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From the Chair...Ben Walker

All of our lives we have heard "the older you get, the faster time flies." I have found this to be especially true since assuming responsibilities as your chairman a few months back. We have so many wonderful things going on, so many additional things we need to be doing, and so precious little time it seems to get these things done. Thankfully we have some very industrious and energetic people who are dedicated to accomplishing the objectives of our foundation. Time may be moving rapidly, but so are out people as well.

I know we all concur in a genuine "thank you" to Susan O'Connor and Stephanie Sherman for chairing the 1997 Trade Day. By all reports it was one of our most successful. I know many of you worked long hours in preparing for this event to say nothing of a long day on the square and we do sincerely appreciate your efforts. The foundation has many dreams and aspirations aimed at carrying out our stated mission; however, none of these are possible without funding. Through your efforts these things become possible.

I am very encouraged by our activities in several areas, among these the action committee for downtown Huntsville. Margaret Ann Hanaw, acting as our committee chairman, has been instrumental in forming the "Downtown Think Tank" composed of foundation members as well as selected individuals having an interest, and hopefully some influence, in the old downtown area. Several meetings have been held with city officials, business leaders, and out-of-town consultants such as the Main Street representatives in an effort to take in all available information for analysis. I feel certain that very good things will come from this effort.

I would be remise if I didn't also acknowledge the continued outstanding efforts of Diane Ellis in the formation of the Mill Village action group. In conjunction with Lauren Martinson they have begun to organize this effort and state its objectives. Under the research grant received as a result of Lauren's efforts we have now hired a highly qualified, part-time employee to carry out the necessary "leg work." I also think we will see very good things result from this activity.

I know it saddens us all to hear that Elise Stephens will be moving to Galveston, Texas, in the near future. For my part, it is hard to imagine the Historic Huntsville Foundation without Elise. I wish her the very best and will try to make the most of the days she has left in Huntsville.

I hope all will be able to come to our next covered dish supper on Thursday, November 6th at 6:30 p.m. at the First Presbyterian Church. We have an exciting program planned. Our guests will be the group from Galveston, Texas, responsible for the revitalization of their downtown area, a very successful endeavor as I understand it.