

CITY OF PELL CITY ALABAMA



**CITY HALL
DEDICATION
May 5, 2002**

HISTORY

From Greenberry Garrett Evans, Pell City's first mayor, to Guin Robinson, the present mayor, the City of Pell City has been well served by progressive leaders. Incorporated in May 1891, the city was an enterprise of railroad entrepreneurs and Northern investors. What started as a boom town, soon became a ghost town and remained so until 1902. In that year, due to the foresight and leadership of Sumter Cogswell, Pell City began a dramatic recovery and was on its way to becoming a New South city.

The meeting place of city government in the early years is not known, but most likely it was the Maxwell Building on present day Cogswell Avenue or the Cornett Hotel located alongside the railroad track. In 1902 the St. Clair County Courthouse was completed, and the mayor and council likely met there until 1904 or 1905. The July 7, 1904 edition of the *Coosa Valleyan*, noted: "The city council has voted to erect a city hall at a cost of \$1,500." The August 4th edition stated: "A city hall and jail to cost \$1,500 is to be built in Pell City at once on the opposite side of Howard Avenue from Starnes law office." The mayor at that time, Thomas S. Millsap, began the project, but it was completed during the W.A. Starnes administration. That building served the city until 1957 and is still standing. It presently houses the optometry office of Dr. Wendell Bedsole.

During the administration of Mayor Joe Kilgroe, the city began an aggressive campaign to improve city services. A new city hall was an essential element of Mayor Kilgroe's master plan. The site selected was the northeast corner of the intersection of 19th Street and First Avenue North which at the time was the location of Pell City Grammar School. The school building had been built in 1905 or 1906 and was the original Pell City High School. It was demolished to make way for the new city hall. At a cost of \$130,000, that building was completed and dedicated on Sunday, October 6, 1957. It housed the mayor, council, city clerk, court, library, as well as the police and fire departments.

The 1957 building served the city for forty-four years. During that time the city experienced tremendous growth. The administration of Mayor Mack Abercrombie saw the beginning of another city wide improvement plan. Once again, the city hall was a top priority. Mayor Abercrombie's plan was implemented by Mayor Guin Robinson. The building which we dedicate today contains 20,000 square feet. It was designed by architect Robert Wanninger and built by the Pell City firm, Goodgame Welding Company at a cost of \$2,000,000.

*Danny Stewart
Pell City Librarian*

Program

Welcome Guin Robinson, Mayor

Invocation Mike Sewell, Fire Chief

Pledge of Allegiance Forest A. Walls, Councilman

God Bless America June Brascho & audience

Recognition of former
Pell City officials Lawrence Fields, former Mayor

Entertainment St. Clair County HeadStart
Elsie McGowan, Director

Closing Remarks Mayor Guin Robinson

Music provided by Birmingham Society of Piping

God Bless America

*God Bless America.
Land that I love
Stand beside her, and guide her
Through the night with a light from above.
From the mountains, to the prairies,
to the oceans, white with foam
God bless America
My home sweet home.*

*God Bless America,
Land that I love
Stand beside her,
And guide her,
Through the night
With the light from above,
From the mountains,
To the praires,
To the ocean,
White with foam,
God bless America,
My home sweet home.*

Composer, Irving Berlin

Mayor Guin Robinson

Council

James McGowan, *Mayor pro tem*

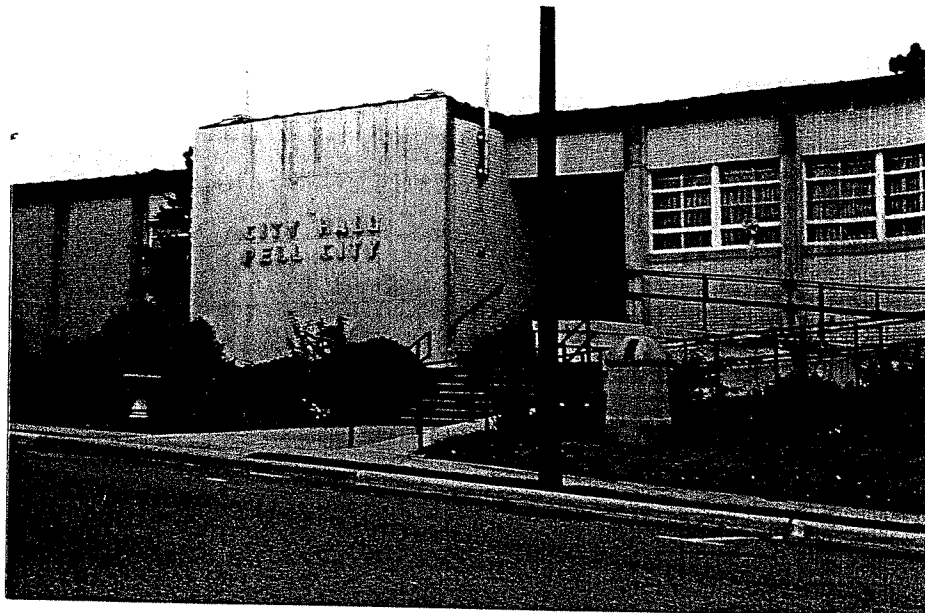
Forest A. Walls

Bernard White

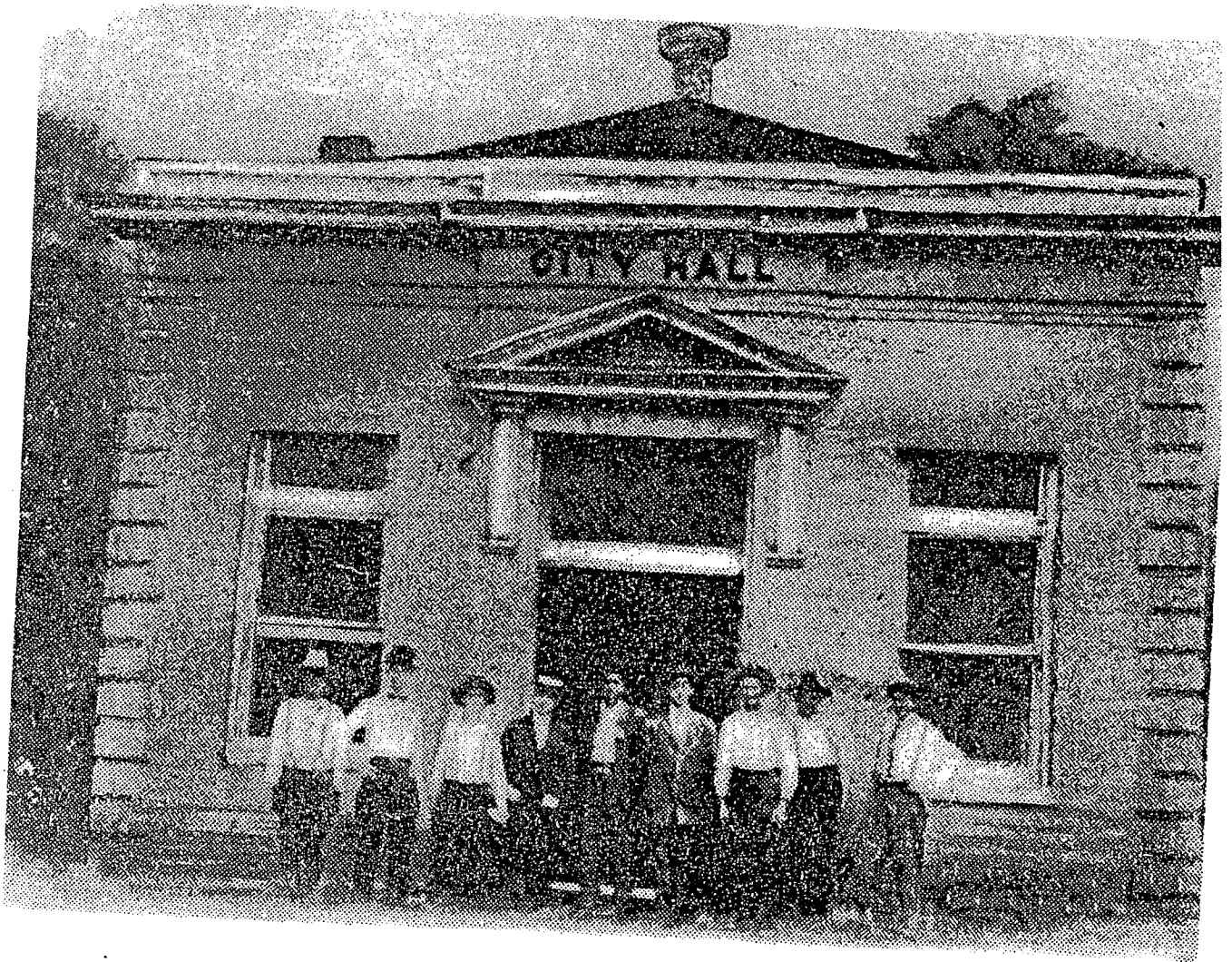
Donnie Todd, Jr.

Darrin DeLoach

Bell City
City Hall



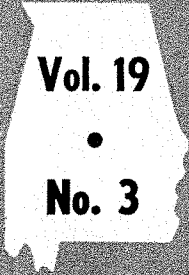
savings & Loan



*Pell City's 1st City Hall
early 1900's - 1950's*

And Now

September 1961

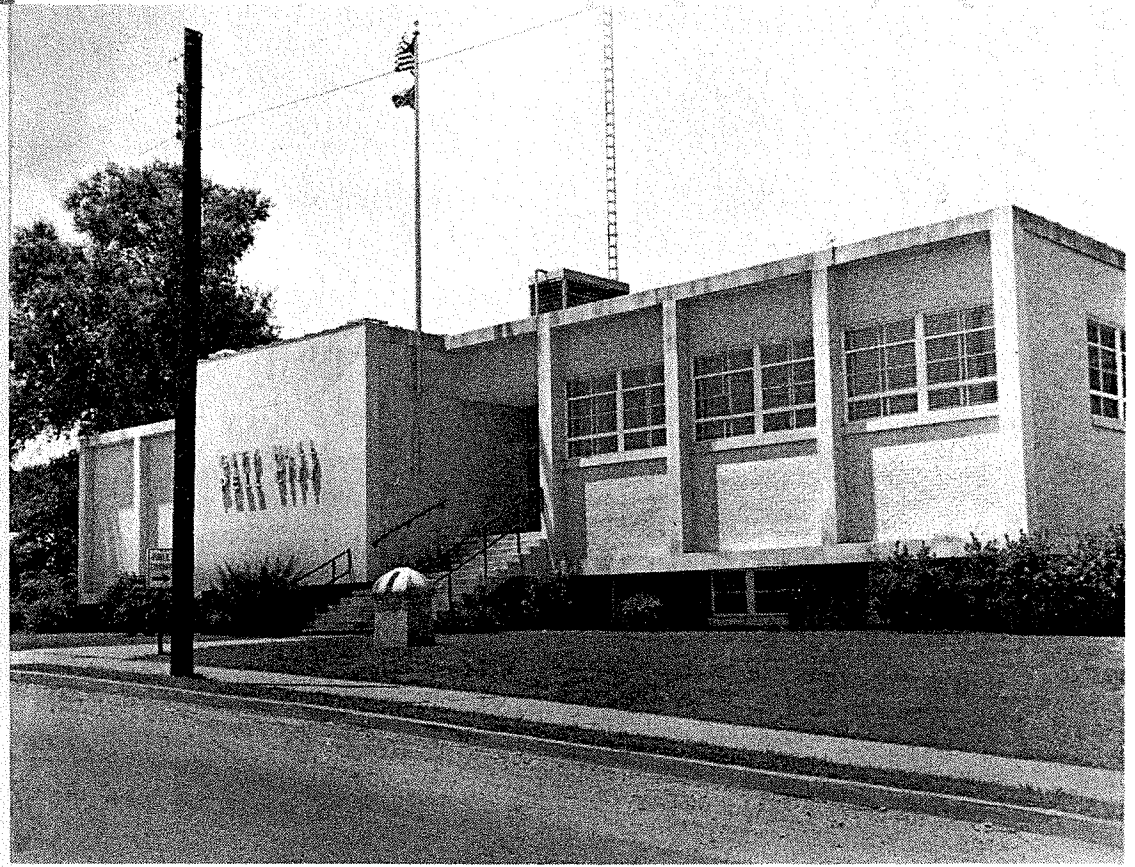


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One of the finest municipal buildings in Alabama is Pell City's. Built in 1957 at a cost of \$125,000 it includes the council chamber, city courtroom, the Mayor's Office, City Clerk's office—and quarters for the recreation, police, fire, street and utility departments. Pell City's government is presided over by Mayor Sam F. Burt.

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