

# **Hoover Historical Society Folklore Center**

## **About the Center - circa 1840**

**The Hoover Historical Society Folklore Center is located on the campus of Bluff Park Elementary School in Hoover, Alabama. The Folklore Center buildings and grounds were dedicated on November 9, 1997, to help children learn about history and to stand as a reminder of the lifestyle of our relatives. The setting is primarily early Alabama in the 1840's. Period furnishings and equipment are used wherever possible.**

## **Stinson Ole Place**

**The focal point of the Folklore Center is the authentic two-story house of hand-hewn logs, known as the Stinson Ole Place. The house originally stood in rural Shelby County off Highway 25 between Columbiana and Wilsonville Alabama, on a wooden plank road called the Columbiana Turnpike. The turnpike was the route for the stagecoach line from Georgia through Alabama. The Hugh Acey Mack Stinson family built the house in the 1840's, and at least three generations of Stinsons lived there until 1946.**

**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 has half-dove-tailed notches, and each log had to be reassembled exactly as it was found.**

## **Household Items**

**The house was furnished with items donated by members of the Hoover Historical Society and by funding provided by the City of Hoover. Inside the house are authentic items including cooking utensils, a spinning wheel, pottery, a churn, quilts, tools, rope beds, and rocking chairs.**

## **Outbuildings**

**The Folklore Center has a number of interesting outbuildings and structures:**

- **There is an outhouse**
- **a watering trough,**
- **a spring house,**
- **a plumping mill,**
- **a smoke house,**
- **a corn crib,**
- **and a small barn.**

**The barn was used to store feed, hay, and harnesses. The sheds would give shelter to the animals in bad weather.**

**A split rail fence surrounds the house, and a boot serves as a rural mailbox.**

## **Grounds**

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

**Most homesteads counted heavily on their gardens for vegetables. Farm families ate what they needed and preserved their surplus by pickling and drying.**

**An herb garden helped families with food flavorings, preservatives, and medicine.**

**For more information contact the Hoover Historical Society, 205-739-7316. The society's headquarters and library are located in the Hoover Community Education Building, 2020 Valleydale Rd. Suite 108 Hoover, AL 35244**

# **Hoover Historical Society Folklore Center**

## **History Detectives**

**The students become Hoover History Detectives when they step back in time and explore the hands-on areas and buildings.**

**We want each student to have an enhanced experience during the visit.**

**When the student leaves, it is our hope that they will feel connected with how our lives are different today and will better appreciate the events that led to the many differences.**

- **Learn about the impact people have on their community.**
- **Discover the story of nineteenth century pioneers, including their reasons for settling in Alabama and their occupations.**
- **Explore how communities grew and developed.**
- **Gain an appreciation for the relative difficulty of the lives of nineteenth century pioneers as compared with their own.**

# **DURING YOUR VISIT**

## **Conversation Starters:**

- **What was life like after moving to a new community?**
- **What adjustments would you have to make?**
- **How has Hoover changed in the past 150 years?**
- **What major inventions have made people more connected to each other?**
- **How is Hoover's story similar to the story of Alabama?**

## **Problem-solving**

- **Look at the map of Hoover and of Alabama. Why did people come here? How did they get there?**
- **Look at the landform map. What obstacles prevented people from living wherever they wanted?**
- **Was there anything to fear?**
- **Where would you have settled?**
- **What would you need to be successful?**

## **Timeline**

- **What are some of the important inventions that changed everyday life?**
  - **Put them in chronological order.**
  - **How did each event change the community?**
  - **What invention would you miss the most?**
    - **Clothing, communications or transportation?**
- 1<sup>st</sup> railroad arrives in the Hoover area in 1871**
- 1<sup>st</sup> telegraph line begins service in Birmingham in 1875**
- 1<sup>st</sup> public telephone exchange 1881**
- 1<sup>st</sup> automobile arrives on the streets of Birmingham in 1899**
- 1<sup>st</sup> electric typewriter 1901 - Walter Disney was born.**

# HISTORY HUNT

- **Find furniture in the cabin that was probably made after the family arrived in Alabama.**
- **Write a message that a conductor might send to a relative who lived far away.**  
**(If you are writing this in the 1800's you are going to need to ride the Talley-Ho or a Wagon down to Oxmoor to take your message. It will be a 2-hour round trip experience)**
- **What subjects do you think the students of the nearby school would have taken? Examine a McGuffey Reader!**
- **What was the water pump used for?**
- **What do you think "tuckered out" means?**  
**(Other Victorian words are: water closet, slick, hankering, iron horse, bustle, circuit rider, knee-high to a \_\_\_\_\_, one-horse, vamoose, and reckon.**

## Other History Hunt Projects

- **Make a 'WANTED' poster**
- **Make a straw broom**
- **Make a scarecrow**
- **Knit a pair of mittens**
- **Throw a piece of pottery**
- **Make a seed mosaic**

## **A Little Background History**

**The Federal Government acquired the land in Jefferson County after the Creek Indian War. When this land was first sold at auction, it was part of the Mississippi Territory.**

**Many veterans of the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812 were given land in Alabama for their service to the nation.**

**There was a great migration of people from 1816-1820 into the Alabama area. Homesteaders and land speculators (people who buy land at a low price and plan on selling for a higher price) claimed the land the Indians had lost.**

**Huntsville was the site to buy land and most of the fertile land could be purchased for \$2.00 per square acre.**

**Most early Alabama pioneers came overland in wagons from older southern states.**

**The earliest wagons arrived on roads that were old Indian trails.**

**Some brave and hardy pioneers traveled alone over Indian trails with packhorses.**

**Some traveled by water and came into Alabama on flatboats or rafts.**

**Once a pioneer chose the location of his property, he would quickly build a cabin. He would select trees about 10 inches in diameter as ideal for his broadax. He would need to gather a hundred logs to begin his "Log raisin' ".**

**The finished cabin would generally be about 16 feet by 20 feet. Some cabins had a wooden floor, but most had a dirt floor.**

**The land can provide for the most important needs of a family.**

- **Corn and hay can feed the livestock and poultry.**
- **Extra corn could be used for the gristmill to make meal.**
- **Sugar cane could be grown to make syrup.**
- **The orchard could give a variety of fruit. Some fruit could be dried.**
- **A good garden could provide for many needs, and extras could be sold.**
- **Flour, salt, and sugar had to be bought.**
- **Eggs and milk could be sold for cash to meet emergencies.**

**Just down Oxmoor Road was the busy village of Oxmoor!**

**Carts, wagons, and buggies would roll in early in the morning from the countryside.**

**Flour, beef, and lumber would be carried to individuals or a local business.**

**The train stopped in Oxmoor.**

**To travel to downtown Birmingham in the 1800's, a horse and wagon had to be ready to leave at 2:00 a.m. to arrive on Morris Ave. in downtown Birmingham at 7:00 a.m.**

## **Family Stories**

**Family stories are the stories your family tells about its members. Even though some of the tales are told over and over again, no one seems to tire of hearing or telling them again. Do you know a good family story?**

**Interview a friend, relative or neighbor who grew up in Hoover. Find out about the past!**

# **GAMES**

**(Life in the Nineteenth Century wasn't all work!)**

**Marbles**

**Jump Rope**

**Cards**

**Jacks**

**I Spy**

**Statue**

**Buzz**

**Kick the Can**

**Hide and Seek**

## **Red Light (Any number of players) - Outdoors**

**A player who is selected to be "It" stands on a goal line marked across the play area. The others stand behind a starting line at the opposite end.**

**"It" counts to ten and calls, "Green light." The others run toward the goal line. The last player over is "It" for the next game.**

## **The Minister's Cat (Any number of players) - Indoors**

**The first player says, "The minister's cat is an astounding cat," using an adjective beginning with "a" to describe the cat. The next player makes a remark about the cat, using the same initial letter for the adjective; for instance, that it is an aggressive cat. This continues, each player using a different adjective starting with "a," until the game has gone entirely around the circle. The first player then repeats the remark using an adjective that begins with "b." This goes around, and so on through the alphabet. Any player who is slow to respond, or who fails, must drop out of the game.**

## **Whistle a Happy Tune (Any number-problem solving)**

**Your team is a group of Iron Workers. You are to inform them that they are to devise a non-verbal code with a whistle. One ironworker will be blindfolded and it will be the rest of the team's task to direct the crewmember to a destination by using a whistle as a signal. There are obstacles - Good luck!**

## **Skipping Rope Rhymes**

## **SUGGESTED READING**

**Erickson, Paul. Daily life in a covered Wagon. Puffin, 1997. Drawing on diaries and letters, and illustrated with photos of actual objects from the past, Daily life in a Covered Wagon explores what life was really like on the wagon train.**

**Flournoy, Valerie. The Patchwork Quilt. Puffin, 1985. Fabric stitched into a quilt tells one family's story.**

**Fraser, Mary Ann. Ten Mile Day: And the Building of the Transcontinental Railroad. Henry Holt, 1996. A detailed account of April 28, 1869, when-as the result of a wager-(\$10,000)- crews laid a record-setting ten miles of track.**

**Kalman, Bobbie. 19<sup>th</sup> Century Clothing. Crabtree Publishing, 1993. Over forty color illustrations and photographs show how they dyed, spun, and wove wool and flax to make the cloth from which they sewed their clothes.**

**Wilder, Laura Ingalls. Little House series. Harper Collins. These classic novels explore the settlement of the West, with the joys and hardships, all told through the eyes of a child.**

**Thompson, Margaret. 25 Games of Yesteryear. Sunhill Press, 1993. Games recalled by adults who played them many years ago. "Our free time was so limited that when we did get a chance to play, it was savored like a favorite dessert! Kick the can, Red Light, Charley over the Water, Fox and Hen, and more.**