

# The Hoover Historical Log

Oak Hill Cemetery's Jim Langley to present talk at the Nov. 17<sup>th</sup> General Meeting at the Hoover Public Library — see p. 3!



Vol. 27 No. 2

## HHS Schedule ...

- November 10 BOARD Meeting Officers of the Hoover Historical Society meet in the Historic Bluff Park School at 10 AM
- November 17 GENERAL Meeting The public and HHS members meet at the Hoover Public Library at 1 PM for refreshments, 1:30 meeting
- January 19, 2016 GENERAL Meeting *Premocar: Made in Birmingham* with J.D. Weeks, local author
- March 15, 2016 GENERAL Meeting *Wings of Opportunity: The Wright Brothers in Montgomery* with Dr. Julie H. Williams

**HHS Patron, Dr. Leah Rawls Atkins with Dr. Wayne Flynt at AHA, Mobile, AL.**

## Historian honored

On October 8, 2015, the Greater Birmingham Auburn Club held its Distinguished Awards Dinner at the Hyatt Regency-Wynfrey Hotel. Dr. Leah Rawls Atkins, a member of the HHS, received the Distinguished Service Award. The first female recipient of a doctorate in history from Auburn University, Leah has given back to the school in numerous ways. She taught in the Auburn History Department until she accepted a position at Samford University. Returning to Auburn in 1985, she became the founding director of the University's Carolyn Marshall Draughon Center for the Arts & Humanities, retiring in 1995. (Continued p. 3)

**MOSS ROCK FESTIVAL**  
NOVEMBER 7-8, 2015



Visit with the HHS this weekend at the Moss Rock Festival from 10 AM-5 PM on Saturday or 10 AM till 4 PM on Sunday.



## Notes from our president...

This is my favorite time of the year. We all can enjoy the cool weather and beautiful colors of the Fall leaves.

Our volunteers have been busy. Thanks to Alec and Sharon Jones who visited the Archives and made adjustments to stabilize the shelves that hold our large scrapbooks. Betty Bagby was honored with our first HHS Hero award in recognition of her past and current contributions as a Charter Member, Officer and Volunteer. She volunteers almost weekly in the Archives.

For the second year in a row, the Folklore Center was open during the Bluff Park Art Show. Volunteers included Bob Kolar, Debbie Burtnett, Jean Butterworth, Doug Harkness, Inez McCollum, Brenda Pritchett, and Carolyn Kolar. A steady drizzle kept the crowds away but a few small groups showed up and some children enjoyed the scavenger hunt. John Tingley paid a long visit (and liked what he saw at the cabin — as a former owner of Homestead Hollow, John has knowledge of pioneer ways!)

We have a great opportunity to

volunteer and spread the word about our organization at the annual Moss Rock Festival on November 7 and 8th. Please donate a couple of hours at our booth!

Thanks to Pam Thompson for her efforts in gaining sponsors for our Hoover History book Vol. II. An initial group of 78 businesses are being contacted.

The family of Barbara Clark has made a memorial donation to our society in her name.

Just as our historical markers were refurbished, one was

Above, left to right: Crimson Tide Broadcaster Chris Stewart accepts a *History of Hoover* book from Carolyn Kolar at a Chamber of Commerce luncheon; Betty Bagby accepts the first HHS Heroes award for volunteerism at the September meeting; and Charlotte Patton assists Carolyn Kolar at the Library office at the Historic Bluff Park School, home of our Archives.

destroyed at the Overseer's house. It was car vs. marker and the car won!

Jerry York presented a great program in September and said he was very impressed with our newsletter. He took a copy to show his civic groups in Oxford, AL. We are glad Debbie's hard work has been recognized.

We are pleased that new members have joined us over the summer and since our last meeting. Please welcome Linda Barwick, Carol McIntyre, Peter Northcott, Lori Salter-Schommer, David Veasey, and Wayne Wood.

We continue to conduct interviews and copy newspaper articles to assist Pamela King in writing our new book. Carolyn and Pam recently interviewed former Mayor John Hodnett. Contact any board member if you can assist us in this project. *Carolyn*

# Tour Oak Hill Cemetery with Jim Langley



Listen to fascinating stories of bygone days of Birmingham's history with Jim Langley at the Hoover Historical Society's next meeting November 17<sup>th</sup> at the Hoover Public Library! His talk will focus on the Oak Hill Cemetery, the city's first, where governors, generals, a Titanic survivor, an Austrian nobleman and early Birmingham movers and shakers including steel magnate Colonel James Withers Sloss, infamous Madam Louise Wooster, Civil Rights leader Fred Shuttlesworth, and Robert Henley, Birmingham's first mayor, are buried.

Langley, author of Delmont's *Slang Blade*, *Tales of Oak Hill*, and *Good Hearted Country Women*, is an artist and writer whose work has been featured in regional newspapers and magazines; e.g., *The Birmingham News* and the *Tombigbee Magazine*. Langley's *Tales of Oak Hill* is comprised of 60+ stories of the famous and infamous of Birmingham, and is designed as a guidebook through the cemetery's history.

*A graduate of Jacksonville State University, Langley also holds a Master's degree in Public Administration from the University of Oklahoma. Originally from Vernon in Lamar County, Alabama, he is married to Ann Whitehead of Nashville.*



## ATKINS

### Continued from Page 1

In 1992, the centennial of the admission of women to Auburn, she wrote a history of women at Auburn. She served on the Board of Directors of the Auburn Alumni Association and received their Lifetime Achievement Award in 2005. Because of her records as a national and international water skiing champion and her induction as the first woman into the Alabama Sports Hall of Fame, Auburn named the University's outstanding woman's athletic award for Leah. Leah was married to George Atkins, an Auburn and NFL football player and an Auburn coach under Coach "Shug" Jordan.

In addition to her publications on Auburn and numerous articles, Leah wrote *The Valley and the Hills: An Illustrated History of Birmingham & Jefferson County*, the centennial history of the Alabama Power Company, and coauthored

*Alabama: A History of a Deep South State.*

## Folklore Center teaches history and skills

Experiencing The Folklore Center is richer for the docents who teach history and demonstrate skills. Both Mary Ann Smith and Inez McCollum are long-time instructors for the Hoover Historical Society's Folklore Center.

Mary Ann Smith is a fiber artist who focuses on split oak baskets. She and her husband were resident basket makers at Tannehill Historical State Park for 15 years when they met the late Jack Crouch, a park commissioner. Jack described the relocation of the log cabin and invited Mary Ann to participate in demonstrations there. Since then, she has demonstrated both basket making and spinning fibers for the groups that visit the cabin. "One of my great passions is to pass down the skills that our ancestors needed to survive in a world very different than we live in," stated Mary Ann. "Most of my time now is spent demonstrating and teaching these skills through the southeast area at John C. Campbell Folk School, Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts, the Alabama Folk School, and locally in private lessons." You'll find Mary Ann on the front porch of the Stinson Ole Place!

Inside the cabin stands Inez McCollum, ready to explain to children how to feed a large family during the winter. Inez said, "My grandmother raised a family of nine. There was plenty of food in the summer [but] she had to plan for feeding that family during the winter." Inez's talk features the items pictured here:



Top right: **Homemade soap:** The children usually guess that this is cheese, butter, or bread. She would save ashes from the fireplace and wood burning stove and put them in an ash hopper. When ready to make the soap, she would pour water over the ashes, save and put in a big black pot, add bits of pork and bring to a boil until mushy. Put this in a mold and let cool. Then cut into chunks. This is an all purpose soap, no perfumed odor. One would shave bits off to use in bath water, or put in the same black pot with hot water and put clothes in to launder. After finished with the laundry, the soapy water was poured on the floor and scrubbed with a corn husk broom. Monday was usually wash day and floors cleaned afterward.

(Clockwise, right) **Hominy:** My grandmother would remove corn (upper left) from the cob. **Continued on page 4...**

FOLKLORE CENTER

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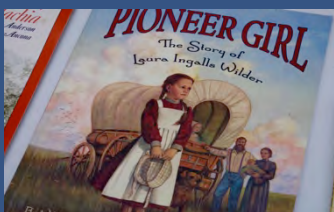
Inez McCollum greeted visitors to the Stinson cabin during the recent Bluff Park Art Show.



Pam Kennebrew greets children with Dancin' Dan as Storyteller Brenda Pritchett plays the dulcimer, singing *Oh Susannah!*



Peggy Patton teaches students how to step off an acre and recommends pioneer literature.



She would have saved ashes from the fireplace or wood burning stove, place in an ash hopper and pour water over the ashes, saving the water. The ash water (lye) was put in the big black pot. Corn kernels were placed in the hot water; boiled and boiled until the outer coating came off. The inside was hominy that could be cooked in the winter time.

**Dried peas:** There were plenty of peas in the garden during the summer. For winter, she would save the peas that had dried. She would soak them in water (re hydrate) then boil until cooked. This would make a pot of peas for her family's dinner.

**Dried Apples:** She would slice apple or peaches, place them on a sheet or other cloth (even a frame similar to that pictured. This would be put on a bush, or even top of the house in the hot sun to dry (dehydrate). When ready to cook, she would soak the fruit (re hydrate) and boil until soft. This would be apple sauce (or peaches). She would make fried pies or serve the fruit for breakfast. She would sometimes put it on top of gingerbread.

**Popcorn:** The popcorn has been removed from the cob. The children recognize that it is corn; but don't know what kind (they see the bag go into the microwave). This is put in a container and held over heat in the fireplace or wood burning stove. The kernels get hot and expand, then pop.

**Not pictured: Pumpkin:** Fruit or vegetable? Fruit! The inside is removed and boiled. Makes a dish for dinner, or can make pumpkin pies. Some of the children volunteer that the seeds can be roasted for a snack food

**Sweet Potatoes:** Dig a hole in the ground and line with pine needles. Place sweet potatoes (can use turnips or other root vegetables) on the pine needles top with other pine needles and dirt. Remove for a meal as needed. Sweet potatoes can be baked or used in pie.

(Right): Cheryl Patton teaches students about Washday Monday.

Thanks to many crafts persons, our visiting students and parents from public, private, and parochial schools learn about life in the 1840s. For more info, contact [gdhark@bellsouth.net](mailto:gdhark@bellsouth.net).





## Shop for the holidays using Amazon Smile and support the HHS!

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[Recipient]

Published five times annually by  
the Hoover Historical Society, PO  
Box 360233, Hoover, AL, 35236.

HHS is a 501 C (3) organization.

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