

# The Historic Huntsville Quarterly

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Volume 25  
Number 1 *Harvie P. Jones, FAIA, Retrospective*

Article 5

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3-20-1999

## The Maria Howard Weeden House Introduction

Historic Huntsville Foundation

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### Recommended Citation

Historic Huntsville Foundation (1999) "The Maria Howard Weeden House Introduction," *The Historic Huntsville Quarterly*: Vol. 25: No. 1, Article 5.

Available at: <https://louis.uah.edu/historic-huntsville-quarterly/vol25/iss1/5>

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# The Maria Howard Weeden House

## Introduction

The Maria Howard Weeden House is one of Huntsville's architectural gems. A distinguished example of Federal period domestic building, it is one of the city's earliest surviving brick buildings. Built in 1819, it represents the architecture of early statehood in Alabama.

Harvie P. Jones wrote his essay to honor the opening of the Weeden House as a museum. The entire Vol. VIII, No. 1, Fall, 1981 issue of *Historic Huntsville Quarterly* was dedicated to the Weeden House's gardens, owners, and architecture, with articles by Sarah Huff Fisk, Frances Roberts, and Harvie.

The lot on which the Weeden House stands had several early owners, but it was Henry Bradford who purchased the lot in May 1819 for \$700 and constructed the two-story brick residence that survives today. Bradford soon relocated to Arkansas, and the house knew other owners until 1845, when Dr. William Weeden purchased it. Weeden died soon after, but his family and descendants—including his talented daughter Maria Howard—lived in the house for more than 100 years. In 1973, the Twickenham Historic Preservation District Association acquired the Weeden House. They later sold it to the Huntsville Housing Authority, leasing it back to operate a historic house museum and making it available for receptions and parties.

In 1934, the kitchen-service building at the rear of the Weeden House was torn down to make way for a garage, shortly after it was photographed and measured for the Historic American Buildings Survey. Harvie hoped that someday it would be rebuilt. His hopes have been realized.

Reconstruction of the kitchen, on its original foundations, has recently been completed (we look forward to an article on the reconstruction in a forthcoming *Historic Huntsville Quarterly*). The Weeden House, including its kitchen, is open from one to four p.m. every day except Monday. It is located at 300 Gates Avenue, Huntsville.