

the  
*Hoover Historical Log*

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

## Save the Dates!

Board meeting

At the Archive/Office

Tuesday, January 13, 2015

10:30 AM

GENERAL MEETING

Hoover Library

January 20, 2015

1:30 PM

Miss Fancy 1871-1954  
B'ham resident 1913-34  
John Todd, Caretaker  
Weight: 8,560 lbs.



### Archivist presents "Miss Fancy" to the Historical Society

Jim Baggett's subject in January is "Miss Fancy, Queen of the Avondale Zoo."

In early 20th century Birmingham, children and adults spent many happy Sunday afternoons feeding and riding Miss Fancy, the gentle elephant who lived at the old Birmingham Zoo in Avondale Park.

Remembered for her habit of sneaking away from the zoo and wandering the surrounding neighborhoods, and her taste for alcohol, Miss Fancy is now the mascot for a Birmingham brewery and a beloved local character. This talk explores the life and legend of Birmingham's most famous elephant.

Jim Baggett is Head of the Department of Archives and Manuscripts at the Birmingham Public Library and Archivist for the City of Birmingham. He has served as president of the Society of Alabama Archivists and Chair of the Jefferson County Historical Commission. Jim has lectured throughout the U.S. and in Europe and has been featured on Alabama Public Television, Alabama Public Radio, National Public Radio and CSPAN. He has authored or edited five books on Birmingham and Alabama history and has written more than fifty articles on archival preservation and Alabama history.

## Celebrate America! at American Village in 2015

Not far from Hoover, one can 'step back in history to the time of the American Revolution.'

Mrs. James Madison, a/k/a Dolly Madison, was the first to wish guests a Merry Christmas at the American Village in Montevallo recently. Speaking during lunch, Dolly reminisced about seeing "Washington City" for the first time. Commenting on a lack of unity in those early days, she said there was "a lot to be accomplished." (Seems like that's still the case in 2015!!)

Dolly recalled the Inaugural Ball, the first of its kind for her husband, and reminded us of her role in saving the portrait of George Washington during the War of 1812. The Americans had to "be ready at a moment's notice to leave the city" and the British burned all of the public buildings. Of course, it was rebuilt.

After lunch, the group attended a service at the Chapel featuring a variety of hymns interspersed with readings from the Gospel of Luke, followed by an impressive visit to the National Veterans Shrine (dedicated early in 2014) with Docent Sarah Galloway. Later, President Theodore Roosevelt chatted with guests in the Oval Office, stressing his conservationist ideals while deploring the tradition of cutting down a live tree for hanging a few baubles!

The final stop featured the quaint village scenes of Christmases Past in the museum. The site includes picnic area, gardens, a barn, bridge and other re-creations of the Colonial era. Various programs are offered throughout the year to *Celebrate America!* in addition to the Colonial Christmas at the American Village. Open to the public, M-F from 10 AM to 4 PM.



## Veterans' Shrine opened in 2014

Dedicated last February, the National Veterans Shrine and Register of Honor is preserving the legacy of this country's men and women who served and sacrificed for America's freedom. On that occasion, CEO of American Village, Tom Walker said, "Today our country faces a growing national amnesia concerning our nation's history and the role of its military." These stories are preserved on a user-generated database and Website, [www.veteransregisterofhonor.com](http://www.veteransregisterofhonor.com). All Alabamians and Americans may register their family's veterans so that all may learn from them. (Full disclosure: Tom Walker's mother is a long-time member of the HHS.)







## Archive news: opportunities to serve

Out with the old, in with the OLD? After consulting with several archival experts, we have found other homes for some *National Geographic* magazines, quilting books, and duplicate copies of *Genealogy Helper* magazines. These did not meet the criteria for our collection, and we are glad to free up some space. In January, we are inviting the residents of Hoover to donate or share their documents and photographs that relate to the history of the City, in preparation for the research that will be required for a second edition of the History of Hoover. (Or, in the alternative to donation, we will offer a copying/scanning service with our office equipment.)

There are other activities that members need to accomplish. Volunteers are needed for the Wednesday time slots 10 AM-12 Noon and 12 Noon – 2 PM to receive donations (or copy shared items.) If any of you remember the newspaper clipping sessions, we need to start going through the newspapers we have to find articles about Hoover. Instead of “clipping” we will be copying or scanning them. This will provide a more stable record as the newsprint deteriorates quickly. The articles will then be filed according to the categories we have in our files. Vadie Honea started this system and it will be most helpful in the research process. A regular time to meet will be determined by those who would like to participate in this effort.



Also on our wish list are volunteers to index the genealogical material we have so we can list it on the Website. We have some valuable resources but no one will ever use them if we don't let them know what we have! Please contact a committee member if you can help!

Archives committee members include Pam Thompson, Debbie Burtnett, Carolyn Kolar, and Arnold Singer.

**Above, left to right: Lisa Allen of the Birmingham Quilters Guild examines quilting books; Pam Thompson shows Kermit Dooley the archival collection; JD Weeks and Kermit Dooley explore the Time Cabinets; and (left) Chip Brantley and Bob Kolar load up *National Geographic* magazines for school art and history projects.**

## Volunteers—the lifeblood of an organization

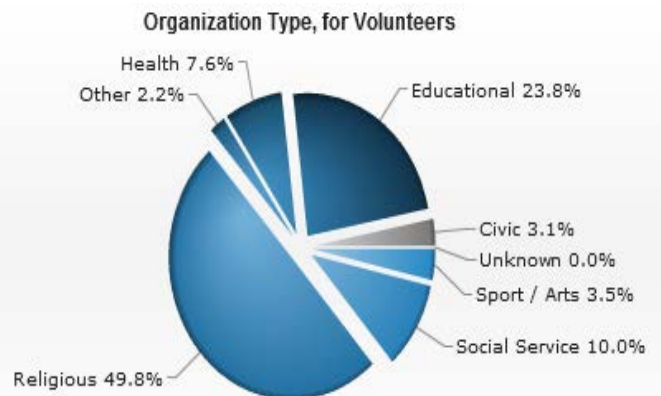
Volunteers are the lifeblood of organizations that enrich a community. Just visit the Website for the Corporation for National & Community Service (NCoC) to read an overview of volunteerism by state and nationally. Figures for Alabama include:



- Almost 25% of residents volunteer, ranking AL 38<sup>th</sup> among the 50 states.
- 921,360 people volunteer, working 116.4 million hours of service...
- valued at 2.6 billion dollars. That's
- 28.6 volunteer hours per capita!

Left: Inez McCollum devotes many hours to volunteer work, including those that benefit the HHS. Above right, Jim Lyons and Ginger Cummings greet visitors at the HHS tent at the Moss Rock Festival.

There are other types of “informal” volunteering in which people engage. Sixty percent help their neighbors; of those, 30% discuss politics with neighbors and friends. An important indicator of family life is eating together and 93% do this. The site also profiles national services such as AmeriCorps and Senior Corps. One of the NCoC graphics provides insight into Organization Types for Volunteers.



Numbers in the chart may not add up to 100% because of rounding



Is your New Year's Resolution to become more active in Hoover's civic life? If so, the Hoover Historical Society hopes you will consider some of its opportunities to serve and help preserve the history of Hoover.

Left: HHS member Arnold Singer keeps the Friends of Hoover going with interesting speakers (and no dues!) at a monthly meeting at *The Egg & I* in Hoover.

## From our president...



We hope you all had a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! We all have traditions around the holidays that give us a chance to remember the warmth and love of Christmases past, and the New Year lets us think about the hope of the future. After the busy fall, the past weeks have been a nice break before the Society gets busy in January.

We look forward to seeing you at the January meeting on the 20<sup>th</sup> at the Hoover Library. The meeting will be downstairs in the room across from the theatre at 1:30 with Archivist Jim Baggett presenting the program. And, we will have refreshments! If you would like to bring something, please contact Sue Knopf.

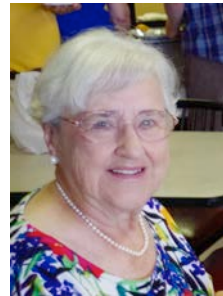
More information about the plans for the history book is on the agenda for the meeting. The Society members are also looking forward to the March meeting, the Annual Field Trip and Membership Tea in April, along with the May meeting and new officer installation. I hope you will make it a priority to participate this spring!

The Society still needs a Chairperson for the scholarship committee, which will be seeking applications in February. The committee members need someone with experience to lead this process.

Another contribution our group could make to the community is to provide speakers for presentations to groups on the Historical Society, so the public will know who we are, what we do, and the value of preserving the history of our City. This would be simple for volunteers to do if we had a PowerPoint presentation. If you are familiar with this program and would like to develop this project, please let me know.

*Pam*

Pam Thompson



## ***The Butterworth Chronicles***

**By Jean Butterworth**

There was a saying on New Year's Eve that my parents always repeated to each other and one had to be the first to say it: "New Year's Eve gift." I really can't recall why, but I think it was for good luck. Also, when I was young our church always had "Watch Night Services" on New Year's Eve. We had planned activities, which included games and singing until midnight and we capped the event off with choruses of "Happy New Year!"

As young married adults with children, our kinfolk encompassed quite a range of cousins, aunts and uncles and many children when we gathered together to celebrate New Year's Day. The families represented through the years included Wells, Vaughan, Butterworth, Bachus, Hays, Watkins, Jacobs, Lundy, Spangler and others.

Mitzi Wells always prepared the lunch on New Year's Day at her home in Hoover. There were no invitations issued for lunch. All the kinfolk and friends and neighbors just knew to show up at Mitzi's on New Year's Day around one o'clock for some of her good Southern cuisine. What a feast she would have!

She prepared two meats--a fresh cooked ham and a cured ham. Also served were macaroni and cheese, potato salad and a sweet potato dish. The vegetables included turnip greens and black-eyed peas. A dime was always put in the black-eyed peas for good luck. We were always welcome to bring any special food items. The bread portion was rolls and cornbread. The condiments consisted of jars of chow chow, fresh little green onions, pickles, and pepper sauce.

Continued, p. 6





**Published five times annually  
by the Hoover Historical  
Society, PO Box 360233,  
Hoover, AL 35236-0233; a 501  
C (3) organization. Copyright  
2015. Editor: Deborah Burtnett**

The meal was not complete until we were served big glasses of sweet tea. And, Mitzi's mother, Mrs. Odom, always brought freshly baked individual apple pies. There were tables set up in the living and dining rooms, usually for the ladies because the men would take their plates and sit in front of the TV in the den to watch the New Year's Day Bowl games. Some men would venture out at breaks to play football and games with the kids outside.

The ladies, both old and young, sat in the living room and caught up with all the news from last year. We rocked babies, shared recipes, gave grandmotherly advice on raising children, and recounted all our ailments since last season and, in general, just enjoyed the day! Happy 2015 to all!



**Hoover Historical Society  
P.O. Box 360233  
Hoover, Alabama 35236-0233  
Archive/Office 205-822-9392**

[Recipient]