



**Celebrating the 40th Anniversary
of the rebirth in 1976 of the
Birmingham Historical Society**
You are cordially invited to attend
***A Victorian
Valentine Party***
Sunday, February 14, 2016, 2:30-4:30 P.M.
Brief Remarks and Election of Officers and Trustees, 3:30 P.M.
The W.S. Brown House-The Clubhouse on Highland
2908 Highland Avenue, grade-level parking in the rear.
2016 Dues, Hats, Gloves, and Calling Cards will be welcomed.



Birmingham Terminal Station. Courtesy Marvin Clemons.

Book Signing at Annual Meeting

Marvin Clemons will join us to sign copies of his recently released *Great Temple of Travel—A Pictorial History of Birmingham Terminal Station, 1909–1969*. Chock full of photographs of the station and the trains that ran in and out of it, the book charts tales of Birmingham’s most beloved landmark. For more information, see www.templeoftravel.net. The collector’s edition will sell for \$50.00 at the meeting.

Trustees and Officers to Be Elected

Carol Slaughter, chairman of the Nominating Committee, reports that all Trustees and Officers listed on this letterhead will continue to serve in 2016 and that the names of Gail Cosby and Judy Jones will be submitted for election as new Trustees. A special thank you to Anne Heppenstall, who is stepping down.

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Ms. Barbara S. Shores
Ms. Paula Stanton
Mr. Ben B. Thompson
Ms. Karen Utz
Ms. Marion Walker

Reminiscences on the Annual Meeting of 1976 and Getting the Society Running Again

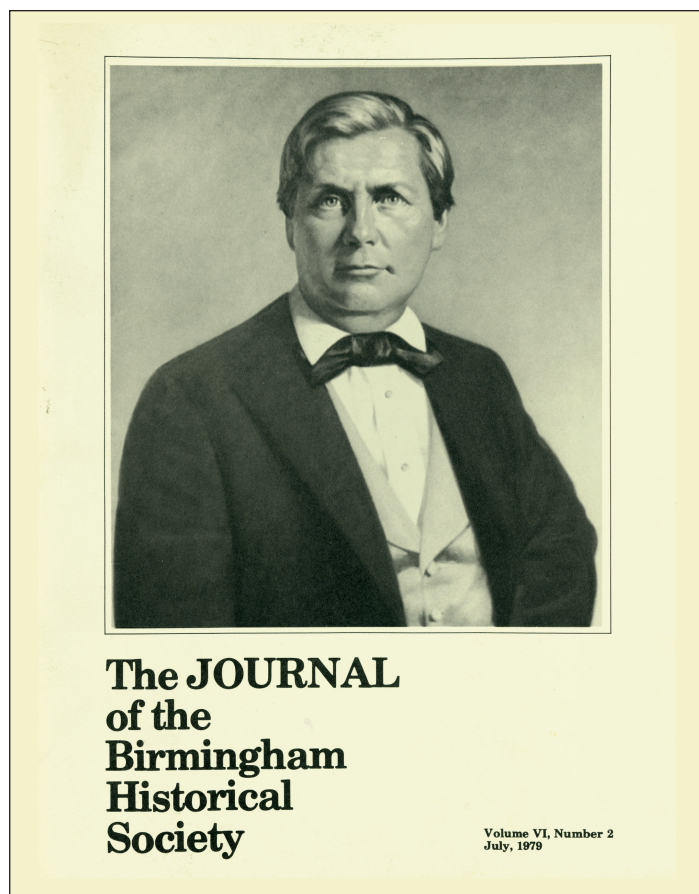
By Marjorie L. White

There have been two Birmingham Historical Societies. The first was established in November 1942 by the gentleman scholar **John C. Henley Jr.** Descendants of Birmingham's founding families met at today's Linn-Henley Library; collected documents for the library; published a *JOURNAL*, newsletters, and bulletins; erected historical markers; and helped save Arlington Antebellum House and the Tannehill Furnaces. Younger leaders came on board in the succeeding years to reinvigorate the group, but in 1963 they decided no one was interested in Birmingham's present or past, and the Society was closed.

As the nation's Bicentennial of the American Revolution approached, interest grew in things historical and in restarting the Society. On January 7, 1976, **Richard A. Bowron** provided the leadership to do so. Members

assembled in the Botanical Gardens auditorium to hear a talk and elect officers and trustees. I do not recall who spoke, but the Birmingham Publishing Company house band played, making the occasion festive.

The new officers, several of whom had been active in the former Society, were eager to restart the publishing program and sought out **Marvin Whiting**, **Ed** and **Ruth LaMonte**, and **Lyn Johns** to write, edit, and pull together *The JOURNAL*. With its volunteer staff, *The JOURNAL* would continue through 15 issues until 1987. The Society then adopted a single annual publication that is distributed, as was *The JOURNAL*, to members as a membership benefit.



This 1979 issue of *The JOURNAL* featured an essay on Charles Linn, sea captain, banker, industrialist, early Birmingham booster.



Terra cotta and marble detail, the Florentine Building. Photograph by Richard W. Sprague, Birmingham Historical Society, 1977.

My election as an officer that January eve in 1976 came because James White, my history-major spouse, advised the nominating committee who called wanting him to serve to “Take Marjorie; she would enjoy that.” I was not from Birmingham, but I had degrees in Romance languages, teaching experience at the University of Alabama at Birmingham and the Birmingham Museum of Art, and a desire to write a Michelin-type guidebook to the city. I was 31 years old. When I told the newly elected **President Bowron**, whom I first met that January eve of the Annual Meeting, that I wanted not only to write a guidebook but also to start a historic preservation movement, he replied, “Marjorie, you don’t want to give the valley back to the Indians, do you? We’ll talk about this later.”

My first opportunity to work on the guidebook came when **Warner Floyd**, then Director of the Alabama Historical Commission in Montgomery, decided that the Commission’s annual conference would be held in the state’s largest city during the Bicentennial. A letter came to Society **President Bowron**, and it was passed about **John Henley’s** office from gentleman to gentleman, each of whom said “Good idea” and passed it on until it landed in my lap. Birmingham Historical Society was invited to organize presentations and tours for the spring conference.

To plan and execute the activities, I searched the newspapers for persons active in historic preservation (**Lib Brown** had made a valiant stand to save the Terminal Station) and recruited friends. **Gray Plosser** produced the opening slide show, which featured a sequence of great historic buildings and the parking lots that replaced them. **Lib Brown** said a driving tour should go to the mansions of the barons of iron and steel and that we would have a picnic in Rhodes Park. Sounded fabulous, but where were these places? I arranged for a bus, and **Margot Marx** supervised City of Birmingham Public Works crews as they dug through layers of mud and debris to reveal the wading pool and benches in Rhodes Park. Highland Avenue had not yet returned to its original glory in 1976; it did have new trees in a new median.

Art historian **Ellen Erdreich** was to lead the downtown walking tour. We prepared 3" x 5" cards recording the information we could find on the buildings. When the day came, Ellen said that I should talk. We got to the Florentine Building at 21st Street and 2nd Avenue North, at which point the distinguished participants—including Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) preservation architects **Harvey Jones** from Huntsville and **Nicholas Holmes**

from Mobile—stared in amazement. Unable to speak, I said, “Well, what do you all think?” They gushed forth with fabulous comments. And so the first Downtown Discovery Tour proceeded, with the participants offering eloquent appraisals of the deteriorated building stock. Despite their poor condition at the time, Birmingham’s historic buildings sold themselves.

BIRMINGHAM HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Founded November 5, 1942

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Marvin Yeomans Whiting

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1976–2016

Reactivated January 7, 1976

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Mr. Richard W. Sprague
Ms. Lillie M. H. Fincher
Mr. Wayne A. Hester

Officers and Trustees Serving (and Still Serving) the Society and Historic Preservation as Trustees

Listed with their first projects with the Society

40 YEARS

Mrs. James H. White III (Marjorie), attempting to write a Michelin guide to Birmingham

Mr. Harold M. Goings, serving as Membership Chair

35 YEARS

Mrs. Thomas A. Adams (Cathy), serving as a Discovery Tour guide

Ms. Alice M. Bowsher, becoming the Society's first director, 1978–1982

Mr. Charles S. Caldwell III, providing security for the Society's offices at Sloss Furnaces

Mrs. Ehney A. Camp III (Pat), chairing the initial Downtown Discovery Tours

Mr. Richard W. Sprague, photographing downtown Birmingham streetscapes

30 YEARS

Ms. Kaydee Erdreich Breman, helping wherever needed

Mr. Samuel H. Frazier, negotiating the Society's move to and lease with Sloss

Mr. Wayne A. Hester, researching the Empire Building in the Society's files to convince his client to restore it

Ms. Linda J. Nelson, helping Alice Bowsher research Five Points South

Mr. Richard R. Randolph III, attempting to locate property to be donated to the Society's Endowment

Mr. Henry B. Ray Jr., attempting to locate property to be donated to the Society's Endowment

Mrs. Johnny Roberts (Carolanne), writing press for the "A Day in Old Birmingham" festival

Ms. Carol L. Slaughter, proofreading a publication

25 YEARS

Mrs. Frank McPhillips (Louise), illustrating 20th Street's buildings for a brochure and exhibit at the Harbert Center

Also serving for more than 30 Years

Judy Brown, the Society's accountant since 1982

Scott Fuller, designer of the Society's invitations, newsletters, and publications

Public Funding and Public Servants

Birmingham Historical Society is a not-for-profit corporation and a membership organization. Both individual and corporate members pay annual dues, meet, receive benefits, help fund programs, and elect the Officers and Trustees to set policy and hire the director. Private foundations and corporations also make substantial financial contributions to support the Society's educational programs. The Society sells its publications to generate additional funds.

However, over the past 40 years, public funding—principally from the City of Birmingham and the National Park Service—has provided the significant support to advance documentation, registration, and preservation of historical buildings and sites, the underpinning of the historic preservation movement. Several politicians have helped support and make possible the preservation of historic resources across our community. At our annual meeting we will honor:

Valerie Abbott, Councilor, the City of Birmingham

Ben Erdreich, Congressman, Alabama's 6th Congressional District

David Herring, Councilor, the City of Birmingham

Reflections on the Second Society's Early Operations

By Marjorie L. White

Note: To get your name in boldface type in the newsletter was the highest accolade accorded Society volunteers.

John Henley III jump-started the Society in 1976 with a \$10,000 grant for operating funds from the Linn-Henley Charitable Trust. With **Jack Monaghan** as Treasurer, these funds lasted seemingly forever. At the restart, the Society was an all-volunteer operation.

The Discovery Tours for School Groups

Historic preservation was a hard sell to adults in Birmingham in 1976. No one in Birmingham thought anything in the city "old." Their parents and grandparents had built it. "Old" in the South was in Charleston, Mobile, or New Orleans, not in Birmingham. Undeterred, the Society focused its initial educational programming on those who would listen: children under the age of 8.

Presidents of the Society, **Richard Bowron** and **John Bradley**, ran day-to-day Society operations from their business offices at Alabama Power and Resource Management,

including the mailings to members, meeting logistics, and typing of everything, especially applications for grants. **Richard Bowron's** fleet of secretarial assistants typed the Society's 1976 grant to the National Trust for Historic Preservation to underwrite a program proposed as "Downtown: An Outdoor Classroom" and the "Downtown Discovery Tour." The White family (James, Marjorie, Marjorie Lee (age 7), James (age 6), and Goodloe (age 4)) stayed at a hotel in Washington, D.C., so that I could walk across the street and hand-deliver the grant to the National Trust offices, on the December due date.

When I arrived with our beautifully typed bundle of great ideas at the National Trust office, there was no one there to receive the delivery. Nonetheless, Boston University and Birmingham Historical Society were awarded the first national grants in a brand-new field: Heritage Education, based on teaching the next generation to appreciate (deteriorated) historic buildings!

The Society applied to the Junior League of Birmingham for funds to match the Trust grant and volunteers to become docents for the Downtown Discovery Tours for school children. The League selected **Pat Camp** to head the first of many years of League financial and volunteer support. **Diana Plosser** was essential in helping develop the tours and cultivate League support for the program. Diana once brought her daughter **Lucia Plosser (Tabb)** in a stroller to conduct a discovery tour when her babysitter didn't show up.

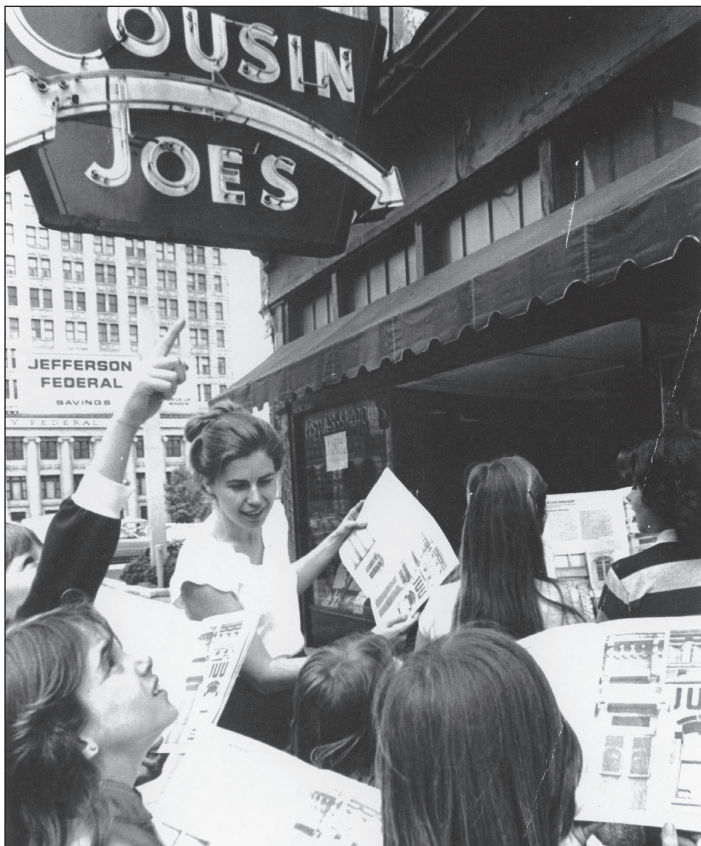
Dwight Young of the National Trust for Historic Preservation came to speak and told us what a treasure trove of buildings of every period of our (albeit short) history we had in downtown Birmingham!

Martin Hames, then headmaster of the Altamont School, gave the Discovery Tour program a big boost. The pre-tour slide-show/pep talk was shown to the entire school, and Hames signed up legions of students for tours. The Discovery Tours were no longer just an idea or a published booklet.

Each of many falls, the new volunteer guides had no idea where downtown was, but once they and the school groups found their way to the city center, the derelict "old" buildings worked their magic on those who could see with eyes of love.

The Society's First Books

Rick Sprague's 1977 photographic inventory of downtown buildings became the basis for our first book, *Downtown Birmingham—An Architectural and Historical Walking Tour Guide*, which Rick and I wrote and Rick designed. The First National Bank of Birmingham financed and sold the publication in all its 57 branches. With the support of First National President



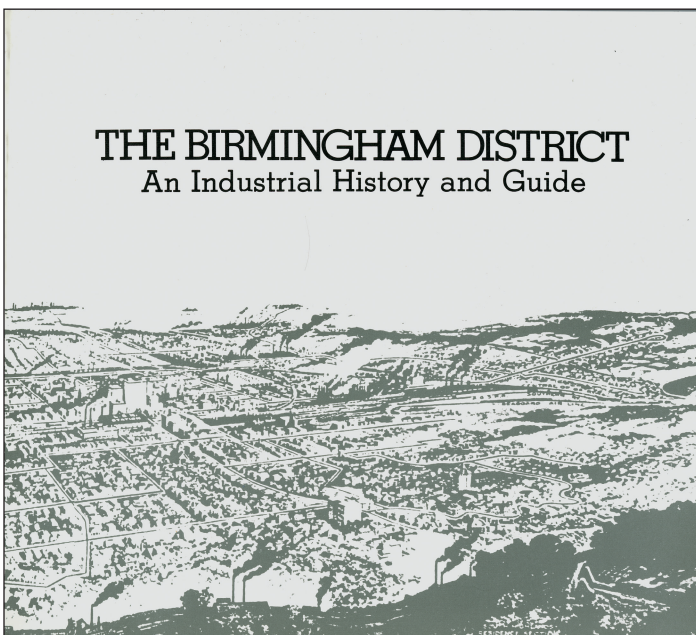
This photograph of a 1977 Discovery Tour led by Marjorie White accompanied the announcement of the National Trust grant. The children were searching for architectural details on an "old" building along Second Avenue North.



2117 Second Avenue North. Photograph by Richard W. Sprague, Birmingham Historical Society, 1977. For their law offices, Sam Frazier and Spain, Gillon, Tate, Grooms & Blan rebuilt this 1889 retail store and restored its cast-iron façade, reopening it to great acclaim in 1985.

Newton DeBardleben and then Vice President **Bill Powell**, more than 5,000 copies were sold in a month. We thought publishing books was a lark!

Downtown Birmingham became the guide for renovation of downtown buildings. **Rick Sprague's** photographs also served as the basis of the many National Register of Historic Places nominations of downtown property the Society prepared. The National Register is the nation's official list of historic properties worthy of preservation. **Mayor David Vann** halted the first major nomination drafted by the Society with the Birmingham Chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) and permitted only the downtown churches to be nominated, but under **Mayor Richard Arrington**, additional nominations laid



the groundwork for the federal tax incentives that would help grow Birmingham's commercial preservation movement. By 1990, the Society's *Cinderella Stories—Historic Transformations of Birmingham Buildings* recorded 152 preservation successes in the city center.

The Society's second major publication (part 2 of the "Michelin Guide to Birmingham"), *The Birmingham District—An Industrial History and Guide*, came out in 1981. By this time, First National Bank had become AmSouth Bank. A new marketing department from Atlanta did not think the book projected the appropriate image for the city. **Bill Powell**, then President of AmSouth and a strong supporter of history and the Society, escorted me to the bank's loan counter, where the Society took out a loan to pay the printing bill! Publishing was *not* a lark. While *The Birmingham District* set national precedents for interest in and support for industrial heritage, it took many years for industrial heritage to be accepted, appreciated, and preserved in our community.

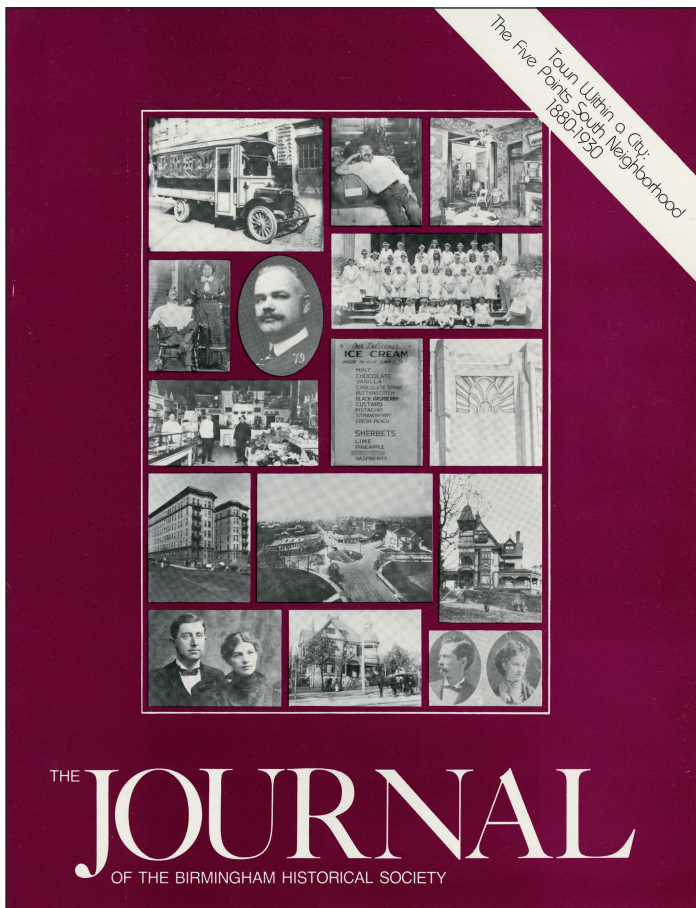
Staffing the Society

David Herring, a City of Birmingham Councilman in the late 1970s, had the special duty to identify organizations that might employ Comprehensive Educational Training Act (CETA) workers. At the time, the federally funded CETA program provided jobs for persons unemployed for 30 days. With CETA funds, the Society paid our first staffer, **Camille Agricola (Bowman)**. **Bitsy Williams (Windsor)** followed close behind. Both passionately addressed digging into historical records on downtown buildings. **Alice Meriwether Bowsher** and **Marvin Whiting** would also become CETA workers: Alice as the first Director of the Society and Marvin as the first Archivist of the newly created Department of Archives and Manuscripts at Birmingham Public Library. Marvin also became the volunteer editor of the Society's *JOURNAL*.

For several years, BHS Treasurer **Jack Monaghan** handled the complicated bookkeeping and financial reimbursements necessary to pay BHS's CETA employees. At one time, the Society employed as many as five CETA workers. The Society's office was in one room of a house at 1425 22nd Street South, across from the Red Mountain Museum. CETA did not last forever, but it provided professional leadership, research assistants, educational program staff, and helping hands to nurture and grow this volunteer organization and its research and educational initiatives.

Alice Meriwether Bowsher Comes Home

When architectural historian and former National Trust for Historic Preservation staffer **Alice Bowsher** came back to Birmingham from Washington in 1978, she brought professionalism and an understanding of how to work with public officials to advance the cause of historic preservation.



Fortunately for all, **Mike Dobbins** had become chief planner for the City of Birmingham and supported historic resource surveys, National Register nominations, local historic districting, public improvements in the newly created historic districts, and many other successful ventures. The City of Birmingham funded these surveys and nominations. **David Herring** and later **Valerie Abbott**, with her astute and always-tuned-in-to-what-we-considered-appropriate-concerns assistant **Martha Espy**, were there to help historic preservation take root in many newly designated districts and neighborhoods of the City of Birmingham during the administrations of Mayors **Richard Arrington** and **Bernard Kincaid**.

Alice Bowsher and **Ann Burkhardt** obtained a National Endowment for the Humanities grant to fund their Five Points South research and the 1982 publication *Town Within a City: The Five Points South Neighborhood, 1880-1930*, which followed on the heels of a historic resources survey of more than 2,000 Southside properties and several National Register district nominations. These provide opportunities for federal and state tax incentives that owners of the city center properties have used effectively for renovations in subsequent years.

The City of Birmingham and the Alabama Historical Commission (AHC) funded the surveys and nominations of

historic resources to the National Register of Historic Places. An initial grant in 1979 to the Society for the nomination of more than 130 buildings in the Downtown Birmingham and Fourth Avenue North districts was \$3,499.43. Clearly, mission and zeal propelled this diligent and meticulous research and completion of the voluminous forms that fill our files. Future grants provided funds to research and nominate thousands of buildings in Pratt City, Smithfield, Thomas, Woodlawn, Avondale, Roebuck Springs, and Roebuck Terrace neighborhoods. **Ellen Mertins** at the AHC provided guidance.

Throughout the 1990s, City funds supported research on civil rights churches and other sites important to the Birmingham Civil Rights Movement. During the administration of **Mayor Bernard Kincaid**, **Vicki Reynolds** oversaw the nominations prepared for the City. These included the Birmingham Civil Rights District with march routes to City Hall and the Retail District, the Dynamite Hill District along Center Street, the applications for National Historic Landmark status for Bethel Baptist Church and 16th Street Baptist Church, and the successful application to the World Heritage Tentative List for these two churches. **Mayor Kincaid** wrote the supporting letter for World Heritage himself. Society research also elevated the Vulcan statue and park to the status of an American Treasure; the Bethel and 16th

FHR 6-300 (11-78)

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

For HCRS use only
received _____
date entered _____

1. Name

historic Downtown Birmingham Historic District

and/or common _____

2. Location

2000-2400 blocks 2nd Avenue North, 2000 block 3rd Avenue North, 200 block 20th Street & number Street, part of 100 & 200 blocks 21st, 22nd, 23rd, 24th not for publication
Streets and part of 300 blocks of 20th & 21st Streets

city, town Birmingham vicinity of _____ congressional district 6

state Alabama code 01 county Jefferson code 073

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name See attached list of property owners

street & number _____

city, town _____ vicinity of _____ state _____

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Jefferson County Courthouse

street & number 716 21st Street North

city, town Birmingham state Alabama

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Downtown Birmingham 1977; Jefferson County Historic Sites Survey, 1976 and 1972;
title NRHP 1579 (Watts Building, Waters Building) Has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1972, 1976, 1977, 1979 federal state county local

depository for survey records Birmingham Historical Society & Jefferson County
Historical Commission

city, town Birmingham state Alabama



Street churches and the Gaston Motel also received this honor. The Society also documented and mapped 60 churches where the Birmingham movement met.

A New Home for the Society

Returning to 1980, a City of Birmingham bond issue (set so high that everyone thought the voters would turn it down) passed, and \$5,000,000 was provided for the restoration and reopening of Sloss Furnaces. The Historic American Engineering Record (HAER), a documentation agency of the National Park Service, had recorded the site in 1976, and Sloss was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1981.

The Society, with the support of the First National Bank of Birmingham, had commissioned Alabama ghost laureate **Kathryn Tucker Windham** to write the story of Theophilis Calvin Jowers, *The Ghost of the Sloss Furnaces*. In 1977, the annual telling of this tale at Red Mountain Museum served as press for the hope that something appropriate would be done with the rusting furnaces, closed in 1973. In the 1980s, no one anywhere in the world had a clue what to do with a



Above: For the 1980 annual telling of Kathryn Windham's tale of the Ghost in the Sloss Furnaces, *Birmingham News* feature writer Elma Bell had this photograph made at the Sloss site. James White and Margaret and Ehney Camp check out the possibilities of a "real" ghost

at the abandoned site. Sloss had received bond issue funding earlier that year. Below: The Society's new offices arrive at the future site of Sloss Quarters. Photograph made for Elma Bell's story in *The Birmingham News*, August 1985.



large-scale, iron-producing furnace site. Industry scrapped such sites and built new operations when plants became as obsolete as these furnaces were. They produced little iron by 1970s standards and lacked pollution control devices.

Sam Frazier, chair of the Sloss Furnaces Board in the 1980s, led a national search to locate **Dr. Randall Lawrence** to become director of Sloss. Randy, who had just completed a \$250,000 exhibition on Appalachian coal mining for West Virginia Governor **Jay Rockefeller**, provided the vision to restore Sloss Furnaces as a Museum of the City of Birmingham. As **Philip McWane** said, "Randy taught us that something that was worth nothing WAS worth something."

Randy Lawrence was charismatic. He encouraged Birmingham Historical Society to move a 1905 cottage in Boyles that the Alabama By-Products Company (ABC) would donate to the Society to provide offices for Society and Sloss staff. And so, with the assistance of **Sam Frazier** and **David Herring** (still a City of



Above: Pat Camp, Lucy Thompson, and Emily Rushing check out progress on the Society's offices at the future Sloss Quarters. *Below:* Volunteers in Preservation (the VIPs) Marjorie Lee White, Claire Datnow and her daughter Robin, strip doors. Claire Datnow wrote teacher materials and conducted teacher workshops for the Discovery Tour program. Photographs, Birmingham Historical Society, 1985.

Birmingham Councilman), the Society removed the roof of the cottage, moved the cottage to the future site of Sloss Quarters, rebuilt the roof with the original timbers, and constructed a new roof and commercial foundations to the standards of City of Birmingham inspectors. **Volunteers in Preservation**, the VIPs, showed up in legions to strip and refinish the heart-pine woodwork. **Gordon Graham** kicked everyone out and worked his refinishing magic. The 10-inch pine baseboards and door framing are still glorious. **Russell Cunningham** also rescued the exhausted volunteer strippers and had the doors professionally refinished.

Our new offices became three rooms, a shared hall, a kitchen, and a bathroom. We found surplus Army desks and furniture for the offices, but **Steve Williams** let me select conference-room furnishings from Protective Life's collection. The highly skilled researcher **Madge Barefield** served as the Society's paid staffer at this time. Other organizations were supposed to move to the future Sloss Quarters to help it grow, but they did not. It was a desolate slag pile that **Pat Camp** covered with 14 loads of donated dirt to provide proper drainage. When vandals stole our heat pump, it was one cold winter. Thanks to the sleuthing of **George Wheelock**, Birmingham police found and returned the heat pump. They also advised a fence around the Sloss site. We celebrated completion of the Society's new offices with a Victorian Valentine Party in 1985.

Sloss's **Randy Lawrence** gave the Society funds to run educational programs at Sloss, including **Kathryn Windham's** telling of the Ghost of the Sloss Furnaces, the first night-time event at the furnaces. The First National Bank of Birmingham supported what was considered a risky event in that unknown, off-the-beaten-path place called Sloss. **Betty Bock** got a church bus and picked up children from the Southtown housing project to fill the amphitheater cast shed. It was a grand success and the forerunner of many more Society and Sloss sponsored events, including the dedication of the historical marker followed by the first party at Water Tower Plaza and the Best of Birmingham festival.

Documenting and Saving Our Industrial Heritage

Randy Lawrence learned that industrial heritage ventures in other parts of the United States were receiving substantial federal funding. Randy and I called upon our Congressman, **Ben Erdreich**, who listened intently and responded, "I think this calls for a little study."

In 1991, the little study came through the National Park Service's Atlanta Regional Office, whose staff did not want to do it. Birmingham Historical Society received the opportunity and \$250,000 to hire planners Cecil Jones & Associates (**Gary Cooper**, **Whilhelmene Williams**, and **Dale Fritz**) and industrial archeologist **Dr. Jack Bergstresser** to help photograph, document, draft histories, and plan for historic industrial sites across what became known as the five-county Birmingham Industrial Heritage District in Bibb, Jefferson, Shelby, Tuscaloosa, and Walker counties. The leading scholar in the history of science and technology, **Dr. Mel Kranzberg**, then emeritus at Georgia Tech, reflected on our findings in published comments. **Dr. David Lewis**, the historian of the recently released major history of Sloss Furnaces, then at Auburn, also provided reflections for the project. Society staffers **Bill Jones** and **Brenda Howell** conducted research and helped hold the vast operation together. The project was supposed to determine sites of national significance and organize them into a National Park Unit, an impossible task which everyone but the Atlanta park service staff ignored. I termed the field research conducted as we met with individuals and groups across the region not only historic documentation but also "collecting pipe dreams." The Society issued four reports plus planning recommendations for a to-be-restored Vulcan Park to become the visitor center for the region.

The National Park Service wanted additional research on civil rights sites. Many of those "pipe dreams" have come true.

The initial "little study" was followed by five summers of top-of-the-line National Park Service documentation through the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) and the Historic American Engineering Record (HAER). These Washington-based agencies sent teams of historians and architects to prepare measured and interpretive drawings,



PHOTO COURTESY OF EDDIE KEY

Gathered at The Tutwiler to discuss the Heritage Corridor project are, left to right, Randy Lawrence, director of Sloss Furnaces; Carol Slaughter, Park Service interpreter; Larry Oaks, executive director of the Alabama Historical Commission; Dwight Young, vice president of the National Trust for Historic Preservation; Paul Hartwig, National Park Service Regional Office; and Majorie White, chairman of the Birmingham Historical Society.

BHS to plan National Park in Birmingham

Photograph by Eddie Key, 1991. Published in the Alabama Historical Commission's *The Preservation Report*, Spring 1991, page 1.

histories, and photographs of Sloss Furnaces, Tannehill Furnaces, Vulcan and his park, Rickwood Field, Bethel Baptist Church, 16th Street Baptist Church, and the Alabama Theatre in the Birmingham area alone. The teams provided significant information to encourage the volunteer supporters of these historic places to undertake their renewal and restoration. **Terry Slaughter** turned the measured HABS front elevation drawing of Rickwood Field into a promotional rendering, and the Friends of Rickwood were off in their quest to reinvigorate the nation's oldest baseball grandstand.

The substantial documentation produced, including more than 600 large-format photographs by Jet Lowe, the National Park Service photographer, is online at the Library of Congress's Prints and Documents Division in the HABS-HAER collection. The Society produced *Birmingham Bound—An Atlas of the South's Premier Industrial Region* summarizing the work in 1997. The Society also produced the "Making It in the Birmingham District" exhibit, which opened at Washington's National Building Museum and traveled through the five-county Birmingham District, then resided for a decade at the McWane Science Center.

And thus, the publishing effort and preservation initiatives of the first Birmingham Historical Society continued to flourish through the contributions of many, many people in some of the educational programs and initiatives of Society No. 2 over the past 40 years. They continue. Read on.

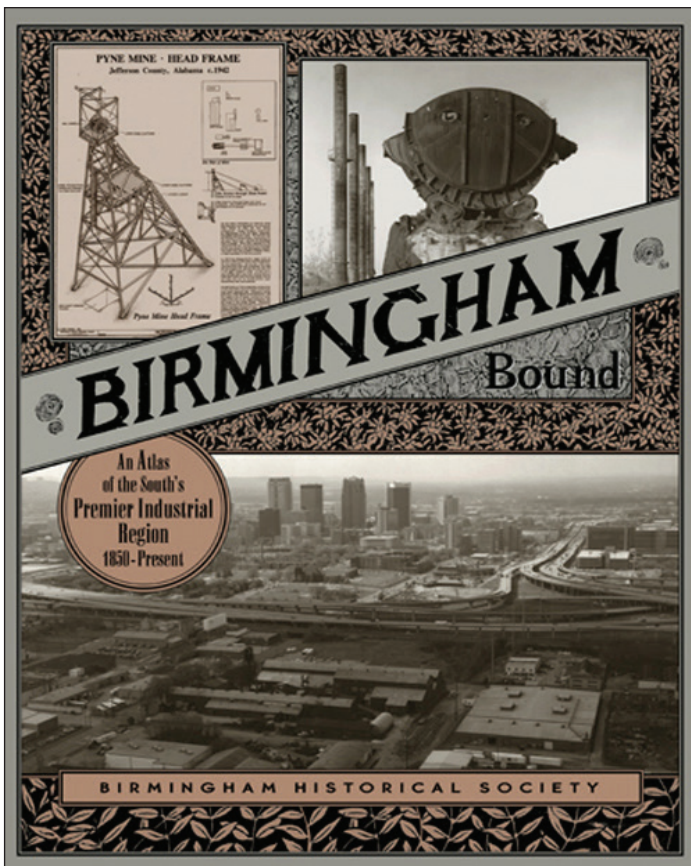
The Other Giant on Southside



Collecting an Air Sample on 20th Street on Southside. Photograph by Bob Mitchell Studio, 1955. Courtesy Southern Research. Air pollution work at Southern Research during the 1950s included a program to collect, count, and measure dust particles in air samples taken in industrial and business areas.

Birmingham Historical Society looks forward to completing the 2016 Members' Publication with Southern Research (SR) and celebrating SR's 75th anniversary this year. Our task has been to organize and explore SR's extensive and oft-unidentified collection of photographs by noted local and national photographers and to help illustrate essays being drafted by SR scientists under the direction of President and CEO Dr. Art Tipton and his predecessor Dr. Jack Secrist III.

You will be amazed at the accomplishments of SR scientists in the fields of engineering, space travel, air and water pollution control, heavy-metal strength testing, and especially the synthesis of new drugs for cancer chemotherapy. Most of us have no idea what is behind those immense building walls that line 20th and 21st Streets South. It is a diamond in our midst. We look forward to sharing the story of how it came to be and continues to enrich our lives and our community. Members will gather at the organization's Southside campus, which includes Quinlan Castle, for a publication celebration, date TBA.



A New Look at an Old Creek: Birmingham's Shades Creek

Tom Carruthers Sr. has been asking for a book about Shades Creek for years. Now, finally, Bruce Bizzoco, Birgit Kibelka, Julius Linn Jr., James Lowery, Hunter Nichols, Brian Rushing, Katie Tipton, Marjorie White, and Beth Maynor Young have been exploring, photographing, and mapping the creek, its tributaries, and its watershed, which includes the southern face of Red Mountain and the communities of Birmingham, Irondale, Mountain Brook, Homewood, Vestavia, Hoover, and Bessemer. We think we can, with more work, produce a very interesting historical look at the creek from geological time to the present day.

Birgit Kibelka and Julius Linn Jr. will present our recent study of the 42 crossings of the creek at the 7 p.m. February 11 meeting of the Friends of Shades Creek at the Homewood Public Library. Please come and bring friends.

Society Calendar

- **Thursday, February 11, 7:00 p.m.**
A New Look at an Old Creek. Friends of Shades Creek Meeting, Homewood Public Library.
- **Sunday, February 14, 2:30-4:30 p.m.**
A Victorian Valentine Party, celebrating the 40th Anniversary of the rebirth of the Birmingham Historical Society in 1976 and many of those who made it prosper. The Clubhouse on Highland, 2908 Highland Avenue.
- **March TBA.** The Spring Equinox **Plowing Party**, Grandmother's Garden, Sloss Quarters.
- **Sunday, April 24, Noon, Heritage Society Luncheon**, Johnson-Slaughter House, 2942 Cherokee Road.
- **TBA, Publication Celebration** of *For Science and Humanity—74 Years at Southern Research Institute*. Southern Research, and the Castle, 2000 9th Avenue South.
- **TBA, Publication Celebration** for the 300-page, 400-color photograph book: *Warren H. Manning, Landscape Architect and Environmental Planner* by the Library of Landscape History, Amherst, MA. Birmingham and Mountain Brook are in it.
- **Monday, February 27, 2017. Publication Celebration** for **Frances Robb** and her book: *Shot in Alabama—A History of Photography, 1839-1941*.

Announcing Second Saturdays at Sloss

Walks and Talks in the Garden

March to October, 10:30–11:30 a.m.

Grandmother's Garden, 10 North 32nd Street
Sloss Quarters

Rain or shine, but not in stormy weather

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| March 12 | Weeds—Friends or Foes?
With herbalist Antonia Viteri |
| April 9 | Building the Soil—Grandmother's Way
With horticulturalist Sallie Lee |
| May 14 | Kitchen Herbs—For Taste and Healing
Antonia Viteri |
| June 11 | Beneficial Bugs—Protectors and Pollinators - Sallie Lee |
| July 9 | Veggie Varieties—The Old-Timey Ones
Sallie Lee |
| August 13 | Designing an Heirloom Garden
Sallie Lee |
| September 10 | Heirloom Garden Workshop, 9am-1pm
Sallie Lee, Antonia Viteri; fee charged |
| October 8 | Roses—Their History and Use
Antonia Viteri |

About Grandmother's Garden

Located adjacent Birmingham Historical Society's 1905 house in Sloss Quarters, where industrial workers once lived and raised their food and medicine chest, the garden recreates a home garden of the early 20th century, the days before commercial fertilizers, hybrid seeds, and highly mechanized practices. Then and now, plots separated by gravel walks are laid out for a family's vegetables, kitchen and medicinal herbs, fruits, and flowers.

Sallie Lee is a horticulturalist who serves as an Urban Regional Extension Agent for the Alabama Cooperative Extension System, working with homeowners and school and community groups, such as Grandmother's Garden.

Antonia Viteri is an architect, landscape architect, and herbalist with certificates in Herbal Studies in California and from Alabama herbalist Phyllis Light of Arab.

Sponsored by **Birmingham Historical Society** and the **Alabama Cooperative Extension System** with the support of **Sloss Furnaces National Historic Landmark**.

All programs except the September 10 Workshop are free of charge.