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Hoover Historical Log

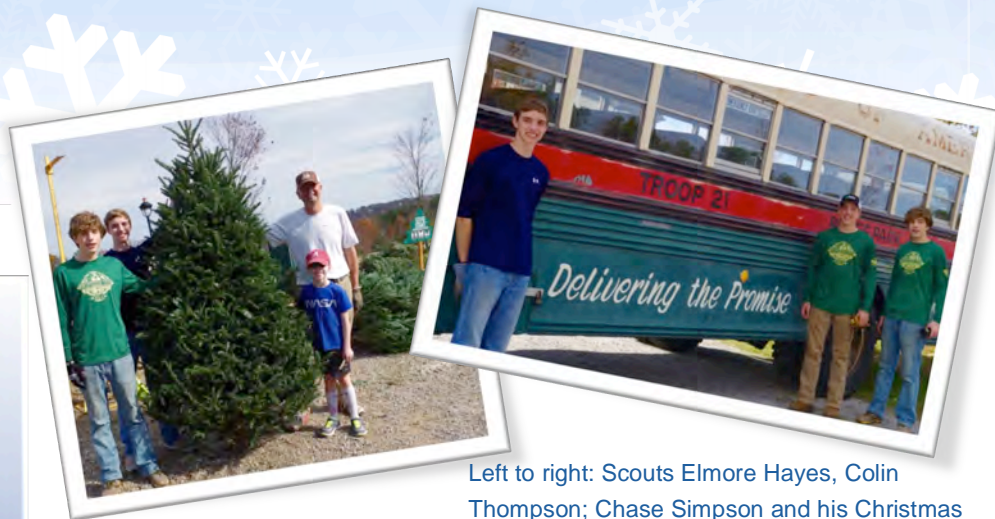
The Official Newsletter of the Hoover Historical Society, Hoover, Alabama

Premocar featured in January program with J.D. Weeks

At the turn of the twentieth century, there was a great deal of invention and innovation around the world. Automobiles, one of those innovations, has a history right here in Alabama.

Today, automobiles and auto parts made in Alabama include such brands as Hyundai, Honda, Toyota, and Mercedes-Benz. But, Alabama used to be the home of Great Southern, Preston, and Keller Motors, makers of the Great Southern Automobile, the Keller Car, and the Premocar, the subject of our General Meeting on January 19th.

Continued on page 2.



Left to right: Scouts Elmore Hayes, Colin Thompson; Chase Simpson and his Christmas tree, and leader Ian Thompson.

Bluff Park's Boy Scout Troop 21 will celebrate 100 years in 2018!

One of our longstanding neighbors close to the Hoover Historical Society is Boy Scout Troop 21. Their scout hut is on Savoy Street, within walking distance of us.

Local author Ian Thompson, whose son, Colin, a member of Troop 21 who recently attained Eagle Scout status, approached us to help with some research regarding the history of the Troop. We were delighted to help as best we could. See some information and thoughts from Ian on page 4.



J.D. Weeks

Save the Date!

Board Meeting

January 12, 2016
10:00 AM at the
Archives/Library
office at Bluff Park
Elementary

General Meeting

January 19, 2016
Refreshments
served at 1:00 PM;
Speaker, 1:30 PM



Premocar, continued from page 1

J.D. Weeks will present the program on "Premocar: Made in Birmingham," with illustrations of the history of Preston Motors and its innovation, the Premocar. The cars were built between 1919-1923 and were made by hand using kiln-dried wood. The car was manufactured at two plants in Birmingham, and President Warren G. Harding visited Birmingham, chauffeured in a custom ivory-colored Premocar Touring Car. Only 300 were built, and only three are extant, all owned by Alabamians.

Come join J. D. Weeks and the HHS on January 19th at 1:30 PM for the program. Come early for refreshments at 1 PM. The program is free!

January's General Meeting Topic: Premocar with J.D. Weeks

J.D. Weeks has lived in the Birmingham, Alabama area for over 78 years. He retired over twenty years ago from Public Health Administration. He has a BA in Urban Affairs and an MPA in Public Administration from UAB; and an ABD in the Public Administration Doctoral Program at the University of Alabama. He is a member of Pi Sigma Alpha, the National Political Science Honor Society, Gamma Omicron Chapter at the University of Alabama.

He is Chief of the Shawano Band of the Appalachian Shawnee Tribe. The Shawano Band includes Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi, Florida, and the southern part of Tennessee.

His love of history and genealogy has resulted in numerous publications. An avid postcard collector, he has over 60,000 in his personal collection. He also collects old books, maps, and any type of memorabilia that you can imagine. He belongs to many historical and genealogical societies, and numerous other organizations. He currently has over 35,000 names in his genealogy database.



President Harding in the Premocar in 1921



Recent donations to the Archives include a typewriter, a pipe organ, and assorted books and memorabilia from Berry High School.

A Message from our President...

Dear Members:

I hope everyone enjoyed a wonderful Christmas with friends and family. We have much to be thankful for as we start a new year at HHS.

We thank the Mayor and our City Council for their \$5,000 contribution to our Society for 2016-17. The city is also replacing the damaged historic marker at the Overseer's House.

Our future History Book II was featured in the December issue of the *Hoover Sun*. We will publish the book next year in time for Hoover's 50th Anniversary.

Part of our mission as a historical society is "To stimulate the preservation and protection of objects of historical interest and to make it available for research." We have honored this as our archive has been busy with visitors and requests for information in 2015. We recently helped patrons with information on the Patton family, the Troop 21 Boy Scout Troop, homeowners in the Park Avenue Historic District, and a genealogy search.

We have also received several donations to the Archives. A lovely pipe organ was donated by Joan Davis and now resides at The Folklore Center. Glenn Murer donated a section of a newspaper commemorating Hoover's 10th Anniversary. In that paper, Bill Hoover discussed his father's dream for the Green Valley Country Club and the development of Hoover. Another page featured William Hoover's plans for a regional shopping center that never materialized.

Rhonna and Jonathan Phillips donated items related to Berry High School and Dr. Billy Phillips, owner of the Hoover Beauty Center and Chiropractic South. A photo from Green Valley Elementary School was featured on our Facebook Page and reached over 1200 people! We continue to generate interest in our organization thanks to Facebook.

We welcome CB&S Bank as our newest Corporate Sponsor and our first donor at the Silver Level toward the publication of our book. We appreciate Paul & Vickie Huckleba's interest in the HHS and hope other businesses will join him. Be sure to thank him when you see him! More on the levels of sponsorship can be found in this edition.

Visit us on January 19th for our General Meeting with the program on Birmingham's Premocar by J.D. Weeks. I guarantee you will learn something new! **Happy New Year!** Carolyn Kolar

BSA Troop 21 Scouts prepare for the future

By Ian Thompson

“I need your help...” continued

“I am planning on writing the history of Boy Scout Troop 21. What form this project takes is not clear at this point, but it will be a combination of the written word and photographs. I assume it will be some form of extended booklet, but we will see.

The First Christian Church, located at that time on Morris Avenue, chartered Troop 21 in 1918 in downtown Birmingham. The Troop remained downtown until 1945 when it moved to Bluff Park and was re-chartered by the Bluff Park United Methodist Church, which continues to do so. Meetings began at the current Scout Hut in 1959, having previously been hosted in private homes, the early Bluff Park Lions Club building, and at the church.

Dan Strunk is the long-time Scoutmaster, having held the position for over 20 years. The Troop has seen close to 200 boys attain the rank of Eagle Scout and remains a vibrant and active Troop conducting weekly meetings, going on monthly trips, and taking at least one High Venture trip a year (to either Philmont Scout Ranch, Sea Base or Northern Tier.)

Amongst other things, I am a golf writer— having written three books and now working on my fourth. One of the books was about Green Valley/Hoover Country Club.

I am beginning the research process now regarding the history of Troop 21 and **this is where you can possibly help me.** Particularly if you have ties to the troop that go back many years or know someone who does, you can help me with images, stories, contacts, etc. Feel free to email me (ian@thompsonsteesoff.com) or call me (532-3457) with your suggestions.”

Editor's Note: Ian Thompson presented a program to the HHS several years ago. He donated a copy of his book, *From Green Valley to Hoover Country Club (Fifty Years of Memories)*, to our Library/Archives.



Some of the members and leaders of Boy Scout Troop 21 prepare for their High Venture Trip to Philmont Scout Ranch in New Mexico in the summer of 2016.

Fundraiser

Scouts coordinate tree sales in Hoover

Christmas tree sales are the main fundraiser for the BSA Troop 21 of Bluff Park, Hoover.

In a well-choreographed series of events, 600 North Carolina white Fraser Firs were delivered via 18-wheeler and set up during Thanksgiving week at two locations— Bluff Park United Methodist Church and at Ross Bridge. Scout Troop Committee Member Ian Thompson said about Ross Bridge, “This is an optimum location. We very much enjoy selling trees here.” The scouts and leaders work four shifts minimum and close when all or most of the trees are sold. Any leftover trees are moved to the Bluff Park location.

Interestingly, the Scouts spent time in January at a lodge next to where the trees were harvested in the mountains of North Carolina, where they also enjoyed snow skiing and inspected the trees they subsequently sold during the holidays.

While this is the fourth year of tree sales at Ross Bridge, it is 50+ years and counting for sales at Bluff Park United Methodist Church. Many local residents support the troop year after year by buying their Christmas trees from the troop.

Funds raised are used to subsidize trips and equipment for Troop 21, which remains an active, involved group of Scouts.

AHA hosts pilgrimage to Old Cahawba

By Marlene Rikard, Ph.D

The Alabama Historical Association's Fall Pilgrimage was to Old Cahawba in October. (The HHS is a member of the AHA.)

Selected in 1819 as Alabama's first state capital, Cahaba was situated at the confluence of the Alabama and Cahaba Rivers. Though the town lost the capital in 1826 when the legislature relocated to Tuscaloosa, it continued to flourish for many years. It was abandoned after the Civil War and a flood in 1865. Today, it is a fascinating—and mysterious—archaeological site operated by the Alabama Historical Commission.

Participants in the AHA pilgrimage met in the quaint and lovely St. Luke's Episcopal Church to hear the story of Cahawba from Linda Derry, the site director. Author and naturalist Bill Finch explained the Black Belt landscape and the reasons for the decline of agriculture in the region.

After a picnic lunch on the banks of the Alabama River, we toured Cahawba's "Negro Burial Ground" hosted by the Black Belt African American Historical and Genealogical Society. Created in 1819 as a slave cemetery, its use continued after emancipation. A University of West Alabama professor led the walking tour of the "New" Cemetery which showcases the work of two Cahawba stone carvers. Other features on our tours were the mysterious Crocheron columns and the Perine artesian well, one of many in the area.

If you want to visit Old Cahawba, visit the Web site at www.cahawba.org. The visitors' center will provide information, maps, and tours to enhance your visit.



Confluence of Cahaba and Alabama Rivers at Old Cahawba

Plans are set for the Annual Meeting of AHA 2016

The Alabama Historical Association, founded in 1947, is the largest statewide group devoted to Alabama history. The AHA is a volunteer-led, membership-supported organization which provides its members with a quarterly, scholarly journal, *The Alabama Review*, and a semi-annual newsletter. Membership is a diverse group joined by a common interest in Alabama history—local historians, teachers, genealogists, archivists, librarians, engineers, accountants, business people, and college professors.

In addition to the fall pilgrimage, the AHA sponsors an annual meeting with papers on Alabama history, book sales, and tours of the host area. The 2016 annual meeting will be in Montgomery, April 14-16. Attendees will explore historic downtown Montgomery and learn about transformation and revitalization of our Capital City.

Information on membership, historic markers, and upcoming events can be found at <http://www.alabamahistory.net/home.html>.

Editor's Note: We keep both AHA publications in the HHS Archive.

An invitation to help publish the History Book II

The Hoover Historical Society has extended an opportunity to local businesses to help defray costs of publishing our History Book project for the 2017 anniversary of the City of Hoover. Paul and Vickie Huckleba were delighted to sponsor, stating "it was a good fit" as they live and work in the community.

President W. Paul Huckleba of CB & S Bank and his wife, Vickie, answered with their support for both the Society and the book with a Corporate Membership and as a Sponsor for the book. The History Book II will include acknowledgement of supportive companies and individuals who help offset the cost of publication. Donors will be designated as Sponsors at several levels: Platinum (\$1,000); Gold (\$750); Silver (\$500) and Bronze (\$250). The Hoover Historical Society is a 501 C (3) organization—and all donations may be tax deductible.

Other ways to support this project are through interviews, donations of artifacts, photos, and other materials for use in this effort. We hope you will participate in this worthy endeavor! And, please remember when you shop online to start at **smile.amazon.com** to support the HHS!



Vickie and Paul Huckleba with
Financial Advisor Richard
McGimsey and Carolyn Kolar,
President.



P.O. Box 360233
571 Park Avenue 35226
Hoover, Alabama 35236-0233

[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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Deborah Burtnett, Editor
debbie.burtnett@gmail.com