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# Hoover Historical Log

The Official Newsletter of the Hoover Historical Society, Hoover, Alabama 35226



Jim and Ann Langley

*You are invited to hear*

## Jimmy Langley: Writer, Artist, Storyteller

Historical Society members and the public are invited to hear Jim Langley on March 21<sup>st</sup> at the Hoover Public Library as he shares Southern Idioms with his audience—a very entertaining event!!

“The more people I meet, the more I like my dog.” Everyone has a favorite Southern Saying in his or her back pocket to pull out and use at the proper occasion. “Smiling like a dead pig in sunshine”—what does that mean? Let “Delmont” give you the answers!

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## Spring Trip!

Jim Langley, our March speaker, has also organized the HHS Annual Spring Trip! The tour is offered to our membership and the general public for \$35 per person with transportation provided by the City of Hoover.

Highlights include visiting the grave of George Washington's bodyguard; the Aliceville POW Museum; and the Face in the Window at Carrollton's Courthouse. Lunch is at the Cypress Inn on the river in Tuscaloosa (not included in the \$35 fee; order from menu.)  
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## Save the Date!

### General Mtg.

**March 21, 2017**

Hoover Public Library,  
1 PM for  
refreshments;  
program at 1:30 PM

### Spring Trip

**April 6, 2017**

City of Hoover  
transports us to  
Aliceville from 8:30  
AM till 4:30 PM

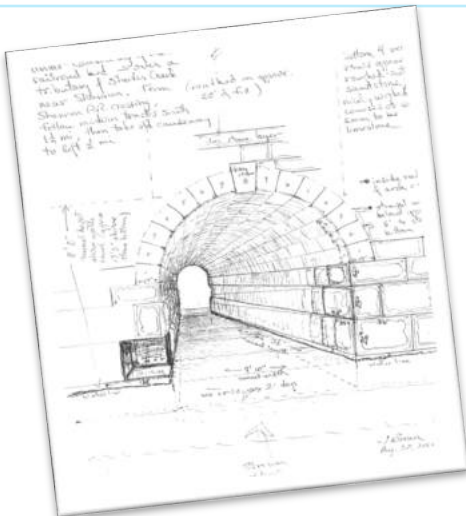
### Membership Tea

**May 21, 2017**

Join us at the Hoover-  
Randle home on Tyler  
Road from 2-4 PM.  
Catch the shuttle!



## Civil War-era bridge under study



Dr. Jim Brown marveled over the precise measurements and layered rocks at the viaduct, a tributary of Shades Creek near Shannon. The missing stones revealed the meticulous workmanship, "a thing of beauty," he said. Sketch 2001 by Jim Brown.



When Dr. Jim Brown moved to Birmingham in 1971, an old-timer near Shannon asked him if he knew of the old Civil War-era viaduct, made of hand-cut stone, near there. "I didn't, so he walked me out there—what a neat thing...way out in the piney woods."

Then, in 2000, Dr. Brown told Michelle Blackwood of the Friends of Shades Creek about the "structure possibly on the land that Homewood was interested in." Blackwood put together a group for Dr. Brown to guide out there, hiking from approximately a quarter-mile from the railroad tracks. They found a creek, but no bridge until they "set off down the modern tracks. A mile and a quarter down the tracks, there was a level, large-radius curved path leading off—obviously an old RR grade where steel had long been pulled—and another quarter mile down it, I found the viaduct...I rounded up the group and they were as wowed by the structure as I was."

Then, the City of Hoover actually bought the property. Michelle Blackwood and Henry Hughes made a presentation to the city council addressing the idea of preserving it. Daniel Corporation agreed to dedicate a two-acre preserve/park with the viaduct at its center. The Daniel Corporation queried Dr. Brown "as to whether or not any Native American names were still connected to the property," but the company finally settled on Ross Bridge. For the first dozen years, the welcome center used a railroad theme relating to the viaduct itself.

Still, some mystery surrounds the dating of the bridge. Dr. Jack Bergstresser, Archaeological Interpreter at Old Cahawba Archaeological Park, believes that the bridge dates to 1871 during the "explosive first year of building Birmingham itself" and its new railroad arteries. Others support the Civil War-era title, which Marjorie White of the Birmingham Historical Society is investigating. She arranged for Richard Anderson and Jet Lowe of the National Park Service's Historical Engineering Record (HAER) to visit the viaduct on February 20. Anderson, analyst of structure and design for historical buildings and bridges, along with Lowe as photographer, spent the day at the viaduct with Jim Brown as "boatman." Local landscape architect, Birgit Kibelka, who works with the BHS, was also present. The photos and documentation will be recorded in the Library of Congress collection. The HHS will share more information as it becomes available.





## Friends of Hoover + Open House = Success!

Dear Members:

In January, the Friends of Hoover met at Capers and heard Mayor Brocato give his State of the City speech. There was a record turnout and many joined us afterward for our Open House that included tours of our Archive and the Folklore Center. People were impressed with the newly arranged and decorated archives and enjoyed learning about activities at the Folklore Center. We gained five new members as a result of the open house. Thanks to all the volunteers who helped make this a successful day!

Charles Hickman has completed a history of the Hoover School System. It is the result of many hours of interviews and research. We are working with him to insert photos and prepare the manuscript for publishing.

Archives Chairman Tom Bailey, Arnold Singer, and I visited two businesses and the McWane Science Center to examine professional display panels. We witnessed the manufacturing process at Expo Displays in Trussville. We are purchasing panels that allow for easy setup and flexibility in our displays.

Twelve Hoover public safety officers were recognized at the February Chamber of Commerce Luncheon. HHS presented each

officer with a copy of our Hoover history book. Congratulations to Paul Huckeba of CB&S bank (one of our corporate sponsors) who was elected to serve on the Board of Directors of the Hoover Chamber of Commerce for 2017-2019.

The Society will elect new officers for 2017-2018 at our March meeting. Nominees are:

**President-Arnold Singer,**  
**1<sup>st</sup> VP, Programs-Anita Dillon,**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> VP, Membership-Carolyn Kolar,**  
**Treasurer-Jim Lyons,**  
**Assist. Treasurer-Inez McCollum,**  
**Recording Secretary-Pam Thompson and**  
**Corresponding Secretary-Jean Butterworth.**

Jim Langley has organized a wonderful Spring Trip for us on April 6th. Members and friends are invited. Payment must be received by our March 21st meeting. See trip details elsewhere in the newsletter.

We are working with Erin Colbaugh to develop plans for Hoover's 50th Anniversary. We were asked to provide a list of *Top 10 Things That Have Impacted the Growth and Development of Hoover*. Tom Bailey compiled the list. The plan is to have Mayor Brocato include this information as he speaks to various groups throughout the year. We were also asked for a list of *50 Things You Didn't Know About Hoover*.

We hope to see you at the General Meeting on March 21<sup>st</sup>!

*Carolyn Kolar*

## Auburn to host Alabama Historical Association

*"Sweet Auburn, the loveliest village of the plain"*\* is hosting the members of the Alabama Historical Association for its 70<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting, April 20-22, 2017.

Opening Thursday afternoon, the meeting begins with a tour, book fair, and reception. Assistant Curator Patrick Thompson, son of HHS member Pam Thompson, who noted "the azaleas should be at their peak" for the 3:00-4:00 PM tour, will host a special guided tour of the Davis Arboretum.

Friday's schedule includes the General Session for business and concurrent academic sessions of research and historians' publications— with afternoon tours and an evening banquet. The final day features the last General Session, more concurrent academic sessions, and a Presidential Address by Dr. Robert Jakeman.

For more information, contact one of the following AHA officers: Valerie Burnes, Treasurer at [vburnes@uwa.edu](mailto:vburnes@uwa.edu); Mark Wilson, Secretary at [mwilson@auburn.edu](mailto:mwilson@auburn.edu); or Maiben Beard, Membership Secretary [maiben@auburn.edu](mailto:maiben@auburn.edu).

\*from Oliver Goldsmith's poem

### Spring Trip!

*Continued from p. 1*

After lunch, the tour concludes with the Haunted Drish House and the Tuscaloosa Museum of Art. Travelers will return to Hoover about 4:30 PM.

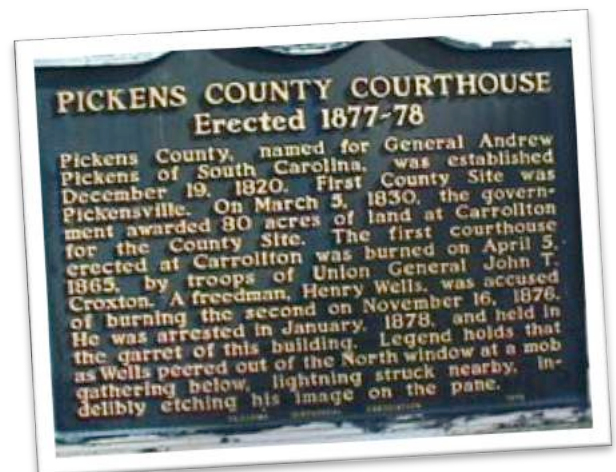
**\*Reservations (required!)** are first come, first served until March 14. Call or e-mail Jim Langley at 980-1827 or e-mail him at [JL091649@yahoo.com](mailto:JL091649@yahoo.com). Checks may be made out to the Hoover Historical Society or cash is acceptable. Mail to Jim Langley, 3821 James Hill Circle, Hoover, AL 35226. Include your name, e-mail address and phone number. Carolyn Kolar will also accept checks at the Board Meeting March 14 or March 21 at the General Meeting. A brochure and background information is available via e-mail.



Pinhole photograph of azaleas by Eddie Erdmann, Turnerville, AL. Used with permission.

For more information on the Davis Arboretum tour,

<http://thomppg.wix.com/auburnazalea>  
[thomppg@auburn.edu](mailto:thomppg@auburn.edu)  
 (334) 332.0283



## Vadie Honea scholarship offered to local seniors

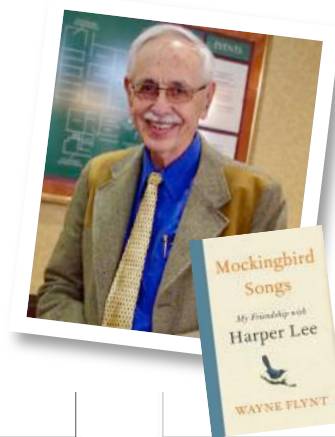
Our Society's scholarship committee has notified seniors at both of Hoover's high schools of the opportunity to earn the Vadie Honea Scholarship Award of \$1,000 with their application and essay. The essays will be read after March 23 and a winner announced from each school in April. Awards are made in May.

The scholarship award helps the Hoover Historical Society fulfill its mission of increasing knowledge of history and cooperating with local historical organizations.

Criteria for selection include academic performance; community service, and a typed, double-spaced 1,000-word essay using topic 'prompts' from the HHS. In celebration of Alabama's 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary (from 2017-19), entrants are to respond to one of these prompts (devised by Dr. Marlene Rikard):

- Edwin C. Bridges' new book, *Alabama: The Making of an American State* (2016: The University of Alabama Press), was written to celebrate the bicentennial of our state. The book is divided into several "eras." Select an era and write about one episode in that era or a person featured in the chapter.
- Select and write about a historic site in Alabama that has been preserved and discuss why it is important to the state's history. Examples: Sloss Furnaces, Tannehill, Joe Wheeler home, Kelly Ingram Park, 16th St. Baptist Church, Moundville, State Capitol, White House of the Confederacy, Ft. Toulouse, Old Cahawba, Ft. Morgan, Horseshoe Bend, Alabama Theatre, Ross Bridge culvert, etc.

**Qualified seniors may contact the guidance counselors at their school for the application form. (Ms. Cindy Bond at HHS and Mr. Tracy Prater at SPHS.) Carlo and Dianne Joseph (HHS patrons) and Henry King of King Acura, sponsor the scholarships.**



### *Mockingbird Songs* debuts in Alabama

Wayne Flynt, noted Alabama historian, has a new book coming out this spring based on his longtime friendship with Harper Lee. *Mockingbird Songs—My Friendship with Harper Lee* will be launched at the Alabama Booksmith in May. More details could be obtained from Jake Reiss at AB in Homewood. (If you are not familiar with the Booksmith, it is a fascinating bookstore. The history of the store is on the Website [alabamabooksmith.com](http://alabamabooksmith.com).)

Dr. Flynt invites readers who are interested in Alabama history to "drop by the Alabama Booksmith (on May 2<sup>nd</sup>) for Jake Reiss's extravaganza. He somehow managed to persuade HarperCollins to launch *Mockingbird Songs* in Alabama on the first day of release. It begins at 4:00 PM and lasts until we can't stand it any longer and return to Auburn so I can catch a redeye special for NYC for the national launch on May 4." Also, Dr. Flynt, a past president of the Alabama Historical Association, will discuss "Sweet Auburn" at the AHA annual meeting general session on Friday, April 21. Check out the AHA at [www.alabamahistory.net](http://www.alabamahistory.net).

### LANGLEY

*Continued from p. 1*

Jimmy Langley is a storyteller, artist and published author of three books. His interest in collecting Southern Sayings stated about seven years ago. His book, *Delmont's Slang Blade*, contains some of his collection. His work has been covered and published by regional newspapers and magazines including John Archibald of *The Birmingham News* and the *Tombigbee Magazine*.





## HOOVER HISTORICAL SOCIETY

### Membership Form

Make checks payable to **Hoover Historical Society**  
**P.O. Box 360233 Hoover, Alabama 35236-0233**  
 Archives /Office: 205-822-9392

#### Types of Membership

Individual	\$10
Couple	\$20
Sustaining	\$50
Patron	\$100
Corporate	\$150

NAME : \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: (Home) \_\_\_\_\_ (Work) \_\_\_\_\_ (Cell) \_\_\_\_\_

**Interests:** Publicity \_\_\_\_ Archives \_\_\_\_ Speakers' Bureau \_\_\_\_ Historical Research \_\_\_\_ Newsletter \_\_\_\_

**Other interests/skills:** \_\_\_\_\_

**SPEAKER/PROGRAM SUGGESTIONS:** \_\_\_\_\_



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[Recipient]

