Bay Minette is the county seat of Baldwin County , the second-fastest growing county in Alabama .
The city is located 35 miles northeast of
Mobile
; 45 miles west of Pensacola, Florida, and 75 miles east of Biloxi, Mississippi. Bay Minette got its name from nearby Minette Bay, named for a French surveyor named Minet. The city did not officially become the county seat until 1900, and was finally incorporated in 1907. The city is governed under a mayor/council form of government that maintains four-year terms.

History

Settlement in Bay Minette began in 1861 when the Louisville & Nashville (L&N) Railroad reached the area, and the town became a junction for the L&N. Newcomers were attracted to the location because it was surrounded by forests and located near the
Tensaw River Delta
and the Gulf of Mexico.

Baldwin County CourthouseAlthough Bay Minette is the most centrally located township in Baldwin County, it was not chosen as the county seat when the county was established. Baldwin County is the third oldest county in the state of Alabama, created on December 21, 1809, ten years before Alabama officially became a state. The first county seat location was at McIntosh Bluff on the Tombigbee River , but it was transferred to Blakeley only one year later, in 1810. In 1898, the State Legislature decided to move the county seat to
Daphne
. In 1900, however, the Alabama State Legislature officially named Bay Minette the county seat, and on October 1, 1901, Bay Minette town leaders officially dedicated a courthouse in the town. The city of Daphne resisted its loss of status, however, and refused to surrender the powers of government.

In order to move the county records to Bay Minette, town leaders devised a scheme to lure the sheriff and his deputy out of the Daphne with a false story about a murder. While the law officers were pursuing the fictitious killer, a group of Bay Minette men stealthily traveled the 30 miles to Daphne, stole the Baldwin County Courthouse records, and delivered them to the new courthouse in Bay Minette. Thus, the town was established as the Baldwin County seat.

Economic Development

The economy of Bay Minette is centered on the thriving timber industry in the area. Approximately 73.6 percent of the Baldwin County area is forest land. In fact, the production of tar and pitch used to caulk and waterproof ships and turpentine (collectively known as naval stores) North Baldwin Infirmary in Bay Minettein Alabama was, from the late nineteenth to mid twentieth centuries, one of the forest industries' largest enterprises. The only significant employer in Bay Minette was a wood processing plant that produced turpentine, resin, and pine oil from knots, roots, and stumps, making use of every part of the tree.

Because of the rich, fertile soils and moderate temperatures in the area, Baldwin County also became one of the richest farming areas in the state. Soybean cultivation began to flourish there in the 1930s. Wheat and potato farming peaked in the 1940s. Pecans and cattle have also played an important role in the county's economy. The Agriculture and Civic League of Bay Minette mainly concentrates on promoting agricultural organizations but also promotes other industries.

Railroads also were an important economic factor in Bay Minette's development. In 1905, the Bay Minette and Fort Morgan Railroad, a supporting line for the L&N Railroad, was built through the dense Baldwin County pine forests between Bay Minette Chamber of CommerceBay Minette and Foley . Later known as the "Foley

Branch," this railroad played a significant role in the county's logging industry. By 1924, the town ranked near Montgomery and Mobile in the freight tonnage handled in the town. In 1982, the L&N Railroad Company merged with the Seaboard System Railroad, which in turn merged with the Chessie System in 1986, becoming CSX Transportation. The company currently handles freight and provides employment in Bay Minette.

Events and Places of Interest

Bay Minette is home to a number of Civil War and other early American historical sites, including antebellum homes and Civil War cemeteries. The John F. Rhodes Civic Center is a 6,000 square-foot facility available to rent for most social events. Bay Minette also holds various events, such as the charity Tour for Toys Motorcycle Run, and the Bike-O-Rama Motorcycle Rally, which includes a motorcycle show, games, live music, refreshments, and other entertainment.

http://www.cityofbayminette.org/