

the

Hoover Historical Log

The Official Newsletter of the Hoover Historical Society, Hoover, Alabama

PROGRAMS 2015-2016



The Snowflake Hydrangea is Hoover's Official Flower

"Keeping Hoover clean and green" is the motto for the city of Hoover's Beautification Board. Among their accomplishments are City Arbor Day, Tree City USA Program, and Litter & Recycling programs. But, did you know this 20-member volunteer group played a role in getting the Snowflake Hydrangea named the City's Flower?

Resolution 3626, adopted April 3, 2006, reads in part: "...be it resolved, by Mayor Tony Petelos and the Hoover City Council ...declare that from this day forward the Snowflake Hydrangea is to be the Official Flower of the City of Hoover."

Save the Date!

Sept. 15, 2015

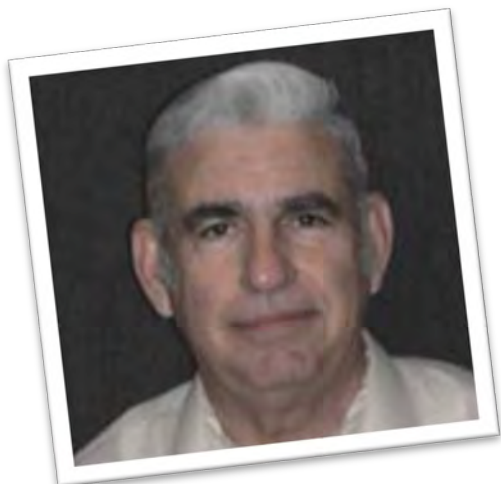
The first Board Meeting for the year at the Archive/Office at Bluff Park.

Sept. 22, 2015

Ruth Elder is the topic of our first meeting at the Hoover Public Library.



- **September 22, 2015** 'Ruth Elder, Aviatrix & Actress' by Jerry York, postcard collector and lecturer;
- **November 17, 2015** 'Oak Hill Cemetery' by Jim Langley, local author;
- **January 19, 2016** 'Premocar : Made In Birmingham' by J.D. Weeks, local author of several books;
- **March 15, 2016** 'Wings of Opportunity: The Wright Brothers in Montgomery' by Julie Hedgepeth Williams, journalism professor at Samford University; &
- **May 17, 2016** 'From Kitchen Gardens to Flora of the Civil War' by Jason Kirby, archivist at the Archives and Rare Book Room (Birmingham Botanical Gardens).



Jerry York presents:

Alabama's Aviatrrix

A native of Anniston, AL, Ruth Elder, along with her co-pilot George Haldeman, set off from Long Island, New York, on October 11, 1927. Her goal was to become the first woman to fly from the United States to Paris.

Did she make it? Find out what happened when the Hoover Historical Society kicks off its 2015-16 club year when Jerry York, our first speaker, presents the "Miss America of Aviation—Ruth Elder." Come hear about her fascinating life of adventure as a pioneer aviatrix, socialite, and movie star at our September 22, 2015, meeting at the Hoover Public Library at 1:30 PM. Arrive early to enjoy refreshments!

Jerry, an Army brat in his early years who settled in Choccolocco in 1954, graduated from Oxford High School and Jacksonville State College. After a career of teaching and sales, he retired. He is a Civitan and serves on the Board of Directors of the Arc of Calhoun and Cleburne Counties and is on the Calhoun-Cleburne Mental Health Board.

Jerry is a philatelist who also collects picture postcards and Boy Scout memorabilia. He enjoys studying and presenting local history such as Ruth Elder's story. Jerry also enjoys cooking from his "real live chuck wagon." He and wife Geraldine live in the Friendship community in Oxford and have two grown children.



The story of Ruth's transatlantic flight will be told by Laurie Notaro in the new novel, *Her Horses Invariably Galloped*, set for publication in March 2016.

AmazonSmile offers fundraising for non-profits

The Hoover Historical Society is participating in the AmazonSmile program. Amazon customers can choose us as an organization for donations. We will receive .05% of qualified purchases made on Amazon by customers who have designated 'HHS.' All products, procedures, prices, etc., as on Amazon.com, are unchanged for the customer. If you shop online, please think of the HHS when you check out!

<https://smile.amazon.com/ch/57-0892846>



A message from our president...

For our 2015-16 club year at the HHS, we have two main goals. One is to help Pam King write the History of Hoover II to be published for Hoover's 50th Anniversary in 2017. Our members are conducting oral histories and collecting newspaper articles to aid in her research. The other is to increase fund-raising efforts to pay for the publication of the book. We will push to gain corporate sponsors soon.

Ed Burtnett and the finance committee met to create a budget that will slash costs to meet our financial commitments associated with the book. We thank the **City of Hoover** for repairing one A/C and replacing another when they failed early this summer. Our Archives' volunteers appreciated their swift response. Thanks to **Russell Kilgore** who arranged for the city to refurbish our historic markers and to **Doug Harkness** for his tireless efforts in making the Folklore Center such a great success.

Thanks to **Debbie Burtnett** for creating a Folklore Center scrapbook and posting items to our Facebook page.

Please save the date of October 3rd. We will invite Hoover residents to visit our Folklore Center while attending the Bluff Park Art Show. Pam Thompson will have our new Membership Guide ready for our September meeting. Look for your copy in your e-mail. Plan to attend our wonderful programs in the renovated Hoover Library. Our first meeting will be September 22nd.

Our organization depends on volunteers. We need members who can conduct interviews, transcribe, work in the archives or help with the newsletter. We are in particular need of skilled craftsmen at the Folklore Center and a person to schedule them. Contact any officer for more information.

I am looking forward to a busy and productive year!
Carolyn Kolar



Left to right: Betty Bagby, Anita Dillon, Inez McCollum, Carolyn Kolar, Ed Burtnett, Pam Thompson.

HHS's 2015-16 Officers

Elected earlier this year and installed May 19th by Brenda Pritchett were:

President, Carolyn Kolar

1st Vice President-Programs, Harriett Hall

2nd Vice President- Membership, Pam Thompson

Recording Secretary, Inez McCollum

Corresponding Secretary, Betty Bagby

Treasurer, Ed Burtnett

Assistant Treasurer, Anita Dillon

Historical markers get makeover...

In preparation for Hoover's 50th birthday

Over the summer, the HHS office received calls about missing historical markers. It wasn't vandalism—it was a facelift for the markers as the City prepares for the 50th anniversary of Hoover in 2017. As of this writing, eight markers have been refurbished.

Gary Blankenship and Laura McConathy of SignsNow in Hoover have restored the background color and silver lettering of the markers. The process begins with pick-up by the Public Works Department; continues with a vinegar bath to kill mold and help remove paint; followed by



washing with soap and water. The marker is then painted overall in green, and the silver lettering hand-brushed. Historical Marker Chairman Russell Kilgore is "impressed" with the results.

Laura said the process was initially "time consuming" but the pair have learned how to do the restoration efficiently, and completed two markers in July alone. "I love doing this," she said. She commented on the "good care" taken by Marie Taylor on the marker at the Overseer's House—"the easiest one to do" because Marie had kept it so clean.



Pam Thompson earns Crouch Award

The Jack Crouch award honors a member for exceptional service and dedication to the Historical Society.

This is a 'get it done' person.

Say it, think it, mention it ---and it's done. This person volunteers in the Archives, participates at the Moss Rock Festival, and *Celebrate Hoover! Day*.

This person has found new ways to promote and publicize our activities; found a new place for us to meet; set up our 'historybook2' project; and conducts oral histories. This person has met with city officials on behalf of the Archives and served on the Scholarship Committee and made arrangements for the Spring Trip.

These are just some of the accomplishments of our winner this year. Of course, I am speaking of our President, Pam Thompson.

Congratulations!

—Carolyn Kolar



HHS awards scholarships to Hoover students

Each year our Society awards a \$1,000 scholarship to a graduating senior at both of Hoover's high schools. The scholarship honors HHS founder, Vadie Honea. Funding this year came from memorials for Barbara Lyons and a donation from Carlo and Dianne Joseph.

Spain Park's Lauren McCabe wrote about women's struggle for the right to vote, bringing it home with the ratification in 1953 of the 19th Amendment by our state and the Civil Rights Act of just 60 years ago. Lauren is enrolled at Auburn.



Spain
Park's
Lauren
McCabe

Hoover
High's
Kevin Wu



Kevin Wu of Hoover High wrote about Supreme Court Justice Hugo Black who hailed from Alabama and "defied his past to leave a legacy of civil libertarianism." Kevin is enrolled at Columbia.

Criterion for the scholarship includes academic excellence, community service, and an essay on an historical topic reviewed by the HHS Scholarship Committee.



Eddie, Kay,
and Susie
Mae
Aldridge

Hydrangea, Symbol of Hoover Continued from page 1

The Snowflake Hydrangea was a "chance seedling" from the parent plant, the *Hydrangea Quercifolia* (oak leaf). Discovered in Lipscomb, AL, Loren Aldridge and his son, Eddie Aldridge, visited the site to find a plant that was not in good condition. They began cultivating and propagating the plant successfully. By 1970, they sought a patent to help the plant to become known. After front-page coverage in the American Nursery Magazine; a feature in the Atlanta paper; and Frenchman Andre Briant's coverage in a 1991 international catalog, the Snowflake's popularity took off. Today it is known around the world.

When Willie Edmiston retired, he became involved with Aldridge Gardens and the Beautification Board. An article that ran in the Birmingham News suggested that Hoover could become the Hydrangea City. Willie and Dr. Vasha Rosenblum pursued it with a Ten Point Plan and grants — presenting their program to the City Council.

"The rest is history," said Eddie Aldridge who gives full credit for the Hydrangea's new status to Willie Edmiston. "It was an honor for us to have the Snowflake picked as the city flower, and since the gardens are there in the city, it's even more appropriate."

Vadie's legacy continues...

Last May, we lost our Founder and Charter Member, Vadie Honea. Vadie's daughter, Patricia Honea-Fleming, generously donated her files to the Archives so that her legacy lives on. Vadie kept meticulous records which have proven very valuable.

Our Society lost two more past officers and long-time members over the summer—Barbara Clark and Shirley Lewis. The Society sends condolences to their families.



Time Cabinets Chairman Gilbert Douglas helped Patricia Honea-Fleming pack Vadie's files for removal to the Archives.



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Recipient

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