers Slaughterhouse, Macon's Drug Store, Lee Drugs, Starling Pharmacy, Baldwin Supply Company, Campbell Hardware, Marvel Creamery, iconic restaurants like Nan's, Mac & Jerry's and Mama Lou's, Glendenning Hotel, Silverhill Hotel and Train Depot, and theaters. Robertsdale's many banks through the years were also featured.



The museum also featured a tour of churches, including what is considered the oldest church in Robertsdale, the First Christian Church, which was founded in 1913. Two churches, the First Baptist Church of Robertsdale and the Robertsdale United Methodist Church will also celebrate their 100th anniversaries in 2021. St. Paul's Episcopal Church, which was founded at the home of Carl Boseck in Elsanor in 1912, moved to Robertsdale in 1922, where it remains at the same location. St. Patrick's Catholic Church was founded in Robertsdale in 1971.



The history of Robertsdale schools was also explored from the first school built shortly after the town's founding in 1906 to current schools, Robertsdale High School, built in 1992, Central Baldwin Middle School in 1994 and Robertsdale Elementary School opened in 2007.




Others who have influence Robertsdale's history were featured, including Mertis Childress, known as the matriarch of the Baldwin County Fair, and Aunt Mertis to all who knew her; and Joe Childress, a standout for the Auburn Tigers and St. Louis Cardinals football teams; the Campbell and McDaniel families, doctors and other professional services, among others.

Congratulations on 100 years City of Robertsdale!

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Residents show off vintage cars, tractors at Centennial Kickoff



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

There were plenty of reminders of Robertsdale's history with a vintage car and tractor show held during the city's Centennial kickoff Sunday, July 4 at the PZK Hall. Centennial Queens are pictured with car show winner Patrick Duck, left, and tractor show winner Robbie Ellison. Mike Ellison finished second in the tractor show contest with Darrell Suddeth third. Frankie Kucera was the second place winner in the car show with Sam Mendenhall third.



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# Robertsdale School history dates to founding of town

BCBE.ORG

The history of Robertsdale schools dates back to the founding of the town in 1905.

The first school in Robertsdale was a wooden two-story structure built on the site of the current city hall in 1905. The first session of school was in 1907-08. There were 35 students ranging from first through eighth grades. Rose Clisby was the teacher. She gained an assistant in 1909.

In 1910, A. F. Moseley became the principal and was assisted by Lila Poos. From 1911-14, G.A. Strong served as principal and Poos taught the primary grades. Strong taught whatever level he found his students.

As enrollment increased, the School Improvement Society was organized to construct a new building. The old building was torn down, and a new block building was put in its place. In 1914, the new principal was Mr. Cutis, but due to illness, he had to move and Strong became principal again and served in that position until 1919. From 1919-20 Florence Burns served as principal of the school.

In 1920, C.F. Taylor of Ohio became principal and at the same time due to increasing enrollment, a new school was planned. In 1927, a high school was completed on land originally owned by the Stoddards. Professor Taylor, as he was known by his students, served as principal until 1953.

In 1953, Virgil Buck, a former student and teacher at Robertsdale, became principal. During his tenure in 1967, J.D. Sellars Stadium was constructed on campus. Football



PUBLIC SCHOOL BUILDING  
ROBERTSDALE, ALABAMA



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

Robertsdale's first school



Old Robertsdale High School – C.F. Taylor

games were previously played at Garrett Park.

Buck retired as principal in 1976 and Bobby Farris became principal. He had also served as a social studies teacher at the school. He served until 1987. In 1987, John Faulk began his tenure at Robertsdale High School. During his time, Baldwin County was experiencing an increase in population and several new schools were being built.

Due to the diligence of citi-

zens in the Central Baldwin area a new school was built in 1992 to serve ninth through 12th grades. The school was built on Alabama 59 on the south end of Robertsdale. In 1998, Faulk retired and Paul Hollingsworth served as principal for the 1998-99 school year. Theresa Bryant served as principal from 1999 to 2011. Craig Ross became principal in 2011, leaving in 2014 to become Superintendent of Cullman County Schools. Joseph Roh served as prin-

icipal from 2014 to 2018 and Joe Sharp, a native of Silverhill and graduate of Robertsdale High School, became principal.

Two years following the completion of Robertsdale High School, Central Baldwin Middle School was completed bringing together students from Robertsdale, Loxley, Silverhill, Elsanor and Rosinton schools. A new Robertsdale Elementary School was completed in 2008 and the former Robertsdale School building

## Alma Mater

*'Tis Robertsdale, Our Alma Mater  
The pride of every boy and girl  
Come you Juniors-join with Seniors  
'Tis Robertsdale now we cheer  
For she's the best school  
True to the golden rule  
We'll fight for her for aye and aye  
For there is none so dear as our school  
So hail to Robertsdale, all hail!  
'Tis Robertsdale, Maroon and Gold  
The colors that we love so dear  
We'll love them ever, forget them never  
'Tis Robertsdale now we cheer,  
For she's the best friend  
True to the very end  
We'll fight for her for aye and aye  
For there is none so dear as our school  
So hail to Robertsdale, all hail!*



School display at the Robertsdale's Centennial Kickoff event.

became C.F. Taylor Alternative School, named for the

first principal of Robertsdale High School.

# Robertsdale Fire Department

ROBERTSDALE.ORG

The Robertsdale Fire Department was started in the late 1920s. Percy Pollard was the first fire chief and the first station was located at the corner of Wilters Street and Alabama 59. Training for the fire department was provided by the military personnel at Brookley Field in Mobile until the late 1960s.

The first fire truck was a used 1931 Seagrave that was donated by the City of Opp.

It was picked up by Herman "Scratchy" Mattingly and Josh Sellars. The first brand new fire engine purchased from a local dealer was a 1947 Studebaker which was housed at Pennsylvania Street and Alabama 59. Though it is fully functional, it is only used as a parade vehicle.

A new 1968 International fire truck was purchased from a local vendor and in 1978, a Ford pumper bought from Harless Fire Sales was added to the station as well.

Since then, two pumper trucks have also been added, one in 1991 and one in 1996.

The fire station was eventually moved to city hall's present location on Racine Street. The fire department was reorganized in 1966 by developing their own by-laws and electing firefighters to represent the fire department in a more official capacity. The department was moved to its present location, on the corner of Nebraska and St. Paul Street in 1992.



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

Centennial Fire Truck



Robertsdale Fire Department in 1929. Pictured from left firemen Alex Merchant, Marvin Beverly, Bill Brown, Ernie Beverly, Alfred Baldwin, Percy Pollard, Baron Glendinning at the wheel, sitting on the fender, Roy Sandbrook and Frank Mulek.



Mayor J.D. Sellers and Robertsdale Fire Chief Marvin Beverly checking out the pump on the Studebaker fire truck taken at the corner of Racine and Pennsylvania Street where the Robertsdale Public Library is located.

# Robertsdale Police Department

ROBERTSDALE.ORG

ROBERTSDALE — On May 2, 1921, Mayor William A. Hammond appointed C.W. Wilson as the first town marshal. Marshals were paid per arrest.

The original police department was located at the southeast corner of Pennsylvania Street and Alabama 59. It was eventually moved to city hall and was later relocated to its current address on East Chicago Street.

There were several marshals appointed between 1921 and 1960. On Oct. 3, 1960, Hamilton F. Hall was appointed police chief, by Mayor Josh Sellars. Wood-



row Wilkes took over the position on Sept. 9, 1974. On Feb. 14, 1977, Robert E. Williams was appointed as the

temporary chief. One week later he became permanent chief of police until his retirement on March 1, 1998.



SUBMITTED PHOTO FROM ROBERTSDALE, PAST AND PRESENT

Robertsdale Police Chief Ben Kucera and Roy Watkins, standing in front of Robertsdale's first police car from the 1950s.

He was succeeded by Alan Lassiter on that same date.

Robertsdale's current Chief of Police Bradley Kendrick

was appointed on Jan. 6, 2003.





SUBMITTED PHOTOS

PZK Hall past and present

# PZK Hall serves Robertsdale for nearly 100 years

ROBERTSDALE — Robertsdale's PZK Hall has served as a gathering place for nearly all of the municipality's 100 years. The structure was originally built in 1924 and added to in the 1950s.

The PZK (which stands for Poucný a Zabavný Kroužek, translated as Educational Recreational Circle), a group

of Czechoslovakian immigrants, built the structure to serve settlers which came to Robertsdale from the North in the 1920s. The Hall was also used by German and Swedish settlers.

The PZK donated the property to the City of Robertsdale on Aug. 17, 1992, and was closed for just over a year, from Dec. 10, 1992 to just be-

fore Christmas of 1993, while the city spent about \$100,000 to renovate the building.

In February of 1994, the property was dedicated to the city with the property being renamed PZK Civic Park and the meeting hall named the PZK Civic Center.

A nearly \$1 million project to expand the facility was completed in 2018, nearly

six years after budgeting the project.

The project was part of the city's 2012-13 budget which was unanimously passed in September of 2012. The initial project utilized a \$100,000 Federal appropriation obtained in 2010 from U.S. Rep. Jo Bonner.

Initial plans called for replacing the wooden deck-

ing on the west side of the building with a poured concrete deck and constructing a T-wing on the east side of the building, providing a side entrance to the building and a 1,000 square foot covered canopy. Plans were later changed to move the concrete decking to the east side of the building and the covered side entrance to the west side.

The city later approved a project for the property, which included a paved split entrance/exit and landscaping.

The final phase of the project called for an additional 3,000 square feet to be added to the back of the building.

In all the city spent about \$900,000 renovating the facility.



JOHN UNDERWOOD / STAFF PHOTO

Owner Nelson Wingo with both current and past employees at Campbell's Hardware & Sporting Goods.

# Campbell Hardware celebrates 75th anniversary

By JOHN UNDERWOOD  
john@gulfcoastmedia.com

Campbell's Hardware & Sporting Goods celebrated 75 years at the same location, hosting an outdoor gathering on Friday, April 23 for members of the community.

"My father once told me that if you take care of the community, the community will always take care of you," said owner Nelson Wingo. "It is because of you that we are here, so this day is to celebrate you."

Founded in 1946, Leonard Campbell and William L. Wingo started the business in downtown Robertsdale with only three employees.

In the early 70s, Wingo bought out the business from this cousin and his son, John Nelson Wingo Sr., took over operations in 1974, increasing the sporting goods department to what it is today while



expanding the business to include more than 15 employees.

Wingo returned home to take over the family business in 1974 and now employs 15 full and part-time employees.

"If you had told me I would

still be here when I came back in 1974, I don't think I would have believed you," Wingo said. "Our employees have become like family and this community has become like family and we plan on being here for years to come."

Wingo was presented with a proclamation declaring Friday, April 23, 2021 as Campbell Hardware Day in the City of Robertsdale.

Wingo also presented certificates of appreciation to two employees, Emory Steadham,



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

Campbell Hardware past and present

who has served as head gunsmith in sporting goods since 1983, and assistant manager Mack Bryan, who has served the business since 1985.

Wingo also recognized his family, including his wife Cindy, daughter Ashley Kucera, who serves as office manager and is in charge of Sporting Goods for the business. Daughter Bridgett

Wingo and son John Nelson Wingo Jr. have also helped run the store through the years.

In 2017, the business received the Small Business of the Year Generations Award from the Central Baldwin Chamber of Commerce and was awarded Alabama's Small Business of the Year Gold Award in 2018.

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## Robertsdale Centennial coin



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

Centennial Coins were made as keepsakes. Available to all that participated in the Robertsdale's Centennial Kickoff event. They will be for purchase at Honeybee Festival in November.



# Art contest winners and prize drawing announced at Centennial Kickoff

An art contest was open to young people in two age categories with winners announced during Robertsdale's Centennial Kickoff held Sunday, July 4 at the PZK Hall. Ages 5 to 8 completed a coloring page depicting them and their family enjoying the new pavilion at Honeybee Park. Ages 9 to 12 completed a drawing of them and their family spending time at a favorite place in Robertsdale. Entries were judged by city of Robertsdale officials and winning artwork was displayed at the PZK Hall. Art Cullen McKinney was chosen as the first-place winner for ages 5-8, while Karigan Chandler won the 9-12 art contest. Grady McDaniel placed second for ages 5-8 with Zolo Price, third. Olivia Parker finished second in the 9-12 age category with Jacob Bartle, third. There was also a drawing for a cooler donated by Campbell Hardware, which was won by Robina Moore.



SUBMITTED PHOTOS



Coloring Contest - older first, Karigan Chandler



Coloring Contest - older second, Olivia Parker



Coloring Contest - older third, Jacob Bartle



Coloring Contest - younger first, Cullen McKinney



Coloring Contest - younger second, Grady McDaniel



Coloring Contest - younger third, Zolo Price

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**Happy 100th Anniversary to the City of Robertsdale!**

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