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News...

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News...

A COMPLETE RUN of *The Old House Journal* has been purchased by the Historic Huntsville Foundation and is now available for reference use by members and other interested individuals. An index for each year facilitates research, and the Buyer's Guide Catalogue is available to assist in locating suppliers of products. The *Journal* is published monthly and carries how-to-do-it articles on the myriad problems encountered when restoring an older house. A typical issue may contain articles on restoring marble sinks, patching cracks in plaster, and Victorian tile. There are also occasional features on the domestic styles and regular columns on restoration hints, recent publications, and sources of old products.

The Old House Journal is not available in the local libraries, but anyone interested in using this set may do so by calling Ira Jones at 883-5998.



THE ALABAMA TRUST for Historic Preservation was formed last August as a statewide organization to coordinate and support the activities of individuals and groups interested in Alabama's heritage and to encourage local and state efforts in historic preservation. The Alabama Trust will represent heritage interests before policymakers in state government and provide a distribution point for technical publica-

tions, including tax information and sources of funding for preservation projects. Volunteers in Montgomery will serve as consultants when the Alabama Legislature is in session and will keep Trust members abreast of pending legislation that involves heritage matters.

The Trust will publish a quarterly newsletter for its members to keep them informed about federal and state tax laws favorable to preservation and to focus on state landmarks, historic churches, military history, archeological sites, folkcrafts, music and literature. Historical articles and artwork from 19th century publications will be reprinted, and a regular feature will be a calendar of events. The Trust also plans to offer workshops, discounts on medallions for historic houses, and reprints of pertinent publications.

The Trust is a non-profit, tax-exempt corporation with a current membership of over 200; Lee Sentell of Decatur has been elected the first president. Annual dues are \$10 for an individual, \$20 for a family, and \$25 for an organization. For further information or to become a member, write to The Alabama Trust for Historic Preservation, P. O. Box 85, Decatur, Alabama 35602.



CITY HALLS/ *continued*

quite logical and predictable. Furthermore, each window is placed directly above each ground level arch making the design even more controlled. The ease with which Breeding incorporated the existing engine house into his new design, even though they are of different scales, causes one to speculate that his choice of the wall dormers might have been a practical--rather than an aesthetic--decision. The eaves of the mansard roof exactly hit the top of the engine house wall, while the horizontal line created by the hipped dormers indicates the taller ceiling heights in the city hall.

Little is known at this time of H. D. Breeding. He came to Huntsville, possibly from Tennessee, about 1890 and established a successful architectural practice here. During the late 1890s he maintained an office in Chattanooga, perhaps living there also, but by 1906, he had settled in Birmingham where he resided until his retirement in the late 1920s. Unfortunately many of his known Huntsville structures have been demolished or remodeled beyond recognition. One suspects that his competence in executing the Queen Anne style was at least partially responsible for the early demise of his structures; as architectural tastes embraced the more restrained styles of the 20th century, late Victorian buildings with their flamboyant facades were considered an embarrassing indiscretion. They had to go, or at least be well hidden.

Breeding's city hall had stood for only 21 years before it was razed to make way for the Twickenham Hotel. By 1913 the lack of modern hotel rooms

in Huntsville was considered a civic disgrace. The city agreed to sell the city hall property to three local men on the condition that they would promptly erect a modern hotel of not less than 80 rooms and costing at least \$100,000. Demolition of the city hall took place in March 1914, and by April construction had begun on the foundations for the Twickenham Hotel.

The city offices were moved to Madison Street where they remained for fifty years until the final move to the present Municipal Building on Fountain Row in 1965. *



AS IT WAS THEN/ *continued*

I have always cherished the memories of my growing up years in Huntsville, and I appreciate this opportunity of setting them down on paper in the hopes they will revive those of others who shared them. Though I made no impression whatever on the small town it was then, Huntsville certainly made a deep impression on me. *



PHOTOGRAPH CREDITS

Dorothea Snow: page 5
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