

OUR NEXT MEETING IS TUESDAY, JANUARY 13, 2004 AT 6:30 P.M. AT THE MEMORIAL SOUTHERN METHODIST CHURCH ON ANDREW JACKSON WAY.

Please invite your neighbors to join us at this meeting

Five Points, by any other name...

A recent Huntsville Times restaurant review of the local eatery Thai Garden referred to its location in ...”the trendy historic neighborhood”. I realized it was the first time I had seen our neighborhood called “trendy”, and reflected on all the other words and phrases used in print over the past few years to describe Five Points.

Jewel

Jewel in Huntsville’s crown

Star

Bright and shining star

Bohemian

Quasi-Bohemian

Huntsville’s first sub-division

Huntsville’s first streetcar sub-division

Huntsville’s oldest sub-division

Eclectic

Huntsville’s most distinctive and colorful neighborhood

Ambience district

A Community

*Was not the most desirable area (*note: this was used in the past tense)*

Desirable

Unpretentious

Diverse

Nostalgic

Artsy part of town

Unusual flavor

Mayberry (said positively)

Mayberry (said negatively)

Bustling

Has so much character

Charming

For those of us who live here, it’s just called “Home”.

Every House Has A Story

By Judy Perszyk

719 Eustis Avenue: The Kendall House – 1910: Previously - 520 Maiden Lane

For every Historic Marker you see in our neighborhood, there is a history that traces the present homeowner to the 1st homeowner. In order to purchase a Historical Marker documentation must be furnished to determine the original owner of the home, and when the home was built. A chain of ownership is developed, and at first glance they are just names and dates, but they tell a story. Along with deeds, one can also find good information and dates in tax assessments, mortgages, old city directories, newspaper articles, Sanborn Maps, even census records and wills.

Continued on next page

Continued from 1st page

719 Eustis Avenue

Prior to 1910 - Virginia A. & Miss Fannie Cabiness

1910 - E. L. & Martha Kendall

1922 - J. L. & Bird Kendall

1927 - Dr. W. L. McCulloch

1946 - Leo & Lawsie Wall

1971 - Jack B. & Barbara McCulley

1999 - Present Darla Furman & Pamela DeLozier

According to Tax Assessment records this land remained vacant until 1910. E. L. Kendall bought Lot 5, Block 336, Old Town, April 8, 1910, and a Mortgage was found dated April 20, 1910. The present homeowners were able to locate Edward L. Kendall, Martha S. Kendall and Son Austin F. Kendall in the 1910 Census listed at this address. Both Father and Son were Lumber Merchants. They were also able to locate Edward L. Kendall in the 1920 Census, his age was listed as 75; also listed is wife Martha and son Austin. Austin's occupation is then listed as "Agent in the Lumber Industry". All were from Michigan. Present homeowners, Darla Furman & Pam DeLozier also provided old photos and a letter from a past neighbor. His descriptions and memories were so vivid. I hope you can close your eyes and imagine our neighborhood, as he describes it so well, at the turn of the Century. Robert E. Sparkman wrote this letter in 1981. He was born in 1906 while his family lived at 806 Wells Avenue, which is directly behind 719 Eustis Avenue. Roberts father, Robert L. Sparkman (1874-1953) moved to Huntsville from Marietta, Georgia early in 1903. The house that young Robert was born in was torn down; pieces were salvaged and reused, and they moved into their new home, built on the same lot, December 21, 1909. He remembered their horse and buggy (known as a run-about in those days) along with a cow that was kept at night in a small barn that was located about where the living room of 719 Eustis Avenue is today. Eustis was known then as Maiden Lane and was open, but unimproved in any way. They used the area extending behind their property, up to the Maple Hill Cemetery gate as "the cow pasture". Roberts father "usually fed and watered "Coley" the horse, before we ate breakfast. He then was curried and harnessed up to the buggy and was available for any transportation needed. My fathers Monument Business needs came first. My mother also used the rig for trips to town, such as visiting friends and just the pleasure of driving around when there weren't more important duties".

The City started improving Eustis Street about 1909. "I remember my mother taking me through the Brick School building that was being built for Professor S. R. Butler. It was located about mid-way between California and White Streets. My father made and installed the Corner Stone for that building in 1909. The city had Eustis Street all torn up, laying water, sewer and gas lines prior to paving. The hot asphalt mixture was prepared nearer to town and hauled up in dump wagons; a lot of them came up Wells Avenue to avoid the steep grades. The weather was quite cold and the material in the wagons was covered over with a thick canvas like blanket to keep it hot. They had to remove these blankets before dumping and a lot of steam and smoke would rise up, it looked like the wagon and all was on fire".

"Soon after the street work was completed, Mr. E. L. Kendall, owner of a mill that sawed and finished cedar lumber products, started building the original part of 719 Eustis. I remember being inside of it while some of the workmen were nailing up wooden plastering lathes on the living room walls, and some were installing a coal fired furnace in the basement".

Mr. Sparkman recalls that his family home had cedar shingles that lasted until about 1925 "when a spark from the chimney started a fire that destroyed most of the roof. Mr. Jim Riddle, who lived north of Southern R. R. and west of Meridian Street, was the builder of our house. I believe he lived on Grove Street."

The last addition to his fathers Shop building along California Street (now Maple Hill Drive), and included a new front entrance and a display window. This occurred about April 1911, and he recalls "I had a birthday party that year and some of my invited guests and I sort of got in the way of the workmen that were putting a tin roof on the shed".

He also remembers "progress being made toward adopting more modern ways of living around the same time. The first electric streetlight in this part of town was installed at the intersection of Wells Avenue and California Street. It was an old style carbon arc lamp that could be lowered by using a rope anchored to the power pole, so the workman could stand on a little stool that had glass insulators for legs, and he would

Continued from 2nd page

trim the carbons and clean the glass chimney about every third or fourth day. He usually rode a bicycle on sort of a patrol duty at night to see that the lights were operating properly”.

How interesting to think of no electricity or pavement, and cows and horses at the entrance to Maple Hill Cemetery. What a gift Mr. Sparkman left for all of us to enjoy.

A big “thank you” goes to Darla & Pam, for sharing their discoveries.

A new feature in our newsletter, Every House Has a Story will highlight a home in our neighborhood. If you are interested in sharing a story about your home, or someone who lived there, please send your story to FPHDA, P. O. Box 10120, Huntsville, AL 35801

October Walking Tours

By Judy Perszyk

The first ever Historic Five Points Walking tours were held the 1st & 2nd Saturdays in October. It was a real family affair for the Goodson Family. Brother & sister Bill Goodson & Pat Goodson were the respective tour guides. The 1928 Foyer - Goodson home on Clinton Avenue belonged to their parents Houston and Alma Goodson who were well known in the community for their neighborhood stores, and of course their longtime ownership of Zestos and naming the famous “dip dog” and “Zesto Burger”. Their sister Mary Lou from Guntersville also dropped in, and they all shared home baked goodies (made with pecans from their parents’ pecan trees) with the tour participants. Refreshments were served under the canopy of a carport and enormous old trees at the home of Rusty George.

Attendance of the 2 tours was greater than anyone anticipated, with approximately 200 people showing up to participate, and we could not have ordered more beautiful weather. Many residents took time to spruce up their yards for guests. Historic facts, architectural details, & recollections were shared, and some participants added their memories as well. It was heartwarming to see so many people enjoying our neighborhood.

Historic Old Town tours were held the 3rd & 4th Saturdays in October, and were just as well attended. The tour guides were longtime Old Town residents Jerry Barclay, Alice Lawler & Lucy Brown.

Our appreciation goes to Faye Wishik, Director of Tourism, Huntsville-Madison County Convention and Visitors Bureau for making this happen. We certainly hope this will become an annual event.

Historic Marker Order

Our next Historic Marker order will be placed in May. It’s not too early to start thinking about if you would like to purchase one for your historic home.

Please contact Judy Perszyk 551-2957 if you are interested or would like more information.

Recipe from the Historic Five Points Cookbook

Baked Potato Soup

By Carolyn Peake

- 4 large baking potatoes
- 2/3 C. all-purpose flour
- 2/3 C. butter or margarine
- 6 C. milk
- ¾ tsp. salt
- 4 green onions, chopped & divided
- 6 bacon slices, cooked & crumbled
- 1 ¼ C. (or more) shredded cheddar cheese
- 1 (8 oz.) sour cream

Bake potatoes 1 hour at 375. Cool and cut out pulp. Melt butter in a large pot over low heat. Add Flour; stir until smooth. Cook 1 minute, stirring constantly. Add milk gradually, stirring until blended. Cook on medium heat, stirring constantly, until thickened and bubbly. Add pulp of potatoes, salt, pepper, 2 Tbsp. Green onions, crumbled bacon, and cheese. Cook thoroughly. Stir in sour cream. Add extra milk if needed. Top with extra cheese and green onions.

Percy Street

By Alta Mae Bailey

When we purchased our home in 1947 our address was 103 South 8th Street. Sometime around 1958 it was changed to Percy Street.

Mr. Gilbert England was Asst. Postmaster and his home was on Beirne Avenue, but Percy Street was on the side of his property. Shortly thereafter our address was changed to 106 England Street. We always felt that he had a lot to do with changing the name to England Street.

So we have lived on 3 Streets in the same house.

FPHDA on the Web

Our website is: www.fivepointshistoricdistrict.org

Please visit from time to time and give us your feedback. Due to circumstances beyond our control, we are without a Webmaster and have lost our software for creating the newsletter. We hope to have this rectified before the next meeting in April.

Please email me at: debrabrasher@aol.com with your most current email address. We would love to be able to share information with you instantly should we need to.

Dear Friends...

By Debra Brasher

Dear Friends,

It has been my great honor and privilege to serve as your President for the last two years. Getting to know many of you better has been wonderful. I have benefited from your friendship. You are lovely, intelligent, and caring people and I thank you for sharing that with my daughter and me. We are all very fortunate to live in the greatest neighborhood in town and to have neighbors that still understand the concept of community. We have come very far since our historic district distinction and Association creation. My hope is that we continue along these paths and continue the trends that we have started. It is just going to get better as the years go by, and I'm looking forward to enjoying it all. My two years have past quickly and it is now time for others to step up and lead us into our next phase. Below you will find the positions for the upcoming election of officers to be held at our January meeting.

- President
- Vice President
- Treasurer
- Recording Secretary
- Correspondence Secretary

Nominees can be added to the ballot even on the evening of the voting. **It is important that the nominee be asked ahead of time and willing to serve before being nominated.** If you or someone you know are interested in serving in one of the above board positions, please either contact me at 534-1513 before the meeting or see me at the meeting to add the name(s). Thank you again to all the terrific people that have worked so hard in making our community a better place. I appreciate you all and wish you the absolute best in the coming year.

Sincerely,

Debra Brasher

Historic Five Points to host a Festival. Please join us at our January 13th meeting for more details.
