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HAL Gallery Presents Huntsville

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HAL GALLERY PRESENTS HUNTSVILLE

Compiled by Nancy Hanning
and Doris Fandre

Black and White Photography by Stuart Siniard

Cynthia Massey Parsons



Randolph Street

Cynthia is a native Alabamian with a BA from Florida State University, is influenced by Thomas Eakins, Singer Sargent, Mary Cassatt and many others which is reflected in her bright and carefree paintings.



3rd Madison County Court House — \$350

Huntsville High 1902





Ed Starnes

Constitution Hall Park "In The Barn"

Mr. Starnes is an accomplished watercolorist influenced by the impressionists during his childhood in Washington D.C. He wants the viewer to share his enjoyment of the interplay of sunlight and shadow. He has won local awards. Selected for inclusion in Exhibitions South 1990 and 1991, he was juried into Panoply and received a Patrons Purchase Award. His paintings are in private and corporate collections throughout the nation.

Mr. Harrison's Umbrella — \$450

Harrison Bros., James and Daniel are said to have carried umbrellas from their White Street homes to their jointly operated hardware store, hence the watercolor of a bit of Huntsville folklore.



**Alma Marks
Sanders**

*First Methodist
Church Steeple*



Park Benches, Big Spring

Taken from atop municipal building, February 1985 Temperature 5°
(This photo was accepted in VBCC juried show.)



Pam Dougherty



Sunday Afternoon at Big Spring — \$300

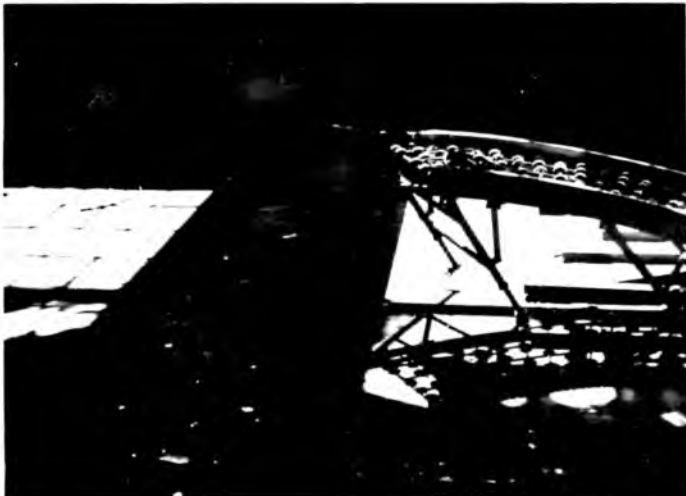
Taken from an old photo in the Heritage room at the public library. The setting looked as though it was out of a Monet or a Renoir painting so she chose to paint it in an impressionist style.

Pam is a professional artist working in pastels loving the pure colors and immediacy. She captures excitement in her work by combining techniques of the impressionists and post impressionists.

Linda Terry

*Reflections of Dallas
Mill — \$100 each*

Linda, with a B.A. from U.A.H. in Studio Art, has been a graphic artist and illustrator for 15 years, currently with Rockwell International. She uses both traditional graphics materials and methods and computers.



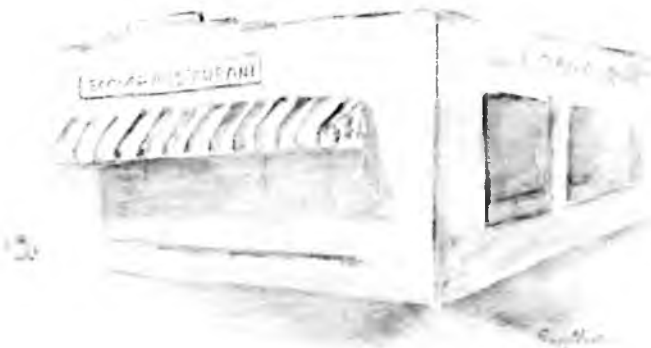
Peggy Montano



Weeden House Doorway

Peggy's aunt and uncle owned the Bon Air. They owned a produce market and home there. Peggy's parents worked and she spent most of her childhood at the restaurant.

Bon Air Restaurant



Marcia Leonard



Cederhurst — \$200

Cederhurst on the corner of Drake and Whitesburg was built in 1825. It is the site of hauntings by Sally Carter even in these recent times.



Mariel Hearn

*Randolph Street —
\$100*

Mariel holds a BA in English from Georgia State, a BA in Studio Art and a BA in Interior Design from U.A.H.

*Stone Wall -
Adams Street —
\$100*



Lois Phillips



Old Federal Square — \$400

Built between 1888-1890, demolished 1954. Situated on Green and Randolph Streets, it housed the Post Office and Federal Court.

Lois paints in watercolors, preferring its freshness and spontaneity. She prefers landscapes and still-lives.

Southern Cotton Seed Oil Company



Anita Hoodless



Weeden House — \$325

Built in 1819 Federal Style at 300 Gates Avenue the birthplace of Miss Maria Howard Weeden. An accomplished artist, Miss Weeden provided for her impoverished family after the Civil War by teaching art in this house.

Anita has her BA from Auburn University. Watercolor is her medium for its challenge, spontaneity and freshness. The fluidity of the medium adds excitement to her paintings.

Constitution Hall — \$360

"Constitution Hall" - Built in 1819. This served as the site for the State's Constitutional Convention.



Marty Vinz



Huntsville Infirmary \$150

Located at corner of Hall and Oak streets, served as Huntsville medical facility from 1904 - 1926.

Marty has taught at Huntsville public schools, HMA, HAL and privately. She has a BS from the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa, UAH, Athens State and Arrowmont School in Tennessee. Dramatic lighting and color, negative space forms, and texture are used to express the artist's feelings toward the subject.

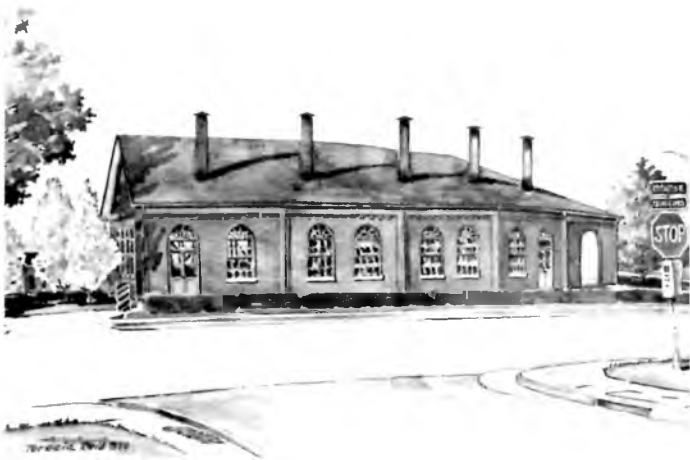
Teresia Reid



Carnegie Library — \$400

St. Mary's Church of the Visitation — \$400





Depot Roundhouse — \$400

First United Methodist Church — \$400

A native Huntsvillian, Teresa's realistic rendering in watercolor and pen and ink, is a real joy to her. She has taken workshops from nationally known artists and has learned lots from working on her own. She is becoming well-known in the area for her paintings of private homes, old buildings, and historic landmarks.



Louise Marsh



Molly Hutchins House — \$425

This house was located at 301 Oak Ave. and Fountain Row. Faced Fountain Row.

Courthouse



Dorothy Montgomery



Old Jones Valley

Dorothy has her associates degree in Fine Arts from El Camino College in California. Having traveled extensively in the US, Europe and the Pacific, her work reflects a variety of subject matter, including landscapes, seascapes and florals, done in a realistic style.

This piece causes one to relive a bit of Huntsville history when the Delta Queen docked along the shore of the Tennessee River.

Excursion to Huntsville — \$400



Melinda McCleary

The Depot — \$650



Betty Bacon

Red Bridge - Big Spring Park



Dana Brown
St. Mary's Church



Karen Young
McCormick House — \$295





Barbara Ward
Lyric Theatre

Pam Nelson
Old Town

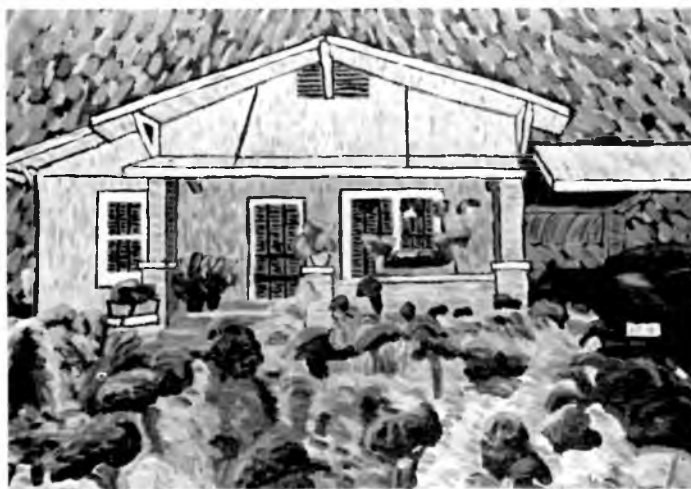


Tom McDonald

First Presbyterian Church

Ollie Oliver

House on Randolph Street



THE HUNTSVILLE ART LEAGUE

On November 24, 1991, the Huntsville Art League stepped into a new era and opened the HAL Gallery and Studio in the Parkway City Mall. Now, seven days a week the public may browse and buy some of the best art available. From traditional art forms to jewelry and crafts, the Gallery exhibits the works of over 50 local artists.

Usually, an artist or two is on hand and a variety of classes is offered throughout the year. By supporting local artists, Huntsvillians have an opportunity to get in on the ground floor and watch their investments grow.

Having lead a peripatetic life — the Terry Hutchens Bldg (1988), the Heart of Huntsville Mall, the Lobby of the Russell Erskine Hotel, shuttled from the Merts Center to Parisians' community room, the Art League is now at home in a busy shopping center that hopefully will insure it a long and profitable residence.

Organized in 1957, HALMA set about trying to secure a museum for the growing community. But, when the Art Museum finally became a reality, "there wasn't room for the organization." (*Huntsville Times*, April 6, 1986)

Membership is open to all. The Art League is a non-profit community organization, a member of the Arts Council, and an important "visual" voice in the community.



Many of these Huntsville paintings are still on display. Inquiries are welcome. Prices are available.

THE CLARKE-DORNING HOUSE

518 Adams Avenue
Huntsville, Alabama

The Clarke-Dorning House is located in the Twickenham Historic District, Huntsville's oldest residential district. It is a handsome late Federal style dwelling built in its entirety in 1835 by Mrs. William Clarke. The house was embellished in the 1850's by Mr. John J. Fackler with antebellum wall and ceiling ornament.

Architectural Design and Notable Features:

The house is built in late Federal design, symmetrical in plan and elevation, two rooms deep, central stair hall, upstairs bedrooms, ground floor reception rooms including large double parlors. It's notable features include a beautiful and correctly proportioned one story Ionic tetrastyle (tetra=4; style=columns) portico, typically Virginian basement consisting of double dining rooms on the north side, connected by a wide service hallway to service areas — butler's pantry and warming kitchen — on the south, and a range of slave quarters. Throughout the house, the simple architectural details are made from fine-grained local timber.

Much remains of the robust handpainted and stenciled 1850s ornament, which provided a sumptuous setting for the balls and masquerades given by previous owners, the Facklers, whose household included four marriageable daughters and eighteen slaves.



Past and Present Owners:

The house has been loved and lived in by many interesting families, including Mrs. Parmelia Bibb, wife of Alabama's second governor, Thomas Bibb. Its charm and character results from the activities of four of its owners:

- Mrs. Susan Clarke, who built the house in 1835.
- Mr. and Mrs. John J. Fackler, who added the elaborate Victorian painted and stenciled wall and ceiling ornament just before the Civil War.
- Mr. and Mrs. Dudley Powell, who from 1943 to 1991 maintained the house with a minimum of structural changes and modernization.
- Mr. and Mrs. Claude Dorning, present owners, who have lovingly preserved the house's fine architectural features and evocative atmosphere, while sympathetically adapting it for gracious, hospitable modern living.

House's Name:

In accepted fashion, the house is currently known as the Clarke-Dorning House, named for it's current owners, Mr. and Mrs. Claude Dorning, and its first owner, Mrs. Susan Clarke. Historically, houses used to be named in a variety of ways: for their present owners, for the most famous person who lived there, for the family who built it, for the family with the longest tenure, etc. For houses that have had many owners throughout the years, the most authoritative, widely accepted nomenclature is:

Original Owner's Name (hyphen) Present Owner's Name

Thus, though many Huntsvillians know this house as the Pynchon-Powell House (named for two recent owners), the Designer's Showhouse '92 follows accepted current practice in calling the house the Clarke-Dorning House. By any name, the house is a rare architectural and decorative treasure.

Owners' History:

The Susan Clarke Era

After the end of the War of 1812, Alabama statehood and peaceful conditions in the Tennessee Valley frontier lured large numbers of Virginians to Madison County. A number of these emigrants, including Captain William Clarke, were members of the famous militia company, the Richmond Blues. Clarke and his wife settled first in a log cabin, then on a large, increasingly productive plantation in Mooresville. In September 1835, after William Clarke's death and the distribution of his handsome estate among his widow and their ten surviving children, Mrs. Clarke purchased 1.85 acres of unimproved property a few blocks from the Huntsville City Square from Benjamin Patterson and James J. Pleasants for \$1,700. Construction of the imposing two story brick mansion, in late federal style, began immediately.

It has been assumed for some years that Mrs. Clarke built only a small dwelling on the Adams Street site, comprising the south portion of the present house. Earlier historians assumed that the double parlors and bedrooms on the north side were added by a later owner, perhaps John J. Fackler, in the 1850s. Historians have determined that this hypothesis must be based on a confusion of the house's history with that of a nearby dwelling also owned by Mr. Fackler.

For some time this version of the house's history has puzzled historians. They noted that the late federal design and detail of the entire house are remarkably uniform, consistent with a date of 1835. They also noted that in 1844 Mrs. Clarke was paid \$10,000 for property she had purchased unimproved for \$1,700 nine years earlier. Real estate and construction documents surviving from the late 1830's for similar Huntsville properties indicate that such a large difference in buying and selling cost could only result from the improvement of the property by the addition of a large and well-built house.

One of the most exciting "finds" of the current restoration has confirmed the new theory that the house was constructed in its entirety by Mrs. Clarke. In the spring of 1992, an inscription dated 1835 was discovered beneath layers of wallpaper removed from a second floor bedroom wall on the house's north side. The inscription — the height measurements of two of the younger Clarke children and the name of their tutor — is definitive documentation that the house was built in its entirety in 1835.

We now know that Mrs. Clarke's new house was, from the beginning, a commodious, well-proportioned, fashionable residence, ideal for a mother and her large family.

Clarke Genealogical Notes:

Captain William Clarke's children were John; Mary (wife of William Mastin); Isabella (wife of Joseph C. Bradley, grandmother of William Bradley and Mrs. Emily Van Valkenburg); William; Ashley; Richard; Sue (wife of Judge William Wynn of Florida); Thomas; Henry; and Jane (wife of Frank Sanders of Abingdon, Virginia).

William Clarke's estate was extensive. It included eighty-nine slaves, shared among his heirs. Not only land but money was also shared; proceeds from Clarke's 1833 cotton crop alone totaled \$2,229, a large cash sum for the period.

The Parmelia Bibb Era

In 1844, Mrs. Clarke moved to Florida. She sold the house and property for \$10,000 to Parmelia Thompson Bibb, daughter of Virginia emigrants Robert and Sara Watkins Thompson of Belle Mina plantation north of Mooresville, and widow of Alabama's second governor, Thomas Bibb.

Bibb Genealogical Notes:

The Bibb children included Adeline (wife of Major James Bradley); Emily (wife of J. J. Pleasants); Thomas; William Dandridge; Porter; Elmira (wife of Archibald Mills); Robert; and Eliza (wife of A. M. Hopkins).

The John J. Fackler Era

After Mrs. Bibb's death in July 1859, the house was sold to Mrs. Margaret McClung, the widow of Madison County legislator Colonel James W. McClung, the brother of the noted duelist Alexander McClung. Two days later, for a \$2,000 profit, Mrs. McClung sold the house to John J. Fackler, a commission merchant, or factor, i.e., an agent who bought and sold goods for the plantation owners he represented. Fackler had been living in the house for several years.

Although Fackler had been described as a cotton commission merchant from New Orleans, recent research indicates that he lived in Huntsville for much of his life. Fackler, a member of Huntsville's earliest Presbyterian congregation, was married on January 17, 1826, to Elizabeth W. Turner, who had moved in Huntsville in 1823 from Caroline County, Virginia.

The John J. Fackler family was large, with family ties to Memphis and New Orleans, important markets for Huntsville cotton. In 1860, the year after Fackler bought the house, U.S. Census records indicate that his Huntsville household consisted of John J. Fackler, age 55, commission merchant; his wife Elizabeth M., also 55; their son, John T. Fackler, 31, a lumber dealer; and four daughters: Jane (possibly "Gypsy", 23); Sallie (Sarah Morgan, 21); Elvira, 19; and Mary Y., 16. According to the 1860 Alabama Slave Schedules, eighteen slaves also lived on the property.

Sixteen slaves were on the property of John J. Fackler:
Four black women - ages 65, 45, 30, and 25

Two mulatto males - ages 35 and 20
Two black males - ages 18 and 17
Eight children -
 One black boy - age 10
 Three mulatto boys - ages 11, 9 and 7
 Two mulatto girls - age 4
 Two mulatto girls - ages 3 and 1

In addition, John T. Fackler's two slaves are also registered as living on the Adams Street property:

One black male - age 18
One mulatto woman - age 16.

Fackler Genealogy Notes:

Documents indicate that Fackler had several children, including Gypsy, Sara Morgan, John William, and Calvin. In addition to the names recorded in the 1860 census, Mrs. Fackler's 1871 will lists Charles W. Fackler (a son or grandson?); Elizabeth Nichol of Nashville, Tennessee (another daughter? another name for Elvira? Elvira's daughter?); and J. Kirk; Calvin B.; and D. Turner Fackler of Danville Kentucky (most likely John T.'s sons). A July 26, 1854, Huntsville newspaper reports the July 5 marriage of Mr. John T. Fackler of New Orleans to Miss Jane C. Reed of Boyle County Kentucky. John T. later moved to Danville, Kentucky where he was living when his mother's will was probated in 1871.

Another Fackler son, Calvin M. Fackler, is reported in a January 26, 1853, Huntsville newspaper as married in Memphis on January 12 to Miss Anna S. Kirk, of Memphis.

An October 24, 1828 Huntsville newspaper records the October 21 death of "William Fackler, young gentleman." William may be John J.'s brother, cousin, or possibly another son. The John J. Facklers were married in 1926, and had a son William, who predeceased his mother.

Embellishments and Ornamentation:

Fackler, his wife and family were extremely hospitable. Their home was the setting for lavish balls, masquerades and other entertainment, complete with string orchestra and perfumed with flowers from the Fackler's terraced gardens. Traces of the garden, reputedly laid out by an English gardener, survived into the 1960's.

Recent preservation efforts reveal that the Facklers embellished the house's principal rooms with bold, handsome wall and ceiling ornaments, executed in a combination of stencil and hand painting. Preserved by later wallpaper, much remains of this handsome Classicizing Victorian ornament, in a sophisticated palette of grays, deep green and Venetian red.

Trompe l'oeil chandelier medallions featured rounded, handpainted acanthus leaves. In the parlors, handpainted leafy motifs, connecting the ceiling medallions with corner ornaments, divide the ceiling into four quarters, each infilled with simpler stenciled motifs. At the top of the walls are remains of a handpainted molding consisting of a repeated motif of horizontal foliage bordering classical medallions. On the walls, fool-the-eye illusionistic painted pilasters create frames for now-low cost Classical vistas; and trompe l'oeil frames above the mantelpieces once enclosed nostalgic painted scenes of classical ruins.





Decorative Painting Notes:

During the Victorian era, cold, multicolored classically derived ornamentation replaced the earlier simplicity of whitewashed walls. Expensive, luxurious wallpapers catered to this new decorative taste — but only if the purchaser was in no hurry, for it took months for those living in inland cities to order and receive goods.

Itinerate artists could complete decorative schemes more quickly — and usually less expensively. Combining freehand painting and stencilwork, they created ceiling, wall, and border treatments that echoed the designs of the most popular wallpapers but had the added charm of handiwork. They brought their equipment with them -- tools for measuring and laying out their designs, long handled brushes, dry colors that could be mixed on the spot into paint, and stencils cut from heavy paper coated with oil, paint, and shellac to make them flat and firm.

The Pynchon and Powell Era

In 1871, Sara Fackler Pynchon, the wife of a physician, inherited the house from her mother, with whom she had been living for some years. She lived in the house until her death in 1924, continuing the family tradition of hospitality.

After Mrs. Pynchon's death, Calvin Morgan Fackler of Danville, Kentucky inherited the house. Two other families, Ruth W. and John Lee Robinson, then Anne Ford and James Blythe, owned the house before its purchase in 1943 by Dudley Sale and Kathryn W. Powell, who lived here for many years. The house was recently purchased from Mrs. Powell by the present owners.

NOTE: Before Mrs. Pynchon died, she carefully labeled her possessions — furniture, utensils, and family memorabilia with the names of the relative designated to inherit it.

Wonderful and Curious Facts About the Clarke-Dorning House:

Much research has been done on the house and its history, some by its owners, Mr. and Mrs. Claude Dorning, and some by Huntsville historians.

Curious Facts: Front Parlor

Workmen uncovered the inscription "Bill Johnston (Johnson)" and a date of 1877. The Dornings have discovered that he was a cotton commission merchant with Calvin (Cal), Fackler's son.

Curious Facts: Dining Room



Visitors to the house often wonder why one light fixture in a major downstairs room is hung off-center from the painted ceiling medallion. The medallion came first, a handpainted ornament added to the house when the Fackler family redecorated in 1859. Later, when the house was electrified, workmen running electric wiring drilled through the ceiling — and in the wrong place! Rather than risk damage to the painting, the cord opening was left as it was — a curiosity, and an unexpected idiosyncrasy.

Curious Facts: Back Parlor

Visitors will enjoy seeing a precious pair of 18k gold errings in a special display. During the renovation, these errings were found in a crack between the heart of pine floors in the back parlor. Perhaps these errings were lost by a young Fackler daughter during a spirited waltz or gavotte; perhaps they were hidden from Union soldiers during the Civil War. It's easy to imagine romantic circumstances for this delightful find.

Curious Facts: Master Bedroom

The locks on the doors throughout the house also attest to its 1835 origins. They were all made by Carpenter and Co., in Willenhall, Staffordshire, England. (The handles were also made in Staffordshire.) The locks bear a brass seal attached to the front plate bearing the words "Carpenter and Co, Patentees," a phrase used by the company to identify its products until 1844.

The keepers of these locks are all embossed with the British Royal Arms. All bear the initials of W R, which stands for "William Rex", King William IV, who ruled England between 1830 and 1837. Such initials indicate the name of the reigning monarch (when William died, these initials were replaced by V R for Queen Victoria). Thus, the locks and their keepers are mute evidence of the dating of the entire house to 1835.

Carpenter and Co. made locks in England starting about 1790; quite expensive — exceptionally sturdy — they are also the handsomest locks used in early nineteenth century American houses.



More Curious Facts: Frescos in the Double Parlors
(Taken from an article in *The Huntsville Times*)

Mrs. Claude Dorning knew the frescos were in the parlors from historians who had written about the house and former residents, yet when she began removing layers of wallpaper she had no idea what she would uncover. Through painstaking work on the walls and ceilings, enough of the original designs have been uncovered to give artist Cecilia Alonso a good idea as to how the room should look. Even the muted tones of the frescos have been mixed to match bits of paint left on the back of the removed wallpaper.