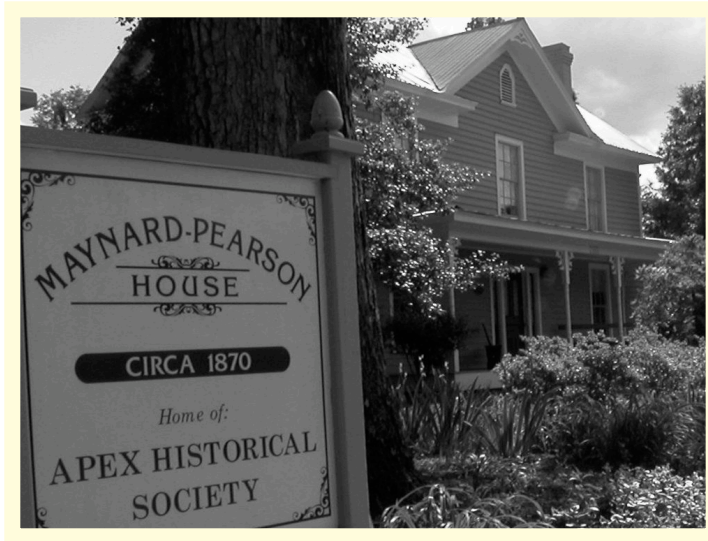


The Dispatch



The Newsletter of the Apex Historical Society Apex, North Carolina March, 2009

AHS Oral History Project

For those of you who haven't recently visited the AHS website, take a look at www.apexhistoricalsociety.com. The website has become a resource about the Society and its activities, offers information about the local community and provides a glimpse into our historic past. New sections provide insight about the downtown historic district, glimpses at the past, ties to the local area and offer a list of similar historical organizations around the state. Information is also available about annual home tours from past years and other activities involving Society members.

An exciting website addition "in progress" describes the new Oral History project and what has been going on behind the scenes to plan a multi-year activity to capture memories of the area as told by long time residents, and record their views of how the community evolved. The project began with an extensive look at similar projects

conducted by other organizations and continued throughout the last year with development of a plan to capture local oral history and memories, record and document the information and make it available to the community. Current work includes training AHS members to serve as interviewers, researchers and transcribers and to help the team begin the process of capturing local oral history.

Please check the website for additional information on the Oral History project or contact Mack Thorpe (email therustybucket@mindspring.com), Molly Weston (email mysteryheel@mac.com), Mary Petersen (email mpete427@yahoo.com) or John Pearson (email jwpearson@gmail.com).

AHS Members that have "graduated" from the two February training sessions include: Hope Blackford, Henry Brown, Debbie Douglass, Margot Knepp, John Pearson, Mary Petersen, Mack Thorpe, LaVerne Seagroves, Jim Bennett, Eleanor

Hennessey, Stephen Hennessey, Hamilton Martin, Shawn Fuller, Tracey Hanburger, Margaret Moore and Karen Reed. Molly Weston is conducting the training sessions. The interviewers are beginning the process of selecting interview candidates and scheduling initial interview sessions.

We are grateful also to Peter and Sharon Galluzzo for providing video recording/editing services for the Oral History project. Please check out their local Home Video Studio services at <http://www.homevideostudio.com/video-services/169/>.

John Pearson, Board Member and AHS Webmaster

Upcoming Events

Signs of spring are popping up all around us. The lull between the homes tour and the beginning of a new year for the **Apex Historical Society** has given way to new energy and activity for the society.

The **Annual Meeting on March 19th** will start the society's new year with a potluck at 6:30 p.m. at the **Maynard-Pearson House**. Bring your favorite dish and enjoy good food, fellowship and meet new people. A meeting will follow the potluck. Election of new board members and officers will be held. **A food drive for Western Wake Crisis Ministries will be held**. We can help meet the needs of others by bringing nonperishable food items to the meeting. Harry and Shirley Beasley will take the donations to the crisis center.

Several activities are taking place at the M-PH during April:

Due to an illness in her family Diane Long won't be able to secure gardens for a garden tour, therefore, the **garden tour has been cancelled** for this year.

There will be a **work day at the M-PH from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. on April 18th**. This is a busy day at the house with cleaning being done both inside and outside. If you prefer to work inside bring your cleaning

equipment. Buddy Holland will supervise. If you are an outdoor worker bring your gardening tools and enjoy the day with the outdoor crew.

The **annual AHS plant sale will be held at the M-PH on Saturday, April 25th**, from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. This has become a successful fundraiser for the society. Plants from your gardens are needed. We also need workers throughout the day. If you need information please call 363-3268.

The society would like to do something new this year. We would like to open the **M-PH to the public on the day of the plant sale**. Shirley Beasley has agreed to give tours of the house during the day. She will need help with this. If you can help with this, please call Shirley at 362-6294.

The society is growing and more members are taking an interest in the activities of the society. I would like to thank each of you who have helped out this past year and encourage others to join us.

Note: if you have a card table that you no longer need, the society can use it. Please call 362-6294 and someone will pick it up. We have outgrown our seating arrangements...a great problem to have!

Did you know:

That an early name of the Apex area was Jones' Crossroads?

The the original plot of Apex was one square mile?

That Union troops camped overnight in the vicinity of Jones' Crossroads after having gotten lost on their march from Raleigh? Later that month the area was the center of large corps when negotiations were occurring between Generals Sherman and Johnston.

That Apex processed over two million pounds of tobacco annually at the highest

average price per pound in the state of North Carolina during the early 1900's?

That the early leaders of Apex and White Oak Township were strong advocates of public education and thus levied local taxes to support the local schools?

That the building that once housed the New Ruin Tavern and was the site of many early gatherings and horse races on the Olive Chapel New Hill Road still exists today?

That tying a horse, mule or ox to a shade tree along the sidewalks carried a fine of up \$25.

That in 1906 it cost citizens five cents a week to have their privies cleaned and deodorized in an effort to improve sanitation as statewide public health initiatives were enacted.

That the first newspaper, *Apex News*, began publication in 1898 but didn't last more than a few years. It was followed in 1905 by the *Apex Journal* which lasted thru the 1920's.

Christmas Home Tour

The first weekend in December of 2008 was highlighted by a number of holiday events in Apex. Certainly near the top of everyone's list was the **Apex Historical Society 2008 Homes Tour**.

Sunday, December 7 arrived with beautiful weather and a great program for all who participated in the tour. This year, our tour of homes and buildings included the "old" and the "new" plus some that might be considered "in between" in age.

The "old" was best represented by the **Maynard-Pearson House**, which goes back to the 1870's. As in the past, it was beautifully decorated. With refreshments available plus an outstanding "**Sweet Shoppe**" selling home-made delicacies, this was a place not to be missed.

Next in age, chronologically is the **Union Depot** on Salem Street, which was built by the Seaboard Railway after the earlier station had been destroyed by fire in 1914.

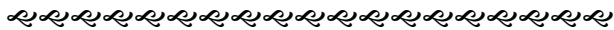
The next home (by age) is one that has just recently undergone a major restoration and that is the **Seagroves-Womble-Fussell** House on Culvert Street. Many of us who traveled on Centre Street in the past few years have watched with admiration as the Fussell family beautifully restored this lovely old home. Inside we learned of the whole experience of preservation and the many challenges they faced in this doing this. We thank the Fussell family for lovingly preserving a part of Historic Apex.

We've now reached a time when a majority of the present Historical Society members were living either here or elsewhere in the USA. The time is 1945, right after World War II, and W.J. (Jennings) Booth built the **Booth-Calhoun House** on North Salem Street. The house is still in the Booth family and is owned by Linda Booth Colhoun, Jennings Booth's granddaughter. In addition to being a wonderful example of a home built with local materials (Mr. Booth owned the Apex Lumber Company and built the home of Southern Yellow Pine), this home had the added bonus on providing old photos of the home showing the landscape of Apex at the time it was built. Thanks to the Colhoun family for providing us the opportunity to let us all know about another period of Apex' history.

Finally, we come to our "modern" home, the home of **Harvey and Texanna Montague on Penny Road**. This magnificent home combines the best of European design with southern charm. The Montagues combined the best features of the many homes that Harvey Montague has constructed through the years and made full use of the beautiful setting as well. Thank you to Texanna and Harvey for allowing us to add this new home to our tour.

When we look at the variety of homes presented this year, we have a true look at the history of Apex. History is not just a series of events that happened long ago, but what has happened in the past and what is happening now.

We thank all of you who organized the Home Tour, worked on the Home Tour, the home owners who opened their homes for us. This was truly a great way to start the Christmas season 2008 for all of us.



Membership Dues are Due!

It's that time again . . . our March Annual Meeting is just around the corner, and that means it's time to pay your dues. Dues are paid by you annually in March to help support the various programs hosted by the Apex Historical Society. We very much appreciate your association with the AHS and hope this year we will see you all involved and actively participating in our upcoming events. The Annual Meeting will be held on March 19th at the Maynard-Pearson House. We will first enjoy a potluck dinner and then have our meeting. Please bring a dish to share, and come enjoy the company of other members. The Plant Sale will again be held this year in April, so keep an eye out for a reminder coming your way. We will need plant donations to sell and also plenty of people to purchase the plant donations! Last year's sale was a huge success, and we are looking forward to another profitable sale.

Also currently taking place is the **Oral History Project**. We encourage each and every one of you to be involved in this wonderful project as we attempt to document your stories of life in Apex. Please read the article by John Pearson detailing this project.

Thank you again for your continued membership in the Society! The dues are listed below:

- Seniors (70+) \$10
- Individual \$15
- Family \$25
- Contributing \$35
- Sustaining \$50
- Patron \$100 and up



Maynard Pearson House Trust Update

The Maynard Pearson House Trust Board (see below) has been busy this past year maintaining and preserving the Maynard Pearson House. Harry, Allen and Ron have faithfully maintained the yard over the past year and will continue through 2009. A tree was removed from the front yard with the assistance of the town, the stump ground, porches scraped and repainted as well as other miscellaneous repairs.

Concerns of termites led us to have three termite inspections of the house. Due to active termites and termite damage, we had the house treated with Termidor by Orkin on February 27. The AHS has agreed to pay for this treatment.

Due to water and termite damage, the house is in need of some repairs. These repairs have been tentatively approved by Capital Area Preservation (CAP). We are in the process of writing up a Certificate of Appropriateness needed for the work. Due to the MPH's status as a Wake County Landmark and an Apex Historic Landmark, all work on the MPH has to be first approved by CAP and the Wake County Historic Preservation Commission. Lee Williams, President of Leland Builders, has agreed to donate his labor to repairing the sunroom floorboards, floor framing, door frame and

changing the steps outside the sunroom door. Thanks to generous donations of AHS members, MPH Trust funds will cover the cost of materials while volunteers will provide the extra labor to complete the work.

Further work needed on the MPH includes replacing rotted exterior trim and siding, fixing existing French Drains and possible addition of gutters in some areas.

By Debbie Douglass

We welcome new Board members David Nyce and Shirley Fiorentino.

MPH Board of Trustees are:

President: Ron Ragland

Vice President: Harry Beasley

Treasurer: Debbie Douglass

Secretary: Lise Zublena

Allen Lawrence, John Pearson, John Messler, David Nyce, Shirley Fiorentino

Sweet Shoppe Thanks

A heartfelt thank you goes out to the following people who made the delicious candy we sold at the Sweet Shoppe on the Home Tour:

Marcy Scheithe
Judy Miles
Helen Robertson
Mary Petersen
DiAne Benzie
Shirley Fiorentino
Laraine Behnke
Mary Sue Lane
LaVerne Seagroves
Hope Blackford
Virginia Harris

Many thanks also to Tate Sanders, who donated a beautiful photograph for us to raffle off.

Welcome to our New Member!

Jim Bennett

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