

the

Hoover Historical Log

The official newsletter of the Hoover Historical Society, Hoover, Alabama



*You're
Invited to...*

*Hoover Historical
Society's
Annual Open
House (free!)
Sunday, April 14th
2 - 4 PM
The Preserve Town
Hall
601 Preserve Way*

*Music Provided by
Bumpus Middle
School Jazz Band*

*"Moonshine, gamblers &
outlaws, oh my!"*

Alabama, the 22nd state to join the union in 1819, has a rich and diverse history. Along with Shelby County, south Jefferson County was largely wilderness area, with dense forests and rugged hills and mountains. The first settlers arrived mainly through Jones Valley, a natural corridor that runs from northeast to southwest.

On the other side of Shades Mountain, the area that is now Hoover remained isolated and undeveloped for a long time. The terrain was favorable ...

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Save the Date!

Board Meeting

March 12

Board meeting at
the Archive/Office
2020 Valleydale
#108 10 AM

General Meeting

March 19

Hoover Public
Library meeting
room, downstairs
1 PM

HHS Open House

April 14

The Preserve Town
Hall at 601
Preserve Way
2 - 4 PM





Huntsville is setting for AHA

The Alabama Historical Association is hosting its 76th annual Meeting in historic Huntsville April 10, 11, & 12 (Wednesday, Thursday, Friday) at the Huntsville Marriott at the Space & Rocket Center, 5 Tranquility Base, 35805.

Information about the meeting including paper presentation, keynote speakers, tours, and pre-meeting

activities is available at <https://www.alabamahistory.net/newsletter>. Tickets range in price from \$30 - \$160. Early activities include the Huntsville Revisited Museum, Davidson Center for Space Exploration and the State Black Archives Research Center and Museum at Alabama A&M University. The opening reception is Wednesday, April 10, at the Huntsville Botanical Gardens. You do not have to be a member to attend!

Aliceville: German POW Museum is focus of HHS Spring Trip

Learning about history with one's friends is so much fun! That's why Spring Trips sponsored by the HHS are special. Are you aware that Alabama has WWII history in Aliceville? On March 11, you can join us on our Spring Trip to Aliceville.

An alien program was established in 1939-40 due to the threat of war. Internment camps for German and Italian* prisoners of war might be needed. Plans were made in Seattle, WA by a joint Army-Navy commission for building camps to house POWs. For example, prisoners taken in the North African campaign under Field Marshal Rommel were put on ships, taken to New York, then transported by train to the Southwest or Aliceville, beginning in 1943.

POW camps were known by four-digit numbers. The 1434th SCU was Aliceville's numerical designation and housed 6,150 POWs. Today, the curator at the Aliceville Museum receives descendants of those German prisoners and became friends with many of the internees over past decades.

Other stops include the Carrollton Courthouse to see the Face in the Courthouse Window (& hear the story!) and Tuscaloosa with lunch at your own expense. Contact information in the flyer.

*POW camps differed from Japanese Internment Camps that were established later, but all foreign nationals were referred to as 'aliens' at that time.



ALICEVILLE GERMAN POW MUSEUM
HOOVER HISTORICAL SOCIETY SPRING TRIP
MARCH 11, 2024
 DEPART HOOVER PUBLIC SAFETY CENTER, 2020 VALLEYDALE ROAD AT 8:30
 LIST - Email j091849@yahoo.com or text 205-099-1318
 LUNCH AT OWN EXPENSE
 RESERVATION: \$20 ; CK TO JIM LANGLEY, 1120 DANBERRY LANE, HOOVER 35242, OR VENMO @JIMMY-LANGLEY-2 OR PAYPAL j091849@yahoo.com
 LUNCH AT OWN EXPENSE
 During World War II, approximately 425,000 Axis soldiers were interned in over 500 POW camps in the U.S. One of the largest camps, with a capacity of over 5,000 POWs, was located at Aliceville, Alabama. The camp, which encompassed over 800 acres, employed more than 1,000 American military and civilian personnel. (BOOK BY RUTH COOK)
 Other stops include Carrollton Court house and Tuscaloosa.



Left: Docent Melissa McLemore and VP Pam Thompson attended the Chamber of Commerce to hear Mayor Frank Brocato's State of the City Address; center, Bumpus Middle School Jazz Band will perform at our Open House April 14th; and right, Linda Joseph as Page & Teller of the AL Society of Colonial Dames Seventeenth Century.

A message from our president...

Hello, History Lovers!

As the days continue to march at a steady pace, we turn to glance behind us and realize how quickly time goes by. For example, the moving of the Stinson Ole Place to the Bluff Park area of Hoover to become the Folklore Center was 26+ years ago. As I remember that occasion, I find myself thinking, "It can't possibly be that long ago!" To put that into perspective, that far into the future will be 2050!

Doesn't that seem far off? Back when the Hoover Historical Society was formed, the mission statement that was written remains our guide. The by-laws, too, are perfectly relevant for the most part. However, one thing that we need to revisit is the dollar amount of dues—we have remained at only \$10 per person or \$20 per couple for this entire quarter of a century. This year, for the first time, our ten-dollar dues were not quite enough to cover our expenses. So, we are considering a change that will be voted on at an upcoming meeting and which we hope will be enough for the next quarter of a century.

Single dues will be \$20 or \$30 per couple. Other levels remain the same: \$50 for Sustaining members; \$100 Patron members, and \$150 for Corporate members. We are fortunate to have been able to remain at this low cost for such a long time, and we are happy that we are still a bargain for all the things that we offer: Official

Archivist for the City of Hoover, the Folklore Center that teaches about Colonial days, and our incredible newsletter. We also offer free programs five times a year, such as this year's latest talks on the History of Bluff Park and the finding of the last slave ship, the *Clotilde*. We offer all this, plus an opportunity to sign up for a spring trip that is always exciting. As you can see, we remain a bargain!

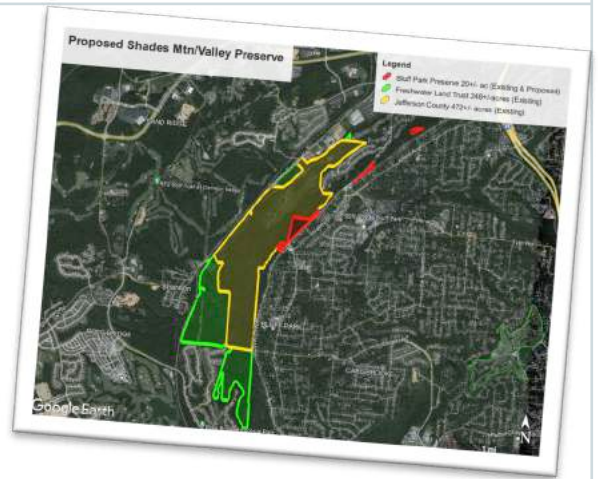
Speaking of Colonial days, I served as a Page and Teller at the Alabama Society of Colonial Dames Seventeenth Century state conference in Eufaula. These ladies are proud of their pre-American heritage and are seeking to preserve history, doing civic-minded tasks, and remaining a most patriotic group. At this conference we marked the Shorter Mansion for its historical significance. We are fortunate to have a dozen chapters in our state. As mentioned in a previous newsletter, Colonial Dames XVII Century reaches back to those ancestors here prior to 1701. Their mission and the mission of Hoover Historical Society remain nearly identical. It is a good feeling to know that many groups appreciate the value of our history.

I do hope you will continue to find a welcome place at HHS as we continue to preserve and remember the history of our beautiful city, surrounding counties, and state.

Linda Joseph

FOSM update is good news!

The Friends of Shades Mountain (FOSM) has been working on a proposed Bluff Park Preserve (BPP) and how that might become part of a larger recreational park including lands owned by Jefferson County and Freshwater Land Trust* The proposed BPP would consist of four properties: Lover’s Leap, the property formerly leased by the Tip Top Grill, Hale Springs, and the property at 712 Shades Crest Road owned by FOSM.



FOSM submitted the proposed BPP to the Hoover task force working on the Hoover Parks and Open Spaces Plan, and President Larry Rodick stated, “I am pleased to announce that the final draft of the Hoover Parks, Public Spaces + Recreation Plan includes our proposed BPP and names FOSM as the leading covener of the various property owners and jurisdictional partners to determine the feasibility of a large scale preservation effort.” The Appendix includes the petition promoting the preserve, orchestrated by Board member Peggy Quinn, including the 700+ signers of that petition.

The map shows how the BPP and adjacent lands could go together to form a larger preserve. For more info, contact Larry Rodick at friendsofshadesmountain@gmail.com.

Mayor’s ‘State of City’ emphasizes growth

As of the 2020 census, Hoover ranks as the largest suburban city and sixth largest city overall with a population of 92K+. Each January, Mayor Frank Brocato delivers a state-of-the-city address at several locations and on YouTube. He stated, “Our city is booming and it’s setting us apart.”

Improving the quality of life in Hoover is reflected in its growth and projects. New artificial turf, continued work on the trail system, new subdivisions, a Class 1 rating from the Insurance Services Office for the fire department, outstanding schools, and the Riverchase surgical and diagnostic center for which a Certificate of Need has been filed. Hoover continues to host the SEC Baseball Tournament and Regions Tradition golf tournament and hosts thousands from around the USA for training at the National Computer Forensics Institute at the Public Safety Center. To learn more:

<https://bit.ly/2jvAaUD>



Projects include a facelift for the Met, new housing for seniors, and a hotel at Stadium Trace Village.



Jimmy W. Langley: Writer, Artist, Story Teller

HHS's March presentation...continued from Page 1

Jim Langley, originally from Vernon in Lamar County, AL, is now a resident of the Inverness Section of Hoover. He is married to the former Ann Whitehead of Nashville, TN. Jim graduated from Jacksonville State University with a degree in Political Science and from the University of Oklahoma with a Master's in Public Administration. He was a Distinguished Military Graduate receiving an Army commission in 1971, and served active-duty tours in Alaska; Fort Sill, OK; and Korea, before retiring as a Lieutenant Colonel in the US Army Reserves. He was the Freedom Award winner for Hoover in 2021.

During his civilian career, Mr. Langley spent 15 years with BellSouth Communications and had shorter professional associations with Dowzer Electric, SITEL, DES, and AIDS Alabama. In retirement, Langley has become a prolific writer, artist and storyteller. He is well known for his book on Southern Sayings—*Delmont's Slang Blade: 1000 of the Best Sayings in the Great State of Alabama*—and a book about Oak Hill, the oldest cemetery in Birmingham (plus he conducts walking tours of the cemetery.) He has also led many trips and tours for the Hoover Historical Society and Hoover Seniors the last few years including local tours in Birmingham and Hoover, tours of important places in our local Civil Right history, and tours of Red Mountain Park. He is an immediate past President of the Hoover Historical Society.

For more information, visit www.Langley.Rocks or read the article recently published about Langley in *Hoover Sun* news source

[HOOVER SUN ARTICLE ON JIM LANGLEY](#)

<http://hooversun.com/peopleplaces/author-shares-family-wit-local-legends1125/>



Moonshine, gamblers & outlaws, oh my!

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for outlaws and moonshiners, who made their own liquor from corn and other ingredients. They also engaged in gambling, a popular pastime that often involved cheating and violence.

As the city of Birmingham grew in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, thanks to the booming iron and steel industry, the over the mountain outlaws and moonshiners expanded their operations and preyed on the new miners and workers. They sold them illegal liquor and enticed them to gamble away their hard-earned money. The situation worsened during the Prohibition era, when the federal government banned the production, sale, and consumption of alcohol from 1920 to 1933. In the 50s and 60s, the Dixie Mafia, with local affiliates, expanded the corruption in the area. The outlaws and moonshiners saw this as a golden opportunity to make more money and power. They also got involved in other criminal activities, such as bootlegging, prostitution, smuggling, racketeering, and corruption.

At the March meeting, we will explore some of the most fascinating and notorious stories of the illicit activities that took place in what is now Hoover. These stories span from the early days of the first settlers to the present day.

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HOOVER HISTORICAL SOCIETY
Membership Form

Make checks payable to Hoover Historical Society
P.O. Box 360233 Hoover, Alabama 35236-0233

Or pay online via Pay Pal at our website:
www.hooverhistoricalsociety.org

Types of Membership	
Individual	\$20
Couple	\$30
Sustaining	\$50
Patron	\$100
Corporate	\$150

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

E-MAIL: _____

PHONE: (Home) _____ (Work) _____ (Cell) _____

INTERESTS: Archives/Historical Research _____	Folklore Center Volunteer _____	Other _____
SKILLS: Computer _____	Fundraising _____	Publicity _____ Leadership _____
SPEAKERS/PROGRAM SUGGESTIONS: _____		

The Hoover Historical Society

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Recipient:

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