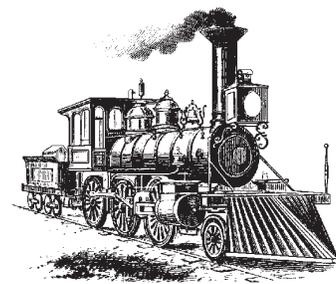


# the DISPATCH

Winter 2013

Vol. XXV, No.1



## All Aboard the Re-Membering Train!

by Claire Rousseau

Now is the time to hop on board our Re-Membering Train! Join us in celebrating our 25 years of “Preserving, Protecting and Promoting” the heritage of Apex. Through March, a \$25 membership gets you a free Apex Historical Society Jerry Miller printed Seaboard Caboose tote bag. [Re-Memberers are listed on p. 6.]

You may also make a donation “In Memory” to the Apex Historical Society to have a loved one’s name printed in “The Dispatch.” See the “In Memory” column in this issue.

Membership forms and tote bags are available at the Maynard Pearson “Open House” the third Sunday of each month from 2:00 to 4:00 PM. Membership forms will be available at all future AHS events as well as at the Halle Center on Salem Street.

Don’t miss out on a wonderful year of celebrating the people and places that make Apex a special town.

### Why I Joined AHS

The year was 1985 when my family and I moved to Apex—a quiet, peaceful town of about 3600 friendly people.

The town library, where I enjoyed browsing for books on Saturday afternoons, was in the former train station. I was curious about this building with two front doors whose windows rattled when trains rolled by.

The downtown was changing. Sadly, some stores were closing their doors. Bennett’s Clothing and Shoes was one of the first going out of business sales my husband Bill and I attended. I recall the rich essence of the leather belts and shoes that made this store special. The sadness of things changing was masked by the jolly customers enjoying a bargain and the big drawing at the final day of shopping.

Martin’s Grocery soon followed and I knew I would miss the fresh local produce Mr. Ralph made available. Apex

Grocery still offered other choices, even engineer’s railroad train hats.

I know because I bought one for my then 11 year-old train enthusiast son Rob. Townspeople, mostly men in coveralls, gathered daily at this store to commiserate about life. It was a relaxed and friendly feeling.

The ladies frequented Thelma’s Ltd. Ladies and Children’s Shop. It was a pleasure to browse in this elegant dress store. Who were these Apex soft spoken, friendly people?

Pope’s variety store offered necessary items and the corner drug store a spot to sit at the counter and enjoy a real soda fountain beverage. That long ago treat I shared with my son made good memories.

Across the street I found Horton’s Home & Garden with folks ready to help. You could get your lawn mower repaired

with a friendly smile, too!

Rose of Sharon drew people looking for gifts and the antique store offered many treasures. Western Auto was on Salem Street back then too. Just about anything one needed could be purchased downtown.

As more stores closed or moved away, I wondered what was to become of the old buildings and the depot that gave the town so much character. Yes, the town that was becoming more like home to me, was changing everyday.

In the fall of 1987, I saw a headline in the Western Wake Herald “Historical Society to be formed.”

I went to that meeting on October 22, at the Chamber of Commerce on 400 West Williams Street, with about a dozen other “like minded people” and as they say, well the rest is history.

# Notes from Mary

Hello members,

Happy winter to you all! I am excited to share with you some of the upcoming events that the Apex Historical Society (AHS) has planned for the next few months. You will see many of these activities described throughout the Dispatch so please read through the whole edition. Our first big program of 2013 is the January Speaker Series scheduled for January 22, at 7:00. Come join us as Molly Weston provides her memories of Apex buildings and homes. Following the program we will be serving pie and staying to mingle with attendees. This promises to be a fun and educational evening.

In keeping with a Valentine theme, our February 12 program will be "Flowers, Fans, and Fluttering Hearts." Bring your sweetie!

Looking back at our 2012 calendar reminds me to thank you all for your loyalty. The Founder's Day program kicking off our year-long 25th anniversary celebration was a huge success. Our thanks go to Claire Rousseau, Jan Brooks, and Shirley Fiorentino for organizing this wonderful program at the Halle. Our Annual Home Tour was also a resounding success. Thank you to all of you who decorated the Maynard-Pearson House, volunteered as hosts and hostesses, and donated candy for the Sweet Shoppe. Your support in our major fundraiser of the year is vital and much appreciated.

I wish you all a happy winter season and I look forward to seeing you at upcoming Society events.

*-Mary Petersen*

## Annual Meeting & Election

The AHS Annual Meeting and election night will feature a pot luck supper on March 21, 6:30, at the Maynard Pearson House. AHS will provide meats, and members should bring vegetables and desserts.

**the DISPATCH..**

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# Founders Day a Rousing Success!

by Claire and Bill Rousseau

Sunday, October 14, at the Apex Halle Cultural Arts Center was a great success for our AHS Founders' Day Event. Guests were welcomed to our 25th celebration by AHS President Mary Petersen followed by a video walkdown memory lane set to evocative music compiled by Bill Rousseau. Faces lit up as guests recognized themselves on the big screen in pictures from the 1980's.

Congratulations to Jan Brougham Brooks our first Society president and founding member, who was thrilled and surprised as vice president Mack Thorpe presented her with a Lifetime Membership Certificate.

We were honored by the reading of the mayoral proclamation by Keith H. Weatherly and the attendance of former mayors Larry Jordan and Everette Edwards and also councilmen Scott Lassiter, and Terry Rowe.

Members of the North Raleigh Model Train Club (NRMTC) shared their outstanding scale model diorama of 1970s



Mayor Keith Weatherly smiles approval as Mack Thorpe presents founding AHS president Jan Brooks with a lifetime membership certificate.



## 1988-89 Historical Society officers

Officers of the Apex Historical Society have planned several events for the coming year, including installation of a caboose beside the old train depot, a celebration when Historic Register status is granted to the depot and a second Christmas Homes tour. This year's officers and directors include (seated from left) Pat Shankle, Ruthie Hodson, president Jan Brooks and Claire Rousseau; (standing) Carl Holleman, James Allen, Tom Belton, Patrick Kane and Ronald Perry. (Staff photo by Stuart Wells.)

Western Wake Herald  
Wednesday, October 12, 1988

downtown Apex. The model ran from today's Anna's Pizza to the asphalt plant. The old water tower was prominent. Each building was custom made to replicate those on Salem Street.

The train shared space with our refreshment table featuring delicious marble cake, nuts, and punch. The NRMTC will present a program at the Halle Center on March 12, at 7:00.

Folks enjoyed comparing memories prompted by Claire Rousseau and Jan Brooks and seeing the piece of furniture that composed the first Apex Post Office loaned for the day by the Everette Edwards family.

The record crowd of many familiar faces were also treated to a room full of remembrances including a timeline full of pictures that recalled many former members and pictures of past activities. The presentation will be preserved as a three dimensional testimony to this past piece of history.

Nostalgia was in the fall air as guests renewed memberships and purchased train hats, whistles and tote bags at John Messler's membership table.

Once again, volunteers made an AHS event memorable. Thank you, all!

# Maynard Pearson House Updates

by John Pearson

## MPH Trust

Thanks to all who took turns at the MPH with mowing and general care of the grounds throughout 2012. **Ron Ragland** (mowing coordinator), **John Pearson**, **David Nyce**, and **Henry Brown** shared in this effort. **Margaret Francis**, **John Messler** and **Mary Caley** and **Riley Petersen** also helped with cleanup activities and **Margaret** coordinated keeping the inside of the house cleaned and maintained. We would also extend thanks to town manager Bruce Radford the Town of Apex Utilities Department for the huge effort to remove the damaged oak tree and clearing debris from the property.



Currently there are several significant maintenance needs around the MPH and both funds and volunteer effort are needed to continue this effort. A list of projects and costs follows. Anyone interested in helping with the grounds care, mowing, painting and general care activities should send email to or contact a board member to join the team.

## MPH Needs

The Maynard-Pearson House (MPH) is a local landmark. It has value to the community as an example of vernacular southern architecture as well as providing a look at the agricultural way of life in Apex in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The MPH Trust and the Apex Historical Society have responsibility for the care and maintenance of the Maynard-Pearson House.

As was reported in the last *Dispatch*, the repair work on the front porch was completed. As many of you know from recent meetings, the MPH is still in need of additional repairs. Some repair items are:

- Rotted roof sheathing and joists on the back porch require replacement. This is a significant job which will require removal and possible replacement of the metal roofing in the porch area as well as the necessary rotted wood replacement. As this work is beyond routine maintenance, we will require

a Certificate of Appropriateness and approval from Capital Area Preservation before we can proceed. We estimate this work will cost \$1500 to \$2000.

- The entire house requires scraping, caulking, and painting. We estimate this work will cost \$5000 to \$6000. The roof may also require painting.
- Replacement of damaged second story fascia boards. We estimate this work will cost about \$500, but it could be included as part of repairs prior to painting the house.
- Replacement of cracked window panes in several locations. We estimate this work will cost about \$150.

If you have the skills to do any of this work or know someone who does and who would be willing to help, please let us know. Also, please let us know if you can contribute financially to these efforts.

*John is the outgoing president of the MPH Trust.*

*The mighty oak (above left) graced the front of the MPH property for many years, but the serious rot (at right) caused its demise. The Apex Utilities Department handled its removal for the Society.*



# Holiday Home Tour

The 2012 Historical Homes Tour was a huge success! Record numbers of attendees strolled through Apex on a beautiful, sunny day stopping in to view the four historical homes located in our historic downtown district. And of course, the Maynard-Pearson House (MPH) on Olive Chapel Road, home of the Apex Historical Society, was open for viewing, too. As always, the homes were beautiful to see and we are extremely grateful to the homeowners who opened their gorgeous historical homes for the public to view. Our thanks go out to the following homeowners:

Richard and Monica Derrenbacher—Poe-Derrenbacher House  
Don and Laura Grimes—Maynard-Grimes House  
Billy and Susan Mills—Olive-Seymour-Mills House (shown below)  
Joe and Lise Zublena—Hunter-Schaub-Zublena House

If you stopped by the MPH for light refreshments or to shop at the Sweet Shoppe you are sure to have seen the beautifully festive decorations that adorned the front of the house. Many thanks to Rhonda and Kenny Magee for creating this holiday masterpiece. Numerous volunteers, too many to mention individually, spent many hours decorating the MPH interior as well.

Thanks must go out as well to those members of the Society who donated homemade candy for the Sweet Shoppe. There was a delectable variety of candies to choose from this year. Our thanks also go out to those volunteers who hosted at the homes on the tour this year. This event would not be possible without your donation of time and it is very much appreciated.

We are already looking ahead to this year's tour so please contact a Board member if you are interested in showing your historical home or if you would like to contribute to the annual event with your decorating talents! Let's make the 2013 tour as successful as 2012.

—Mary Petersen  
2012 Home Tour Chair

# Twilight of War: The End of the Civil War in the Triangle

Local historian and director of The City of Raleigh Museum Ernest Dollar brought to our attention the human emotions, struggles and reactions of area people and soldiers in the final days of the Civil War in April, 1865. He made the events and people real to his audience. He enhanced his stories with his video presentation.

Could you imagine in 1865 having your Southern home occupied by the Union Army, the enemy? Such happened to David Lowry Swain, president of the University of North Carolina. To his wife's dismay, their young daughter Ella, was courted by Colonel Smith D Atkins of the 92nd Illinois volunteers, during his stay in their home that April. It was the scandal of Chapel Hill.

Thanks to Mr Dollar's talk that evening, I've enjoyed reading their story in Suzy Barile's book, *Undaunted Heart: The True Story of a Southern Belle & a Yankee General*.

In 1991, Dollar's interest to preserve an 1865 Civil War battlefield produced the paperback *Morrisville* from Images of America: North Carolina.

Thanks also to our charter board member, Thomas Belton, for bringing Ernest Dollar to our lecture series. So many people enjoyed that evening and told me they'd like more historical lectures. Personally, I'd come to hear Ernest Dollar speak again!

— Claire Rousseau



# The Apex Union Depot

by J. C. Knowles

The Apex Union Depot is one of the most prominent sites in Apex and has a long and varied history. Originally constructed in 1870, a new wooden depot was built in 1906, when a second set of tracks was laid for the Durham and Southern Railroads.

By 1911, more than 30 trains passed through Apex daily, carrying passengers and freight. This wooden depot was unsuitable for the citizens of Apex, as there were no restroom facilities and in the unheated building. The Seaboard Railroad, however, blamed the town, as there was no sewer system or electricity in the town.

In 1911, fire destroyed most of the downtown business area, and although the railroad water tank was destroyed, the frame depot remained untouched. The town commissioners passed an ordinance “requiring all building within the downtown fire district be constructed of brick.” Today you will note that all the stores in the first and second blocks of Salem Street are constructed—as regulated—of brick.

After the fire, town officials and the railroad started talking about replacing the depot. It wasn't until late 1913 or early 1914 that the depot once again caught fire. From this fire a serious movement started for the construction of a new building which was constructed of brick and was open for business by early 1915 for both passengers and freight. When completed the depot cost \$8,586.

A train depot made of brick for such a small town as Apex was almost unheard of in those days. An expensive brick depot was for such towns as Raleigh, not Apex; however, if the depot was to be built on the present site, the ordinance stated it must be built of brick. It seems that the railroad engineers were unhappy with the deal, so they built the freight depot just outside the fire district—of wood.

The remarkably well-preserved depot is built on a simple rectangular plan, measuring 76'-8" by 30'-6", with 13'-6" wide bays projecting five feet at the centers of both the longer trackside and Salem Street elevations. A bell cast hip roof covers the building and is still laid with the “Cartwrights Victoria Galvanized Shingles or equal” specified in the architectural drawings. A 7' roof overhang supported at the corners with heavy chamfered brackets shelters the

walls. On the Salem Street side, the bay terminates under the slope of the roof, while the trackside bay breaks through the roof to form a hipped dormer.

The dark red brick veneer, laid with red tinted mortar, may be the “Oriental Brick” specified in original drawings. Windowsills, doorsills, and a continuous stringcourse\* around the building—which doubles as the sills of the larger windows—are brown sandstone. Several windows are original poured glass. The baggage room doors on the south end of the building provided access for baggage carts, and the double-leafed sliding doors at the rear of the room opened to the baggage loading dock. Original, conical cast iron corner guards manufactured by Raleigh Iron Works protect all four exterior corners of the building and the jambs of the baggage room doors.

The interior plan has retained most of the 1914 design, which included racially segregated waiting rooms and rest rooms, an arrangement common to all depots built during the era. The waiting room for whites (north end) and blacks (south end) are divided across the building's center by the stationmaster's office, which extends into the trackside bay on the back of the building, and the utility closets and restrooms on the Salem Street side. The north waiting room was partitioned on the north end to create a separate lounge and restrooms for white women. The restroom has been converted to a storage area.

On the south side, the black waiting room remains intact, but the baggage room has been partitioned for a small mechanical room. The stationmaster's office remains much as originally configured. What were formerly restrooms for white and black men, serve as men and women's today. A narrow hall connects the two former waiting rooms, and the previous black woman's restroom has been converted into a kitchen by the current occupants.

The interior finish is well preserved. Walls are plaster over a wainscot with a symmetrically molded six and a-quarter-inch chair rail, a dado paneled with vertical beaded boards, and a wide baseboard. Windows and door frames, including those of the ticket windows, are molded and mitered. Three fireplaces, one double sided, originally heated the two waiting rooms and the separate women's lounge. The

fireplaces' elaborate paneled mantels of Neoclassical design have Ionic capitals on the pilasters flanking the fireplace openings and carry a deep shelf.

One wooden stall with louvered doors remains in the restrooms and the oversize urinal in the men's restroom is still functional. A heavy iron light fixture with six railroad lanterns hang in the main lobby. The lanterns, now converted from oil to electric, are stamped with seals from five different railroads. Several switchmen's lanterns hang outside the building. A small metal plaque embedded in the rear of the building identifies the highest point on the railroad.

When passenger service was discontinued in 1969, the depot was acquired by the Town of Apex for use as a public library, although CSX Transportation Corporation retains ownership of the land. In 1988, through efforts of the Apex Historical Society, the building was listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Today the historic Apex Union Depot welcomes thousands of visitors each year, serves as a meeting and information center, and plays host to a variety of events including band concerts and festivals. During the summer months there is a farmers market on Saturdays.

\*Stringcourse—A horizontal band (as of bricks) in a building forming a part of the design.

*J.C. Knowles is the “Ambassador of Apex.”*

Thanks to the following for their knowledge, assistance and information that make this story possible: Town of Apex; Apex Herald; and Warren L. and C. P. “Toby” Holleman, authors of *Pluck, Perseverance, and Paint*. This book is available at the Rusty Bucket in Apex.

# Monthly Home Tours

by Shirley Fiorentino

Since April of this year, the Maynard Pearson House (MPH) has been open on the third Sunday of every month from 2-4 PM. Several people have worked preparing the house, putting together interesting facts and volunteering their time to be at the house on open days. It has been a learning experience from the start, and these are some of them:

- Many visitors have passed by on a regular basis and are pleased to be able to explore the interior of the house.
- Having a few members in the house encourages more conversation from the visitors.
- Having the house open offers an opportunity to promote upcoming events and to entice more folks to become members.

We have had a core group of volunteers these past six months, all of whom have enjoyed sharing a couple of hours of their time for the benefit of the Society.

As we move forward in this 25th anniversary year, I'd love to hear from more of you who would like to share in this experience. You could even stop by for a quick visit yourselves. During my years of membership, this is the first time I've been able to really learn about the house and its contents. There are some beautiful and interesting items to be found.

Call me at 919.303.2939 or e-mail frankfiorentino@aol.com and we'll find a convenient time for you.

**In Memory of...**

Margaret Ferry  
 Lib Covington  
 Dot & Bill Goodwin  
 Pete & Mary Sue Lane

Carl Shaler  
 Margaret Moore

Mary Lee Tunstall  
 Betty Tunstall Williams  
 Charlie Brooks &  
 Ruthie Hodson  
 The Rousseau Family

## Re-Members

- Renee & Gregory Anderson\*
- Dorothy Andrews
- DiAne & Chris Benzie
- Lynne & Richard Brann
- Lucille Gentsch & Jeff Gaulin
- Steve & Eleanor Hennessey
- Margot Knepp
- Toni & John Messler
- Brian McCullough
- Charlotte & Keith Otterbein\*
- June & John Pearson
- Patricia Pullen
- Bill & Claire Rousseau
- Rob & Courtney Rousseau
- Melanie & Terry Rowe\*
- John & Lisa Suteu\*
- Wake Remodeling\*\*
- Luke & Catherine Dobbins
- Betty & Larry Williams

\*New Members

\*\*Corporate Members



**Apex Historical Society**  
 PO Box 506 • Apex NC 27502  
 2012 Membership Application/Renewal

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Membership Class - Please Circle

Individual \$15 • Senior (70+) \$10 • Family \$25 • Contributing \$35 • Sustaining \$50 • Patron \$100  
 2-Year Business \$100

# Board Member Vacancy

## We Need You!!!

The Society is in need of members to fill four positions on the Board. If you are interested, please contact a current Board member. Positions will be filled at the annual Membership meeting in March. This Society cannot run without the support of its members. We have been lucky to have outstanding members of the Society sitting on the Board for the last year. Let's keep up the momentum by filling Board positions. Please support the Society as it seeks to protect, preserve, and promote the history of Apex!

## At the Halle Center

*by Molly Weston*

In recognition of the Society's 25th anniversary and the Halle Center's 100th, David Wood, director of the Halle Center, asked the Society to create a monthly display at the Halle reflecting some part of the Town's history. Valuing our collaboration with the Halle, we quickly agreed.

Because of time constraints, Ann Yeaman and I decided to create a Christmas Eve scene—after Santa's visit. Allen Lawrence quickly agreed to make a fireplace, complete with mantel, andirons, and wood. John

Messler hauled the fireplace and set it in place. Mary Petersen arranged the tree, stockings, and antique toys Ann and I had in our collection. We changed the scene for January, featuring different toys, mostly from Ann's collection.

If you have an idea (and the things to make it happen or know who does!) for a future display, contact any board member. Meanwhile, stop by the Halle and check out the last display before the back door.

## On the Docket

January 20, 2:00–4:00

Maynard Pearson Open House

January 22, 7:00

“Apex Buildings & Personalities,”

Halle Center

February 12, 7:00

“Flowers, Fans, & Fluttering

Hearts,” Halle Center

February 17, 2:00–4:00

Maynard Pearson Open House

February 21, 7:00 AHS Board Meeting

March 16 Proposed Apex Historic

Downtown District promotion

March 17, 2:00–4:00

Maynard Pearson Open House

March 21, 6:30 AHS Annual Meeting &

Election of Officers, Halle Center

See article, page 2

## Apex Historical Society

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