

SHELBY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.

Planning a Shelby County Alabama Historical Marker Dedication Ceremony

The Shelby County Historical Society, Inc. is proud to play a part in promoting historic preservation and the celebration of Shelby County history through the Alabama Historical Commission, the Alabama Historical Association and other organizational historical marker programs. We hope this guide will be a useful tool in planning your dedication ceremony and celebration.

Publicity

As soon as your marker arrives from the foundry:

- Gather publicity materials – clear photographs and a brief, simplified history of the topic or site
- Prepare a press release with your specific information
- Send copies of the press release along with the photographs and history to local news media and/or post on the Internet [this may be done through e-mail for speed and quality of photographs for the media]
- If possible, make personal visits to select media outlets to convey the significance of the historical marker to the area
- Invite the Community and members of the Shelby County Historical Society, Inc. to attend your dedication ceremony. The President and other Officers & Board of Directors of the Shelby County Historical Society, Inc. are happy to participate in these programs
- Invite the Shelby County Commissioners, other Shelby County Officials and the Mayor(s) in your area
- Invite representatives from the Alabama Historical Commission and/or Alabama Historical Association; if this dedication ceremony is that of a cemetery be sure to include an invitation to the Alabama Cemetery Preservation Alliance. In addition, you may choose to invite additional State Officials
- If this dedication ceremony is that of a cemetery be sure to invite family members, descendants and friends of those buried in that cemetery and include the church members if it's a church cemetery
- Please note: variables in the application procedures and manufacturing process make it prudent to wait until your marker arrives to set a date for the dedication.

The Ceremony

Consider including the following activities:

- Welcome from the President of the Shelby County Historical Society, Inc. and/or person of your choice
- Opening prayer and comments by a minister and/or person of your choice
- Posting of the colors, pledge of allegiance to the Alabama and U.S. flags and if possible special music presentation [additional suggested possible groups to be involved are local high school JROTC, local Boy Scout and/or Girl Scout organizations, if this dedication ceremony is that of a cemetery then the possibility of inviting the Sons of Confederate Veterans Shelby Camp #1537 and the Cahaba-Coosa Chapter of the Sons of American Revolution]
- Introduction of distinguished guests [with comments made by the Alabama Historical Commission and/or Association, any State Official, if applicable the Alabama Cemetery Preservation Alliance, County Commissioner for your area and/or the County Commission Chairperson and the President and/or another Officer or Board of Director of the Shelby County Historical Society, Inc.]
- A brief synopsis of the history of the marker topic
- Unveiling of the marker [using an appropriately dignified cover] and reading of the text
- Musical entertainment, if appropriate
- Expressions of appreciation to those involved in the project
- Refreshments, if appropriate

The printed program for the dedication ceremony should include several basic components:

- Date, time and place of the ceremony
- List of speakers
- Acknowledgments to those who worked on the project
- Copy of the marker text
- The words to the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States Flag and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Alabama State Flag

We hope this general guide will be helpful to you, but remember that each ceremony can be unique, reflect the character of the community and be tailored for a particular topic or situation.