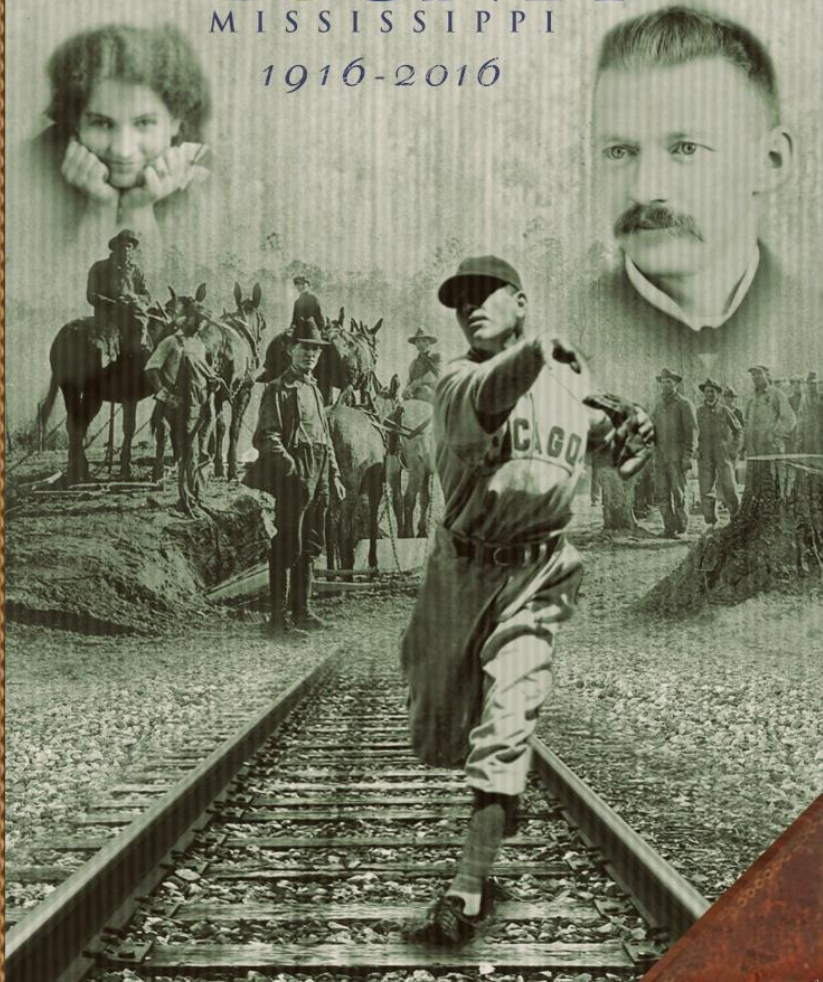
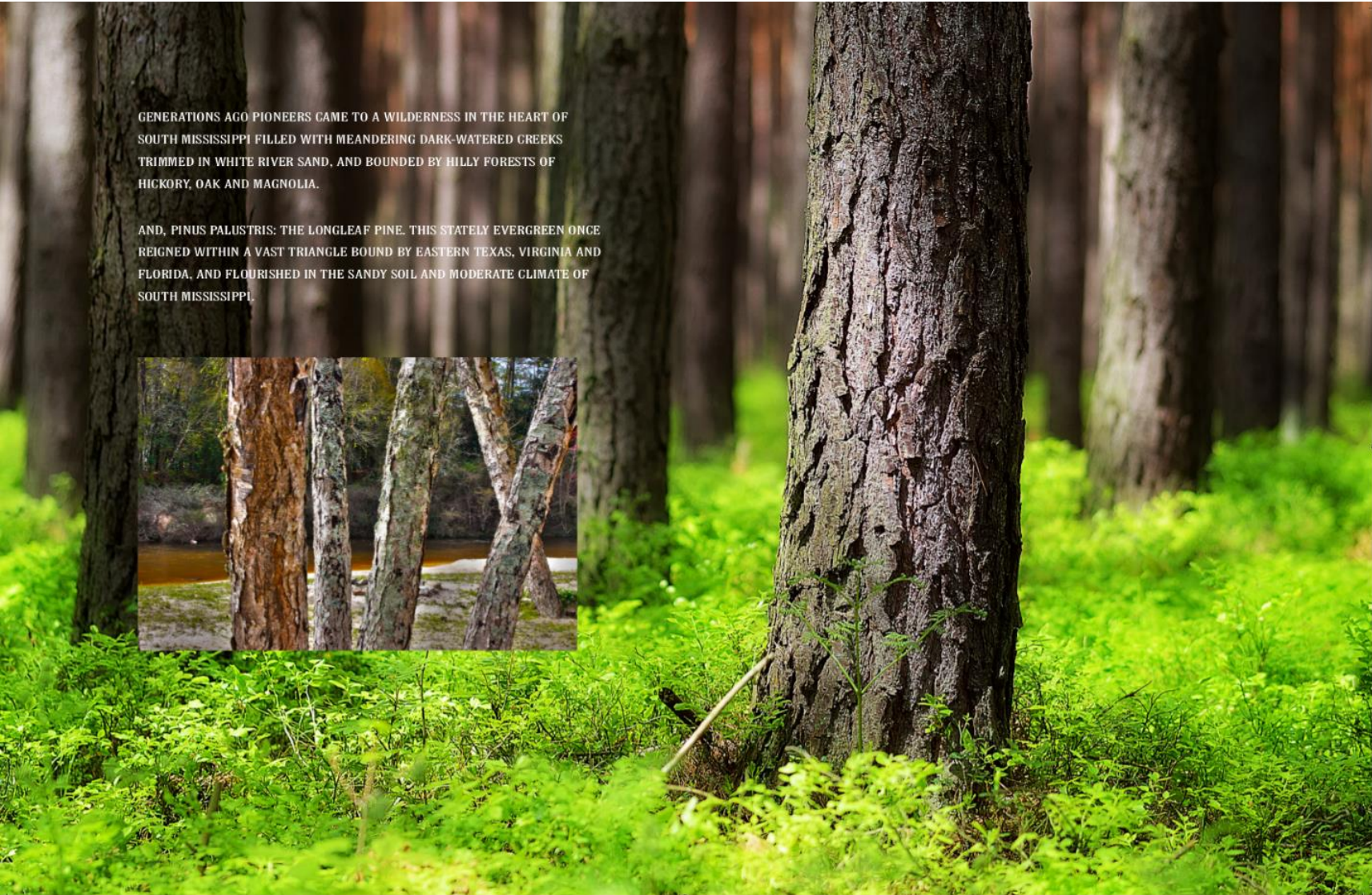


STONE COUNTY

MISSISSIPPI

1916-2016





GENERATIONS AGO PIONEERS CAME TO A WILDERNESS IN THE HEART OF SOUTH MISSISSIPPI FILLED WITH MEANDERING DARK-WATERED CREEKS TRIMMED IN WHITE RIVER SAND, AND BOUNDED BY HILLY FORESTS OF HICKORY, OAK AND MAGNOLIA.

AND, PINUS PALUSTRIS: THE LONGLEAF PINE. THIS STATELY EVERGREEN ONCE REIGNED WITHIN A VAST TRIANGLE BOUND BY EASTERN TEXAS, VIRGINIA AND FLORIDA, AND FLOURISHED IN THE SANDY SOIL AND MODERATE CLIMATE OF SOUTH MISSISSIPPI.



FINKBINE LUMBER CO.

THE LONGLEAF FORESTS, THOUGH, WERE MORE THAN AN EMERALD CLOAK RESTING MAJESTICALLY ON GENTLE MISSISSIPPI HILLS. FOR THOSE WILLING TO PEER MORE DEEPLY, THE TREES CONTAINED A TREASURE LODGE: RESIN, TURPENTINE, PAPER AND LUMBER — ALL EAGERLY NEEDED BY A NATION IN THE MIDST OF AN INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION.

LAYING HOLD OF THIS TREASURE, THOUGH, WOULD TEST THE METTLE OF EVEN THE MOST DETERMINED. IN AN AGE WHERE MOST THINGS MOVED BY WATER AND STEAM POWER, THE LAND FEATURES THAT LEFT EXPLORERS WIDE-EYED WITH WONDER— ITS CREEKS, MARSHES AND HILLS — MADE ACCESS TO THE PINES RUGGED AND DIFFICULT.

THE SOLUTION WOULD COME IN THE FORM OF TRAIN LOGOMOTIVES HAULING CARS OF TIMBER TO WAITING SHIPS IN THE GULF DARING INDIVIDUALS CUT A RAIL LINE, SOON NAMED THE GULF & SHIP ISLAND RAILROAD, THROUGH THE MISSISSIPPI WILDERNESS FROM THE COAST NORTHWARD TO HATTIESBURG. FROM IT THEY BUILT SPURS DEEP INTO THE PINE FORESTS WHERE THEY LOADED THEIR FELLED TREES FOR TRANSPORT TO MILLS ALONG THE MAIN LINE. THEN OUT TO POINTS FAR AND WIDE!

A group of engineers pose for a photograph – November 22, 1903



Finkbine Lumber Company -
Wiggins, Mississippi



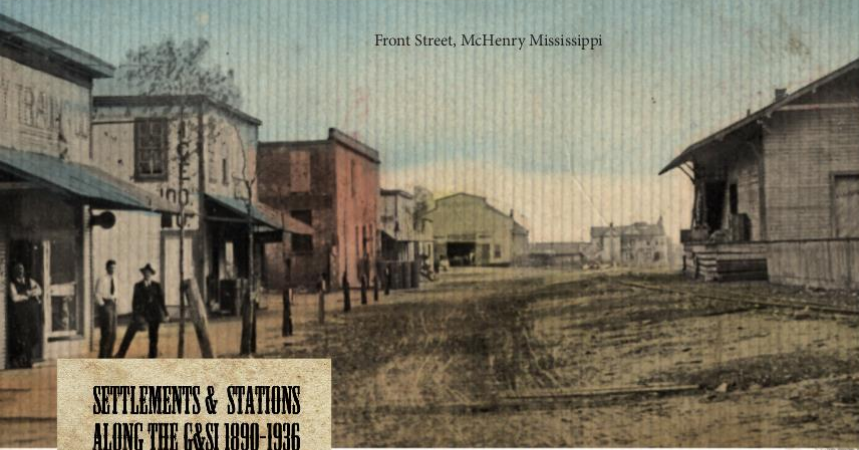
Gulf and Ship Island Railroad - 1903



Dantzer Lumber Company -
Pasagoula, Mississippi



Front Street, McHenry Mississippi



Wiggins, scene of progress and prosperity. G. & S. I. R. R.,
Harrison County, Mississippi



G & SI AND ITS SPURS EVENTUALLY BECAME A TRELLIS FOR SETTLEMENTS OF PEOPLE COMING TO WORK AND LIVE. ALONG IT, NAMES BEGAN TO BUD: MCHENRY, PERKINSTON, TEN MILE, BIG LEVEL, WIGGINS, BOND.

LARGE LUMBER COMPANIES EMERGED AS THE BACKBONE FOR A FLEDGLING ECONOMY THAT SOON BIRTHED OTHER BUSINESSES — AND WITH THEM CHURCHES, SCHOOLS, AND A HOSPITAL.



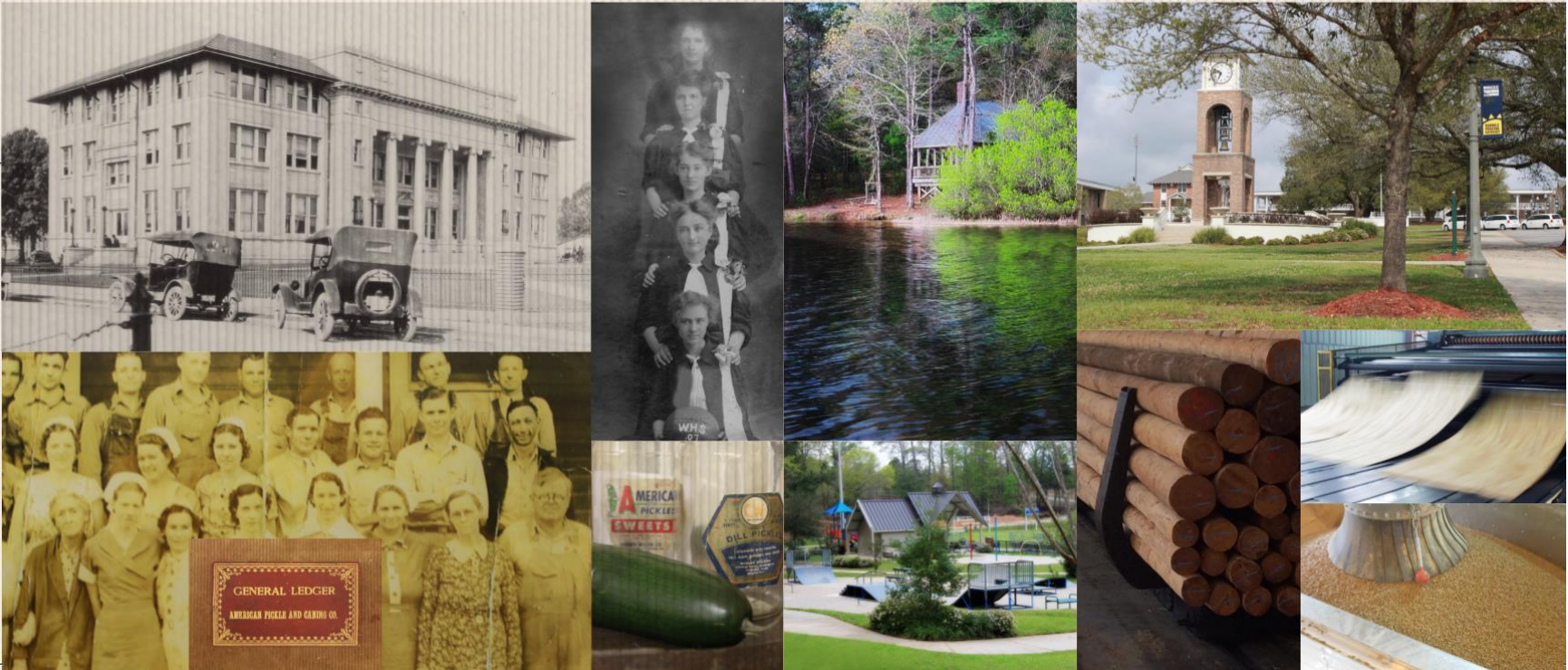


AS THE TWENTIETH CENTURY DAWNED THIS CLUSTER OF COMMUNITIES FROM MCHENRY TO BOND BEGAN TO COALESCE IN A DESIRE FOR SELF-DETERMINATION. IN 1916 THEIR DESIRE GAVE BIRTH TO A NEW GOVERNING BODY: STONE COUNTY.

BUT THE FLEDGLING COUNTY SOON BEGAN TO FEEL THE TREMORS OF ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL UPHEAVAL. THE VAST TRACTS OF TIMBER, THE REGION'S MAIN ECONOMIC DRIVER, DWINDLED. FINKBINE-GUILD LUMBER, ONE OF THE LARGEST MILLS, PIVOTED FROM PINE TREES TO PICKLES: THEIR AMERICAN PICKLE AND CANNING COMPANY BECAME AT ONE POINT THE LARGEST CUCUMBER PICKLE DISTRIBUTOR IN THE WORLD.

OTHER LUMBER BUSINESSES SOUGHT OUT DIFFERENT MARKETS IN UTILITY POLES AND PLYWOOD. AND, A SMALL, CIVIC-MINDED GROUP DEVELOPED FLINT CREEK INTO A POPULAR OUTDOOR DESTINATION. IN LARGE AND SMALL WAYS, THE PEOPLE OF STONE COUNTY ADAPTED TO ADVERSITY.

AT THE END OF THEIR FIRST CENTURY, THE RAIL LINE REMAINS AN ENGINE OF COMMERCE IN TANDEM WITH A MODERN HIGHWAY SYSTEM AND PORT. AND WHILE TIMBER IS STILL A DOMINANT FORCE, A NEW "CREATIVE" ECONOMY HAS TAKEN ROOT: NEW KINDS OF MANUFACTURING LIKE ENVIVA WOOD HEATING PELLETS; NEW USES FOR THE LAND LIKE STONNINGTON FARM AND G & M GOAT FARM; AND GREATER OUTLETS FOR THE ARTS LIKE THE TELLING TREES MURAL PROJECT.





BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY, THOUGH, MAKE UP ONLY PART OF THE HISTORY OF STONE COUNTY'S CENTENNIAL. THERE IS MORE: A CURRENT OF COMMUNITY RUNNING DEEP, RISING NOW AND AGAIN LIKE TINY RAPIDS ON A BLACK WATER CREEK. IT WAS WHAT FIRST ATTRACTED SETTLERS TO WORK THE TIMBER, AND WHAT ALSO ENTICED A RENOWNED CHILDREN'S BOOK AUTHOR AND BASEBALL LEGEND TO COME AND CALL STONE COUNTY HOME. IT LIKELIKE EMANATED FROM ITS NEARBY COLLEGE, WHICH THROUGH THE YEARS HAS ATTRACTED STUDENTS FROM FAR AND WIDE, MANY

OF WHOM BECAME RESPECTED SCIENTISTS, MAGAZINE PUBLISHERS AND ASTRONAUTS. THE PEOPLE OF STONE COUNTY, WHETHER WITH ROOTS A CENTURY DEEP OR NEWLY PLANTED, IMMERSE THEMSELVES IN THIS SENSE OF COMMUNITY AND CELEBRATE IT: THROUGH TILE MOSAIC MURALS CHRONICLING THEIR LIFE AND TIMES; IN THE OUTDOORS, WITH HIKING TRAILS, RIVER FLOATS AND ECO-TOURIST DESTINATIONS; BUT MOST OF ALL IN NEIGHBORLINESS, A WAY OF LIFE RISING UP FROM THEIR FONDNESS FOR THE PAST, DETERMINATION FOR THE PRESENT AND HOPEFUL OPTIMISM FOR THE FUTURE. THIS IS STONE COUNTY, IN CELEBRATION OF ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF INNOVATION, INGENUITY AND GRIT.

