



Foundation Forum

Foundation Forum and Historic Huntsville Foundation Newsletter

Our preservation mission discovers, documents, shares, and preserves the history and material culture of Huntsville-Madison County through programs and projects that include the contributions of all Alabamians. Supported by member donations since 1974, our nonprofit organization promotes the preservation of historically and culturally significant places through education, public engagement, and advocacy.



Hidden No More: Huntsville's Black Suffrage Pioneers

Six Black women who labored quietly for voting rights received a homecoming reception for the ages on a sunny October afternoon in William Hooper Council Memorial Park, with the dedication of a historic marker that welcomed Mary Binford, Ellen Brandon, India Herndon, Lou Bertha Johnson, Celia Love, and Dora Lowery to their rightful place in Alabama history.

Alabama Governor Kay Ivey and Huntsville Mayor Tommy Battle joined devoted family members and over 500 event attendees to dedicate a historic marker recognizing the six Black women allowed to register to vote in Madison County in 1920 following the ratification of the 19th amendment.



Left to right: Patsy Harris and Yvonne Lowery-Kennedy, granddaughters of Dora Lowery; Alabama Governor Kay Ivey, HHF Executive Director Donna Castellano, Dr. Herndon Spillman, grandson of India Herndon; Huntsville Mayor Tommy Battle, Joan Carter, granddaughter of Mary Binford; Lakeside Methodist Pastor Randy Kelley, and over 500 community supporters witnessed the unveiling of Alabama's first historic marker recognizing Black suffragists.

Huntsville's Black suffragists were the product of a vibrant Black community formed in the aftermath of slavery whose members committed themselves to claiming the opportunities of freedom. They were "educators, business owners, philanthropists, community volunteers and the mothers of the Civil Rights Movement," said Donna Castellano, Executive Director of the Historic Huntsville Foundation (HHF). According to Castellano, the full tapestry of Alabama history only becomes visible when their stories become part of the narrative.

Grandchildren and other family members of the suffragists (*continued on page 3*)

From the Chairman

Leslie Tuck Walker

As the year speeds ever closer to its end, and as I prepare to complete my tenure as your Historic Huntsville Foundation Board Chair, one might think I would be looking back. It seems only natural to spend my time reminiscing over the past few years and fondly reliving HHF's successes in growth, the resiliency of Harrison Brothers Hardware during the pandemic, the dedication of our team to sharpen our focus on educating the community about Huntsville historical sites with a more inclusive vision as well as so many other points of pride and progress.

Instead, I choose to look forward! I anticipate ahead to a future HHF, a community force in creating a home for the newest of citizens, from the farthest away places,

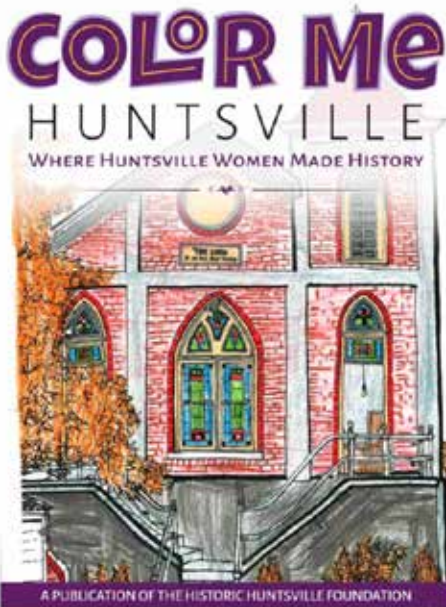
by fostering a pride in this city. A pride that comes from understanding the roots of our community and the role you are playing in writing the next chapters. We have made huge strides in this direction over recent years but there is still much to be done.

As the passionate team of your Historic Huntsville Foundation Board and staff moves on to next goals, they will absolutely need all your support and encouragement. Together you will make magic in opening doors for more Invitation to History events, explore the creation of history-driven trails, tours, and behind-the-scenes opportunities, as well as uncover more hidden history, preventing it from being lost forever.



HHF Chairman Leslie Walker

"Thank you" seems so small to encompass all I have been fortunate to be part of with Historic Huntsville Foundation and Harrison Brothers Hardware. The enormity of what this group does often leaves me speechless, so it will simply have to be enough for now.



Christina Wegman's sketch of Lakeside Methodist Church makes a glorious cover for "Color Me, Huntsville: Where Huntsville Women Made History." Black Huntsvillians founded Lakeside in 1866. The congregation completed the sanctuary in 1886, constructed from materials purchased from the original c. 1843 Church of Nativity, dismantled in the 1870s. Sadly, fire destroyed the building in the late 1960s.

Color More, Huntsville!

Was there every any doubt? Our NEW "Where Huntsville Women Made History" coloring book is an unqualified success. Artist Christina Wegman and historian Donna Castellano once again combine their collective talents to create a kid-friendly coloring book that brings much-needed attention to the untold stories of Huntsville women.

Here, the history of Huntsville's women come alive as children learn about Mary Binford, Ellelee Humes, Alice Baldrige, Nurse Johnnie LouJeanne Dent, and Alberta Taylor--groundbreaking pioneers whose work improved the lives of all Alabamians. Our newest coloring book brings the stories of Black and White women from the shadows, putting a spotlight on their individual lives in a way that explains the significance of their collective contributions to our local, state, and national history.

This book is one component of HHF's larger program, "Where Huntsville Women Made History," which includes the dedication of four historic markers and the debut of a heritage history trail. HHF received grants from the Alabama Humanities Alliance, the Community Foundation of Greater Huntsville, and generous support from HHF members to fund these projects. As a memento of the occasion, HHF gave "Huntsville Women" coloring books to those who attended our October marker dedication.

Three generations of Binford-Carters peruse the pages of "Color Me, Huntsville" at the marker dedication honoring their grandmother, great grandmother, and great-great grandmother Mary Binford. "Color Me, Huntsville" features a sketch of the Binford family home, now demolished, and the story of Mary Binford.



Jim Teed

(continued from page 1) travelled from New York, Baton Rouge, Chicago, and Atlanta to witness the unveiling of the historic marker. All were unaware of their grandmother's involvement in the suffrage movement until contacted by HHF representatives. Joan Carter, granddaughter of Mary Binford, compared the suffragists to "hidden figures," pioneering women whose contributions to a great cause had been unknown.

Huntsville is the first city to dedicate a historic marker to Alabama's early Black suffragists. We hope our example inspires others to follow in our footsteps.

Building the Future for Huntsville Preservation

A new year heralds new opportunities, and HHF's 2022 membership package gives members new opportunities to learn, share, and experience Huntsville history and its historic sites.

Experience Huntsville's Historic Places at our "Invitation to History" Tours.

Oakwood University will also open the gates to their historic campus for our members to explore. We will enjoy tours of East Hall, c. 1910, J. L. Moran Hall, completed in 1943 and named after the first Black president of Oakwood University, and the Morning Star School House. We have fingers crossed that the Aeolians will make an appearance, too! Scheduled for Late Spring 2022.



A Landmark for Higher Learning
The campus of Oakwood University



Family Matters
The Goldsmith House

Members will tour the magnificent c. 1883 Goldsmith House in the heart of the Twickenham Historic District. Built by Henrietta and Morris Bernstein for their daughter Betty (Bernstein) Goldsmith and son in law, Oscar Goldsmith. The property remained in family hands until its purchase by Nancy and Richard Van Valkenburgh in 2000, when it became home to Van Valkenburgh & Wilkinson Properties, Inc., a family-owned real estate business.

Witness Alabama History at our Marker Dedication Events.

Members will receive advance invitations to the historic marker dedications recognizing Dr. Frances Roberts, noted historian and historic preservationist, and Alice Boarman Baldrige, first woman from Madison County elected to public office in 1916.



ClaybyLaura's artful interpretation
of our preservation mission.

Discover the Hidden History of Huntsville Suffragists

Members will receive mailed invitations for "Hidden Figures No More: Capturing the History of Huntsville's Black Suffragist," a program presented by HHF Executive Director Donna Castellano on Wednesday, February 16 at 6:00, the Huntsville Area Association of Realtors Building.

Preservation all Wrapped up in a Bow!

Members who join at the Patron (\$125) level or above will receive a newly commissioned Preserve dish from ClaybyLaura personally delivered to their porch. Laura completely reimagined the piece for 2022, incorporating her signature "Alabama" shape into the design.

Peruse our new membership menu in the enclosed membership materials!

Alabama's first historic marker dedication recognizing Alabama's Black suffragists was a celebration for the ages.



Jim Teed

228 words that made history.



Jeff White

The family of Mary Binford. Joan Carter and Dr. Allen Carter, grandchildren of Mary Binford, flanked by Tony Carter, Memphis Carter (left) and Ben Carter (right).



Jeff White

The family of India Herndon. Dr. Herndon Spillman, grandson of India Herndon, and his daughters, Katherine-Evangeline Spillman and Leslie-Claire Spillman



Jim Teed

Blue skies and the First Baptist Church steeple make for a glorious day of history.



Jeff White

Snapshots of history.



Jeff White

The family of Dora Lowery. L to R Timothy Kennedy, Carnetta Kennedy, Yvonne Lowery-Kennedy, granddaughter of Dora Lowery, Zoe Kennedy, Joseph Lowery-Kennedy, Ciana Kennedy and Heather Kennedy.



Jeff White

Warner Byars, Annie Cheatham, Ida Crawford, Velma Foster, Diane Singletary King, Harriet Littlepage, and Elaine Tibbs Rice interpreted the history of suffragists at the marker dedication.



Jeff White

Lochlan Elrod, who colored the sketch of Lakeside Methodist that graces the newest cover of Color Me, Huntsville, with and his grandmother, Suzie Hiatt.



Jim Teed

Denise Swain, of Scenethat Tours, interviewed the suffragists' grandchildren about their grandmothers, creating the first documented oral history of the suffragists' lives. Here, Denise speaks with Dr. Allen Carter and Joan Carter about their grandmother, Mary Binford.



Jeff White

Decatur's Girls Connected 4 A Cause celebrating voting rights.



Jeff White

Huntsville Alumnae Chapter of the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.



Jeff White

Volunteers from Huntsville's Girls Inc. distributed marker programs at the event.



Jim Teed

Central North Alabama Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.



Jeff White

The Huntsville Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.

Your membership support and generous contributions are the foundation of our community-based preservation mission.

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2022 Membership Levels & Benefits

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- Invitations to “Invitation to History” Members-Only Tours
- Recognition in HHF newsletter
- 10% discount at Harrison Brothers Hardware, excluding sale and consignment

Patron \$125 *All of the above, plus:*

- ClaybyLaura Pottery Keepsake made exclusively for HHF members
- Recognition in HHF Newsletter

Benefactor \$250 *All of the above, plus:*

- Early-Bird registration for “Invitation to History Tours”
- Recognition on Donor Board in Harrison Brothers Hardware

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

- Recognized in “Color Me, Huntsville: Where Huntsville Women Made History” coloring book
- Five copies of “Color Me, Huntsville: Where Huntsville Women Made History” coloring books

Preservation Society \$1000 *All of the above, plus:*

- Recognition as Preservation Partner at all HHF events
- Recognition as Preservation Partner on HHF website

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

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- Recognition as Foundation Partner on all HHF events
- Recognition as Foundation Partner on HHF website

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- I would like to renew my membership in the Historic Huntsville Foundation.
- I would like to join the Historic Huntsville Foundation.
- Individual/Family \$50
- Patron \$125
- Benefactor \$250
- Community Partner \$500
- Preservation Society \$1000
- Preservation Partner \$2,500
- Foundation Partner \$5,000

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