

History

Nestled in the foothills of northeast Alabama, twelve miles north of Anniston on Highway 21, Jacksonville is a town steeped in history. The land that would become Jacksonville was purchased in 1833 from the Creek Indian Chief Ladiga. Because Ladiga was a signer of the Cusseta Treaty of 1832 under which terms the Creeks gave up their remaining lands, he was allowed to select land in the county and to have his title validated.

Life here has long centered around education, beginning on April 16, 1834 when the town reserved a one-acre square for a schoolhouse. In 1836 the Jacksonville Academy was incorporated and 1837 saw the establishment of the Jacksonville Female Academy. In 1883 the Academy was recognized as a State Normal School and through the years, became Jacksonville State Teachers College before attaining full university status in 1966.

At one time a thriving county seat, with substantial growth, the city's tranquility was broken by the War Between the States. The greatest majority of its male citizens, including four generals and the "Gallant" Pelham from nearby Alexandria, fought for the Confederacy. Later, at various times the town was visited by Gens. Beauregard, Wheeler, Polk and B. M. Hill, who headquartered in some of the historic structures that continue to grace the city. Even today, Civil War aficionados find much of interest in Jacksonville, and many visitors trek to the City Cemetery, where the Pelham grave and monument is perhaps the most sought-after attraction.

The Twentieth Century brought continued growth and change to Jacksonville. Old families and early sources of income were supplemented by many newcomers and new industry in the area. Eventually, the influx of federal dollars due to the location of Fort McClellan and the Anniston Army Depot brought additional changes and more diversity to the local population base. Growth at Jacksonville State, and the addition of industries such as Federal Mogul and Parker Hannifin boosted local employment opportunities. The closure of Fort McClellan created great anxiety in the area and in Jacksonville as the new millennium neared, but growth in the City has continued. With its attractive location, the retention of its small town charm, its high quality educational programs and the availability of developable land at reasonable prices, the City appears poised for substantial expansion in the near future.

As it was in the past, much of what is good about Jacksonville begins on the Public Square. From JSU pep rallies and city festivals to charming, locally-owned shops where visitors are always treated like lifelong residents. This downtown historic district and gathering place is at the heart of the City.

Newcomers will find that living in Jacksonville is not only economical, it is convenient as well. Jacksonville provides a full range of city services to include Advanced Life Support emergency

medical services, fire and police, water, gas and sewer, and garbage and trash services including a voluntary recycling program. The City operates a new Community Center, Senior Center and a modern internet-accessible public library.

For more information on how to share our history, or become a part of our future or to request a city map, please call (256) 435-7611, FAX (256) 435-4103.