



# HOOVER HISTORICAL HAPPENINGS

Vol.24 No. 5

May 2013

## Dates

May 18 Meeting, 1:30

## Executive Committee

Delores Wilkinson  
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

## MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

**Hoover Historical Society Meeting**  
**Saturday, May 18th**  
**1:30 pm**



Armed Forces Day was first observed on May 20, 1950. The day was created on August 31, 1949, to honor Americans serving in the five U.S. military branches – the U.S. Army, U.S. Navy, U.S. Marine Corps, U.S. Air Force and U.S. Coast Guard – following the consolidation of the military services in the U.S. Department of Defense. Our program will be a small salute to the Armed Forces through music. Our guest will be Lindsey Murdock, a fine trumpet player and a 1953 graduate of Fairfield High School. We will also install officers for next year. Join us May 18!

-Tom Laggy, First Vice President

## President Expresses Appreciation For Great Year

How quickly this year has flown by! Thanks to all the officers and committees who have accomplished their purposes and made the Society the best ever. Our devotionals have been inspirational and our programs have been interesting and enjoyable. We have purchased an additional laptop, projector and sound system to support our speakers. Our organization's record keepers have been on time and concise. We revised our bylaws after a full decade to bring our activities into compliance with our non-profit status.

The Folklore Center, under the wonderful care of our "cousins," continued to bring history alive for the students who visited. It is a true educational asset for the community.

The Society has preserved a piece of Hoover's history with the Crawford Fire Tower Cab. The cooperation between

the Society and several city agencies has been outstanding. A historic marker was also placed there. A power-point presentation has been prepared and is available for membership recruitment and programs.

We are proud to announce a \$1000 scholarship for Hoover High School from Dianne and Carlo Joseph. The Josephs also opened their home to us for our annual tea. The Henry King Family (King Acura) has donated a \$1000 scholarship for Spain Park High School.

Let me express my gratitude to each of you for all of the support you have given the Society over the past year. Our membership has grown, and we have many accomplishments of which to be proud. Without everyone's help it would not be possible to accomplish so much.

-Delores Wilkinson, President

## Water, Water Everywhere

Visitors to the Bluff Park area were probably seeking a cool place to vacation, clean air and, certainly, clean water. Bluff Park afforded them all of these things. A conversation in September 2012 with Tommy Tucker, longtime resident of Bluff Park, resulted in information about water and springs in the area. Most interesting were three: near the Valley Street/Shades Crest Road intersection, the area near the “Big Rock” on Shades Crest Road, and near the intersection of Valley and Park Avenue.

Tommy Tucker described a “water cave” which is still an active water source. Originating on the lip of the Crest, it is located just across the road from a house previously owned by a Mr. Chambers. This house was located behind the auto repair shop at the Shades Crest/Valley St. intersection. Mr. Chambers also built the concrete structure over the spring with bars across it to keep out animals. He worked for the Birmingham Water Works, so he knew to put in pipe and pump to bring water into his home.

Northeast of the antique shop at the intersection of Park Avenue and Shades Crest Road the original Hale springs are located. Not in use now and usually dry, this spring was over the lip of Shades Crest Road and near the famous “Big Rock” near the Bluff Park Hotel. Water was piped to many other houses.

The third spring is still in use, though not for drinking. Located next to the fire station and behind a white house on Park Avenue, it is now a small pond originally called “Schwab’s Pond.” Mr. Schwab, an early resident, also donated land for the first school and the first cemetery. This spring/pond, according to Tommy Tucker, was a “watering hole” for earlier visitors to the area, and may have been the most frequently used spring for those who came hiking, on horseback or driving buggies. It may have been the original attraction for those looking for relief from the heat of the valley below.

The Bluff Park area continues to fascinate and delight residents and visitors alike. The presence of a ready water supply was certainly vital to this community. Water lines were laid to the Bluff in the early 1900’s, first to the Fresh Air Farm, whose well had dried up, then to many homes on Park Avenue.

- Joan Davis

*Thanks to Tommy Tucker for the information in this article. His DVD is in the HHS Archives.*

## Touring Moundville and Greensboro With HHS



Hoover Historical Society members and guests recently hopped on a bus and took off for a day of fun and adventure. We first stopped at Moundville Archaeological Park and toured the museum, and four adventurous souls braved a climb up one of the mounds. Our next stop was in Greensboro at the Pie Lab, and it was delicious! Yes, we had our choice of four or five pies for dessert, and most of us ate way too much. We next toured the antebellum mansion Magnolia Grove, a site operated by the Alabama Historical Commission. To bring the trip to a close, we drove past the historical homes of Greensboro and saw the work being done by AmeriCorps and Auburn architecture students. This memorable trip was led by Charlotte and Tom Laggy.

### 2013-2014 Officers

President - Inez McCollum

1st Vice President - Pam Thompson

2nd Vice President - Carolyn Kolar

Recording Secretary - Debbie Burtnett

Corresponding Secretary - Jim Lyons

Treasurer - Anita Dillon

Assistant Treasurer - Betty Bagby

-Doug Harkness, Nominating Committee Ch.

## Springtime Chores

Springtime is here! Memories of my mother doing her spring cleaning involved pulling all the mattresses off the beds and placing them on wooden saw horses in the back yard to get a “good sunning.” Then, of course, they had to be turned over once in this process to sun the mattress on the other side. This was a favorite playhouse under the mattresses for my little friends and me on those sunny days. Feather pillows were also placed in the sun, and soon they would puff up from the sun rays and be ready for a tired head to fall asleep on.

Other chores included opening the windows in the house and letting the breeze blow out the smells of winter mothballs and musty fireplaces. Slipcovers were washed and rugs taken to the clothesline and beaten to get the dust out. Spring housekeeping it was!

Oh, my, how my fingers did hurt helping Mother wash all the cotton curtains in the house. We worked, washing them and starching them and then attaching them to the pins on the curtain stretchers. You remember those? The wet starched curtains were attached by hand every inch or two to pins spaced around the wooden stretchers. Of course, the curtain stretchers had to be adjusted to fit the size of the curtain. Letting them dry outside and getting the curtains hung back over the windows was also a chore. The curtains did look nice once back on the windows.

What about those those pant stretchers for blue jeans? A good spring sunny day was always just right for the blue jeans to be washed, starched and put through aluminum adjustable pant stretchers. These were then placed outside to dry. After drying, the pants would almost stand up and walk! But, how my brother loved those starched blue jeans in those days. This is in contrast to teenagers wearing their soft faded blue jeans today!

In the spring, chores around the garden included tending to strawberry plants that had been planted in the fall. They needed pine straw placed around each plant to keep the strawberries off the dirt as they

grew to nice plump sizes. This was a backbreaking job.

Each spring the ground in the garden had to be plowed. Daddy would hook up ole Molly the mule to a plow and proceed to turn the earth. Daddy would talk to the mule and say, “Gee” and “Haw.” I could never remember which word meant right or which word meant left. He never planted the garden without referring to what condition the moon was in, particularly the full moon. I will never forget the fragrant smell of the freshly plowed ground.

Always in the early spring my family had baby chicks to raise. These chicks were so cute. Sometimes we would have a cold snap in the spring and the baby chick would have to be moved from the chicken house to a warmer place on the back porch. There were special feeders and water containers for the chicks. My job was to put the chicken feed in their tin eating tray, which had individual holes for each chick to put his head in and eat. This was so they would not scatter the feed and waste it. The drinking container was a quart jar filled with water and inverted over a screw-on lid with space to let the water run out a little at a time. I also remember the feed store in Tuscaloosa that sold colored baby chicks. They would dye the baby chicks in pastel colors for children to have as pets during the Easter season. This is a no-no now.

In the community the county gravel trucks would dump and spread fresh new pea gravel on the roads. The country roads had gotten ruts in the road after a winter of muddy conditions. This eliminated the chore of the community men having to cover the ruts in the road by hand with a shovel.

I remember with a smile those memories of springtime chores.

-Jean Butterworth

## Alabama Historical Association Meets In Eufaula

Hoover Historical Society Past President Jackie Matte and Jean Butterworth attended the 66th annual meeting of the Alabama Historical Association in Eufaula on April 12-13. The meetings were very informative. Membership in the association is at 609; conference attendance was 204.

-Jean Butterworth





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## HHS Enjoys a Beautiful Membership Tea



*Home of Carlo and Dianne Joseph*



What a lovely spring day for a Tea Party! Hoover Historical Society pulled out all the stops to have a wonderful Membership Tea held at Dianne and Carlo Joseph's historical home in Bluff Park on April 7. It couldn't have been a more beautiful day as guests were signed in by Carolyn Kolar and Lea Pennington. Guests were greeted by Hoover Belles as they entered the home, and enjoyed a delightful treat from servers Inez McCollum, Veronda Garner, Shirley Lewis and

Charlotte Laggy in the dining room. Larry Russo provided a nice musical atmosphere, and guests enjoyed touring Dianne and Carlo's house. Dianne Joseph provided the lovely floral arrangements, and Marshall Morgan provided the silver serving trays and bowls. Greeting the members and guests were Delores Wilkinson, Anita Dillon and Sandra Hart, who was in charge of the tea.