

## Monument to a Boll Weevil

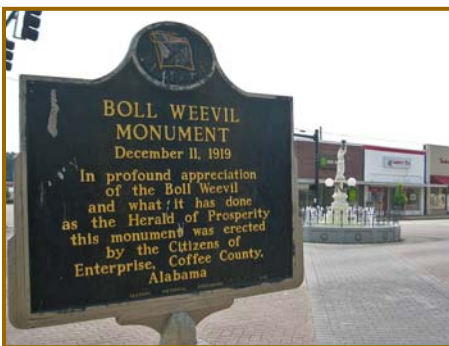
In southern Alabama is a town of 25,000-plus population named Enterprise, where an unusual monument has been erected. It honors an insect, the Mexican boll weevil. It is the world's only monument built to honor an agricultural pest.

The citizens of Enterprise placed this prominent landmark downtown to show their appreciation to this beetle, hailed as a "herald of prosperity," in 1919. They said it had a profound influence on the area's agriculture and economy.

The boll weevil appeared in Alabama in 1915; by 1918, farmers were losing entire cotton crops to it, and cotton was king of agriculture in that area. H.M. Sessions saw this dilemma as an opportunity to convert the area to peanut farming. Cotton was grown again, but farmers learned to diversify their crops, a practice that brought new money to Coffee County.



Bon Fleming, a local businessman, came up with the idea to build the monument, and helped to finance the total cost. It depicts a female figure in a flowing gown with arms stretched above her head. She raises high a trophy topped with a larger-than-life-size boll weevil.



It is a tribute to how something disastrous can be a catalyst for change, and a reminder of how the people of Enterprise adjusted in the face of adversity.

Out of a time of struggle and crisis had come new growth and success.

How about your life? No doubt, you can look back at times when hardships and challenges struck, and yet, out of them came blessings.

It's not so much what happens to us that matters, but what we do about it.

– Beecher Hunter