



The Historic Huntsville

*Foundation is committed
to building a vibrant future
for*

Huntsville-Madison County

by preserving our past.

Since 1974, we have

promoted the protection

and preservation of

Huntsville-Madison County's

historically, architecturally

and culturally significant

structures and sites

through education, advocacy

and public policy.

Foundation Forum

Foundation Forum and Historic Huntsville Foundation Newsletter

THE FORCE AWAKENS IN BIG SPRING PARK



Mayor Tommy Battle huddles with a band of Jedi knights in advance of the movie. Movie sponsor Progress Bank handed out free lightsabers to hundreds of young Jedi warriors and knights, adding to the evening's festivities.

Donna Castellano

There was a great disturbance in the Force on a clear Friday night in Big Spring Park, as legions of Jedi knights with glowing lightsabers greeted the arrival of *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* at Historic Huntsville Foundation's Movies in the Park. The park had standing room only as the film's opening credits rolled over the screen and the brassy orchestral blasts of John William's score sent chills down the spine of every fan drawn to this classic tale of good versus evil.

The Force Awakens is the second of six films in HHF's expanded Movies in the Park series. July 28 brings Woody and his pal Buzz Lightyear to the park in *Toy Story*; A thousand voices will join along when *Sing* hits the screen on August 11, and the series will take an introspective turn with *Inside Out* on August 25. That still

leaves *The Secret Lives of Pets*, whose June date was cancelled due to weather, for September 8! Many thanks to our presenting sponsor Jerry Damson Honda/Acura for their support of the Movies in the Park film series and to Cadence Bank for offering three bonus movie features.

In addition to an expanded movie schedule, 2017 Movies in the Park also features a collaborative partnership with The Huntsville Symphony Orchestra. The HSO serenades movie audiences with beautiful music before the film and offers a Musical Petting Zoo as part of HHF's Kid's Corner. The Petting Zoo lets children explore their musical side by playing with a variety of musical instruments. HHF Chairman Jason Vandiver, shares, "There are lots of kids having a great time at the Petting



Jason and his daughters making memories at Movies in the Park.

HHF CHAIRMAN JASON VANDIVER WITH HIS HANDS FULL AT MOVIES IN THE PARK.

The Force Awakens can't

Zoo. They play drums, tambourines and violins. I'm not sure if those instruments are supposed to sound like that, but the kids sure seem to enjoy it."

While 2017 MIP sports new features, there are things about Movies in the Park that haven't changed. Families still show up early to grab good viewing spots and bring picnic baskets and treats for the kids. Kids run, play and patiently stand in line waiting to have their faces painted. Folks pick up dinner from food trucks and take the edge off hot summer nights with ice cream, popsicles and shaved ice treats. Ducks paddle along in the canal. There are smiles, sweat, laughter and tons of memories in the making.

FROM THE CHAIRMAN Jason Vandiver

One of the biggest privileges of working downtown is being able to walk to many of Huntsville's best restaurants on my lunch break. Huntsville's core boasts some fantastic casual and fine dining options even for those of us who always seem to be on the go. However no matter how busy I may be, I always try to build an extra 5-10 minutes into my stroll to stop by and check in on Historic Huntsville Foundation's greatest asset, Harrison Brothers Hardware.

After a recent afternoon visit to Commerce Kitchen, I turned the corner onto Southside Square to be met with a buzz of activity around the front door of the store. There were a half dozen or so people chatting and showing off their purchases to one another. Others were taking photos of the building's façade and our recently refurbished historical marker. I worked my way towards the entrance just in time to hold it open for another pair of shoppers exiting the building. As they passed, I took great pride when they exclaimed to the group on the sidewalk "They need something like this where we're from."

It was this statement "...where we're from" that really stuck with me as I entered the store. As the remaining customers finished their purchases, I introduced myself as the Chairman of the non-profit foundation that owns and operates the store. I shook a few hands and thanked them for shopping with us. I took this opportunity to ask one gentleman where home was for the group. He said they were with a small church in a small town in Georgia that I'd probably never heard of. He was correct; I had not.

On the walk back to the office, that statement "...where we're from" popped back into my head. Well, Huntsville is where I'm from, a fact that I share any chance I get. I started to wonder if Huntsville folks visit other cities and say something similar to the group from that small Georgia church. Or do they visit other cities and say, "You know this place is nice, but it's no Harrison Brothers." I'd like to think that it's the latter of those two sentiments.

I want to encourage visitors, transplants and natives alike to come and see what Harrison Brothers has to offer. If you've never been, you don't know what you're missing. If it has been awhile since you've been in, come and see what's new. And to our regulars, thank you from everyone at Historic Huntsville Foundation for your continued support. This year Harrison Brothers celebrates its 120th birthday. If you ask me, it doesn't get any more "...where we're from" than that.

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TALKING HISTORY

A Conversation with Madison's City Administrator Taylor Edge

Jeanne Steadman



Madison City
Administrator Taylor Edge

Could you please summarize what the City of Madison did on Main Street and any upcoming plans for Martin Street?

Madison's historic downtown is an asset to the community. We want to restore it as a hub of activity. To do that it takes vision, investment, and cooperation. The City's vision is for historic downtown to be vibrant and a magnet that draws both residents and visitors.

To realize this vision, it takes both public and private investment. The City has invested millions of dollars to restore and beautify the infrastructure along Main Street. This includes streetscapes, increased parking, and making downtown more pedestrian friendly. Because of our public investment, private investment has followed. That includes not only renovation of historic structures but also new construction that blends and contributes to the historic ambience of Madison Station. We are able to accomplish this thanks to the partnership with our Madison Historic Preservation Commission, which was established to help preserve but also support progress in that area.

Are there plans to take these improvements to other streets in the historic district?

Continued public investment is now moving south along Martin Street. There is current construction to widen Martin Street and add sidewalks on both sides of the street from Sullivan to the city parking lot. Speaking of the City parking lot, it is being expanded, rebuilt, with beautification elements such as trees and landscape islands added as well. This project is a joint project with Madison Utilities where very old infrastructure is being upgraded, which adds value to historic downtown. There is already commercial interest along Martin Street based on this new construction. This is a \$1.9M commitment to the growth of historic downtown. In the near future, the City anticipates further announcements that will inject energy into the area and work as a catalyst for continued beneficial growth.

What role do residents and business owners play in supporting the City's efforts and investments in downtown Madison?

It takes cooperation to restore the hub of activity in our historic downtown. Change is difficult in any circumstance but it is especially difficult when it involves historic elements. To make Madison Station what the community longs for, it requires cooperation from City staff, landowners, business owners, and legacy family roots that established our wonderful town. The Madison city motto is, "Where Progress Meets Preservation." To make this motto work for us rather than against, it requires cooperation. We are starting to see that downtown, and it is producing amazing results. Structures and parcels that were once thought hopeless are now hopeful. Where there were once fists up, there are now hands out. That is what it will take to make our historic downtown all it is capable of being.

How important is the historic downtown area to the success of the City as a whole?

The Mayor and City Council are committed to making historic downtown Madison vibrant again. This is the core of Madison. Everything that happens in the downtown core benefits Madison's quality of life. Through vision, investment, and cooperation, it will become a reality.

INVESTING IN ALABAMA HISTORY



Preservation tax credits can be used for preservation projects like the restoration of this residence in the Old Town Historic District.

Donna Castellano

Alabama Legislature Reauthorizes Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit

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The Alabama Legislature and Governor Kay Ivey approved a new Historic Preservation Tax Credit program in May that will have a tremendous impact on historic preservation projects across the state, fueling significant investments in historic downtowns, neighborhoods and rural countrysides. The newly approved program funds \$20 million dollars in tax credits annually through 2022, for a total of \$100,000,000 in available tax credits.

Both commercial and residential historic properties are eligible for the tax credit project.

The initial program, which lasted from 2013-2016, fueled the renovation of 52 projects in Alabama for an estimated investment of \$346.7 million. 69 percent of these projects were in Birmingham and Mobile; Huntsville had one approved tax credit project, a residential project in the Old Town Historic District received a \$33,750 credit for a rehabilitation investment of \$135,000. Four Birmingham commercial projects each received \$5 million in tax credits; one Montgomery commercial project received a \$5 million tax credit.

Features of the 2017 law include:

1. \$20 million dollars in tax credits are available per year, for a total of \$100,000,000 in preservation funds. A project project can receive up to \$5 million in tax credits.
2. 40 percent of funds are reserved with counties with fewer than 175,000 people. If projects in rural counties do not reserve funds by the first two quarters of the fiscal year, then any project, regardless of its location in the state, can apply for the remaining tax credits.
3. Eligible properties must be at

least 60 years old; eligible properties must be listed to the National Register of Historic Places or a contributing structure in a National Register Historic District.

4. A Historic Tax Credit Evaluation Committee, comprised of state officials, will review applications, rank and reserve tax credits for approved projects.

5. A rehabilitation plan must be submitted to the Alabama Historical Commission for approval. Modifications to the exterior must comply with Department of Interior Rehabilitation standards; all work is subject to review for compliance.

6. 25 percent of allowable rehabilitation expenditures can be refunded through tax credits. Allowable expenditures include but are not limited to: repair and stabilization of

historic structural systems; restoration of historic plaster; energy efficiency measures except insulation in frame walls; repairs or rehabilitation of heating, air conditioning, or ventilation systems; repairs or rehabilitation of electrical or plumbing systems exclusive of new electrical appliances and electrical or plumbing fixtures; and architectural, engineering, and land surveying fees.

Allowable expenditures do not include the cost of acquisition of the Certified Historic Structure or Certified Historic Residential Structure, the personal labor by the Applicant, enlargement of the Certified Historic Structure or Certified Historic Residential Structure, or any cost associated with the rehabilitation of an outbuilding unless the outbuilding is certified by the Commission to be of historical significance.

7. The tax credit is an Alabama state tax credit. The tax credit is applied toward the property owners state income tax; if the credit is greater than the tax owed, the credit comes back to the property owner as a tax refund.

8. Applications for the 2018 cycle will be available through the Alabama Historical Commission on November 1, 2017.

Redemption of the credit occurs only after completion of the project, certified by the Alabama Historical Commission. For more information, contact **Donna Castellano**, donna@historichuntsville.org or consult the Alabama Historical Commission website at ahc.alabama.gov.



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TEMPLE B'NAI SHOLOM

Donna Castellano

The Huntsville Jewish Heritage Center - Huntsville's Museum with a Mighty Purpose

The Huntsville Jewish Heritage Center at the Temple B'nai Sholom explains the religion and traditions of Judaism, provides a history of Huntsville's Jewish population, and shares the many contributions of the Jewish community to Huntsville's civic and cultural life. Located in the original study used by Temple rabbis, the artful displays of the Heritage Center weave together an overarching narrative that offers great insight into the Jewish religion and asks visitors of all faiths to reflect upon the beliefs shared in common.

This ambitious project began with a simple request. Temple rabbi Elizabeth Behar asked Margaret Anne Goldsmith to convert the original rabbi's study into a museum. Without hesitation Margaret Anne agreed to this task. As she explains, "I knew it would please my ancestors."



Margaret Anne Goldsmith

Margaret Anne and her ancestors are rooted in the history of Temple B'nai Sholom and of Huntsville. Her great, great grandparents, the Bernsteins and Hersteins, were founding members of the 1876 B'nai Sholom congregation. Her great grandfather, Isaac Schiffman chaired the 1899 Temple building committee, and her great grandfather Oscar Goldsmith was a member of the building committee. The contributions of Margaret Anne's family to our city are recognized in the I. Schiffman Building, the names of streets, and in the names of a ball field, an elementary school, and a wildlife sanctuary donated to the city of Huntsville in memory of the Goldsmith and Schiffman families.

With deep ties to Temple B'nai Sholom and the greater Huntsville community, Margaret Anne brought a unique

perspective to the museum project. She states, "I believed the Heritage Center would be a way to teach, inform and share with our visitors information about Jewish beliefs, holidays, life cycle events and our sacred Jewish objects, rituals and traditions. We have no efforts to proselytize. After visiting the Center, we want guests to leave with a better understanding of our similarities and our differences and celebrate both." And this endeavor, she knew, would please her ancestors.

Temple B'nai Sholom has anchored the corner of Lincoln Street and Clinton Avenue since 1899 and is the oldest synagogue building in continuous use in the state of Alabama. The congregation purchased the land for \$1,500 in 1898 and contracted with William Meyers of New York to build their house of worship. Architect B. H. Hunt of Chattanooga designed the Romanesque Revival-style synagogue as well as other religious structures across the southeast, including the First Baptist Church that once stood at the corner of Clinton and Church Street.

The Heritage Center is located in the original rabbi's study, which is on the northeast corner of the sanctuary building. Marking the entrance to the Center is a collection of beautifully framed Torah covers. The Torah, which is handwritten in Hebrew, is Judaism's central text. It conveys the foundational stories and laws of the Jewish people, including the Five Books of Moses, Genesis through Deuteronomy. The Torah is handwritten in Hebrew and rolled around two ornate wooden shafts, attached to either end of a scroll. As a sign of reverence, the Torah is covered with a cloak, or cover. The Torah covers displayed at the entrance of the Heritage Center are highly decorative, with gold embroidery and beading.

Christopher Madkour of the Huntsville Museum of Art

described the Heritage Center as an "exquisite jewel box."

The original mantel, stained glass windows and rich wood floors and moldings impart great warmth to the room. The roll top desk is part of the Temple's furniture collection and has been used by rabbis since the synagogue's construction. The space has an air of quiet restfulness, as one feels the presence of the scholars who studied, contemplated and wrote here in past years.

The Heritage Center introduces visitors to Judaism through a series of exhibits that illustrate the beliefs, culture and history of Judaism from its ancient origins to the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948. In a display dedicated to Jewish Memorial and Celebration Days, photographs and donated artifacts explain Jewish life events. Photographs donated by Temple members show



Torah Covers displayed in the Jewish Heritage Center





Displayed are two Torahs. The Torahs are wearing mantles, breast plates, pointers and crowns. A Torah pointer, or yad, is used whenever reading or studying the Torah as a sign of respect for the Holy scriptures.

the celebration of a Brit Milah, or Bris, where Jewish males are circumcised at eight days old; the Bar and Bat Mitzvah, a ceremony marking the initiation of thirteen year old boys and girls into the Jewish community; the Jewish wedding ceremony, where couples take their marriage vows under a Chuppa, or a wedding canopy made of cloth or garland. Exhibited is a candle used during Shiva, a seven-day period of mourning when relatives mourn the death of a loved one.

The observance of Shabbat is integral to these life events. Shabbat is Judaism's day of rest, which begins at sundown Friday night and continues until Saturday evening. Temple members donated Shabbat Candles, Kiddush Cup, and Havdalah set used during the Havdalah ceremony at the close of Sabbath.

A second display case introduces visitors to Jewish holidays. The High Holy Days of Judaism are Rosh Hashanah, the Day of Judgment, and Yom Kippur, which is a day of fasting that

climaxes the ten-day period of atonement that begins on Rosh Hashanah. Displayed is a Shofar, or ram's horn, sounded in the synagogue on Rosh Hashanah and at the conclusion of Yom Kippur. Also displayed is a silver sculpture of a Shofar.



The Jewish holiday of Hanukkah commemorates the rededication of the Temple in Jerusalem in 165 BCE following its defilement by the Greeks. Jews celebrate Hanukkah by the lighting of eight candles or oil lamps. Displayed are two Menorahs donated by Temple families.

The Passover Seder is a ritual meal that commemorates the Jewish people's deliverance from Egypt. Displayed are items used during the Seder, including the Haggadah, which is a liturgy recited during the Seder, and Seder Plates, which hold symbolic foods eaten during the reading of the Haggadah.

One of the most unforgettable artifacts in the Heritage Center is a yellow, cloth Star of David, which was sewn on the jacket of a Jewish Holocaust victim. During the Holocaust



*A dedication plaque recognizing Temple B'nai Sholom's 1898 building committee.
Tallits, or prayer shawls, are used for morning prayers.*

Jews were required to wear yellow stars on their clothing. The framed star represents the Holocaust Memorial Day of Yom HaShoah, the day of mourning for victims of the Holocaust. A Temple congregant donated this artifact.

A copy of the Declaration of the State of Israel is also displayed, marking Yom Ha'Atzmaut, which is a holiday commemorating the Establishment of the State of Israel in 1946.

Items in a third display case introduce visitors to Jewish symbols, sacred objects and traditions. The Seven-Branch Menorah and the Magen David, or Star of David, have represented Judaism since ancient times. Jewish homes and synagogues collect funds for righteous causes in the Tzedakah Box. Jewish homes are marked by a Mezuzah, which is affixed to doorposts and contains handwritten passages from the Book of Deuteronomy.

There are three items displayed traditionally worn by

Jewish men during prayers and services. A Tallit, or prayer shawl, is worn during morning prayers, Sabbath and holiday services. A Tefillin is two boxes containing handwritten Scriptural quotations. The boxes are bound with leather and strapped to the forehead and weaker arm and worn during daily morning prayers. A Yarmulke, or skullcap, covers the head of men as a sign of humility before God.

Visitors can learn about the history of Huntsville's Jewish community through a video documentary that is shown in the Heritage Center. The film begins with the arrival of Huntsville's first Jewish settlers and traces the evolution of the Jewish community over the decades. Explored is the role of Huntsville Jews in slavery and the Civil War, the impact of urbanism and nativism on the Huntsville Jewish community, and changes to the Jewish community with the arrival of Huntsville's space program in the 1950s. Through this beautifully produced documentary, visitors learn about the contributions of Jews to our city and gain a deeper appreciation for the cultural diversity of Huntsville.

The Jewish Heritage Center is clearly a labor of love. Meticulously organized and curated by Margaret Anne Goldsmith, the exhibits of the Heritage Center educate visitors about Judaism in a personal way--through the memories, photographs and family heirlooms donated by members of the congregation who want to share their religion with their neighbors and the larger community. At a time of great division in our nation and around the world, the Heritage Center shows the power of a still, small voice.

Sholom.

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Dr. Lou Weiner with the rescued Torah dedicated in memory of his daughter.

The dedication plaque reads in part:

This Torah survived the Holocaust

Charred by fire, stained by blood

It is dedicated

In memory of my beloved daughter

In memory of the 1,500,000 children

In memory of the 6,000,000

Czechoslovakia that were restored and returned to service after their removal by Nazis who plundered and destroyed synagogues in occupied lands during World War II.

After the war and decades of decay, a London art dealer negotiated with the Czechoslovakian government to purchase the discarded Torahs and move them to Westminster Synagogue in London in 1964. The Czech Memorial Scrolls Trust was established to catalogue the place of origin, age and condition of each scroll, repair them when possible, and make them available to synagogues around the world.

Dr. Louis B. Weiner, a member of Temple B'nai Sholom, arranged with the Memorial Scrolls Trust to have a Czech Torah donated to the Temple in memory of his beloved daughter, Julia Ann Weiner.

Every artifact displayed in the Heritage Center has a story to tell; some tell stories of religious traditions and family celebrations while others tell stories of persecution borne by Jewish people throughout their history.

Displayed in a handsome case in the Temple sanctuary is a Torah rescued from the Holocaust, one of 1,564 Torahs from



Please Join Us

The Historic Huntsville Foundation invites you to tour the Huntsville Jewish Heritage Center at Temple B'nai Sholom

Thursday evening, September 14th at 6 PM.

Our hosts will be Margaret Anne Goldsmith, Ann van Leeuwen, Temple president, and several docents.

We will begin with a program and a question and answer period followed by a tour of the Temple and the Jewish Heritage Center.

Our hosts will share portions of the Sabbath service including prayers that would be offered both in a Jewish home and at Temple services Friday evening.

Light refreshments will be served. • Mailed invitations will follow

THIS PLACE MATTERS

May! A Month of Celebrating Historic Preservation



Campus 805, the former Stone Middle School, provided the perfect setting for an event exploring innovative approaches to historic preservation.

Celebrating historic preservation is what we at Historic Huntsville Foundation do best, and we were thrilled to partner with the City of Huntsville and the Huntsville Historic Preservation Commission in a series of public events during the month of May that recognized the many preservation successes in our community.

The cornerstone of the festivities was a “Preservation and Placemaking Seminar” at Campus 805, with Cheryl Morgan, Emerita Professor of Architecture at Auburn University, as keynote speaker. Immediately following Ms. Morgan’s talk was a panel discussion featuring Dennis Madsen, Manager of Urban and Long-Range Planning, City of Huntsville; Chad Emerson, CEO, Downtown Huntsville Inc; Jennifer Moore, Huntsville-Madison County Convention & Visitors Bureau, and Ms. Morgan. Donna Castellano, Executive Director of the Historic Huntsville Foundation moderated the discussion.

HISTORIC HUNTSVILLE FOUNDATION



MOVIES BEGIN AT SUNDOWN

Food vendors serve at 5:30

HSO performance at 7:00

BIG SPRING PARK EAST

July 28 ■ August 11

August 25 ■ September 8





124 Southside Square
Huntsville, AL 35801

2017 Membership Levels & Benefits

Individual/Family Membership \$50

- Guests at holiday membership reception
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- Receive Foundation newsletter
- Recognition in HHH newsletter

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- Recognized as Patron Member in HHH newsletter

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- Recognized as Benefactor Member in HHH newsletter
- 10% shopping discount at Harrison Brothers Hardware, excluding consignment and sale merchandise
- Individual or corporate recognition as Benefactor on Community Sponsors and Donor Board displayed in Harrison Brothers Hardware
- Benefactor recognition at HHH's Movies in the Park film series.

Preservation Society \$1,000 *All of the above, plus:*

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- Individual or corporate recognition as Sponsor at HHH's Movies in the Park film series

Preservation Partner \$2,500 *All of the above, plus:*

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- Recognition as Supporting Sponsor of HHH's Movies in the Park film series

Thank you for building a more vibrant future for Huntsville-Madison County by preserving our past!

Membership Levels

- ☐ Yes, Please renew my membership in the Historic Huntsville Foundation.
- ☐ Individual & Family \$50
- ☐ Patron \$125 to \$249
- ☐ Benefactor \$250
- ☐ Preservation Society \$1,000
- ☐ Preservation Partner \$2,500

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