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Front Matter

Huntsville-Madison County Historical Society

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From the President:

Venture to Huntsville's downtown, and the one constant is change. Buildings come down. Buildings go up. Buildings are refurbished – given new looks and new life. The continuous march of change is impossible to miss.

If you were to visit Huntsville's courthouse square today, though, there is one change that, if you're not careful, you might miss. And unlike these other changes, it's not about the new, but about the old.

Near the corner of Eastside and Northside Square sits preserved a section of brick sidewalk from the 19th century. Over time, the structure preserving the sunken sidewalk section has become increasingly difficult to see through. Now, the Society, fueled by the passion and vision of board member Carol Codori, is leading its refurbishment, providing a window to Huntsville's past.

It's a fitting task for the Society, and a representative one – the sidewalk section long predates this Society, and this effort is a step toward ensuring that it long outlasts our current membership. In the meantime, this effort will help provide the residents of Huntsville with a new view of our history.

And that, ultimately, is what we should strive to do, both corporately as a Society and individually as its members – to serve as stewards of our history during the moment we pass through it and to provide a

window allowing others to gaze into our past. It's why we put up, preserve and restore historical markers. It's why we support those working to preserve our historic buildings. It's why we share resources with local teachers and students.

They may not be quite as concrete as that sidewalk structure, but the articles in the Review you hold in your hands, ably assembled by Arley McCormick, serve that same purpose as well. Their authors have undertaken with their writing to preserve the stories of our history, and to give their readers a window into our past.

I hope you enjoy this issue of the Review. I encourage you to go downtown and look at the sidewalk project. And I commission you to be mindful of the ways you can help create your own windows.

David Hitt
President, HMCHS

From the Editor:

Our community began before the birth of the Alabama Territory and a short history lesson may be useful. At the turn of the 19th Century the Mississippi Territory was growing and Alabama was becoming a destination for squatters, investors, and landed property owners expanding the cotton industry. They were seeking recognition for an independent Territory in preparation for statehood. The communities in the state will recognize their achievement during the remaining Bicentennial period; 2018, and 2019.

Madison County was represented by seven prominent citizens when the Constitution Convention was held here in 1819 and the entire state will focus on Huntsville again in 2019. But, this year we celebrate the 100th anniversary of WWI.

One hundred years ago the Alabama Brigade guarded the Mexican border to prevent a revolution from migrating into the United States. The United States invaded Haiti to squelch European intervention, and Americans watched nations bleed on the battlefields of Europe for the first four years of WWI.

On May 7, 1915 a German U-boat sank the Lusitania and 1,924 souls were lost including 114 Americans. With oceans isolating us from Europe and politicians debating the merits of diplomacy or war,

Americans were aroused and began taking sides. We joined the fight and before an armistice was signed, North Alabama lost over 100 of her young men to the war while their families were struggling through a depression and the Spanish flu.

Our home is here and we live with the history our forefathers forged under the circumstances that could not always be controlled or justified. Our Review reflects the circumstances and understanding, and frequently the opinion of authors that study characters and events that affect our view of our community today. Thanks to them the Historical Society's Review always captures the soul of the community we call home. The authors illustrate noteworthy characters that form the foundation of our society and provide insight into the political and social fabric common to our community and state, and occasionally, the nation and the world. We find, as in life, characters whose names do not appear on statues or buildings but, none the less, are beacons of honest citizenship and responsible community representatives defining who we are.

How did our community respond to key events? Who were the characters that played a role and those that struggled, just to live? Our challenge is to tell the story of our community, the individual trials and triumphs, using the milestones of yesterday as a backdrop to illustrate the lives that influenced our social environment.

I want you to write, follow your passion for our community and describe a character for the Review. I will never exclude an article with other historical references. I encourage authors to consider illustrating the contributions of our special citizens during our two hundred years of existence. See the editorial policy on page 80.

The Huntsville Historical Review; Editorial Policy

The Huntsville Historical Review, a biyearly journal sponsored by the Huntsville-Madison County Historical Society, is the primary voice of the local history movement in northern Alabama. This journal reflects the richness and diversity of Madison County and North Alabama and this editor will endeavor to maintain the policy established by his predecessor with regard to the primary focus of the Review as well as material to be included in it. A casual examination of every community in the world reveals the character of its citizens and, if you listen and look closely, voices from the past and expectations for the future. Today is based upon our collective experience and the socialization of our ancestor's existence.

Although this publication focuses on local history, we cannot forget that what happens here has roots often connected by state, regional, national, and international events. In an effort to build on past traditions and continue the quality of our *Review*, an editorial policy will be implemented to guide contributors who wish to submit manuscripts, book reviews, or notes of historical significance to our community. The Historical Society wants you to submit articles for publication. Every effort will be made to assist you toward that goal.

You can contribute to our history through the *Huntsville Historical Review*.

Manuscript Preparation and Submission

Please submit an electronic copy of your article or book review to arleymccormick@comcast.net or send to:

Huntsville-Madison County
Historical Society
Box 666
Huntsville, Alabama 35804

Review Content and Style

- In matters of form and style, a good guide is the fourteenth or fifteenth edition of *The Chicago Manual of Style*.
- If you choose to include footnotes the preferred citation method for full articles would be best.
- Manuscripts should be in 12-point font and in Times New Roman. Microsoft Word
- This is a guide and not intended to discourage the creative process nor constrain authors from contributing to the Review.

Book Review

Please limit your book review to topics relevant to local, state, or southern history. A good review should

clearly and concisely describe the nature, scope, and thesis of a book that would be relevant to Madison County history. Emphasis on local and regional history will be given in order to help readers expand and contextualize their knowledge. Your review should be helpful to the general reader interested in Madison County or North Alabama and here are some good rules to follow when writing a book review:

- Your first obligation in a book review is to explain the subject of the book and the author's central thesis or main points.
- Your second obligation is to evaluate how successfully the author has made his/her point. Is the author's argument reasonable, logical, and consistent?
- Your third obligation is to set the book into a broader context. If you can, place the book into a wider context by looking at broader issues.
- Your fourth obligation is to render a judgment on the value of the book as a contribution to historical scholarship.

News and Notes Submissions

Please keep your submissions limited to 250 words and please include contact information if you are making an inquiry or asking a question. The editor has the right to change or delete wording or information.

Little Reminders . . . Good Writing Rules

- Write in the active voice, and the past tense.
- Cast your sentences in the positive.
- Topic sentences should be clear and straightforward statements of what the paragraph is about. Every sentence in a paragraph should work to explain the topic sentence.
- Write in the third person.

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