

# Hoover Historical Happenings

Vol. 22 No. 2

November 2010

## Dates

Nov. 16 General Meeting  
Dec. 1 Newsletter articles are due  
Jan. 4 Board Meeting  
Jan. 18 General Meeting

## Executive Committee

Marie Taylor  
Charlotte Williams  
Delores Wilkinson  
Barbara Clark  
Christine Simonton  
Jim Lyons  
Sharon Jones  
John Williams  
Betty Bagby  
Jean Butterworth  
Charles Shelby  
Doug Harkness  
Peggy Patton  
Katherine Staursky  
Marshall Morgan  
Joan Davis  
Arnold Singer  
Vadie Honea  
Joy Elliott  
Barbara Lyons  
Charlotte Patton  
Mary Ross Searcy  
Charlotte Laggy  
Tom Laggy  
Betty Tucker  
Faye Walker

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## Johnny Curry To Present To November Hoover Historical Society Meeting

Johnny Curry served sixteen years in the Alabama House of Representatives from 1986-2002. He considers his sponsorship and passage of the bill to fund construction of The American Village to be his most important legislative achievement. The American Village in Montevallo is a civic education center whose mission is to strengthen and renew the foundations of American

liberty and self-government through citizenship education.

In June, 2006, Mr. Curry became an Assistant to the Executive Director for Special Projects at The American Village after a thirty year career at BellSouth. Previously, he served on its Board of Trustees for ten years. Join us on **November 16, 1:30**, to hear Mr. Curry discuss the role of The American Village in reconnecting citizens to that history.

## The Rest Of the Story

The Hoover-Randle house on Tyler Road is marked with a Hoover Historical Society marker stating basic facts about the house and the founder of our city. But....did you know these facts?

- The name Hoover comes from an old German word "Huber" which means a possessor of land. It was changed to Hoover by immigrants to America.

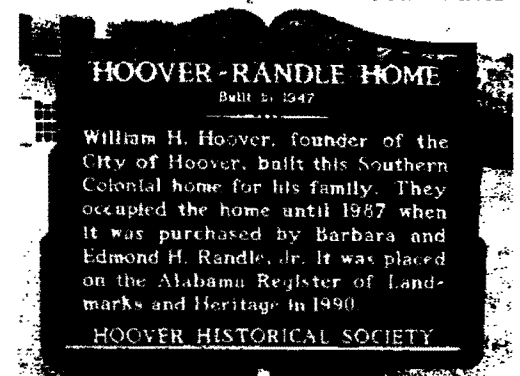
- William Henry Hoover, Sr, father of our founder, owned a brick manufacturing business in Russellville. He had a dream of building a town for his workers, planning to call it Hooverville. Economics would not permit this. His son would fulfill this dream. His factory made the bricks for the O'Brien Opera House in Birmingham as well as many Morris Avenue buildings.

- After trying many fields of business, William, Sr. founded an insurance

company, Employers Mutual of Alabama. His son Bill (William H., Jr) joined in the business and became president.

- In 1944, Bill bought 160 acres along Tyler Road. After living many places in the Birmingham area, in 1950 the family built, furnished and occupied their home. Shortly after this, Mr. Hoover bought 682 acres along Highway 31 and south of Vestavia. Many called it "Hoover's Folly." Hoover was founded in 1954 and incorporated in April 1967. The Hoover-Randle house was not annexed into Hoover until 1975.

- Joan Davis



## Front Porch News



Last time we talked Uncle Charles Shelby was having the roof over the pantry fixed. What a relief it is to get that done. So far Aunt Marie Taylor has not discovered another leak or broken fence rail to get upset about, but she has been checking everything out to get ready for company so I expect I'll be getting a list soon. Did I mention all them First Graders from Bluff Park Elementary are coming to see us? Can you imagine having a hundred and ten six-year-olds to corral at one time? Just keeping them out of the creek and from falling out of the hay loft keeps everybody busy. I invited all the cousins to come and keep them busy. Besides, there is a lot of work to get done before winter. Cousin Mary Ann Smith is bringing the wool from the sheep shearing to card and spin so we can make blankets and stuff. Cousins Don and Gwen Chafin have a truck load of chairs that need seats and backs fixed with new wood strips. Cousin Cheryl Patton, all the way from Arley, Alabama, is a-coming to get help making soap and getting the heavy washing done. Of course Grandma Joy Elliot, Aunt Inez McCollum and Aunt Katherine Staursky will be in the cabin trying to keep the kids from breaking Aunt Marie's dishes and falling down the stairs to the sleeping loft. I hope they get the butter churned while we got help. My old shoulder won't last like it once did. Of course it won't be all work. Papa Joe Hosmer will be picking and singing some tunes and Cousin Pam Kinnebrew, the best story teller in these parts, will be spinning a story that will keep everyone quiet for a while, including me.

I told Uncle Jim Lyons to get the cotton sold because I was going to need a little cash to cover some extras. You know we don't charge for our visits, and feed and supplies are getting more expensive every year. Besides, we have two more bunches of kids already signed up for later on. Prince of Peace and Bluff Park 5th grade have already sent me letters wanting to come. I sure hope they don't plan to stay till supper because if they are that will be a lot of biscuits and gravy.

I better go and see what Aunt Marie is upset about now. I sure hope nobody left the gate open and the cows got out.

- Uncle Doug Harkness

## HHS Picnic Held Sept. 10

HHS members and guests enjoyed a relaxing, fun time at our recent Fall Membership Picnic. The September 10 event took place at the Bluff Park Community Center Park where good weather, good food and good friendships abounded. It was such a pleasant time to take in the fall sunshine. Entertainment for the evening was presented by a delightful strummin' trio led by member Joyce Cauthen. We would like to thank the committee, Faye Walker, Barbara Clark and Delores Wilkinson for making this event possible.

## Membership Grows to 135

Thanks to everyone for getting their dues in and helping our membership to grow to 135. It is never too late to join the Hoover Historical Society! Ten dollars to Delores Wilkinson (1066 Mountain Oaks Dr. 35226) makes you a member immediately! Ask a friend, neighbor or even someone you do not know to join us as we are discovering Hoover.

Welcome to new honorary member Mayor Tony Petelos, 100 Municipal Dr., Hoover, AL 35226-5503. His phone number is 444-7510; his email address is [mayorsoffice@cihoover.al.us](mailto:mayorsoffice@cihoover.al.us).

Please make the following corrections in your directory. If you don't have a directory, come to the next meeting to pick up one. If you live out of town or are unable to attend meetings due to health or transportation problems, let us know and we will get you one.

Corrections:

Sandra Hart - [Sandra62520@bellsouth.net](mailto:Sandra62520@bellsouth.net)

Robert/Carolyn Kolar - [rvkpe@yahoo.com](mailto:rvkpe@yahoo.com)

John/Charlotte Williams - [charleyw3007@bellsouth.net](mailto:charleyw3007@bellsouth.net)



## Membership Tea Is In the Works

Delores Wilkinson, who chairs next year's Membership Tea, is already busily planning that event. It will be **April 3, 2011**, at the home of James and Kim Harwell on Shades Crest Road. This is the former home of Mrs. Elizabeth Lacey, one of Bluff Park's most prominent citizens. We're in for a fabulous time again! We encourage all our members to plan now to attend the Hoover Historical Society Membership Tea.

## Memories of McKenzie

*Jane Schrubbe, long time member of the Hoover Historical Society, recently celebrated her 80<sup>th</sup> birthday. I asked Jane to recall for us some of her favorite stories about growing up in McKenzie, Alabama, during the Depression years.*

Jane told a story about "Mary and the spilled milk." The family maid named Mary always got up early to milk the cow. Jane usually accompanied her on the walk to take the milk in a glass jug to her mother's cafe. As they were walking along, all of a sudden another female came across the side walk and stabbed Mary with a large knife several times, all the while screaming, "You stole my boyfriend." Mary dropped the jug of milk on the sidewalk and milk went everywhere! Jane was very upset and started crying. Luckily, her older male cousin saw the incident and came to Jane and took her to her mother's cafe. Others came to assist Mary. Jane remembers that she had nightmares for a long time after this, and she wouldn't sleep by herself. Jane's sisters said at that time there was no help for anyone back then.

Of course, Jane was the envy of all her friends because she had to go to court in Greenville to testify. The other person was found not guilty. The sad thing was that Mary was paralyzed after the stabbing.

July 4<sup>th</sup> was always a fun time in Jane's community. Her daddy would put wooden sides up on his truck bed and all the kids in town would ride in the back of the truck to the river to have a picnic. Her mother would fry chicken and have all the goodies for a picnic. The kids would swim in the river and of course do some horsing around. In one of those joking incidents, Jane's brother dunked her under the water and she got choked. This caused her to be afraid of the water for many years, but she later overcame this fear.

Jane hated school. That was in the first grade. She could walk to school from her home through a field in back of her house. The handy man, Ole Henry, who chopped wood for the family would say to Jane's mother, "Miss Gladys, don't make that child go to school." Jane went to school and ran home every chance she got during recess. Jane's teacher was a good friend of her mother's. Every time Jane came up missing, the teacher would go looking for Jane. Eventually she discovered that Jane would run home. Jane finally out grew this. She went on to attend 17 more years of schooling, graduated from the University of Alabama and became a school teacher. No more recesses, Jane! The little school is still standing but is in much need of repair.

-Jean Butterworth

## Reflections Of 9/11

Upon my retirement, we moved from New Jersey to Hoover to be a part of our grandchildren's lives, so my memories of Alabama and Hoover are very limited. My life has been impacted by a small street in downtown Manhattan—Dey Street. Dey Street starts at the intersection of Broadway with the then AT&T headquarters on the north side and a newspaper stand operated by a blind man on the south side. Peter Perizzi, that man, was my first employer. I was 14 and received \$1 per hour and \$1 per week subway fare.

Dey Street continued west toward the Hudson River. Upon crossing Church Street, the headquarters and southern terminus of the Hudson Tubes loomed on the north side of the street. One block further south was the site of the Singer Building which when it was built was the tallest building in the world. This building also holds the distinction of being the tallest building ever demolished. No, that was not my building, nor am I related to the Singer Sewing Machine people.

I remember the demolition and excavation of the several block area south of the Hudson Tubes and west of the Singer Building to make way for the Twin Towers complex. It was very eerie to see the excavated site two years after 9/11.

One of my friends owned an insurance agency which was located on the 78th floor of the South Tower. We were invited to his offices to enjoy the spectacle that accompanied the rededication of the Statue of Liberty on the July 4th weekend of 1986. An amazing display of fireworks from numerous barges in the Hudson and East Rivers took place on Friday night.

On Saturday, July 4th, President Ronald Reagan viewed the parade of the Tall Ships as they passed between the Statue of Liberty and the battleship USS Iowa. I remember several French military jets flying by at eye level with multi-color contrails.

The tragedy of 9/11 is very personal to me. Two years earlier, we sold our home to a delightful young couple. He was working in his office which was over 100 stories above the street below when the terrorists deliberately crashed into each of the Twin Towers. And, two houses down, another neighbor perished during 9/11.

- Arnold Singer

**See the Mural!** The mural is in place at Wells Fargo Bank across Hwy. 150 from the Galleria. Hoover Historical Society played a great part in developing this, thanks to Charlotte Patton's work.

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Return Service Requested



*From the President*

## **Dr. Tom Caldwell Leaves a Legacy To Our Library Archives**

Dr. Tom Caldwell was a believer in our historical society. He thought enough of us to include us in his will. Through his planning our library archives has received a share of his large collection of quilting books, and now they are available for everyone to enjoy. What an honor it is for us to have these books, and how special a man he was to remember us.

Dr. Caldwell was a pediatrician in Birmingham, and his contributions to the medical community are well known. But it was after he retired that he became interested in quilting. It began as therapy and grew into a hobby. He even became the first male member of the Birmingham Quilters Guild and enjoyed talking about and sharing his own quilts. Dr. Caldwell and his daughter, Cathryn, were tragically killed in an automobile accident on October 20, 2008.

Dr. Caldwell's legacy is more than quilting books. He passes on to us that we should remember our society

when we plan for the future.

We have a most interesting program planned for you on November 16. Plan now to join us as Johnny Curry presents an outstanding program on American Village. We'll see you there!

-Marie Taylor, President

## **Leather Breeches Beans**

After you finish washing the clothes in the back yard in your black washpot, you might try this recipe:

Take good, full green beans (if they aint nothing but slabs, they aint fit t'eat), and string them on ten or twelve spool thread, then break off the ends. Hang in the rafters in warm, still dark air. To cook them, take down as many as you need. Soak them overnight. Parboil them on a wood stove with a little soda added to the soak water to soften them up. After 1 hour, take them out and wash and "rench" them. Put them in a pot of clear water and several chunks of fat meat. Cook for 2-3 hours until soft and done.

-Aunt Aries recipe, *Foxfire Book 2*