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Huntsville-Madison County Historical Society

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President's Message

How, precisely, does one undertake writing one's first "President's Message" in the Huntsville Historical Review? I could think of no better way to begin than to revisit the archive and be inspired and challenged by the efforts of my predecessors. I am, after all, merely the latest steward of this small stamp of real estate in the Review so ably now edited by Arley McCormick, himself the latest steward of a publication only a few years away from marking its first half-century.

Such stewardship, to be sure, is both boon and burden. There is no greater foundation on which to undertake any effort than to build on the accomplishments of the past. And, indeed, the Historical Society currently enjoys great momentum built by a great team, who are leading a variety of efforts to promote and preserve our local history. The Review you hold is an example of that. Two historical markers have been erected since the last issue of this Review. The Society is working increasingly hard to partner with local schools to share our history with students. We are an active partner with other organizations in the area.

But with that boon comes the burden of responsibility, to honor what has come before in what you hand over to those who come after. As president, I have a responsibility to support the Society's efforts, and to promote local history. But I also have a responsibility to ensure that I give the next president administration of a Society worthy of the one my predecessor passed to me.

I share this because it speaks to my goal not only for myself, but for the Society over the coming years. If you are reading this, you, also, are a steward, of the stories, images or archives that constitute Huntsville and Madison County's history. We are embarking on a two-year celebration of Alabama's bicentennial of statehood. That

two-century period begins in downtown Huntsville, and Huntsville will play a central role in its celebration.

There will be greater awareness of local history over the next two years than there has been for quite some time, and we have an opportunity and a responsibility as stewards of that history to share it with the many who today love this community, but have never had the opportunity to know its story.

Read and enjoy the stories contained herein, but think also of how we can share them, and others.

David Hitt
President
Huntsville-Madison County
Historical Society

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