



HOOVER HISTORICAL HAPPENINGS

Vol. 24 No. 2

November 2012

Dates

Oct. 31 Ribbon Cutting
Nov. 13 Board Meeting
Nov. 20 HHS Meeting
Dec. 1 Newsletter
deadline

Executive Committee

Delores Wilkerson
Tom Laggy
Carolyn Kolar
Shirley Lewis
Anita Dillon
Betty Bagby
John Williams
Virginia Cain
Jim Lyons
Charles Shelby
Doug Harkness
Peggy Patton
Katherine Staursky
Marshall Morgan
Barbara Lyons
Joy Elliott
Charlotte Patton
Joan Davis
Marie Taylor
Charlotte Williams
Inez McCollum
Charlotte Laggy
Betty Tucker

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Joan Davis and Marie Taylor,
Editors

Fire Tower Project To Be Complete October 31

THEN....



It was a sad sight indeed...the old fire tower cab sitting forlornly behind the Fire Station on Municipal Drive. It had originally been the top of a tower on Shades Crest Road in Bluff Park.

AND NOW....



Due to the efforts of the Hoover Historical Society and the cooperation of the City of Hoover, we now have a beautifully restored Fire Tower Cab sitting in its new location on Chapel Road across from Gwin Elementary School. Shown are Tommy Tucker and John Greene.

The date for the official ribbon cutting is October 31 at 1:00!

Hoover Historical Society Meeting Will Honor Our American Veterans

The HHS meeting in November will be November 20 at Artists On the Bluff (old Bluff Park School) at 569 Park Avenue. The meeting will be in the auditorium on the left as you face the school. The meeting begins at 1:30. Since November is the special month when we honor our veterans,

the program for the November General Meeting will be on the National Cemetery at the American Village in Montevallo. Ms. Bonnie Woodie will be our guest speaker.

Come join us, fly your flag, hear a great program and enjoy refreshments, too!

From the President...

I find it hard to believe that the leaves on the trees are beginning to change colors and football season is here. This is an exciting time for the Hoover Historical Society.

We have a record number of new members and in particular from the Monte D'Oro neighborhood. I had a delightful meeting with the officers of their Neighborhood Association whereby a large percentage of their residents became members of our Society. I was not familiar with all of the wonderful events and activities that go on there. Monte D'Oro is one of the best kept secrets in the city of Hoover!

I take my hat off to Tom Laggy for the program which we had for our September meeting. I look forward to the remainder of the programs which he has planned for us for 2012-2013.

Our Fire Tower Cab is now in place at its new location on Chapel Road across from Gwin Elementary. Everything looks so lovely. Jim Lyons and his committee have done a phenomenal job in getting every little detail attended to. We will have our big ribbon cutting ceremony for the Fire Tower Cab on **October 31 at 1:00**. A reception for all will follow nearby at Fire Station No. 2.

I hope to see all of you at the ribbon cutting and at our next meeting on November 20 at 1:30.

-Delores Wilkinson, President

From the Folklore Center

Front Porch News

It's that time of year when the leaves start to fall, and you can smell that change is coming in the weather. You can just feel that something is different. All the animals are getting ready for the coming of winter. A most interesting phenomenon is the collection of humming birds around the feeder. I have read the story of their migration to South America, and how they need to tank up before they leave for that long flight. Some even fly directly over the Gulf of Mexico to return to their winter resort.

Well, I could bore you with stuff like that, but now for the news! Low and behold just when you think nothing is happening something comes out of left field. Uncle Charles and I were clearing the fence row last week, and we got word that a long lost cousin was coming to visit. Can you believe that cousin Peggy Patton sent us a communication that she was coming to stay a spell at the Stinson Ole

Place. That was exciting enough, but then she told me she had found a milk cow that we could have for free. Now I got to tell you, my first thought was there goes my late sleeping. Just when I get Aunt Marie's roof and fence fixed now I will have to milk that cow twice a day. Then Uncle Charles reminded me that she was free! He never did say nothing about helping with the milking.

Oh, one other thing--we got two bunches of school children coming to visit soon, so we have to get the wood cut for the wash pot fire and trim the grass. I almost forgot to mention that we have some folks coming all the way from Birmingham Quilting Society to help us get ready for the cold weather. Carolyn Gilliland and Vasha Rosenblum will be quilting us some cover for the beds. It is a lot less trouble to pull up a quilt when it gets cold than to hunt up ol' Blue. A clean quilt sure smells better, too. Till next time.

-Doug Harkness

Sounds Like Barney Fife

It wasn't the Brinks Robbery, but in the early days of our fair city, an unusual theft was pulled off by a robber in broad daylight. The following tale was recounted to me by Jane Hoover Parrish, who has lived in the area for 49 years, even before Hoover was incorporated.

We're not sure of the date, but it seems that a small office building on the east side of Hwy. 31 (near where the Old Patton Chapel Road enters) was occupied by a bank and the Hoover Police Department. At that time, our Police Department consisted of two men, Chief of Police Davis and one police officer.

One day a fellow walked into the bank, held it up and took an unknown amount of money. After he ran out with the loot, the bank notified the Police Department. Chief Davis was out of the office that day, leaving one lone officer to watch the city. The officer immediately took off, running after the thief.

Chief Davis was summoned and hurried to his office. He found out that his lone officer had been seen chasing someone down the road. Alas, the officer was found by the Chief, tied to a tree. No robber was to be found! And we never did hear if the bank got its money back....

-Joan Davis



How Cold Is Cold?

In the mornings when I get up I immediately hurry to the thermostat to turn up the heat in my house. Sometimes I think about how cold my house was when I was a child. I really do appreciate the luxury of central cooling and heating these days.

I really believe that the weather was a lot colder in Alabama during my childhood years. In the winter I wore lots of clothes in the house since the house was heated by a coal-burning stove and later by a floor furnace.

There was not much to entertain the family during those cold rainy days except studying, reading and listening to the radio seated around the stove. So, the alternative was to go to bed to keep warm.

Before it was time to go to bed, Mother would heat water on the stove and fill a hot water bottle and put it in the bed near where my feet would be. I usually slept in socks, so when my feet touched the hot water bottle my feet stayed cozy warm.

If I had a cold or cough Mother would rub my chest down at night with “Vicks Salve” from that little blue bottle. Then she would then put a clean flannel cloth on my chest. Boy, did it smell!

I wore flannel pajamas and slept under many quilts that my mother and grandmother made for those long winter nights. In fact, the quilts were so heavy that it was hard to turn over in the bed!

Standing outside to catch the school bus in the early mornings was no fun. My brother and I dressed warmly on those bitter cold winter mornings. When we arrived at Taylorville Elementary School we had to stand outside again until the school opened. Usually we would run and play to keep warm until that time. Inside the school the older boys would build a fire in the coal stove in each room in the school. We kept on our coats until the room became

somewhat warm.

Dr. Warren Derrick, former Medical Director of the Specialty Clinics at Children’s Hospital said, “I remember one time when I was living in Tullahoma, Tennessee, during WWII (my father was in the army) the only house we could find to rent was a summer cabin in a remote camp. The floorboards were so poorly laid down that wide gaps allowed air to penetrate into the room because there was no insulation. My parents heated the house with an old pot-bellied coal stove. I caught pneumonia and had to be hospitalized. Talk about the good ole days!”

Looking back over this now, I think that I didn’t feel the cold as I do now. Nowadays, I dress warmly, but with not as many layers as I did as a child. Still, in Alabama I must remember to dress warmly in the summertime when I eat out in restaurants, attend church and seminars because the “controllers of the thermostat” keep the thermostat turned down low!

Brr!!!!!!

Oh, how I appreciate our heating and cooling systems!

-Jean Butterworth

HHS Library/Archives Extends Invitation To You

The Archives of the Hoover Historical Society is open on Wednesdays from 10 until 2. Our project this year is to list our files on the website. We hope this will give the community greater access to the information collected by the Society on the history of Hoover. We also have abstracts of all the homes listed in the Park Avenue and Shades Crest Road Historic Districts. Three older area cemeteries are documented and have been placed on the Alabama Registry.

For those interested in genealogy, we have approximately 50 local family genealogies and would welcome adding yours to our collection. We have a registry of Revolutionary and Civil War soldiers, as well as genealogy guides and periodicals. A number of local organizations have entrusted us with their scrapbooks, and we have histories of local churches and several surrounding counties. Stop by for a visit. We are always happy to share what we have collected about the history of our area.

-Charlotte Patton

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Showing Off Sweet Home Alabama

by Inez McCollum

A few years ago I wrote an article for this publication entitled, *Get Out of the House*. The message is still the same. Our area has many venues that are even more beautiful during the fall. Some of us had guests from Sacramento last week, and we were anxious to give them a taste of Sweet Home Alabama.

We welcomed them to the area by going to Arlington for lunch. My guests were fascinated by the pecan trees. They are from an area that has walnut and almond trees, but no pecans. They had never seen pecans that still had the outer husk.

We visited downtown Birmingham on two of the days. One of the locations I had never been to was the Alabama Sports Hall of Fame. It was so interesting to see how many known names in sports are from Alabama. We toured the Civil Rights Institute which contains many displays of incidents they were familiar with. We saw Norman Rockwell's "America" at the Birmingham Museum of Art, then went to The Irondale Cafe for lunch. They were familiar with

Fannie Flagg's movie, but didn't realize that was based on our area. A visit to Vulcan was next on the agenda. Those Westerners were able to see much of our beautiful area from the Iron Man's pedestal.

One day was spent in Montgomery with a tour of the State Capitol and Confederate White House. The Exchange Director (person from the Sacramento Club who put their visit with us together) had requested some Alabama sports venues, so that included a day in Tuscaloosa. While in "T" Town, we went to the Bear Bryant Museum and on a thorough tour of Bryant-Denney Stadium. This was followed by a visit to Moundville where our own Jackie Matte gave them the background information on Indians from that area. My guests were still talking about Moundville when they left Birmingham.

This fabulous week was arranged by Tom and Charlotte Laggy, our HHS Spring Trip couple. Wonder what they have in the works this spring for us?