

the

Hoover Historical Log

The Official Newsletter of the Hoover Historical Society

Happy New Year!

From the President...

Happy New Year to all! We have made another year of history in Hoover.

Unfortunately, it will go down as one of the most trying years to date. However, we still have to remember how blessed we are.

I want to thank all the members of the Hoover Historical Society for your support in 2020. I especially want to thank Debbie for all the hard work and hours she puts into making this newsletter professional and informative for our readers. I also want to thank the Board for all of their hard work. Even under harsh conditions, we have made great progress this year. So, Carolyn Kolar, Linda Joseph, Debbie Burnett, Edna McWilliams, Pam Thompson, Lisa McClung, Gene Fuller, Gilbert Douglas and Wallace Miskimon: thank you very much!

I also want to remember the contributions made by past President Arnold Singer who we lost this year. Let's make 2021 the best year ever.

Jimmy Langley



Editor of the EOA to address January meeting

Family Tree Magazine has lauded the online Encyclopedia of Alabama as one of the nation's best state-focused websites. It was named a "Best of Free Reference" by Library Journal and is a winner of the "Digital History Award" from the Alabama Historical Association. EOA is the state's premier online reference resource for "all things Alabama." The site is similar to a traditional print encyclopedia, with an emphasis on authoritative content based on sound scholarship. Its online format makes it an accessible reference tool offering articles, video, audio, graphics, and hyperlinks. Learn tips for navigating this remarkable resource on the state's history, culture, and natural environment and discover the wealth of Alabama's history that is just a few clicks away with our next speaker, Laura Newland Hill, during our January Zoom meeting.

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Save the Date!

Board Meeting January 12th, 2021

The HHS Board meets via Zoom at 10 AM; watch for the link via email!

General Meeting January 19th, 2021

Join us at 1 PM via Zoom (link coming) for the program at 1:30 PM

Next Meeting... March 16th, 2021

Guests Behind the Barbed Wire: German POWs in America, Ruth Beaumont Cook

Christmas in the time of Covid

Hoover-Randle Home & Gardens

Due to the Pandemic, the staff of the Hoover-Randle Home & Gardens cancelled the Ho-Ho Randle festivities this year. However, they invited organizations to decorate a few trees for the benefit of the guests at the home this season. The groups included the Historical Society, Leadership Hoover, Hoover Service Club, and Hoover Helps. Event Coordinator Tahara Evans stated, "We are so blessed to have some of the best non-profits and organizations in our city. Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays from the Hoover-Randle!"

Christmas tour at the Stinson Ole Place

The Bluff Park Christmas parade was set for December 12th, and so were the members of the HHS at the cabin—offering photos with our newly painted wagon and a virtual Santa. Members gathered to decorate the cabin and two families toured. Special thanks to Gene and Sandra Fuller who are maintaining the Stinson's former home and shared their knowledge of pioneer life with our guests.

Linda Joseph arranges Christmas greenery while Gene Fuller whittles and Jim Langley poses with Virtual/3-D Santa Claus.



Hoover Pioneer: James Taylor Ross

By Jimmy Langley, Research Historian

James Taylor Ross was born in the highlands of South Carolina in 1803 in the town of York(ville) near Charlotte, N.C. He was descended from the Scotch-Irish pioneers who left Northern Ireland in the 1700s and settled in the rugged Appalachian Mountains. Many moved to the American colonies to escape famine and persecution by the Church of England. The Ross descendants arrived in Frederick County, Virginia, in 1744 and migrated to South Carolina.

The first settlers found their way into Cherokee County Alabama in 1835, before the Cherokee title was extinguished. A short time later, James Ross with his wife and two young sons came with a party from South Carolina and settled on the south side of Coosa River. Many settlers made this move after the Indian Removal Act of 1830 was fully implemented. In the late 1830's native Indians were removed to Oklahoma, making safe and available new land for settlers. He and wife, the former Mary Louisa Coward, lived there for a short time before moving west to central Alabama. The couple ultimately had four sons. The family moved to a farm in Old Jonesboro north of the current town of Bessemer in the 1840s. They settled into their new chosen home near the Talley Indian Mounds on Valley Creek and joined the Baptist Church. Ross started out as just a small dirt farmer, working the farm and raising livestock with his own sweat.

The rolling hills of Alabama's Shades and Shannon Valley reminded Ross of the hills and valleys of his childhood. He decided this would be where he would make the future for his family. While still living in Old Jonesboro, he purchased 120 acres of Government Patent lands made available at reduced cost near Ross Creek in 1854. In 1858 he purchased another 120 acres of sparsely settled land where Montevallo Road crossed Ross Creek. He became one of three large landholders in the area.

By 1860, Ross had rapidly expanded his holdings and his farming operation. He had acquired over 500 acres of land, of which 70 acres were productive. He planted Indian corn and cotton; raised cows for milk and butter; sheep for wool; and 40 pigs for food and additional income. His prosperity greatly increased, and the future looked bright.

On January 11, 1861, Alabama seceded from the Union and James Ross's life drastically changed forever. All four of James Ross's sons served, voluntarily or reluctantly, in the Confederate Army. With his sons off to war, he was discouraged by the ravages of the Civil War. Worrying about money to maintain his basic lifestyle, he was open to selling much of the land in Shades Valley. So, in October of 1862, when John T. Milner of the South & North Railroad came to him wanting to buy four tracts of land, approximately 490 acres, for \$1,500; he jumped at the offer.

Afterward, Ross moved from Jonesboro to one of the tracts of land he still owned in Shades Valley. His youngest son Alec returned from the war. He and his wife Mary Antoinette Nabors lived with his parents. After living on a ridge overlooking Shades Valley, the Rosses moved to a site on Little Shades Creek (near the former Woodward Iron Company's ore mines at Redding), now in Red Mountain Park.

James Ross became a respected member of the Shades Valley community. At age 85, he was elected Justice of the Peace for Jefferson County. He died in 1890 and is buried with other members of the Ross family in Union Baptist Cemetery in Lipscomb. Alec Ross had migrated with his family to the new town of Bessemer. The land that Ross sold to Milner was where Ross Creek Culvert (now called Ross Bridge) was built around 1864 by master stonemasons and slaves as a part of the South & North Railroad. ***To be Continued...***



The entire story is on our Website,
hooverhistoricalsociety.org. Follow this link to
read ALL of Jimmy's research and view photos!

www.hooverhistoricalsociety.org/

Editor of EOA discusses its website via Zoom

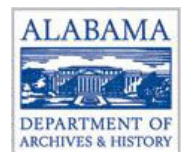
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Laura Newland Hill is the communications editor for the online Encyclopedia of Alabama. She joined the encyclopedia's team in 2004, about four years before the site launched, when she started working for historian Wayne Flynt in the history department at Auburn University. Her enthusiasm for the state's history and culture includes occasionally teaching Alabama History courses for lifelong learners in Auburn. During Alabama's Bicentennial year, she traveled to all 67 counties in the state. She presented a paper on the Montgomery Motor Corps, a World War I woman's service organization, at the 2018 Alabama Historical Association Annual Meeting. Laura has served as a member of several statewide committees, including the Alabama Bicentennial Commission's education committee, the Alabama World War I Centennial Commission, and a marker committee for the Alabama Women's Suffrage Centennial committee. She has been a member of the Alabama Historical Association since 2007. Laura earned a Master's degree in communications from the University of Tennessee-Knoxville and a Bachelor's degree in humanities (history, theatre history, and art history) from Jacksonville State University.



Scholarly sources that contribute as partners of the EOA include:



From the Encyclopedia of Alabama's website...

The Encyclopedia of Alabama's mission is to present trustworthy and authoritative information on a wide range of topics. EOA is a collaborative effort involving many individuals and organizations and offers articles written or adapted specifically for it, and new content is added to the site regularly. Our authors come from all areas of scholarship and range from scholars at academic institutions to scientists out in the field. Whenever possible, articles are enhanced with multimedia content, making EOA a dynamic educational tool. Multimedia content is made possible by the generosity of organizational [partners](#) that have shared their collections and archives with the project. The Alabama Humanities Foundation holds the copyright to EOA's original content in trust for the citizens of Alabama.

Join us January 19th at 1 PM for Laura's 1:30 presentation via Zoom. Watch for the link in your email and on Facebook!

<http://encyclopediaofalabama.org/>

GFWC Shades Mountain Woman's Club celebrates 50 years in 2021

GFWC Shades Mountain Woman's Club was founded in 1971 in the Hoover area as a community service club that is part of the General Federation of Women's Clubs (GFWC). GFWC is the largest volunteer organization for women in the world. Headquartered in Washington DC, clubs from all fifty states and several countries combine their resources to lobby Congress on matters that are of importance to their members.
www.gfwc.org.

The Shades Mountain Club members have been very active on the state level as officers in GFWC Alabama. Members include past presidents Roberta Atkinson and Cathy Barker, of Hoover and President elect Jan Greer, Chelsea. Other members serve on the state board. Three high school clubs are sponsored and advised by club members: GFWC Hoover Juniores, GFWC Pelham Juniores and GFWC Helena Juniores.

The Club's major project and fundraiser for over 40 years has been the Hands On Art for Children at the Bluff Park Art Show. Parents can leave their children for one hour for \$10 to do art activities while the adults enjoy the art show, or they can stay with them. Children enjoy painting, play dough, thumbprint art, and pasta/cereal necklaces. The Juniores clubs assist in this activity.



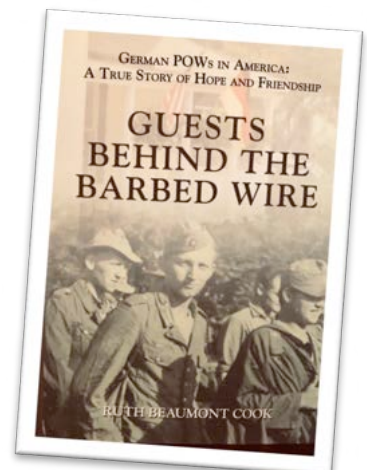
Bottom left: Juniores at Bluff Park Art Show. Above, the Shades Mountain Woman's Group at Alabama Headquarters in Birmingham.

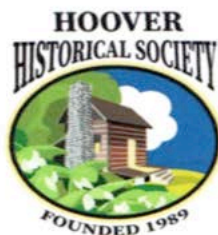
The funds raised allow them to support many community causes such as Ronald McDonald House, Alabama Symphony, Miss Alabama, Operation Smile, Heifer, Intl, Camp Seale Harris, St. Jude, Safe House and Wreaths across America.

A celebration is planned for later in the year. Former members are asked to contact the committee to be invited to attend. Membership is open and dues are \$35 per year. For more information contact Pam Thompson at pamrayt@gmail.com

Coming soon...

Our March program features the story of 6,000 German POWs held in Aliceville, AL. Published in 2007, the Book won a Bronze Medal in History from The Independent Publishers Book Awards.





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

NAME: _____

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Interests: Publicity _____ Archives _____ Speakers' Bureau _____ Research _____ Newsletter _____

Other Interests & Skills: _____

The Hoover Historical Society

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[Recipient]



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