ANNUAL REPORT TO THE MEMBERS 2015

ACCOMPLISHMENTS 2015


• Researched 74 years of scientific endeavor at Southern Research Institute and selected photographs from the Institute’s superb photographic collections in preparation for a 75th anniversary publication, due out in 2016. Fell in love with Chairman Tom Martin and his zeal for building scientific endeavor.

• Began research on the history of Shades Creek from geological and archeological time to the present for a future publication: A New Look at an Old Creek—Birmingham, Alabama’s Shades Creek.

• Researched and published a statement of historic context for the creation of the Confederate Monument in today’s Linn Park.

• Researched and published a statement of historical context for the Jefferson County Courthouse murals, entitled “The Old South and the New South.”

• Hosted the annual Heritage Society Luncheon at the Brower-Hill-Head House on Ridge Road.

• Continued to grow Grandmother’s Garden using early 20th century heirloom plants and practices, with the help of the Alabama Cooperative Extension System and Master Gardeners. Developed signage for the garden. Conducted the annual Spring Equinox Plowing Party. This demonstration home garden of kitchen and medicinal herbs, perennials and vegetables is open to the public year round.

• Renovated the porches of our offices at Duncan House at Sloss.

• Acquired an overhead scanner, learned how to use it, and digitized and made searchable 12,000 pages of the annual records of the Society dating to the 1940s, including newsletters, invitations, minutes of meetings, budgets, correspondence, and photographs. Most of these records were in bound volumes! Thank you Scott Fuller for making this possible!

• Reprinted Bob Moody’s Birmingham and A Walk to Freedom.

EVENTS COMING IN 2016

• Sunday, February 14, 2:30-4:30 p.m. A Victorian Valentine Party, celebrating the 40th Anniversary of the rebirth of the Birmingham Historical Society in 1976 and many of those who made it prosper. The Clubhouse on Highland, 2908 Highland Avenue.

• March TBA. The Spring Equinox Plowing Party, Grandmother’s Garden, Sloss.

• Sunday, Noon, April 26, Heritage Society Luncheon, Johnson-Slaughter House, 2942 Cherokee Road.

• TBA, Publication Celebration of For Science and Humanity—74 Years at Southern Research Institute. Southern Research, and the Castle, 2000 9th Avenue South.

• TBA, Publication Celebration for the 300-page, 400-color photograph book: Warren H. Manning, Landscape Architect and Environmental Planner by the Library of Landscape History, Amherst, MA. Birmingham and Mountain Brook are in it.

• Monday, February 27, 2017. Publication Celebration for Frances Robb and her book: Shot in Alabama—A History of Photography, 1839-1941. To receive the 2016 publication on the Southern Research Institute, 2016 dues must be paid. Books will be mailed if not picked up at the party at Southern Research. Date TBA.

December 2015

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To define the garden entrance, a mulberry row in the former slag pile was planted.

They grew. The shotgun was renovated and its swept-dirt yard planned. Our master gardeners won a statewide award of excellence for their work.

Pick axes and a few prayers accompanied the planting of the seedlings.

There was some dirt in the side yard for the sweet olive planting.

Louise McPhillips illustrated Sloss Quarters surrounding our garden rooms planted with roses and perennials, kitchen and medicinal herbs and vegetables.

Gardeners: Linda Goode, Christopher Pugh, Mary McLaughlin and a rosemary.
Plowing and mulching day prepared the veggie garden for spring planting.

Well-conditioned soil, manure, and abundant rain helped grow great tomatoes, peppers…

To eat snake gourds, harvest when less than two-feet long.

American Beauty Roses on the front fence.

The “Katrina Survivor” rose on the back porch rail.

Our Peggy Martin Rose.

Valerian.

Antonia Viteri and Chris Pugh show the weekly harvest of snake gourds.

A cascade of Petit Scotch Roses.

Chives.

Passion Flower or May Pop.

Comfrey and rosemary.

Corn, okra, and the Italian specialty gogootz or snake gourd.

Medicinal herbs, left; roses and perennials, right.

White, medicinal, yarrow.
The following individuals have generously supported the Society at levels above the general membership dues. We acknowledge their support and express our gratitude.

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Project Guidance: Wayne Hester The Front Porch and Steps: Marx Brothers, Inc.

Grandmother's Garden

Garden Guru: Sallie Lee, Alabama Cooperative Extension System (ACES) Master Gardeners: Linda Goode, Kitty Linebery, Mary McLaughlin, Christopher Pugh, Antonia Viteri who also contributed photographs for this report

Illustration for the principal sign: Louise McPhillips

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Birmingham Historical Society is a private, nonprofit organization whose mission is to contribute to the quality of life in Birmingham by preserving, learning from, and celebrating the city's past while helping to shape its future. Members receive newsletters, invitations to events and the annual publication. Those members joining at the Heritage Society level receive invitations to additional events. To purchase Society publications, see the BHS web-site www.bahistorical.org or amazon.com for titles available or contact us at One Sloss Quarters, Birmingham, Alabama, 35222, t. 205-251-1880, The Society promptly mails all book orders.

Membership is for the calendar year: January–December. Members must pay 2016 dues to receive the 2016 annual publication.