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The Hoover Historical Log

The Official Newsletter of the Hoover Historical Society



Fall program: Kelly Kazek's Odd Travels

Need a break from all the distressing news about COVID-19 and the political environment? If so, you might like to 'tune in' using our Zoom link for our September program with Kelly Kazek—an award-winning journalist and humor columnist who travels the South's back roads writing about Southern culture and roadside attractions for *It's a Southern Thing* and *This is Alabama*. She is the author of two humor books and numerous books of regional history. Every Sunday, you can read her column syndicated by AL.com in *The Birmingham News*. **Continued on Page 4**

Upcoming Programs for 2020-2021

Odd Travels

Sept. 15, 2020

Join us and Kelly Kazek via Zoom to hear about our southern oddities! Read her weekly column in TBN.

Women's Suffrage

Nov. 17, 2020

The Fight for the Noblest Democracy: Women's Suffrage in AL, Jennifer Watts, from Vulcan Museum.

Encyclopedia of AL

January 19, 2021

Laura N. Hill will discuss the online encyclopedia of the state's history, culture, geography, and natural environment.

Journey of a Rocking Chair...

by Patti Stinson Larkin and Bonnie Stinson

Abraham Stinson (Abe) was the oldest son of Hugh Acey Mack and Elizabeth Stinson. Until the early 1880s, Alabama was home to Abe's family. When Abe and Martha decided to move their family from Alabama to Texas, they made the journey with their five children and settled in Itasca, Texas. It is unclear if the Stinson rocker was part of that journey.

The Stinson rocker is a "super-sized" rocker, so rumors that the rocker was made in Texas circulated. The Kansas Stinson family knew that everything was bigger in Texas from their trips to visit their Texas grandparents.

Continued on Page 5



Scholarships Awarded

Each year, the Hoover Historical Society administers a scholarship program for the public high schools in Hoover, funded by local businesses and sponsors including Signature Homes and Carlo and Dianne Joseph. Students must complete an application, research and write a 1000 word essay on an historical topic, and submit to their guidance counselor. And, for the second year, the HHS has worked with the Career & Technical Education specialists to select a student going directly into the workforce or attending a technical school.

Hoover High's Ricari Thomas wrote about Alabama the Beautiful using texts written by the state's renowned historians including Wayne Flynt and our own Leah Rawls Atkins. He documented several historical events with an optimistic voice. He is attending the University of Montevallo. Tegan Gibbons of Spain Park HS selected the topic of the most significant event in Alabama's 200-year history—the Civil Rights Movement and how it affected not only AL but also the nation. She is attending the University of Alabama. And, entering the work force as an electrician—with tools provided by Signature Homes—is Christopher Evan Neiters. Congratulations to all!

L to R: Ricari Thomas, Tegan Gibbons, and Evan C. Neiters with his father and tools for his employment.



Crouch Award recipient is Jimmy Langley

Each year, the Society honors someone who has contributed significantly to the organization. This deserving member is recognized for outstanding service and dedication during the club year. The award honors the late Jack Crouch, founding member of the HHS and developer of The Folklore Center.

An author, artist, storyteller, and historian as well as a leader describe this year's honoree—Jimmy Langley. He holds two degrees and was a distinguished Military Graduate, commissioned in 1971. Lt. Colonel Langley retired after 23 years and worked in the public sector until retirement. He was just re-elected to serve a second term as president of the HHS. He and wife Ann are active in many aspects of life in Hoover.

He has developed interesting and historic tours ranging from the German POW camp in Aliceville to three historic plantation homes to a Christmas visit at the American Village, as well as creating a Tour of Hoover. That tour has become quite popular with long-time residents as well as newcomers to the city. Jim traces the history of Hoover from the time of Native Americans to early settlers to the contributions of William H. Hoover, Sr., the city's founder. He also researches and tells stories about the area—including researching the lake for which Lakeshore Blvd. is named. Congratulations to Jimmy Langley!





L to R: Retiring honoree Inez McCollum with her portrait in oil at the Officer Installation; Edna McWilliams announced Jim Langley as Crouch Award winner; and Mayor Frank Brocato installed officers for 2020-2021 at the Hoover-Randle House, Hoover, AL

A word from our president: "Find a penny, pick it up... And all day long you'll have good luck!"

Yesterday (July 8), I went to the Hoover Historical Society Folklore Center. The centerpiece for the Folklore Center is an 1840's log cabin called the Stinson Ole Place. A member of the current Stinson family donated a beautiful rocking chair belonging to one of the original Stinson family members. As we were talking, we mentioned to her that when the cabin was taken down from its original site in Shelby County, Hoover Historical Society member Jack Crouch discovered a cache of pennies under the boards of the front door threshold. I was told that the pennies were eventually melted down and became part of the sign at the front door of the newly constructed cabin in Hoover. The question was, "Why were the pennies there?"

According to one theory, people originally thought pennies would bring good luck because of religious beliefs. Folklore from ancient civilizations said metals—like copper—were gifts from gods intended to protect people from evil. This theory also fueled other superstitions like charm bracelets and metal horseshoes, which are also "lucky." Plus, metal currency like pennies were linked to more wealth and thus more luck.

Another reason people might have claimed pennies would bring good luck comes down to the battle between good and evil, which is like two sides of the coin. Finding a penny heads up meant you'd have luck on your side, but tails up

would mean the opposite, although the exact reasoning for this is unknown. Some people say that if you find a penny tails up, you should flip it over to make it heads up so that it can bring luck to whoever finds it next.

No matter the reasoning, pennies are part of many lucky traditions. Then there's also the old saying that brides might recognize: "Something old, something new, something borrowed, something blue, and a penny in the shoe." These are all things brides should wear on their wedding day for good luck in their marriage; that lucky penny—or a silver sixpence, as the original rhyme said—would bring prosperity to the couple.

Are you lucky? Were you born under a lucky star? Start with the basics: if you were born in the United States and now live in Hoover—you're lucky. If you are fortunate enough to have good health, you're lucky. If you have family and friends that care about you, you're lucky. If you have "enough" money and resources to live your life without fear, you're lucky. If you have the freedom to pursue happiness and have experienced equal justice, you're lucky. We at the Hoover Historical Society encourage you, even in this time of Covid-19, to count your blessings. You're probably luckier than you think!

Jimmy Langley

Docent at TFC retires

Our historical society is blessed with many multi-talented members. At our officer installation at the Hoover-Randle House, we honored retiring docent Inez McCollum.

Over the years, she has served the Society in a number of positions, including secretary (several times!) and as president. She has earned the Crouch Award in the past. She and her late husband, Mack, came to Hoover as he finished pastoral training at Samford, and they raised three sons.



There are many admiral aspects to Inez's life—she is also an author frequently published by *Alabama Pioneers*. She writes delightful and wistful stories of the past, published online, including two of her latest: *What is the Strangest Thing You Ever Ate?* (January 2020) and *Have You Ever Seen the Cahaba Lily in bloom? You Shouldn't Miss It This Time!*—this past March.

Inez is also involved in her church and other civic organizations and she participates in the GBBC—the *Great Backyard Bird Count* (another of her stories) every February. She has traveled the world with Friendship Force and hosted citizens of other countries right here in Hoover. Inez may be retired, but she's still a vibrant member of our city and our Society!!

'Oddities' theme of Kazek's blog

Continued from Page 1

"Sometimes I talk on quirky history and sometimes on roadside attractions. Sometimes I give humorous presentations based on my latest book, *Not Quite Right: Mostly True Tales of a Weird News Reporter*," added Kelly. We can't wait to hear what she has to say! (Her program was rescheduled from March 2020—canceled because of the Pandemic shutdown.)

Born in Georgia and raised in Alabama, she is a true daughter of the South. She resides in Huntsville, AL, with her husband, known to readers as 'Sweetums.' They travel Alabama's back roads together, seeking out quirky history for her blog at *KellyKazek.com*. She writes, "In my job, I wander around the south writing about any weirdness I might stumble across along the roadside. As you can imagine, the south is the gift that keeps on giving—in a good way!"

Kelly is scheduled to talk with us via Zoom on September 15th. The Zoom link and other info will follow; check out Facebook and our Website if you'd like to participate (free!).

Our Website: www.hooverhistoricalsociety.org. (We have new features for you to check out!)



Bamahenge is just one of many Stonehenge replicas across the country. It is located at Barber Marina in the Gulf Shores area.

Journey of the Stinson Rocking Chair

Continued from Page 1

After Abe's death in 1910, the Stinson rocker was given to, Leonard Tarrance (L.T.) and Bertha Stinson family. L.T. was the fourth child of Abe & Martha. L.T. and Bertha had three sons, Leon, L.E. and Travis and nine grandchildren. Five of the nine grandkids lived in Kansas and would make the trip to Itasca, Texas, with their parents, L.E. and Bernece, for holidays and special occasions.



Left: Lawrence Tarrance Stinson and Bertha Eva Stinson.

L.E. & Bernece G. Stinson at right, parents of Patti S. Larkin who donated Abe Stinson's rocker in July 2020.



Holding several children at once, the holidays were a true test of the rocker's ability to hold all the kids at once. As the years went by and the grandkids grew, fewer kids would fit in the rocker at one time. In addition to holding several grandkids at one time, the rocker also held memories of love, joy and sadness for the Stinson grandkids. Grandpa L.T. had passed away from cancer in 1950.

Grandpa L.T. found that the rocker was the only comfortable place to sit in his last few years. After Grandma Bertha, wife of L.T., passed away in 1964, Leon Stinson took possession of the rocker.

The rocker was now making its journey to Houston, Texas. The rocker was in need of repairs and Leon was unwilling to allow the rocker and memories to disappear from the Stinson family. Leon searched for someone in the Houston area to repair the worn out cane seat. Leon searched for a number of years, but was unable to find anyone that could repair the rocker. L.E., Leon's brother, took possession of the Stinson rocker. The rocker was now making its journey to Wichita, Kansas.

When the youngest daughter, Patti, of L.E. and Bernece, moved out on her own she took possession of the rocker. The rocker was a great addition to Patti's new home. Since Patti Stinson Larkin took possession of the rocker, it has been on an extensive journey. It has been to Oklahoma, Missouri, Florida, and Arkansas. Patti and Charlie Larkin have decided that the Stinson rocker is ready for a new journey and a new owner. Patti and Charlie wanted to donate the Stinson rocking chair. They contacted the Hoover Historical Society. The Stinson family is excited the Hoover Historical Society agreed to take possession of the rocker, where it will be displayed at the "Stinson Ole Place". The perfect place for the rocker to make its final journey is Hoover, Alabama.



The Society was expecting the donation of Abe Stinson's handmade rocking chair for several months; time enough for artist Jimmy Langley to create a thank-you gift of a painting of the Stinson Ole Place! Charlie and Patti Larkin were overwhelmed with their unexpected gift!



HOOVER HISTORICAL SOCIETY Membership Form

Make checks payable to *Hoover Historical Society*
P.O. Box 360233 Hoover, AL 35236-0233
Archive/Office 205-739-7316

Types of Memberships

Individual	\$10
Couple	\$20
Sustaining	\$50
Patron	\$100
Corporate	\$150

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Other Interests & Skills: _____

The Hoover Historical Society

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[Recipient]



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