

BIRMINGHAM HISTORICAL SOCIETY

# Newsletter

September 2023

## Announcing our Annual Publication: *100 Years* by Anne Roberts Gayler



Centenarian Anne Roberts Gayler penned this manuscript. In her lively prose, she weaves the tale of her life well lived. Born in 1882, this daughter of the Old South and an English investment banker grows up in the industrializing New South as Charleston, Bessemer, and Birmingham rise. Educated in local, New York city, and Dresden, Germany schools, she aspires to be a singer. Marriage to a dashing civil engineer leads to an adventurous life in the U.S. Navy as the United States extends its influence in the Pacific, Atlantic, and Caribbean theatres in the early years of the 20th century. Commandants, admirals, Presidents Theodore

Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson, and extended Roberts and Gayler family members weave in and out of the Navy's wife's exciting life. This 216-page book includes Missy's 1986 manuscript and photographs, news clippings, and memorabilia from her many scrapbooks, as well as explanatory detail.

### SOCIETY CALENDAR

September 19, 6:30 p.m., **Bluff Park: Then & Now**, hosted by the Hoover Historical Society at the Hoover Public Library, 200 Municipal Drive.

October 1, 4:00 p.m., **100 Years Publication Celebration**, 2827 Highland Avenue. Members and family may pick up their complimentary copies of the book at this time. Additional copies will be available for sale for \$30.

October 3, **Members' Books to be mailed** to those not receiving them at the reception. Please let us know if your book does not arrive.

October 29, 3:00 p.m. **Christine Putman & Big Jim Folsom**, Talk & Book Signing with Folsom's grandson Jamie Putman, 2827 Highland Avenue.



**Anne Roberts Gayler:** Navy wife, mother, singer, and writer, with Ernest Gayler, *left*, and Anne and Pete Gayler, *center*.



### Big Jim & Christine

Politics, power, and love come together in the true story Big Jim's grandson Jamie Putman will share at his talk on Sunday afternoon, October 28 at the Society's offices.

Teacher and historian James Putman, Jr. will speak about the affair that shook Southern politics and sign copies of his new book: *Christine Putman & Big Jim Folsom*. Copies will be available for sale for \$20.

### *With appreciation to our sponsors ...*

The editors, Julius Linn Jr., Katie Tipton, and myself, are excited to share the story Anne Roberts Gayler [known as "Missy" to her friends and family] typed in the 1980s and thank her descendants for saving her manuscript and scrapbooks, her grandson Chris Gayler for digitizing the manuscript, to Sumter Carmichael Coleman and her sister Anne Miller for sharing it and the scrapbooks, and the many of Missy's family, the descendants of her parents Belle Sumter Yates and David Roberts, for providing the financial support to publish the 2023 Members Book.

Thank you: Sumter Hazzard and Peter Adolph, Mena Hazzard and John Brock, Robert Louis and Jennifer Carmichael, Colin Robert Carmichael, Ian William Carmichael, Belle Sumter Carmichael and Stephen Coleman, Belle Marie Fitzgerald Edelberg, Anne Gayler, Alexander Groves and Kim Gayler, Christopher Alexander Gayler, Elaine Sohler Gayler in honor of Christopher Noel Gayler, Leah and Meredyth Roberts Hazzard Jr., Sarah and Meredyth Ryne Hazzard, Gillian and Thomas Adair Hazzard, William Miles Hazzard, Sarah E "Swiss" Larsen and Peter Britt, Melissa Roberts Larsen Hogan and John E. Iffland, Evelyn Roberts Larsen, Anne Roberts and Petr Ledvina, Annie Carmichael Ledvina, Eva Noel Ledvina, Caroline Gayler Maness, Anne Gayler Miller, Deborah Gayler Poisot, Beebee David Roberts IV, David Roberts V, John Allen Roberts, Robin Roberts and Patty, Laura Susan and Thomas A. Roberts, Fluff and Thomas Atkins Roberts, Belle Sumter St. Denis, Hilty Hazzard and Jeff St. Denis, Katherine Roberts Matthew Smith, Maria Roberts Larsen and Doug Todd, and Libby Hazzard and Win Tuttle.

— Marjorie L. White

**Bluff Park: Then & Now to be featured**

Today Bluff Park is a close-knit community in suburban Hoover. The Shades Crest Road and Park Avenue Historic Districts showcase its historic homes and churches. But where's the park that gave the avenue and the community its name?

We will explore the history of this beloved community and “the Bluff Park,” once the centerpiece of Hoover’s earliest subdivision that currently presents itself for consideration in the City of Hoover’s ongoing park planning process as a future Hoover city park: The Bluff Park Preserve.

Speakers will be landscape architect Birgit Kibelka and historian Marjorie White. Working with the Society over the past decade, Kibelka and White have documented historic landscapes for the National Park

Service and the Alabama Historical Commission, including the Civil War-era Ross Creek Culvert (aka Ross Bridge), the 1871 railroad wonder Brock’s Gap, the 1913 Altamont Park, and the 1920s planning for Mountain Brook. (Documenting includes research, photographs, and maps assembled in printed histories.) This summer they have turned their gaze to the historic Bluff Park, discovering fascinating historic details and opportunities for the future that they will share with us in their illustrated presentation on the 19th of September.

Please join the Hoover Historical Society at the Hoover Public Library on September 19 at 6:30 p.m. for this informative presentation.



Sunset Rock

Bessemer

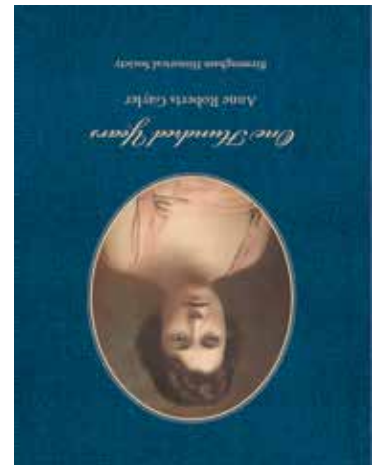
Oxmoor

Ensley

Birmingham



Bluff Park: Then (1908) and Now. Illustration and photograph of the view from Sunset Rock across Shades Valley to Red Mountain and beyond, courtesy Birmingham, Alabama Public Library Harvey Copeland Collection and Cliff Brane, respectively.



Join us on October 1 to celebrate ...

Birmingham Historical Society  
 P.O. Box 321474 | Birmingham, AL 35232  
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