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News...

Historic Huntsville Foundation

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News...

THE SMALL FRAME HOUSE on Bannister Alley collapsed in September when the contractor began repair work on it. The owner had planned to shift it slightly on the lot and then incorporate it into a new house. Unfortunately it was greatly weakened by insects and rot and fell in before any work could be done.

The house was the only known surviving example in Huntsville of the type of small, simple frame house built for people of modest means prior to the Civil War. The house originally had only one room up and one down although a small wing had been added to it later. It shared common stylistic features with the more pretentious houses of the period but in a much simplified condition.

The loss of these modest houses results in a distorted view of architectural history because without them concepts of the past tend to be derived solely from the more elaborate homes of the wealthy. The restoration of the Bannister Alley house would have been a valuable addition to Huntsville's architectural heritage.



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THE HUNDLEY HOUSE at the corner of Madison and Gates should soon be getting a new, much needed roof. The city, with the encouragement of the Foundation, applied for and received a matching grant from the Alabama Historical Commission to begin exterior restoration. Plans by Jones and Herrin for the first stage of the restoration have been completed and approved, and construction bids were received in early October.

Work to be completed under this grant includes removing the worn-out roofing materials and replacing them with new metal shingles and sheet metal, making structural repairs to the roof and chimneys, and repairing the trim along the gables and eaves.

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THE 1980 CALENDARS of the Historic Huntsville Foundation are now on sale. The cover of the new calendar features a beautiful color rendering of downtown Huntsville as seen from Echols Hill in the 1890s. Each month is illustrated with a different historic structure in Huntsville. Included are ante-bellum and Victorian houses and commercial buildings. The illustrations for this calendar were drawn by local artists Lee Harless, Richard Pope, and Chuck Long.

The new calendar is smaller than last year's and comes with a mailing envelope so that it can be easily sent as a gift. The price remains only \$5, and calendars can be purchased from Foundation members and from most local gift shops and bookstores.

Foundation members are encouraged to assist in the sale of the calendars as this is the major fund raising activity of the organization. The proceeds will go toward establishing a revolving fund to be used for the preservation of significant local structures. Calendars can be obtained by calling Charlotte Wallace at 883-0037.

RECORDS OF THE DALLAS Manufacturing Company are now available for research. Mrs. Warren Sockwell recently donated several volumes of material to the Historic Huntsville Foundation. These books are the minutes of the Dallas stockholders meetings and of the Dallas board of directors meetings. Taken together they cover the entire period of operation of the Dallas Mill (1890-1952) and contain much data about construction, machinery, production, personnel, and the

finances of the company.

Mrs. Sockwell's father was George S. Elliott who served as treasurer and general manager of Dallas from 1936 until the company was dissolved in 1952.

The Foundation is most grateful to Mrs. Sockwell for the generous donation of these volumes which portray a significant chapter in the history of Huntsville. They have been placed in the Heritage Room of the Huntsville Public Library where they will be available for use by the general public.

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The GUDENRATH building on Washington street, which housed the Twickenham Pharmacy, has been razed leaving an ugly hole in an otherwise solid block. The building was both historically and architecturally significant to Huntsville, and its demolition is much to be regretted.

