Formally created the Birmingham Historical Society Endowment Fund and transferred $1.3 million to the fund that will help support the Society's educational programs in future years.

Continued to build our digital collection with the Alabama Department of Archives and History online Digital Library.

Conducted the Annual Meeting and feted Frances Robb's *Shot in Alabama—A History of Photography, 1839-1941* and tasted members' Heirloom Cakes.

Hosted the annual Heritage Society Gathering at the Crawford Johnson Residence, the recently restored home of Maye and Bernard Frei.

Photographed Shades Creek from the springs where it originates to its confluence with the Cahaba River, and researched historical happenings.

Almost completed Historic American Engineering Record documentation of the Ross Creek Culvert, built late 1863 as part of the Confederate government's development of industrial infrastructure in Shades Valley and today the centerpiece of the Ross Bridge community.

Researched and prepared a newsletter on the history of the Sloss Quarters from the opening of the furnaces in the 1880s to today's recreation.

Hosted Robin Karson, editor of *Warren H. Manning—Landscape Architect and Environmental Planner* (the 2017 Members' book) at a public lecture.

Continued to grow Grandmother's Garden using heirloom plants and practices. Saturday Walks and Talks featured historical and medicinal plant use, and Alabama Plein Air Artists painted in the garden.

Celebrated the Society's 75th Anniversary with a gathering at the Birmingham Printing Company Buildings, now home to ArchitectureWorks.

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**FOUNDING THE SOCIETY 1942**

**City Historical Society Formed**

Group Plans To Gather First-Hand Data For Archives

Birmingham's first historical society was organized this week at a meeting in the Public Library, at which time temporary officers were elected and plans made for drawing up a constitution and by-laws. John C. Henley, Jr., presiding as temporary president, said the purpose of the society would be to preserve material objects pertaining to the history of Birmingham and to encourage a wide study of both city and county. Henley pointed out that Birmingham, whose claim to being the youngest city in America for its size, was recently verified by officials of the U. S. Census Bureau, is unique, in that several citizens can recall the actual founding of the town, whose 71st birthday fell on the 19th day of December. “This indicates,” he said, “that we still have time, and the splendid opportunity, to preserve historical facts in their fullest accuracy, instead of allowing them to become forever garbled by the passing of time and the day when base sources of information will have disappeared.”

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**Preserving Our History**

Birmingham shows signs of maturing. It has become conscious of its history. More important, it has become conscious that history can be preserved only in records, and that unless some person or some group makes a point of preserving the records, history is lost, or distorted.

The organization of the Birmingham Historical Society is evidence of the city's maturity. It grows out of a realization that the time has come to compile and record the facts of the city's early life before it is too late. There are still a few pioneers in the city, persons whose lives go back to the 1870s when Birmingham was but a sprawling and quarreling mining town. Their assistance in compiling records of the city's early history will be valuable and should be utilized now.

It is good to note, however, that the society, even though its work deals with the past, has a forward look. History is of value to man only when it enriches his understanding of the present or points the way to a better future. The Birmingham Historical Society proposes to make its work valuable now and in the future by assuming such tasks as marking historic sites around the city and by preserving material objects for later study.

Let a word of commendation be said, also, for the Birmingham Public Library, which sponsored the organization of the society. A great library, it has been said, contains the diary of the human race. The Birmingham Public Library should at least house the diary of Birmingham.

*The Birmingham News*, January 1, 1943

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**Founding President**, author, speaker, philosopher, historian

**John C. Henley Jr. (1880-1949)**
INCORPORATING

CERTIFICATE OF INCORPORATION

of

BIRMINGHAM HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Members of the Birmingham Historical Society, an unincorporated association, met on the 7th day of April, 1954, and, by unanimous vote, adopted the following resolutions:

"BE IT RESOLVED: That the Members of Birmingham Historical Society, an unincorporated society, desire to become incorporated under the provisions of Article 3, Section 133 of the Code of Alabama, 1940, and we, as such Members, do hereby agree and intend to become incorporated under said law.

"BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That the name of the corporation shall be "Birmingham Historical Society".

"BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That the following named persons, are hereby elected as Trustees of the corporation to serve until the first annual meeting of the corporation to be held on the third Monday in January, 1955, and until their successors shall have been elected and qualified:

Trustees

Mr. L. B. Johnson
Mrs. W. M. Spencer
Mr. Robert Johnson, Jr.
Mrs. Florence Donelson
Mrs. A. M. Love

"BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That the following persons, who are now Officers of the Association, are hereby elected as Officers of the Corporation, to hold office until the first annual meeting of the Society on the date hereinafter designated:

President
Mr. R. W. Ferguson
1st Vice President
Mr. W. M. Spencer
2nd Vice President
Mrs. Lyda S. Brown
Secretary
Mr. Robert Johnson, Jr.
Treasurer
Mrs. Florence Donelson

"BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That the elected Trustees named above are hereby authorized and directed to file in the office of the Judge of Probate of Jefferson County, Alabama, a Certificate of Incorporation, making the same selected for the Corporation, the name of the Trustees and Officers, and the length of time for which the Trustees and Officers shall serve, as elected, each certificate shall also set forth the purpose of the Corporation, the qualifications for membership therein, and such other matters as may be appropriate, proper, or desirable to be contained in this Certificate of Incorporation.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, the above named Trustees, all of whom are citizens of the State of Alabama, have subscribed their names to this document this 1st day of May, 1954.

Mrs. Emma M. Collins
Mr. W. M. Spencer
Mrs. Florence Donelson

We, the undersigned, R. W. Ferguson as President and Florence Donelson as Secretary of the Birmingham Historical Society, hereby certify that the above and foregoing are true and correct copies of Resolutions adopted by Birmingham Historical Society at a meeting of the Members held on the 15th day of April, 1954.

President

Secretary

Approved and certified by the undersigned Members of Birmingham Historical Society:

Historical Society Officers:

President: R. W. Ferguson
Vice President: W. M. Spencer
Secretary: Florence Donelson
Treasurer: Robert Johnson, Jr.

The new officers of the Birmingham Historical Society took over volumes of Birmingham sketches and personalities the society has turned over to the Birmingham Public Library. Left to right: Joseph P. Walker Jr., treasurer; Mrs. Bester Brown, vice president; Hill Ferguson, outgoing president, and Ormond Somerville, new president. Officers not shown are: Mrs. Darby Brown, vice president and William J. Nelson. Four new trustees of the society also were elected as follows: A. C. Felton Wimberly, Joseph H. Woodward, Ill, Mrs. Sellers Stough and William M. Spencer.
KEEPING BUSY

Hosting meetings with speakers (1942–)


Collecting records for libraries, especially Birmingham Public Library (1942–1960s+) and Alabama Archives

Designating historic sites with markers (1950s–1980s) and banners (1987–1990s)

Initiating preservation of historic sites
  - Tannehill Furnaces (1950)
  - Arlington (1950)
  - Sloss Furnaces (1978–1985+)
  - Vulcan and His Park (1993–1999)
  - Rickwood Field (1994)
  - Bethel Baptist Church (1996–)
  - 16th Street Baptist Church (1993+)
  - Railroad Park (beginning 1989)
  - Red Mountain Park (c. 2005)
  - Ross Bridge (2017)

Documenting landmarks, districts, and neighborhoods

Conducting tours, special events, and exhibits
  - World Heritage Nominations (2007)

Accepting façade easements, beginning with the Redmont Hotel and the rooftop sign (1984–1991) and earmarking funds received for an endowment


Growing Grandmother’s Garden at Sloss Quarters (2006–)

PUBLISHING
(not including issues of the BHS Journal)

1978 Downtown Birmingham: Architectural and Historical Walking Tour Guide
1978 Downtown Discovery Tour
1978 The Ghost in the Sloss Furnaces
1980 Birmingham Heritage Hike Guide and Patch
1981 The Birmingham District: An Industrial History and Guide
1982 Town Within A City: The Five Points South Neighborhood, 1880–1930
1983 Five Points Heritage Hike and Patch
1984 Old Birmingham, New Architecture: Student Projects for an Historic Downtown Context
1985 Go To Town, Birmingham: A Public Forum on a Vital City Center
1986 Image of the City
1989 Buildings Against Cities: The Struggle to Make Places
1989 Designs on Birmingham: A Landscape History of a Southern City and Its Suburbs
1990 Cinderella Stories: Transformations of Historic Birmingham Buildings
1991 Judge Clarence Allgood: His Brother's Keeper
1992 Mountain Brook Estates (reprint of 1926 publication)
1993 True Tales of Birmingham
1994 The Birmingham Industrial Heritage District Map
1995 Vulcan and His Times
1995 Birmingham's Vulcan (reprint of 1938 booklet)
1996 Birmingham View: Through the Years in Photographs
1997 Birmingham Bound: An Atlas of the South's Premier Industrial Region, 1850–Present
1998 Low Virtues: The Value of Human Scale Architecture to Birmingham Urbanism
1998 In Celebration of the Restoration of Alabama Power Company's 1925 Tower
1999 Vive Vulcan!
1999 Walking Tours of Birmingham Churches Conducted from 1990 to 1999
2001 A Pizzella View: Governor Braxton Bragg Comer and His Family
2001 Aspiration: Birmingham's Historic Houses of Worship
2004 Art of the New South: Women Artists of Birmingham, 1890–1950
2005 A Park System for Birmingham (reprint of 1925 Olmsted Brothers plan)
2006 The Olmsted Vision: Parks for Birmingham
2007 Hand Down Unharmed: Olmsted Files on Birmingham Parks, 1920–1925
2008 D. O. Whilldin: Alabama Architect
2009 Mountain Brook Village: Then and Now
2010 Digging Out of the Great Depression: Federal Programs at Work in and Around Birmingham
2011 The Jemison Magazine and The Selling of Birmingham, 1910–1914 (journal reprint)
2012 The Jemison Magazine: Birmingham and Mountain Brook, 1926–1930 (journal reprint)
2014 Mountain Brook: A Historic American Landscape
2015 Bob Moody's Birmingham: A City in Watercolor
2016 For Science and Humanity: Building Southern Research
2016 Birmingham, 1915
2017 Warren H. Manning's City Plan of Birmingham (reprint of 1919 report)
BUILDING A DIGITAL COLLECTION

In April 2017, the Alabama Department of Archives & History agreed to host PDFs (searchable and ready to download) of BHS newsletters, Journals, and selected publications (see below). They are located on the web at digital.archives.alabama.gov / Alabama Genealogy and History Publications / Birmingham Historical Society.
REPORT ON MEMBERS’ CONTRIBUTIONS
November 1, 2016 to December 1, 2017

The following donors have generously supported the Society at levels above the general membership dues. We acknowledge their support and express our gratitude.

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Edgar Marx Jr. and Marx Brothers, Inc.

Shades Creek Project
Anonymous, Anonymous, Mary Smith Slaughter Fund.

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.bhistorical.org or amazon.com for titles available or contact us at One Stoss Quarters, Birmingham, Alabama, 35222, t. 205-251-1880. The Society mails book orders.

Membership is for the calendar year: January–December.

Members must pay 2018 dues to receive the 2018 annual publication.

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