

# The Hoover Historical Log

The Official Newsletter of the Hoover Historical Society

Hoover, Alabama 35226



## The First Thanksgiving



## Save the Date!

- November 4 & 5 Moss Ross Festival; to volunteer, contact Arnold Singer
- November 14 Board Meeting at special time: 1 PM at the old BPES
- November 21st Hear Chief Derzis speak to the group at 1:30 PM; refreshments at 1 PM
- January 16, 2018 HHS General Meeting with former Mayor Frank Skinner

## Meet Chief Derzis...

November's General Meeting features Hoover's Chief of Police, Nicholas C. Derzis. Born in Berlin, Germany, he lived all around the world as the son of a Colonel in the US Army. Before moving to Alabama in 1977, he resided in Arlington, Virginia for nine years.

Chief Derzis began his career as an officer with the HPD in 1979 and has risen steadily through the ranks. He became Assistant Chief in 1999 and Chief in 2005. Throughout his service, he has been responsible for many initiatives within the department such as the Special Response Team, School Resource Officer program, and the development and construction of a new police operations center and jail facility.

He earned a Bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice from Samford and is a graduate of the FBI National Academy. His talk will cover subjects ranging from the qualifications of his officers to crime in Hoover.



## You can't miss the 12<sup>th</sup> Moss Rock Festival...

Nature intersects with art and design throughout the festival. Come enjoy live music, kids art workshops, outdoor activities, food, free tastings, and lots of ART!

\$7 Adults, kids ages 15 & under are free; park at the Hoover Met and take the free shuttle



## A message from our president...

Dear Members:

Learning history can generate emotions ranging from horror to laughter. Hoover's history tends to generate smiles and wonder.

Tom Bailey, Chair of the Hoover Historical Society archives committee, is a retired Managing Editor of the Birmingham News and a book publisher. Tom has researched and generated *50 Fun Facts about Hoover*. The 2,542 words can be

found on a 20" x 30" poster display that was created for Hoover's 50th anniversary celebration.

Debbie Burtnett, Editor of our newsletter and Facebook page Administrator, recognized that Hoover certainly has more than 50 Fun Facts as her postings reflect. Check out our Facebook page several times a month for Fun Facts about Hoover. Our newsletters are posted on our website:

[hooverhistoricalsociety.org](http://hooverhistoricalsociety.org).

Most people do not realize that the Hoover Historical Society owns a log cabin built in the early 1840s by the Stinson family. It was disassembled in Shelby County (photo, above left) and moved to Hoover in 1997. Last school year, almost 600 people, mostly elementary school students, visited the Folklore Center that features the Stinson Ole Place.

If you are interested in a tour of the Folklore Center please e-

Dedication photo of TFC November 9, 1997: Mayor Frank Skinner; Superintendent Jack Farr; Jack Crouch, Jessie Bean; Tommy Daniels; Charles Shelby; and Reverend Mac Stinson Jr.

mail me at [arnoldasinger@gmail.com](mailto:arnoldasinger@gmail.com). When I receive enough responses, I will contact everyone to schedule one or two tours.

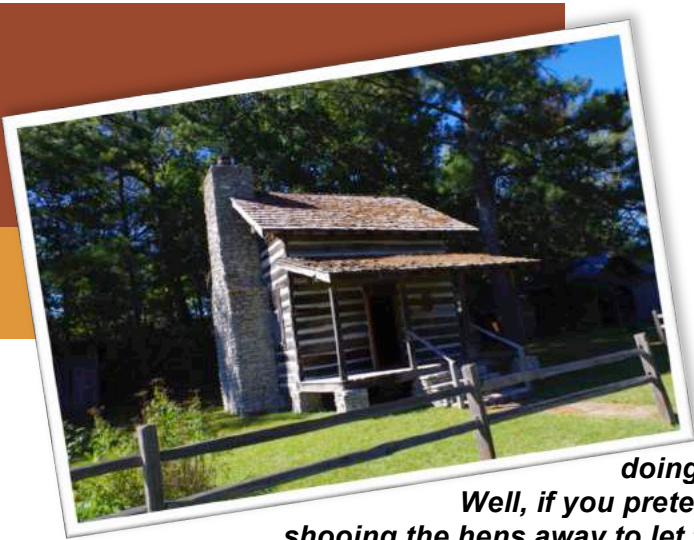
The HHS is celebrating Hoover's 50th anniversary with speakers who are active in making Hoover a safe and

vibrant city. Chief Nick Derzis (above, right) is our guest speaker on November 21<sup>st</sup> at the Hoover Public Library. Refreshments served at 1 PM with the program at 1:30 PM. Please join us. Happy Thanksgiving!

*Arnold Singer*



Storyteller Pam Kennebrew greets visitors at The Folklore Center.



## The Folklore Center Celebrates Its 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary!!

*By Peggy Patton*

***Howdy! Come In and sit a spell!  
Have you wondered what these buildings are doing here?***

***Well, if you pretend and look out the window, you might see Marie shooing the hens away to let the doodles peck the corn grains she shelled. Pam is carrying an armload of stove wood from the stack. Inez is over poking the fire and cutting apples for a pie. Tonight, we are going to have a platter of ham that Dad smoked. You probably have questions! Who would have lived here? How would they have gotten here?***

***This cabin is typical of a fine home on a small farm in the early 19th century in rural Alabama. How did it get here on a 21<sup>st</sup> Century school campus?***

The Hoover Historical Society Folklore Center is located on the campus of the Bluff Park Elementary School in Hoover, Alabama.

The Folklore Center buildings and grounds were dedicated on November 9, 1997, to help children better understand a 19<sup>th</sup> century small farm and family participation.

The setting is primarily early Alabama in the 1840s. Period furnishings and equipment are used wherever possible. The focal point of the Folklore Center is the two-story house of hand-hewn logs known as the Stinson Ole Place.

The house originally stood in rural Shelby County on a wooden plank road called the Columbiana Turnpike. Under

the leadership of Jack Crouch and Charles Shelby, the house was dismantled log-by-log, and rebuilt on the Bluff Park Elementary School campus.

The house was furnished with items donated by members of the HHS and by funding provided by the City of Hoover. There is an outhouse, a watering trough, a springhouse, a plumping mill, a smoke house, a corncrib, and a small barn. A split rail fence surrounds the house. Jack Crouch nailed a red boot on the fence that could have served as a rural mailbox.

A swept yard, two herb gardens, and a grassy area complete the fenced area.

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How to best use this Folklore Center?

its president, Beth Kinsaul, set up a committee of interested members of the HHS, including active and retired teachers. The committee traveled to Montgomery to see how archives were stored properly.

They visited Old Alabama Town and spoke with artisans and docents. The group dissected The Alabama Course of Study. It was decided that first graders and fifth graders would be the target groups to invite to the Folklore Center.

Suggested activities, props, and conversation starters were offered to the volunteer docents during the first few years.

The HHS paid for artisans to share their expertise with school groups such as an

***Continued on Page 4***

The HHS under the leadership of

## The Folklore Center celebrates 20 years

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instrument maker; a mountain man; a potter; a weaver; a spinner; a basket weaver; a spinner; a basket maker; a soap maker; etc.

The Birmingham Quilter's Guild has been a steadfast group through the years, allowing each child the opportunity to stitch a quilted square. Peggy Sturdivant and Jack Crouch helped the volunteers develop scripts that encouraged the audience to join in a discussion about the family life on a small farm. Through the years, the names and faces of volunteers have changed, but it is the hope of those who have worked with the Scouts, Garden Clubs, Home School groups, and school groups that all will feel a connection with how our lives are different today.

The Stinson Ole Place helps students gain a better appreciation of the events that led to settlers arriving in this area. How did they get here? Why did they come here? Two common questions asked when touring the cabin are: "What do you see in this cabin that you would not find in your home?" and "What's in your bedroom that you do not see in this bedroom?"



HHS Secretary Pam Thompson and Marie Taylor review the cleaning schedule for the cabin.

Doug Harkness has carried on Jack Crouch and Charles Shelby's leadership role in inspiring docents to encourage the audience to play an active part in their tour. Making soap, singing a song, pacing an acre, handling tools, stitching, and finding answers to an Itty Bitty Scavenger Hunt.

Our storytellers have typically entertained, and also educated the listeners about how food was preserved or how families survived hardships. As we celebrate the 20th year that our HHS has offered tours we love to say, "It's always a great day on the Bluff for a field trip to the Hoover Folklore Center."

## A tribute to Marie Taylor...

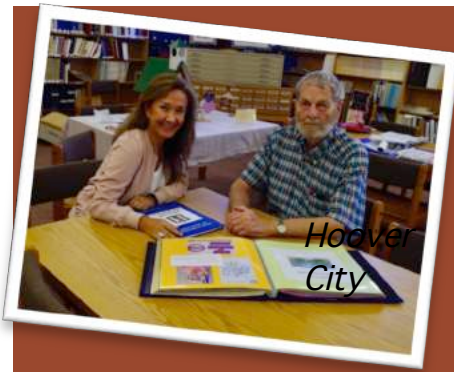
After twenty years of maintaining the contents of the Stinson Ole Place log cabin, Marie Taylor has announced her retirement from the position of caretaker, all-round cleaner and keeper of the cabin.

She first retired from a distinguished career as an educator, and then enjoyed working in the log cabin with the Historical Society while doing historical research. As the owner of the historic Overseer's House, she researched it, and even maintains a general store in her home. She has hosted the Historical Society Membership Tea on many occasions. Marie helped with researching Bluff Park's history, including the history of Bluff Park School for its 70th anniversary in 1993.

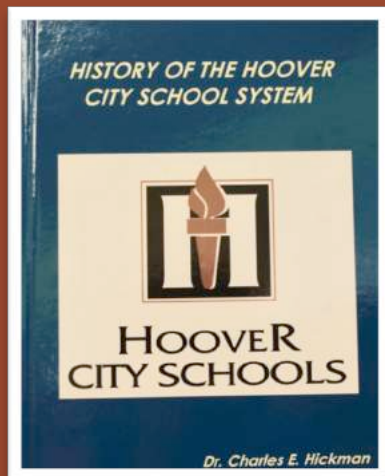
Every year, Marie performs a thorough cleaning in the Fall and Spring prior to student field trips—including washing all the windows inside and out, dusting everything, sweeping floors and laundering antique linens as needed. After field trips, she sweeps up to be sure there are no crumbs to attract critters. She has battled rats, raccoons and flying squirrels on occasion.

When a gun was brought in to display, she objected to its presence. It remained on display for years, but she filled the barrel with something so it could not be fired. And, if anything breaks, Marie finds a way to fix it. The HHS expresses its appreciation for her many years of dedicated service behind the scenes, and wishes her many more days of pursuing other interests.

—Pam Thompson



Cecilia Olarte, a volunteer at the HHS, designed the cover for Dr. Hickman's book.



Dr. Charles Hickman, right, with family members: son-in-law Mac Hardy, daughter Charlene and wife, Joyce at the BOE meeting in September.

## A history of Hoover City Schools published

A new book, *The History of the Hoover City School System*, was presented to Hoover's Board of Education in early September. Author Dr. Charles E. Hickman made the presentation.

Dr. Hickman, a member of the first Hoover Board of Education, researched and wrote the work as a member of the Hoover Historical Society. Nine appendices include many graphics detailing the school system's growth—lists all superintendents, enrollment by years, taxes in both Jefferson and Shelby counties, and winners of the Finley Awards. The text is illustrated with pictures of major events as well as photos of key leaders.

The history of Hoover City Schools began years before the system was formed—with citizen committees that advocated a system for improving education for children in the new city.

The Hoover City Council unanimously approved the formation of the Hoover City School System (HCSS) in October 1987 and appointed the first Hoover Board of Education. The board appointed the first superintendent in January 1988. After negotiating leaving the Jefferson

County system, the HCSS opened for students in August 1988.

Dr. Hickman interviewed many people involved in that early effort including council members William Billingsley and Faye Anderson and Mayor Frank Skinner—all of whom were critical to the formation of the school system. Other interviews were conducted with persons who made major contributions throughout the years. The purpose of these interviews was to obtain their perspective on the system.

Dr. Hickman stated, "My major goal was to present an objective view of the issues that arose over the years and their resolution. In the conclusion [of the history], I wrote that the Hoover City School System has provided and continues to provide excellent educational experiences for students."

He added, "The previous boards of education and superintendents have brought us to the present. Now, it is your responsibility and opportunity to provide leadership to enhance the educational experience for our students." After the meeting, Dr. Hickman signed copies for BOE members and guests.



# 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 <input type="checkbox"/> Archives <input type="checkbox"/> Speakers' Bureau <input type="checkbox"/> Historical Research <input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter <input type="checkbox"/>
Other interests/skills: _____
SPEAKER/PROGRAM SUGGESTIONS: _____



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*Recipient*

