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An American Signature Quilt

Historic Huntsville Foundation

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Through the years HHF has come up with a number of creative fundraisers. No one who attended will ever forget the memorable “Rooftop Affair,” an elegant party held under a full moon on the upper level of a downtown parking garage, with music, dancing, fireworks, and a magnificent view of city lights. The “Movable Feast” was unique, as was the Harrison Bros. benefit on the downtown square, with dinner at the courthouse and an auction and street dance.

Now, in an effort to pay off the remaining mortgage on Harrison Bros., Lynn Jones and Dale Rhoades have come up with an unusual project that will not only preserve history, but create history as well. Lynn and Dale have been busy for almost a year writing letters and collecting autographs from famous personalities for an American Signature Quilt. Lynn was inspired by an antique (1880-81) signature quilt owned by Dale, which contains signatures of many well known personalities of that day and was used as a fundraiser for the GAR. She approached Dale with the idea of making a modern day signature quilt as a fundraiser for the store, and Dale said, “Let’s do it!”

They have been totally consumed by their determination to secure signatures from a broad spectrum of Americans who have made an impact on the 20th
century, and overwhelmed by the response to their requests. The result is a full size Ohio Star quilt (pieced by Dale, and hand quilted by Ellen Anson), containing the signatures of 163 notable personalities. Bob Hope, Katherine Hepburn, President Bush and three past Presidents, James Michener, Edward Teller, Milton Friedman, Walter Cronkite, Charles Schultz, Neil Armstrong, Mickey Mantle, Jonas Salk, Captain Kangaroo, Rosa Parks, Jessica Tandy, and Helen Hayes are just a few of those who responded. A full list of the signers is included in the latest HHF newsletter. They constitute a veritable Who’s Who of the late 20th century. Frances Robb has developed an educational packet, which will be used in local social studies classes this fall, based on the names included in the quilt. This quilt is a real treasure.

A kick-off party to introduce the quilt to Foundation members is scheduled for September 7th, from 7 to 9 p.m., at Gorin’s. The quilt will also be on display at the Court House on Trade Day, September 8. Raffle tickets will be available at that time. A drawing for the quilt will be held November 3rd at a gala celebration, to which all the signers, Foundation members, and their friends will be invited. You will be hearing more about this in the future. The Foundation preserves Harrison Bros. as a “place in time.” To support this preservation effort we present our American Signature Quilt, “A Stitch in Time.”

ORDER FORM

To order raffle tickets, send check payable to Historic Huntsville Foundation, to:

Historic Huntsville Foundation
Box 786
Huntsville, Alabama 35804

Tickets are $5 each, or 3 for $10.

Number of Tickets: ______
Amount Enclosed: $ ______

NAME ________________________________
ADDRESS ________________________________

ZIP ________________

TELEPHONE ___________________________

For further information call Dale Rhoades, 534-3002, or Lynn Jones, 534-6671. Please do not call Harrison Bros. for ticket information, but tickets may be purchased there.