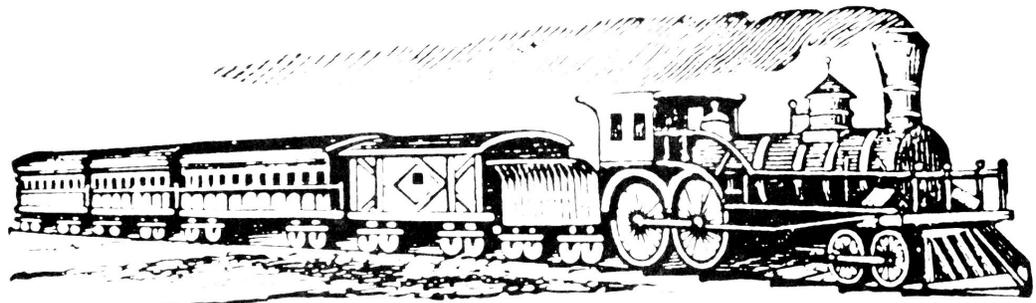


The Dispatch

Apex Historical Society



The Newsletter of the Apex Historical Society Apex, North Carolina October/November/December, 2019

President's Message

Jeff Hastings:

This most recent quarter was profoundly impacted by the sudden passing of our organization founder, Jan Brooks, on August 5, 2019. Our feelings about Jan and the contributions she made to our organization and to our community were well summed up by Bill Rousseau at Jan's Celebration of Life service held August 17, 2019. Bill is also an AHS founding member who has worked with Jan since the beginning.



I am reprinting Bill's presentation at Jan's service as my President's Message for this issue of the Dispatch.

Thank you Tom, Annie-Girl, and your families for giving me the privilege of presenting at this celebration of Jan Brook's life.

Anne was always Annie-Girl to Jan, even after she grew up to be Mrs. Anne Brooks Easter. Every one else was 'Kiddo.' If she couldn't remember your name, you were 'Kiddo.'

Jan had **three great passions** in her life:

- Her family
- Her dog
- The town of Apex and the Apex Historical Society.

I have **first hand knowledge** of Jan's passion for Apex and for the Apex Historical Society. **Those of you** who have known her in this capacity most certainly have many stories to share.

We know quite well Jan's passion for Apex, so we can only imagine how intense her passion was for her dogs ;

- Li'l Bean, Belle Bear and Buckwheat.

And then, of course, there's her **over-the-top love** she had for Charlie, Tom, Annie-Girl, and their families.

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My wife Claire and I first got to know Jan when we responded to an ad in the Apex Herald. It was an invitation to get together for the purpose of starting a historical society in Apex.

That's when I got my first taste of **her uncanny knack** of getting people to work harder and give more than they had ever intended to do. I came to the meeting mostly to accompany my wife, but that night I ended up becoming the Treasurer of the new society.

Jan's vision and her personality drew many people to join the society, and within about a year and a half we had 100 members.

When Dogwood Ridge was first started, its **developer** approached the fledgling Society and told us that there was an old farm house on the property that he was going to tear down. We could have it for free if we would just move it off the site.

We were intrigued. But we had no land, no money, and no wealthy benefactors. But Jan took a group of us to the house for a look-see, and she got our imaginations going.

Jan asked the developer if we could have the house in place.

The developer balked:

- The house took up two lots.
- The lots were in a prime location.
- The out-buildings were on the verge of collapse.
- The main house was in serious disrepair and would be an eyesore that would affect his home sales.

Jan set out to make a deal. In the end, the developer gave up more than he had ever intended. He reconfigured his lots, and we got the house in-place.

To put the house into presentable condition, the developer insisted we raise \$25,000 for repairs.

Jan got people to dig deeper than any of them had ever intended.

Today, the Maynard Pearson house stands as a tribute to her spunk, her vision, and perseverance.

Jan looked at the depot building, the Apex Library at the time, and thought that it ought to have a caboose associated with it.

She wrote a letter to the railroad asking if they had any cabooses available. Months went by and she forgot about it.

Then, in 1991, she got a letter from CSX Railroad asking where she wanted her caboose delivered.

- We had no land.
- We still had no money.

Jan persuaded the town to dedicate a space next to the depot to place the caboose.

We still needed a base on which to place the caboose. Jan requested that CSX prepare a rail-bed, place the rail-ties, and put a section of steel rail in place to support the caboose in an authentic setting. This was not something they had anticipated doing when they gave her the caboose.

They agreed.

As the delivery date approached, Jan realized we had no way of getting this caboose off of the main line and onto it's new base.

Jan asked, 'Since you already have the equipment to lift rail cars off and onto tracks, could you please just hoist this little caboose onto the new tracks? This is an equipment-intensive and labor intensive project that is not as simple as it sounds. They were not inclined to get this deep into the project.

Jan prevailed.

She also got one of our members to get the specially formulated paint donated.

And, she got the **New Hope Valley Railroad** in Bonsal to research the markings and

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procure the decals needed to create a historically authentic display.

If there is any **one talent that defines Jan**, it is her ability to get people to give above and beyond what is reasonably expected of them.

And as a result, **she made a difference** in this town.

Apex has a historic district that includes many homes that were in a state of disrepair and neglect at one time, but which are today restored with an eye to maintaining the character of the home, and are being lived in by families who are excited to be a part of Apex history.

The annual home tour, and the homes that are placed on display each year, are Jan's lasting legacy in Apex. She protected and helped preserve the historic character of this community.

So, when you visit the homes on tour, or when you take your kids or grandkids to play on the caboose, or when you go to the ice cream social at the Maynard Pearson house, you can offer a prayer of gratitude to Jan Brooks.

You rock, kiddo.

God bless.

Recap of the Ice Cream Social

Sunday August 18th we gathered at the Maynard Pearson House for our annual old fashioned ice cream social. Four delicious flavors were waiting for us to devour along with cookies, pies and cakes.



Thanks to

- Jeff & Lesleigh Hastings for their peach ice cream,
- Diane Long for her banana ice cream,
- Dave & Gwen Nyce for their maple walnut ice cream, and
- Laverne Seagroves for her strawberry ice cream.

What a wonderful treat.



Thanks to all who donated goodies, which included cookies, cakes, coconut cream pie, brownies, and apple cobbler.

Preservationist of the Year Award goes to the Apex Garden Club

We were pleased to award the **Billie Duncan Preservationist of the Year award** for the first time to a group: the Apex Garden Club. Laraine Behnke, Society member as well as president of the Apex Garden Club accepted the honor for her garden club. Their work included creation of the 'secret garden' at the Apex Depot, maintaining the planters in front of the caboose and their work at the Maynard Pearson House grounds. Our Society sincerely appreciates the work done by the Apex Garden Club members, and we thank them all.

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In Memorium

Remembering our charter members

We are sad to say goodbye to two of our charter members Jan Brooks and Noel Weston.

Jan's graveside service will be in Marshall Michigan on Friday, October 4th at 3:30 PM.

Noel will have a celebration of Life Sunday October 6th at 2:00 PM at the JC Raulston Arboretum, 4415 Beryl Road, Raleigh.

The Society gratefully acknowledges donors to AHS made in memory of Jan Brooks. This list is inclusive through the date of publication, and we are aware that some additional donations may be in transit

Ms. Susan Lehr
Roddie & Cindy
Robinett
Thomas Belton
Joseph & Kristin
Thomason
Nancy Sims
Margaret LeGault
Warren Holleman
Stephanie Trojan
Christine Frost
Diane Long
Betty Coleman
Saundra & Michael
Cohen
Feef & Richard
Dillon

The Society also gratefully acknowledges donations made by the family of Noel Weston at the time he was moving to Garner.

Carey Noel Weston

SEPTEMBER 11, 1945 - JULY 4, 2019

GARNER

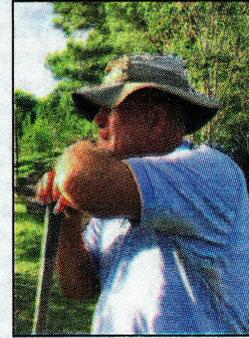
As the first City Horticulturist for Raleigh, Noel established two American Hemerocallis Display Gardens, Jaycee Park and Fletcher Park. He later received that designation for Lakeview Daylily Farm. After leading the efforts to re-landscape Pullen Park, he received Raleigh's Employee of the Year Award in 1976.

Noel was the son of the late Rev. W. A. Weston and Bertha Bell Weston and the brother of the late W. A. "Bert" Weston, Jr. He leaves his wife of forty-nine years, Molly Johnson

Weston, and daughter Erin L. Weston. Both live in Garner.

Molly and Erin extend sincere thanks to his faithful caregivers Lydia Aryee, Nicole Holland, Ebony Keith, and Beatrice Opoku; and to the marvelous folks at Amedisys Hospice who have provided expert care and guidance during the last stages of Noel's life. He died Thursday morning at his home in Garner after suffering a major stroke at his beloved Lakeview Daylily Farm in July 2017.

A celebration of life will be held in the fall.



Jane "Jan" Brougham Brooks

OCTOBER 29, 1938-AUGUST 5, 2019

CARY

CARY - Jane (Jan) Brougham Brooks was born October 29, 1938 in Joliet, IL. She died August 5, 2019 at her home in Cary, NC. A Celebration of Life service will be held August 17 at 11:00 am at Hope Community Church in Raleigh, NC.

Jan grew up in Morris, IL, spending her early years immersed in piano, voice and horses. She graduated from Michigan State University with a degree in Music and was affiliated with Chi Omega sorority.

She married Charles Edwin Brooks on September 23, 1961. Jan and Charlie moved to Rockford, IL, then to historic Marshall, MI. They moved to Apex, NC in 1982.

Jan had a long career in real estate, working for Sherman & Associates in Marshall and then MacGregor Realty and Lillian Smith RE/MAX United in Cary. Her career highlight was her "encore" career, working for the past decade at the Cary School of Music.

Historic preservation was an



enduring passion for Jan. She was a driving force behind the development of the Marshall Historic Home Tour, the oldest home tour in the Midwest. Jan and Charlie were honored with Lifetime Membership in the Marshall Historical Society. In 1981, they were recipients of the State of Michigan Governor's Award for Distinguished Volunteer Service.

She continued her pursuit for historic preservation in Apex, NC. In 1987 she assembled a small group to preserve, protect and promote the history of Apex. The Apex Historical Society was born

out of this group, with Jan as Founding Member and first President. After 32 years, she was still active on the Board and attending Society events.

Jan was active in the First Presbyterian Church in Morris, IL. In Marshall, MI, Trinity Episcopal Church was her church home. For the past 10 years, Jan was attending Hope Community Church, Raleigh, NC.

Jan is survived by her children, Thomas Wright Brooks (Jennifer), and Anne Brooks Easter (Jon); her grandchildren, Haven Ashleigh Brooks, Hollyn Grace Brooks, Charles Ayers Easter and Ben Powers Easter; and her brother Robert Powers Brougham (Linda). She was preceded in death by her husband, Charles Edwin Brooks; daughter, Katharine Craig Brooks; parents Mr. & Mrs. Erwin Roy "Bill" Brougham; sister, Beth Ann Brougham Sage and brother, William Powers Brougham.

Memorial gifts in Jan's honor may be made to the Apex Historical Society, PO Box 506, Apex, NC 27502.

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October 13th Picnic

Join us at the Maynard Pearson House on Sunday, October 13th, for our annual picnic.



The Society will provide the fried chicken. Please bring a side dish or dessert to share.

The time will be 4:00PM to 6:00PM this year.

The topic of discussion will be our December 8th Home Tour.

RSVP to Diane at #919-362-8097 or Erin at cell #919-219-3610 by October 10th and let them know how many to expect.

Membership News

Erin Thompson reports that our directory will be coming out this fall.

Apex Historical Society Christmas Home Tour, Sunday, Dec. 8th

We are pleased to announce our Home Tour will be on Sunday December 8th this year. The Apex Parade downtown will be Saturday the 7th. A fun weekend to be in Apex.

The Halle Center will also have their annual silent auction of decorated Christmas trees to benefit the Wake Crises Ministries in Apex.

So, mark your calendars for this fun holiday weekend in Apex.

Discounted pre-sale of Home Tour tickets will be available at the Apex Depot and Rusty Bucket, both on Salem Street, after November 1st. Tickets will be on sale the day of the tour at the Apex Depot.

Look for more info on the tour at www.apexhistoricalsociety.com

AHS 2019-2020 Board Members

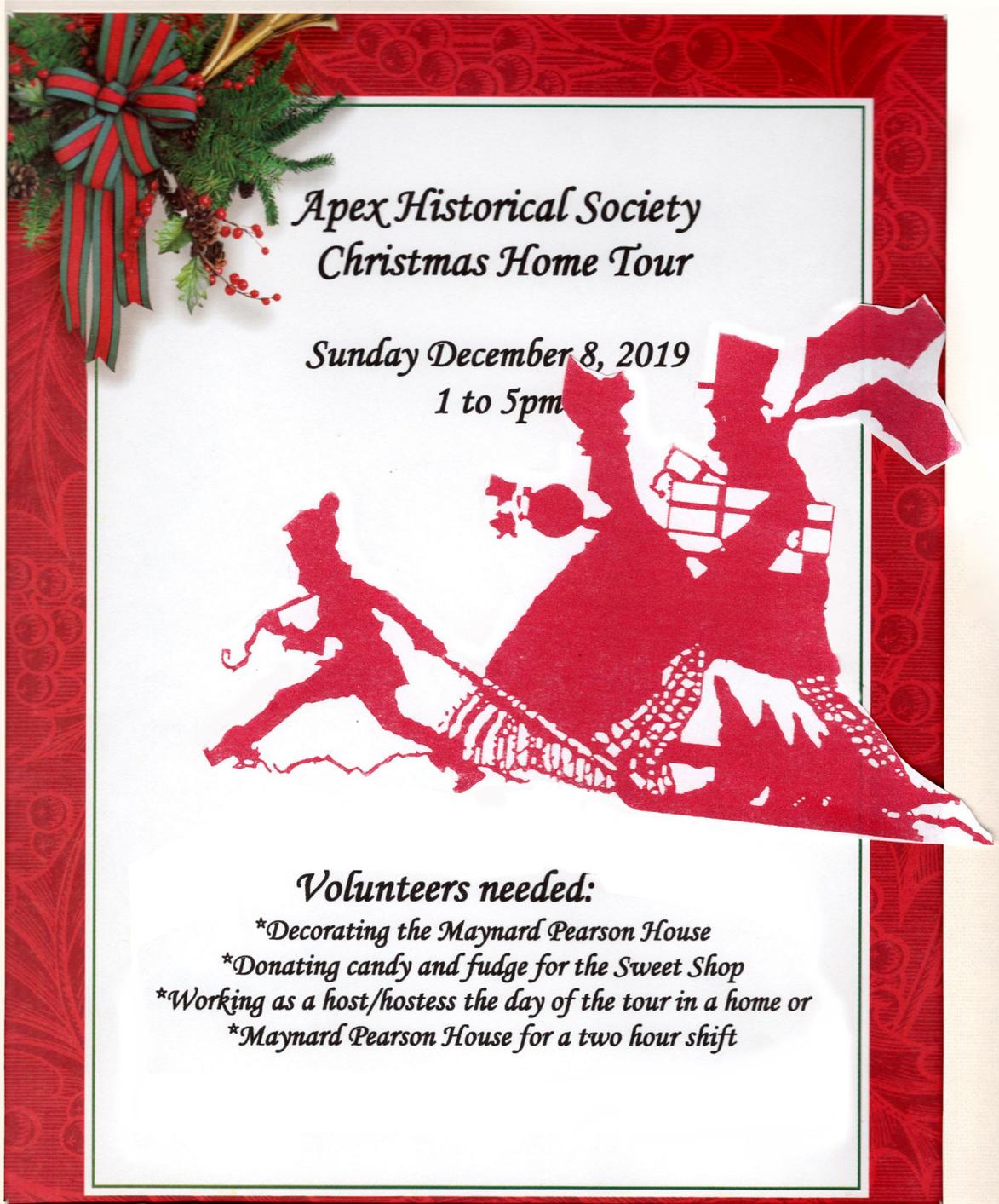
Jeff Hastings AHS Board President
Jeremy Bradham AHS Board Vice President
Erin Thompson AHS Board Co-Secretary
Diane Long AHS Board Co-Secretary
John Messler AHS Board Treasurer
Heather Werking* AHS Board Member
John Pearson AHS Board Member
Laverne Seagroves AHS Board Member
Margaret Lawrence AHS Board Member
* Replacement pending

Newsletter Produced by:

Claire and Bill Rousseau

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*Apex Historical Society
Christmas Home Tour*

*Sunday December 8, 2019
1 to 5pm*

Volunteers needed:

- *Decorating the Maynard Pearson House*
- *Donating candy and fudge for the Sweet Shop*
- *Working as a host/hostess the day of the tour in a home or*
- *Maynard Pearson House for a two hour shift*