

Historic Huntsville Quarterly

A Publication of the
Historic Huntsville Foundation, Inc.



VOL. I, No. 3

Huntsville, Alabama

Seventy-five Cents
July - September 1975

HHF APPLIES FOR \$16,500.00 GRANT TO STUDY LOCAL ARCHITECTURE

Synwood Smith, Chairman of the Historic Huntsville Foundation, recently asked Huntsville Mayor Joe Davis to grant the Foundation \$16,500.00 in "Comprehensive Employment and Training Act" funds for the purpose of conducting a detailed and scholarly examination of Huntsville architecture from its beginnings to the present time.

According to Mr. Smith's letter to Mayor Davis, such a project would



involve: extensive research into local and regional records; interviews; the collection of old photographs of city buildings; recording and identifying the buildings currently standing which have historical or architectural interest; comparing Huntsville's building patterns with national patterns; and determining the effects of local cultural, social, and economic conditions on construction methods, materials, and styles in order both to discover what is truly unique about Huntsville's architecture and to better understand and project that which remains.



Smith said that the resulting data and collection of photographs (cont'd on page 2)

HHF Applies for \$16,500.00 Grant
to Study Local Architecture
(Continued from Page 1)

can be used in many ways to meet a variety of needs, "including the following which were explained to Mayor Davis: (1) a photographic exhibit at either the Von Braun Civic Center Museum or the museum of the UAH Art Department; (2) a published, scholarly study, extensively illustrated, which will present the history of Huntsville construction patterns; and (3) a series of lectures for presentation to the general public, schools, civic organizations and city agencies.

However, Chairman Smith reports that he has been informed by City Attorney Charles Younger that, before the Mayor may approve the Foundation's application, Alabama Attorney General Bill Baxley, will have to specifically approve the transfer of such legislatively-appropriated funds to a private, non-profit corporation, such as the Foundation. Thus, while Mr. Smith states that he is "guardedly optimistic" about the Foundation's chances of receiving the funds, he also thinks, "it will be at least one month, and possibly two, before we shall know for sure."

* * * NOTE * * *

A COPY OF THE FULL TEXT OF CHAIRMAN SMITH'S LETTER
TO MAYOR DAVIS IS PRINTED ON THE CONCLUDING
PAGES OF THIS ISSUE OF THE QUARTERLY



FURNITURE MADE of wicker, willow or cane add a Victorian flavor to an old house --- whether old or con-

temporary reproductions.

TO CLEAN these kinds of furniture, wash thoroughly with soap and warm water and a small stiff brush or soft rag. If the piece is placed in the sun to dry it will bleach to a slightly lighter shade. Another way to lighten is to add some household bleach to warm water and apply after cleaning. Let

CLEANING
WICKER
FURNITURE

this application remain on the furniture for about a half hour before rinsing.

IF SOME PARTS have come loose or unravelled, thread them back into place and fasten with a waterproof glue. It may be necessary to bind the part in place while the glue sets for a day. You can then polish the furniture with a silicone wax. Older pieces may benefit from a coating of polyurethane varnish to prevent further splitting or breaking.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

by Lynwood Smith



any things of great interest have been developing in the months since we last met. I have postponed, several times, calling a general membership meeting in hope that all or most of the projects discussed in this article would materialize. Now that most of the projects have reached the stage where they fruitfully may be discussed, a general membership meeting will be scheduled in the very near future. (SEE THE LAST PAGE OF THIS ISSUE FOR ANNOUNCEMENTS.)

Since its beginning a year-and-a-half-ago the Foundation always has been blessed with a number of members who are ready, willing and able to give their time and talents to the organization. However, the Foundation also has had two serious deficiencies since its inception: it has had neither significant financial resources nor significant projects to capture the imagination and allegiance of many among our membership.

More recently, a third problem has plagued the Foundation - that of executive languor. While deplorable in an abstract sense, this condition is rooted in some very real and understandable human situations. In May of this year, I left the law firm with which I had been associated for almost three years and formed a new legal partnership. Since then, I have devoted most of my time to making that venture a successful endeavor. In addition, shortly after embarking on the new venture, and during my "copious free time," I also obligated myself to teach once again the course on Constitu-



Have any Experiences to share with other readers? Send your ideas and hints to: The Editor, Historic Huntsville Quarterly 412 Zandale Dr. S. W., Huntsville, Ala. 35801.

tional Law in the Department of Political Science at UAH. Furthermore, during the same month of May, 1975, your Vice-Chairman accepted a position with the federal government at the Marshall Space Flight Center; since doing so, what little spare time she has had has been devoted (of necessity) to her young children. Thus, we have had no one at the executive level to give daily direction and impetus to the Foundation for almost six months.

The final problem confronting our organization has centered on this publication. Despite repeated pleas for "HELP!", Claire Johnston, Nan Holloway, and Evelyn Riggs have received very little; they have almost alone nurtured this publication through its first three issues, for which they are due (and have received) many thanks. The greatest praise which can be paid Claire, Nan, and Evelyn, is that, despite the paucity of their assistance, they have managed to establish a very fine publication. Recently, Claire Johnston received a letter from Catherine Donaldson,



Publication Office of the Alabama Historical Commission, complimenting her on the excellence of this publication.

I do not think we should have a morbid (Continued on pg 4)

CHARACTERS

Officers of the Historic Huntsville Foundation, Inc.

CHAIRMAN: C. Lynwood Smith, Jr.
VICE-CHAIRMAN: Mrs. Pat Laxon
TREASURER: Tommy Beason
SECRETARY: John R. Wynn
IMMEDIATE PAST CHAIRMAN: Harvie P. Jones

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Leroy Simms	Richard E. Oliver
James S. Wall	Mrs. Sandra Turner
Mrs. Sarah Batson	Mrs. Pat Laxon
Hall Bryant, Sr.	J. Earl Robertson
John E. Hoar	James Record
Harvie P. Jones	Mrs. Joseph C. Moquin
Richard Van Valkenburgh, Jr.	Tommy Beason
John R. Wynn	Mrs. Cynthia Caffey
Mrs. Shannon Allison	John G. Gann
Robert G. Cope	Bill Offenloch
Mrs. Linda Doud	Bill Nailen
Bill King	Lynwood Smith

Chairman's Report
(Contid fm pg 3)

attitude about the foregoing problems or become flagellants when that is unnecessary. And I believe it is unnecessary. In all fairness, Historic Savannah Foundation, Inc. and Historic Charleston Foundation, Inc. (organizations after which ours was copied) went through similar periods of organizational lethargy before developing into the dynamic and purposeful entities they are today. However, unlike Savannah and Charleston, Huntsville primarily is a middle-class community composed of nomadic Americans with transient ties to this community. That is to say, unlike Savannah and Charleston, Huntsville (1) does not have a large class of very wealthy individuals who, for tax-related philanthropic purposes, are capable of devoting large sums of money to historic restoration and preservation; nor

(2) does Huntsville have a large class of citizens whose interest in the preservation of historically significant structures is rooted in ancestral ties of this community. Despite those facts, I believe it possible to overcome some of our organizational deficiencies.

ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS & PROGRAMS

First it seems to me primarily important to transform our loosely knit organization into a dynamic group with a carefully planned program of community action. In order to do so, goals must be set, and the community must be informed of, and made to understand those goals. However, "goal-setting" in the abstract is meaningless; discriminating and intelligent choice among competing value-options and organization-goals only can be premised upon an intelligent and through examination of the community in which we live. In my opinion, I think that this organization, as a first step to becoming a more viable civic organization, must engage in an authoritative appraisal of Huntsville's valuable buildings. On the other hand, such an authoritative appraisal requires one thing that we have very little of: money.

Nonetheless, over the past three months, Professor Jeffrey Bayer (Head of the UAH Art Department vocationally, and an architectural historian avocationally), his wife Linda, and I have engaged in numerous discussions regarding an authoritative appraisal of Huntsville's architecture. Those discussions are reflected in the letter which I mailed to Mayor Joe Davis requesting \$16,500.00 in "Comprehensive Education and Training Act" funds. (A COPY OF THAT LETTER IS REPRINTED ELSEWHERE IN THIS ISSUE OF THE QUARTERLY.) I am guardedly optimistic about the prospects of receiving that (cont'd on pg 5)

Historic Huntsville Quarterly

Editor. Claire Johnston
Associate Editor. . Nan Holloway
Associate Editor. . Evelyn Riggs
Assistant Editor. . Lynwood Smith
Publisher. Kent Lee Holloway

Published four times annually by the
Historic Huntsville Foundation, Inc.,
P. O. Box 2008, Huntsville, Ala. 35804.
Subscriptions: free to all members
of the Historic Huntsville Foundation;
\$2.50 per year to all others.

Chairman's Report
(Cont'd fm pg 4)

grant. If we are fortunate enough to be awarded the funds, however, for the first time since its beginning the Foundation will have sufficient funds to embark upon its goal-setting requirements.

EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP

In the meantime, this organization very much needs constant executive direction, as does any viable organization. Hopefully, this organization eventually will have sufficient resources to consider the employment of a professional, full-time, well-qualified director. Until that day, however, we desperately need the services of someone whose vocation not only will allow him or her to devote more working hours to the activities of the Foundation than your present Chairman and Vice-Chairman can, but also one whose vocation is sufficiently related to the purpose of this Foundation that

any time devoted to its activities could not, under any circumstances, be considered "wasted." Fortunately, one such person is a member of our organization: Professor Jeffrey Bayer of the UAH Art Department. At my request, Professor Bayer has graciously consented to serve as an "Executive Director" of this Foundation during the remaining months of my term of office. At the next general membership meeting, I shall ask the approval of both the creation of such a position, and Professor Bayer's appointment to it.

EDITORIAL LEADERSHIP

By any measure, this publication is the most significant contribution of the Foundation to our community to date. As mentioned earlier, Claire Johnston, Nan Holloway, and Evelyn Riggs deserve the lion's share of credit for that. However, those ladies have informed me that they no longer can unaided maintain the substantive quality of this publication. But, during the course of discussions on another Foundation project (discussed below), Henry S. Marks agreed to serve as Editor-in-Chief of the Quarterly. Mr. Marks is both a private educational consultant with offices in Huntsville, and, an instructor in history and economics at Northeast Alabama State Junior College. Mr. Marks also is the author of five books, numerous articles, a contributor to two encyclopedias, and a frequent reviewer of books for several publications (primarily scholarly journals, but also the Huntsville Times). With the continued assistance of Claire Johnston, Nan Holloway, and Evelyn Riggs as Associate Editors, Mr. Marks undoubtedly will be able to improve the substantive quality of our Quarterly. Mr. Marks has proposed an essay competition among area high school and college students on subjects of local historical significance. In addition to (continued on page 6)

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT
(cont'd from pg 5)

receiving a monetary honorarium, the winners of the high school and college competitions, respectively, would have their articles printed in this Quarterly. Moreover, Mr. Marks inaugurates in this issue a continuing column on distinguished area citizens. The first contribution is a biographical sketch of the life of Henry H. Chambers. That article appears elsewhere in this issue.

PUBLIC VISIBILITY

In an effort to enhance the visibility of, and to make the community more aware of, the Historic Huntsville Foundation, I proposed to Leroy Sims and Bob Ward (Editor & Publisher and Managing Editor, respectively, of the Huntsville Times) that the Foundation be allowed to institute a column appearing bi-monthly in the Sunday edition of the Huntsville Times throughout the bicentennial year concerning distinguished area citizens and significant events in the history of our area. Any member of the organization who wishes to do so may contribute an article for possible publication in the Times. However, our new Editor-in-Chief, Henry S. Marks, has agreed to bear the not insignificant burden of being responsible for writing at least two such articles each month throughout the bicentennial year. Through the means of this continuing column, Huntsville citizens not only will become aware of the existence of this organization, but also (hopefully) will form a favorable impression.

Therefore, while I many times have become frustrated over the seeming inability of our organization to make meaningful contributions to our community, I can say without reservation that I now am optimistic concerning its future. We appear to be on the threshold of exciting opportunities.

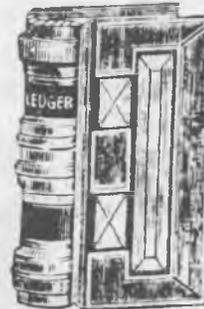
I look forward to seeing each of you at our next general membership meeting. Please make every effort to attend and to support your Foundation.

- CLS jr. -

TREASURER'S REPORT

by R. Thomas Beason

STATEMENT OF INCOME & FUND BALANCE



The following is a statement of the Historic Huntsville Foundation, Inc. for the six months period ending September 30, 1975.

<u>Income</u>		
Dues		435.00
Subscriptions		2.50
		437.50
<u>Expenses</u>		
Printing	106.00	
Telephone	44.99	
Supplies & Postage	27.28	
Utilities	5.98	
		184.25
Excess of Revenue Over Expenses		253.25
Fund Balance at April 1, 1975		1,183.58
Fund Balance at September 30, 1975		\$1,436.83
<u>Assets</u>		
Cash in Bank		1,411.83
Utility Deposit		25.00
		\$1,436.83
<u>Fund Balance</u>		
Fund Balance		\$1,436.83



by Nan Holloway

"CENSUS OF 1825"
(Town Limits)

White males over 21	-	308	
White females over 21	-	<u>170</u>	<u>478</u>
White males under 21	-	219	
White females under 21	-	<u>229</u>	<u>448</u>
			926
Free persons of color		44	
Slaves		<u>542</u>	<u>586</u>
Total			1,512

(This information has been taken from "Early History of Huntsville, Alabama" written by Edward Chambers Betts, 1916.)

The residents of Huntsville began the third quarter of 1825 with a grand Fourth of July celebration, our country's 49th Birthday. A large number of citizens assembled in the grove adjoining the town where a dinner was prepared for the occasion. Among the many toasts that were given were those to the union of the states, the people of the United States, the memory of Washington, the memory of the Patriots and Heroes of the revolution, and the fair daughters of America.

With a population of fifteen hundred, the town of Huntsville wasn't void of enlightenment. Literature, classical music, educational facilities and drama flourished. The old village theatre had just undergone a complete repair with new scenery, dresses and decorations. On opening night patrons were entertained with the reading of the Best Poem award, submitted by a local resident, and the performance of "Will, or School for Daughters." The drama was directed by Mr. Alex M. Wilson.



The close of this quarter commenced the winter sessions of Huntsville Female Academy and Green Academy, located a quarter of a mile from town. The course of instruction for young women included reading, writing, English grammar, French language, arithmetic, geography with maps and globes, history, composition, rhetoric, plain and fine needlework, music, drawing and dancing - all considered to be useful and ornamental branches of the female education.



With such an abundant appreciation for cultural heritage, there loomed about the town a growing uneasiness involving the matter of gambling.

In the town limits there were one licensed Faro Bank, one licensed roulette table and three licensed billiard tables.

Each was required by an act of Assembly to pay a tax of \$400 to the state and \$200 to the county. The following passage, taken from the "Southern Advocate" July 7, 1825, expresses the editor's feelings on this issue.

Thus we see this little village contributing within a ten weeks, no less than \$3000 to the public revenue, at the expense of the public morals. Quere - Which is most creditable to the state, a full (continued on pg 9)

MINUTES OF MEETING

A meeting of the general membership of Historic Huntsville Foundation, Inc., was held on Sunday, June 1, 1975, at the Corley-Tidmore home in Huntsville, Alabama. A quorum was present.

Lynwood Smith presided and called the meeting to order. The reading of the minutes of the last meeting of the membership was waived on motion duly made, seconded and carried unanimously.

Lynwood Smith welcomed guests and members of the meeting and encouraged those who had not joined the Foundation to submit their application for membership.

The first order of business to come before the meeting was a report of the nominating committee. The nominating committee nominated the following persons to serve as officers for the forthcoming year: Lynwood Smith, President, Harvie Jones, Vice President; John R. Wynn, Secretary and Thomas Beason, Treasurer. Upon motion duly made, seconded and carried unanimously, the recommendations of the nominating committee were approved.

Pat Laxson then gave a report concerning the location of an office for the Historic Huntsville Foundation. The slave quarters of the Sophie Lowe home appears at this time to be the most promising location for an office of the Foundation.

Lynwood Smith reported to the member-

Membership in the Historic Huntsville Foundation

If you want to become a member of the Historic Huntsville Foundation, and to assist in enhancing Huntsville's future by preserving its significant architectural and historic heritage, send your name, address, telephone number (home and office) and check in the appropriate amount (made payable to the Historic Huntsville Foundation Inc.) to: Mrs. Lochlin W. Caffey, Chairwoman, Membership Committee, Historic Huntsville Foundation, 100 Calhoun Street, S.E. Huntsville, Alabama 35801.

MEMBERSHIP CLASSES

Student.	\$ 2.50
Active (Individual).	10.00
Business.	50.00
Patron.	25. - 99.00
Benefactor.	100. or more

ship that the Foundation had received a number of articles having architectural value which are currently being warehoused in facilities furnished by Nanette Laughlin.

Claire Johnston gave a report concerning the newsletter of the Foundation and encouraged those who wish to participate in the publication of the newsletter to contact her.

Dr. Jeff Bayer from the University of Alabama in Huntsville presented to the meeting a program (cont'd on page 9)

concerning residences and structures having architectural and historic significance. His presentation was well received by the membership and was appreciated.

There being no further business to come before the meeting, and upon motion duly made, seconded and carried unanimously, the meeting was adjourned.

Submitted by
John R. Wynn, Secretary

treasury obtained by moral means, or an honest, industrious and sober population? The answer is too obvious to require comment.

The feelings of others in Huntsville concerning this issue are not readily available.



HENRY H. CHAMBERS

-by-

Henry S. Marks

Henry H. Chambers was certainly one of Alabama's most distinguished leaders during the territorial period and the early days of statehood. Born near Kenbridge, in Lunenburg County, Virginia, on October 1, 1790, he was a graduate of William and Mary College in Williamsburg in 1808. He left his native state to study medicine in the medical department of the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, graduating with his medical degree in 1811. The following year he moved to Madison where he engaged the practice of medicine. After

serving as a surgeon on the staff of General Andrew Jackson he moved his practice to Huntsville, also settling here.

As a leading citizen of this area he was naturally drawn into politics. His initial position of importance was as a member of the first state constitutional convention, held in Huntsville, in 1819. Chambers at this time discovered that there was a roadblock to his obtaining office in the federal (continued on page 10)

government in the person of William H. Crawford, who was Secretary of the Treasury in the administration of James Monroe. T. P. Abernethy, in his The Formative Period in Alabama, 1815-1828, states that Crawford "enjoyed a practical monopoly of federal patronage" and that he "put his friends into office whenever he could." When the first General Assembly of Alabama met in Huntsville, one of its most important duties was to select its two Senators to Congress (it was not until 1913 that Senators would be popularly elected to office). There was an understanding that one would come from northern Alabama, while the other would represent the southern part of the state. John W. Walker, representing the north of course, was selected, along with William R. King, who represented the Alabama and Tombigbee section of the state. But Crawford had attempted to interfere with the selection of King, wishing to replace him with Charles Tait, who had moved to Alabama from Georgia in 1819. This interference created lasting antagonism between northern and southern Alabama. Those who sided with Crawford were labeled as the "Georgia faction" and Chambers was considered to be one of this group. Indeed, those opposing this faction considered the good doctor to be one of the foremost leaders of this group. This was to cost Chambers his first effort at winning a federal office. Crawford had intensified what undoubtedly would have been rivalry between the northern and southern portions of Alabama. Chambers decided to run for the federal House of Representatives. He was opposed by John Crowell, who had been the first and only Delegate to Congress from the Alabama Territory and who represented the southern portion of the state. Chambers was solidly supported in the Tennessee Valley. The Alabama Republican (our first newspaper) gave the election returns on October 2, 1819 (incidentally, only on its second page). Madison County over-

whelmingly went for Chambers: 2,382 for the doctor, against 215 for his opponent. Limestone County was even more in favor of Chambers, 1,119 to only 12 votes cast for Crowell. The paper also stated in this issue that Chambers' "majority in the Tennessee Valley is between 4 and 5,000 . . ." The following week the Republican stated ". . . we are inclined to believe Dr. Chambers is also elected to Congress. . ." But on October 16th the weekly reported that Crowell was elected to Congress.

In 1820 Chambers was successful in attaining public office; he became a member of the State house of representatives. However, he failed to win the Governorship in 1821 and 1823. In 1821 he opposed Israel Pickens, who had written a letter just two years previously endorsing him in his campaign against Crowell. Chambers proved to be a weak candidate, carrying only a few counties in the Tennessee Valley area. Yet in 1824 he was a Democratic presidential elector on the Jackson ticket. (cont'd on pg 11)

FOR SALE

Federal period home built in 1826, located on the old Maysville Road at Maysville. This two story home, originally a basic four room structure, has now been modified by the addition of various rooms. Restoration of this home would not be difficult, according to Harvie Jones, a local architect.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CALL:
Joe Steele Realty
Huntsville, Alabama

HENRY H. CHAMBERS
(continued from page 10)

Chambers finally achieved federal office in 1825, when he was elected to the United States Senate. He defeated William Kelly, who had won election in 1823, to fill the unexpired term of John W. Walker, then stood for reelection against Chambers. Chambers served in the Senate from March 4, 1825, until his death near Kenbridge, where he was born, on February 24, 1826. He was en route to Washington to attend the opening session of the Twenty-seventh Congress. His remains were interred in the family burial ground near Kenbridge. The vacancy caused by his death was filled by the appointment of Israel Pickens, but ill health forced him to resign during the same year.

So death prematurely ended the life of Henry Chambers, one of Huntsville's most noted early public figures. Largely forgotten today, he is yet another fine example of the heritage of Alabama.

Pre-1840 Antique Hardware

Ruth and Robert Adamsky are a couple of old-house buffs whose passion for authentic restorations has led them into their own business: Dealing in antique house fittings of pre-1840 vintage. They usually have in stock such items as H and H-L hinges, latches (both brass and iron), strap hinges, box locks, boot scrapers, hasps, iron hooks, fireplace cranes, pintels, pot hooks and knockers. They do not carry large architectural hardware such as iron fences, nor furniture hardware. Typical prices are \$12 for a 6-8" Norfolk latch to \$65-125 for a box lock.

Although they specialize in New England hardware, they do a mail order business with all parts of the country. They welcome inquiries. Write to: Ruth and Robert Adamsky, 244 S. Main St., Andover, Mass. 01810. Tel. (617) 475-4953.



ATTENTION

All Artisans, Carpenters & Craftsmen

Wishing to Advertise
Trades & Skills
Useful in the Restoration
of Historic Homes
Are Invited
to Submit Notices to
the Historic Huntsville Quarterly
Phone: 534-1404 or 881-2174



Refinishing Stripped Wood

1. Make sure wood is dry before applying finish. Three or four days drying time is normal; five days in damp weather. Don't dry furniture in direct sun—the wood will warp.
2. Wood bleached by stripping can be darkened with stain. But don't over-stain; it is very difficult to remove stain from wood if you use too much.
3. The stripping process usually raises the grain of the wood, but once the grain is sanded smooth again you'll get a superior mirror-like surface for finishing. The final results are usually better than on wood that hasn't had the grain raised.
4. Apply sealer to hardwoods before sanding. This will stiffen the surface fibers and cut sanding time in half.
5. Apply stain before rubbing with steel wool. Sometimes one area will be rubbed with steel wool harder than another, causing uneven staining. Even better: Sand lightly, stain, apply sealer, then steel wool lightly between coats of final finish.
6. Oak, when new, requires a paste filler to fill the pores. After stripping, filler must be re-applied to achieve the glassy smoothness of new oak. Many refinishers skip this step, however, preferring the character of unfilled oak.
7. If re-gluing is required, stain before gluing. Glue closes the pores of the wood, preventing penetration of the stain.

HORNSBY, BLANKENSHIP, HIGGS & SMITH

ATTORNEYS AT LAW, P. A.
408 CENTRAL BANK BLDG.

HUNTSVILLE, ALABAMA 35801

RALPH W. HORNSBY
DAVID B. BLANKENSHIP
JOHN Z. HIGGS, JR.
C. LYNWOOD SMITH, JR.TELEPHONE 533-5800
AREA CODE 208

September 16, 1975

The Honorable Joe Davis, Mayor
City of Huntsville
City of Huntsville Municipal Building
Huntsville, AlabamaRE: Application by the Historic Huntsville Foundation, Inc.
for Comprehensive Employment and Training Act Funds
(i.e., CETA-VI Funds).

Dear Mayor Davis:

I am Chairman of the Historic Huntsville Foundation, Inc.
The Historic Huntsville Foundation was organized and incorporated
in April, 1974. Its purposes, as stated in the Articles of
Incorporation, are as follows:

The purposes for which the Corporation is organized are to acquire, hold, improve, sell, exchange, preserve, develop, and restore sites, buildings, residences, and other structures of historical or architectural interest in and around Huntsville, Madison County, Alabama, and, to increase knowledge and greater appreciation of such sites, buildings, residences, and other structures. (Emphasis added.)

With regard to the emphasized language of the Foundation's purposes, the Historic Huntsville Foundation plans to undertake a detailed and scholarly examination of Huntsville architecture.

The Honorable Joe Davis, Mayor
September 16, 1975
Page Two

Such a project would involve recording and identifying the buildings currently standing which have historical or architectural interest, comparing Huntsville's building patterns with national patterns, and determining the effects of local conditions on building methods and materials in order to determine both what is truly unique about Huntsville's architecture and to better understand and protect that which remains.

This project would involve extensive research into local and regional records, interviews, and the collection of old photographs of city buildings. It would first be necessary to identify those structures to be included in the study. Some work already has been done in isolating noteworthy buildings, but these surveys usually (we believe) deal only with one or several phases of building (e.g., the ante-bellum residence). By way of contrast, the Historic Huntsville Foundation project would be concerned with all types of buildings, including the domestic house, commercial buildings, company housing, and cemetery monuments. The selected structures would be photographed and then extensive research would be done to determine when each structure was built, by whom it was built, how it was built, and why it was built. This phase also would require generalized research into local social, cultural and economic conditions in order to determine what effect such conditions had on local building patterns. The study would extend to buildings erected within the past year.

The resulting collection of photographs, and the raw data assembled, will be utilized by Historic Huntsville Foundation for a photographic exhibit, a published monograph, and public lectures. The resulting collection of photos and data also will be placed in the archives of local libraries for use by other scholars, and, to serve as a survey of Huntsville buildings in the mid-1970s.

The Honorable Joe Davis, Mayor
September 16, 1975
Page Three

The bulk of scholarly, architectural monographs which have been published to date usually study communities that are, or were, in the cultural and economic mainstream. Furthermore, architect styles usually are originated and refined in the urban northeast. The fact that Huntsville never was in the cultural or economic mainstream, and is located in the rural south means that we can expect to discover variations in Huntsville architecture when compared with national patterns of building. The Historic Huntsville Foundation study would pick out what was traditional about Huntsville architecture, and then determine what was unique as a result of its geography, climate, remoteness from cultural centers, and rural setting. The economic and social conditions, both locally and nationally, which influenced styles also must be considered.

The results of such a study can be expected to show that Huntsville retains: (1) some classical examples of American architecture; (2) some examples which illustrate the adaptations and derivations caused by local conditions; and (3) some styles that, while common elsewhere in the United States, never appear in Huntsville. It is to examine and understand these possibilities that the Historic Huntsville Foundation proposes to undertake the study described. The results of such a study would give a coherent picture of building patterns in Huntsville from its inception to the present, and the forces that shaped such patterns.

Once the photographs are available and the research has been completed, the raw data can be used in many ways to meet a variety of needs. Some of those needs which already have been foreseen include the following:

(1) A photographic exhibit in a local museum which could later be loaned or rented as a traveling show. Sections of such a photographic exhibit could be extracted for specific localized use. It also could prove as a model for other communities.

The Honorable Joe Davis, Mayor
September 16, 1975
Page Four

(2) A scholarly monograph, extensively illustrated, which would present the history of Huntsville building patterns as determined by the research. Such a monograph also would serve as a tourist guide to points of historical and architectural interest in Huntsville.

(3) A series of lectures aimed at Huntsville audiences. Such lectures could be composed to appeal to the interest of specific groups, such as the general public, schools, civic organizations, and city agencies. For example, a lecture to the City Council and its planning agencies would demonstrate how social and economic conditions affect community environment, and vice-versa.

(4) The photographs and raw data would be deposited in local library archives to serve as a survey of Huntsville buildings for the future use of other scholars.

(5) The raw data and conclusions would be available for the use of city officials when planning for the future development of Huntsville and its environs.

(6) Such a study would help to determine which buildings and neighborhoods should be protected for the enrichment of Huntsville's future. Indeed since such a study would constitute a permanent record of outstanding Huntsville architecture, it is possible that the attention of Huntsville's citizens would be directed to their unique architectural heritage, with the hope of utilizing and thus saving the best architectural examples. In other places, it has been found that much valuable architecture has been saved by being thus evaluated.

The Honorable Joe Davis, Mayor
September 16, 1975
Page Five

The first stage of the project to be implemented will be the photographic exhibition. The objective is to make people aware of local architecture through a show of black and white photographic panels coherently displayed in a Huntsville museum with appropriate explanatory material. All aspects of building will be included - domestic, commercial, industrial - and each will cover a wide range from the classic styles to those that are of no particular style, but are nonetheless noteworthy. Comparisons with old photographs will show how buildings have been updated to stay in style with contemporary trends. A catalog to accompany the photographic exhibit will explain the interest of each photo - why the subject was chosen and what one should notice when viewing it. The emphasis of the photographic display and accompanying catalog will be on creating awareness and enjoyment of local architecture, rather than on pedantic labeling by style.

To successfully conduct a project of this scope, the services of a great number of people can be used. The research would be concerned with many fields other than architecture, so that people with many different interests can become involved. Specifically, the project will require a photographer, a dark-room consultant, a secretary, and several research aides. Some of the areas that will require study are the following:

1. Dating and identification of each structure to be photographed;
2. Ascertaining the location of old photographs of Huntsville;
3. Compiling a history of Huntsville architects and builders;

The Honorable Joe Davis, Mayor
September 16, 1975
Page Six

4. Compiling a history of Huntsville building trades;
5. Compiling a history of Huntsville manufacturing, as related to factory buildings and company housing;
6. Compiling a history of Huntsville utilities; and
7. Compiling a history of Huntsville's economy through the years.

Without saying more, I think the foregoing explanatory material is sufficient to demonstrate that the proposed Historic Huntsville Foundation project is ambitious in scope and content. Unfortunately, the financial resources of our organization are not sufficient to alone undertake such a project. However, I have been informed that so-called "CETA-VI" funds are available for worthy community projects and endeavors of this nature, and, that such funds might be utilized to pay the salaries of research aides. Therefore, I respectfully request that you authorize the payment of such CETA-VI funds to the Historic Huntsville Foundation, Inc. for the purpose of employing two research assistance to be compensated in the following manner:

(a) One research assistant (who would constitute the Executive Director of the project) would be authorized to work on the project not more than forty hours per week, and at a salary not to exceed \$10,000.00 per annum; and

(b) One research aide to be authorized to work not more than forty hours per week, and at a salary not to exceed \$6500.00 per year.

The Honorable Joe Davis, Mayor
September 16, 1975
Page Seven

Should you find the foregoing proposal and request sufficiently interesting, and I sincerely hope that you will, I shall be most happy to meet with you at your convenience in order to discuss in more detail its scope and content, to show you examples of comparable projects undertaken in other areas, and to answer any questions you may have. I look forward to your response.

With best wishes, I am

Respectfully yours,

C. Lywood Smith, Jr., Chairman
Historic Huntsville Foundation, Inc.

CLS:es

Publications That Can Help

If you have a Greek Revival house, or any other type for that matter, you may well be missing some of the original mouldings. Or ornament may be desired for a frieze, cornice or a mantel that is too plain. The Decorators Supply Corporation has a line of 13,000 patterns of composition carvings for interior and exterior. All of them are pictured in a large artbook which you can order for \$10.00. If you can bear to part with it in 60 days, you can return the catalog and the money will be refunded. A price list accompanies the catalog. Send the \$10.00 to:

The Decorators Supply Corporation
3610-3612 South Morgan Street
Chicago, Illinois 60609

There are two books that were very important to builders in America during the period when Greek Revival houses were built. They have been used by Journal readers to restore or re-create structural elements and architectural details. They contain practical geometry, glossaries, plans, elevations and construction techniques. They are:

The American Builder's Companion
by Asher Benjamin, \$3.50

The Modern Builder's Guide
by Minard Lafever, \$5.00

Both are available from Dover Publications, Inc., 180 Varick Street, New York, N. Y. 10014. Add 35¢ for postage and handling.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

There will be a GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING of the Historic Huntsville Foundation on Tuesday evening, November 25, 1975, at 7:00 P.M., at the Headquarters of the Madison County Federation of Womens Clubs: i.e., the "Steamboat Gothic House" at 205 Lowe Avenue, Huntsville, Alabama.

Professor Jeffrey Bayer, Head of the UAH Art Department, will present a slide presentation on area architecture.

Please make plans to attend this meeting.



FROM:

The Historic Huntsville Foundation, Inc.
P. O. Box 2008
Huntsville, Alabama 35804

