

Historic Decatur Association



Letter from Your President *July 1st, 2019*

Greetings Neighbors,

I hope this newsletter finds you well and enjoying the beginning of your 100 days of Summer. Your Board and I are continuing to celebrate events surrounding Alabama's Bicentennial while your Christmas Tour committee is working hard planning this year's kickoff party and tour of homes. We are told this year is likely the tour's 40th year. We are looking forward to making this milestone year the best tour so far for Alabama's bicentennial.

The Garden Tour was held May 19th and was a great success this year. Please join me in thanking Cindy Upton and the host of people who helped make this year's tour great.

As I mentioned, Harriette Mathews, Christmas Tour Chair, and your committee are hard at work planning the tour kickoff- referred to as Christmas in July. Mark your calendar for July 18th, 2019 and join us at Townhouse Galleries at 5:30 pm in celebration of tour homes, sponsors, and volunteers past and present.

Your board is continuing work on our neighborhood-wide tree planting project. You should see additional trees planted this fall. Also, we have started a refocus on "the signage" project. Currently, we are working with local and state agencies on grants to assist us with the beginning phase of this project. More details about this project will follow soon.

If you have information you'd like to share with historic Decatur neighbors, please pass it along to a board member. Remember, our goal this year is to get to know each other, get involved and make a difference in our beloved historic district.

I wish each of you Happy Independence Day on the 4th!



Brenda Henson
HDA President 2019

Historic Decatur Association
2019 Officers / Board Members

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Welcome New Neighbors

We would like to take a moment to **Welcome New Residents** to our wonderful Historic neighborhoods. If you are a new resident, we would love to hear from you! First, we invite you to join HDA. A membership form is attached to this newsletter. We utilize several forms of communication and welcome your participation throughout this year. A great way to keep up to date on current events is through our website historicdecatur.org, NextDoor and FaceBook. If you have not yet joined or would like more information on how to join the HDA, please contact any member of the HDA board and or email me at bhenson4@wm.com for help. We would love to get to know you and your family.

A message from Decatur's Historic Preservation Commission:

As a follow up from our last newsletter, the HPC has finalized the fast-track system. The new COA application is on the HPC website (link below). The process is the same as before, the difference is a large number of items (roofing requests, repairs, etc.) can now be expedited, eliminating the need to appear before the HPC. Caroline Swope can approve, typically within a few days if the packets are complete. Larger scale projects still need to go in front of the commission.

Link for FAQ: <https://www.decaturalabamausa.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/CoA-FAQ-Decatur-FINAL-COPY-April-2019.pdf>

Application link: <https://www.decaturalabamausa.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/CoA-application-Decatur-FINAL-COPY-April-2019.pdf>

Garden Tour 2019 Historic Decatur's 2019 Garden Tour was Wonderful! Here are a few pictures from the day. From top left, Cindy Upton, our chair, showing her own container plantings. Cindy's plantings were widely enjoyed at HQ but (as her labor of love) were not for sale. Had they been for sale, Cindy could have made some serious cash as most guests coveted her plantings. Top right – One of our fabulous gardens. Lower left- Decatur Youth Symphony provided entertainment for tour guests to enjoy. Lower right- Another of our fabulous gardens. There are many other fabulous pictures to enjoy on Historic Decatur Garden Tour Facebook page.





If you got it, flaunt it—and we’ve got it, neighbors! By Harriette Mathews, Christmas Tour Chair

Did you know our combined historic districts contain one of the finest and largest collections of Victorian and early 20th-century craftsman and bungalow homes in Alabama? Many are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Top that off with the fact that our Christmas Tour has once again been designated a “*Top 20 Event*” by the Southeast Tourism Association gives us good reason to brag.

The 2019 Historic Decatur Christmas Tour is slated for Saturday, December 14th. Six months away, yes, but your Historic Decatur Association Christmas Tour Committee is hard at work devising plans for a top-notch display of our city’s fabled beauties.

Albany’s Westminster Presbyterian Church is tour headquarters this year. Most of our tour homes and sites are lined up. Only one spot is left. If you’re on the fence about placing your home on tour, please let us know soon to secure your spot!

The Christmas Tour line-up will be announced at our tour kick-off event, *Christmas in July*. Mark your calendar now. This annual event will be Thursday, July 18th, from 5:30-8:00 pm at Townhouse Galleries. In addition to refreshments and fine fellowship, party-goers will be treated to a Christmas décor demonstration and fabulous door prizes donated by our awesome sponsors. We look forward to seeing you there.

If you’d like to sponsor or volunteer for Christmas Tour, we’d love to have you on board. Feel free to reach out to Harriette Mathews, Christmas Tour chair, via the contact info listed in the newsletter.

In the meantime, tell your friends and family to save the date of December 14.

Christmastime is our time to shine!

_____ I am interested in being part of the Christmas Tour committee.

_____ I am interested in having my home on tour.

_____ I am interested in volunteering for Christmas Tour.

PLEASE EMAIL YOUR INTEREST FORM TO: Harriette Mathews at harriettepmathews@gmail.com

We need your Help! Together, let's clean up our streets, sidewalks, gutters, and porches in an effort to make Decatur's Historic District visibility beautiful from our streets.

As the city seeks to make 6th Avenue Decatur's Gateway, opportunity exists for us to help improve and beautify the city. The HDA will spearhead a cleanup project early this Fall (after the weather cools) targeting Old Decatur and Albany areas that are overgrown, etc. Will you plan to help?

Below are a few things you can do now to jump start cleanup.

- 1) When backwashing your swimming pool to the street, ensure your street drain is clear of debris (before backwashing) so your pool water runs off properly and doesn't create flooding in the street.
- 2) Please refrain from raking or blowing your leaves and grass clippings to the street and leaving them there. When you do this, your leaves and clippings migrate to the end of the street and clog the street drains. This in turn causes flooding and debris collection at the end of our neighborhood streets. Please bag your yard waste or use your yard waste container for disposing of glass clippings, leaves, etc. The picture below is an example of a 5 minute rain.
- 3) Everyone does not have pets, and no one wants to clean up after yours. When walking your pet, please be considerate and clean up after them. And, do you know where your cat is? Many residents are complaining about cats doing their business on their porches. Please, know where your cat is and keep it at **your** home.
- 4) Reverse Parkers Beware...Did you know Decatur has a city ordinance prohibiting vehicles from parking in the direction of oncoming traffic? Drivers who reverse park pull into oncoming lanes to park and again when leaving their parking spot. These maneuvers are safety hazards which can cause accidents. This message is to remind everyone that the city is now issuing citations to reverse parkers.



Community Events



Historic Decatur Association:

Christmas In July, Christmas Tour Kickoff, July 18th 5:30 pm until 8 pm Townhouse Galleries

Neighborhood cleanup TBD

Neighborhood Greenery Form: Available October 15th

Neighborhood Decorating Challenge, December 10th (first judging 3pm, second judging dusk)

Greenery Collection: November 30th, **Swag Making/Hanging:** December 1st

Luminary Preparation: December 13th, **Placement:** morning of December 14th

Christmas Tour Date: December 14th

Historic Decatur Association's Board meetings: HDA meetings are held the last Tuesday of every month at 6 pm at the Railroad Depot. We invite you to join us for these meetings.

Decatur Mall: Currently on exhibit (on the walls) of Decatur's Mall (on the Beltline) is a wonderful display of Historic Decatur's History. Be sure to visit the mall, take in some shopping, and be fascinated by the history that is DECATUR!

Carnegie Events:

Current exhibit

Historic Preservation Commission:

Location: Depot, 5:30 p.m.) July 11, Aug. 8, Sept. 12, Oct. 10, Nov. 14, Dec. 12

Downtown Merchants and Business Association:

3rd Friday Downtown

River Clay Festival, Historic Downtown Decatur, September 27th-29th

Decatur Parks and Recreation

Rhodes Ferry Park – Alabama Hwy. 20 at Oak Street

July 21 Al Keith Band Smooth Jazz/Pop/Blues

July 28 Reginald Jackson & Friends Smooth Jazz

Daikin Amphitheater at Founder's Park – Alabama Highway 20 at Canal Street

July 15 Madison Community Band Summer Band

July 15 Decatur Youth Symphony Classical

July 22 Sophisticated Swingers Big Band

July 29 Michael Dean & Memphis Elvis Tribute

All concerts are free and begin at 6PM. Bring a picnic and your favorite seats or blanket. For more information call 256-341-4818 Weather information - cancellations, moving to another venue - will be posted on the Decatur Parks & Recreation Facebook page



Historic Spotlight presented by Caroline T. Swope, M.S.H.P., Ph.D.

Style Guide: Colonial Revival

The Colonial Revival style is an easily recognizable style, and one that has examples every few blocks as you walk through our historic neighborhoods. It originated with the patriotic-filled Philadelphia Centennial Exhibition of 1876. Many of the original Colonial and early Federal styles were loosely based on Greco-Roman design sources in an attempt to make connections between the greatness of past civilizations and our young democracy. In 1898 The American Architect and Building News published a series of photographs and measured drawings of Colonial architecture. (They were republished in 1923.) Other publications also created interest in the style, as did the much-publicized documentation and multi-million dollar restoration of Colonial Williamsburg during the 1930s. One result of this intense documentation is that Colonial Revival homes constructed between 1910 and 1935 are more likely to duplicate the original prototypes. The style continued after World War II, but designs were usually simplified for economic reasons or changing. The 1976 bicentennial kept Colonial forms in design periodicals through the late 20th century.

The term “Colonial Revival” in architecture generally refers to early English and Dutch houses. The symmetrical buildings had a number of architectural details that found favor: extensive paneling of entryways and primary living spaces, center hall ways, foursquare plans, Palladian windows, classical columns, shuttered multi-lighted windows. Secondary influences came from Dutch Colonial examples, which sport a gambrel roof, sometimes described as a “barn” roof. While the dominant architectural style at the time of the exhibition was Victorian, it did not take long for designers to add Palladian windows and classical columns to even the rambling irregular Victorian structures! Early examples of Colonial Revival are rarely historically accurate copies, instead they are rather loose interpretations of the style. A variety of design details are used in English Colonial Revival homes. They generally have regular massing, with hipped or side facing gables. Roof eaves are articulated with multiple layers of molding- dentil work (a series of small square blocks) is one of the more typical examples. Windows are evenly spaced, with the front door frequently holding the center position. A columned porch or small portico marks the primary entrance, and the paneled door is surrounded by sidelights and occasionally a federal style fan light above. Windows are double hung, with both sections displaying multiple lights. During the Colonial period large windows required the joining of multiple small panes of glass. Since window glass was imported from Europe, and large sheets were expensive and prone to breakage on the long sea crossing. Thus, for the revival styles “old fashioned” multi-lighted windows were sometimes specified. Shutters reappear in Colonial Revival styles as well. Solid and louvered shutters were operable during the colonial period and could be used to block light or protect windows. (Most Victorian, Craftsman and Tudor styles lacked shutters, in part due to their obsolescence, and in part because the parings of two or three windows together would not allow functional shutters).



