

# *Historic Decatur Association*

## *Newsletter*

*March 1st, 2018*

Greetings Neighbors,

Can you feel it? There's excitement in the air! It's finally spring – a time of renewal, a time of new beginnings. I hope you enjoy this renewal, our first HDA newsletter of the year. As we launch into 2018, your new board and I are excited about everything to do with the Decatur's historic district. It's our goal to reinvigorate the neighborhood in 2018. We want our neighbors, all of you, to feel this excitement. We want you to WANT to be involved. Together, we can and will make a difference and keep this excitement going.

As your board, one of our first goals is to re-embark on a neighborhood-wide tree planting program. Hopefully, the first trees are installed, or are being installed, as you are reading this newsletter. The Historic Decatur Association recently designated funds to plant 20 new trees in the historic district. These trees are to be split between the two neighborhoods. It's wonderful to see progress. Do you want to be involved? (Check out the article in this newsletter for more information.)

We'd like to congratulate last year's Christmas Tour committee on another successful year. Of course, it couldn't be done without you. It literally takes an army of volunteers to pull off our biggest event of the season. We are appreciative of everyone's efforts, big and small. Be sure to thank the homeowners who opened their doors. Without homes, we simply wouldn't have a Christmas Tour. THANK YOU. Speaking of the Christmas Tour, your board is in search of a new tour committee and chairperson. Early planning makes lighter the work in the fall. More info is in this letter.

Also, a big shout out of thanks to our outgoing board of directors and board members at large. They did some great work in our neighborhood last year as the first combined HDA board. Although this change was for the better; change is always hard. So, thank you to Lindsey Faulkner, the HDA inaugural President and her team, D Hall, Larry Freeman, Cindy Upton, Lynn Schuppert, Craig Baker, Karen Thomas, and Jason Terry for all your work in 2017.

We will try to keep you up-to-date on some of the goings on in and around the historic district throughout the year. If you have information you'd like to share, please pass it along to one of your 2018 board members. (They are listed in this newsletter complete with preferred contact information.) There's a lot going on in the community with the Garden Tour, Diner en Blanc, Carnegie exhibits, Princess Theater events, Christmas Tour, and more. There are new restaurants and businesses opening on 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue and Bank Street as well. Please consider shopping and dining locally in historic Decatur. It's truly a great time to be here!

Can you tell I am excited to be part of the historic district? I hope you are too! We have so much going on, lots of great things planned – and we want all of you to be a part of it.

Wade Dinsmore  
HDA President 2018

*Historic Decatur Association*  
*2018 Officers / Board Members*

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*Welcome New Neighbors*

by Shannon Defazio

We would like to take a moment to **Welcome New Residents** to our wonderful Historic neighborhood. If you are new residents, 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 NextDoor. If you have not yet joined or would like more information on how to join, please contact any member of the Historic Decatur Association board and or email to [shannondefazio@icloud.com](mailto:shannondefazio@icloud.com) for help. We would love to get to know you, your family, and/or your four-legged friends.

For more of what's going on, check us out on NextDoor or on FaceBook. We try to post current events, get together, and such in real time 😊



Historic Decatur's 2018 Garden Tour is planned for Sunday, May 20<sup>th</sup>. This tour has traditionally been our gift to the community. Events such as this keep people excited about visiting our beautiful neighborhoods and returning to support of our annual Christmas Tour of Homes. Participation in the Garden Tour is simple. If you love gardening, please consider opening your gate to allow visitors to stroll through on May 20<sup>th</sup>. Our headquarters location which is still to be determined will offer tour guests Tour information and refreshments, and volunteers are needed to work HQ and to bring refreshments. More information is coming soon. Our first need is Gardens. Please contact Cindy Upton, Garden Tour Chair, at 256-566-3344 if you are willing to share your garden as part of this year's Garden Tour.

\_\_\_\_\_ I am interested in sharing my garden on tour.

\_\_\_\_\_ I am interested in volunteering on Garden Tour day.

PLEASE EMAIL YOUR INTEREST FORM TO WADE DINSMORE AT [wdinsmore100@gmail.com](mailto:wdinsmore100@gmail.com)



Historic Decatur's Christmas Tour of Homes will be here before we know it. As mentioned in my letter, it takes an army of volunteers to make the event successful. We are presently in need of a 2018 Christmas Tour chair person, homes for tour, and volunteers. Please help us make this year's Christmas Tour the best one ever!

\_\_\_\_\_ I am interested in the Christmas Tour Committee Chair position.

\_\_\_\_\_ 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 WADE DINSMORE AT [wdinsmore100@gmail.com](mailto:wdinsmore100@gmail.com)

## Community Events

### Historic Decatur Association:

**Neighborhood Social**, April 22<sup>nd</sup> at Frasier Park, 2-5pm Bring a covered dish to share

**Garden Tour**, May 20th, 2018

**Neighborhood Decorating Challenge**, December 4<sup>th</sup> (first judging 3pm, second judging dusk)

**Christmas Tour** Date: December 8th

**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:

**Embracing Art XVI**, Open house March 6th, Artist Reception March 9 at 6 pm

**Carnegie Visual Arts Center 15th Anniversary Celebration**, April 11th

**Mayes and Fielder**, April 24th, Artist Reception - April 27 at 6 pm

**PaperWorkers Local**, June 14th, Artist Reception - June 14th at 6 pm

**Camp Carnegie** (1st through 5th grade) – July 9th-13th

### Princess Events:

**Kristy Lee, Singer /Songwriter Listening Room Series**, RFCU Loft, Thursday, March 8th, 7:00 PM

**Orchestra Sul Ponticello**, Shelton Auditorium, Saturday, March 10th

**Toying with Science**, Shelton Auditorium, Monday, March 12th. 9:30 A & 12:30 PM, Tuesday, March 13th, 9:30 AM

**Community with a Conscience- TBA**, Coffee Bar, Tuesday, March 13th, 6:00 PM, Admission is Free

**Community with a Conscience- TBA**, Coffee Bar, Tuesday, April 10th, 6:00 PM, Admission is Free

**Chris Canterbury and Channing Wilson, Singer/ Songwriter**, RFCU Loft, Thursday, April 12th, 7:00 PM

**Popvich Pet Theatre**, Shelton Auditorium, Saturday, April 14th, 3:00 PM

**Jay Burton Film Premiere of Dormant**, Shelton Auditorium, Saturday, April 21st, 7:00 PM

**Ali Babba and the 40 Thieves**, Shelton Auditorium, Saturday, May 5th, 2:00 PM

**Debbie Bond and Radiator Rick, Singer /Songwriter**, RFCU Loft, Thursday, May 10th, 7:00 PM

**Decatur Youth Symphony**, Shelton Auditorium, Monday, May 14th, 7:00 PM

### Morgan County Archives:

**Morgan County Genealogical Society** Meeting Schedule (Location - Morgan County Archives, 2:00 p.m.) Mar. 4, Apr. 1, May 6, June 3, July 1, Aug. 5, Sept. 9, Oct. 7, Nov. 4, Dec.2

### Historic Preservation Commission:

Location: Depot, 7:00 P.M.) Mar.8, Apr. 12, May 10, June 14, July 12, Aug. 9, Sept. 13, Oct. 11, Nov. 8, Dec. 13

**Morgan County Historical Society Meeting:** May 15th, Location/Time TBA. For information, [\(256\) 351-4726](tel:2563514726)

### Downtown Business Association:

**St Patrick's Day Pub Crawl**, March 17th

**3rd Friday Kick off**, 2nd Avenue, April 20th, 5-9pm

**Market on Bank Kick off**, Bank Street, May 5th, 6-9pm

**3rd Friday**, May 18<sup>th</sup>, 2nd Avenue, 5-9pm

# Membership/Change Form Historic Decatur Association

*Print Clearly & Complete In Full*

**Mail To:**

Larry Freeman  
615 Johnston St  
Decatur, AL 35601

**Annual Dues:**

**\$25.00 Per Household**  
**Make checks payable to:**  
**Historic Decatur Association**

**Adults (will be alphabetized by last name in Directory)**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Last Name                                      1. First Name                                      2. First Name  
(Names will be listed in above order)

**Others in household (include other adults and/or children)**

\_\_\_\_\_  
First & Last Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
First & Last Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
First & Last Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
First & Last Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
House or Apartment Number                                      Street

\_\_\_\_\_  
Home Phone                                      Work Phone

\_\_\_\_\_  
First Name:                                      Cell:                                      E-mail:                                      \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Second Name:                                      Cell:                                      E-mail:                                      \_\_\_\_\_

**Additional Contribution: \$** \_\_\_\_\_  
(All contributions above dues payment are tax deductible)

*Thank You!* If you are completing this form as a change in your personal information only, please circle the following: This is a Change of Personal Information Only.

**Note: The information on this form may be used for publication of a new HDA directory.**  
**Please highlight any information that you wish to be excluded from the directory.**

\_\_\_\_\_

# Historic Spotlight

## The Princess Theater



She is a grand ole dame. The Princess Theatre has been a north Alabama landmark for more than a century. She began as a livery stable in 1887. Yep -- a place to park your horse. As you may see in the photograph on the left, the structure was quite different than it is today. The photo below shows her looking a little more like she looks today after she was transformed into a silent film and vaudeville playhouse in 1919, presenting high class road shows, pictures and Keith (of Radio-Keith-Orpheum, or RKO) Vaudeville. On opening night, December 30, 1919, the play "Tea for Three" was staged with music provided by local orchestras. The next day, the film "The Wolf" was shown, with prices at 20 and 30 cents. Ah, the good ole days.

After a facelift in 1941, the Princess emerged with the art deco style that remains today (see photo below on the right) and features a brilliantly lit neon marquee that is an icon for the region. Local architect Albert Frahn decorated the auditorium burgundy and gray walls with murals that glow under blacklight. If you visit us today, you can still see these features. Some find them stunning; others notice the slightly "creepy" quality. Either way, children who come to the venue remain particularly fascinated by them. The glow of fluorescent carpeting guided theatergoers down the aisle - a brilliant solution to aisle safety. The lobby featured a terrazzo floor with a map of Alabama, marking the Tennessee River and Decatur, imported veneer walls and art deco stair rails. Those features can still be seen as well. The classic art deco facade displayed a geometric design, lit glass bricks, yellow and black vitrolite glass and a two story marquee with more than 3,000 feet of neon tubing. The Princess reopened on August 7, 1941 as a classic art deco theatre with the film "Tom, Dick and Harry" starring Ginger Rogers.



Princess stage, presenting children's theater, choral concerts, musicals, dance and theatre. More than 60,000 people attend events at the Princess.

After a \$750,000.00 renovation, the Princess once again reopened and this time as the city's performing arts center. The 677-seat Theatre began serving as a stage home for local performing arts groups, providing a multipurpose rental facility for the community, serving as an arts education resource for schools and annually presenting a variety of touring artists in music, theatre and dance. A Professional Series featured national touring arts events from Broadway musicals to major concert artists and family events. For more than twenty years, the Princess Theatre presented an array of outstanding cultural events, including such artists as Tony Randall and Ray Charles, the national tours of Broadway musicals such as "Evita" and "Big River," and concerts by the Glenn Miller Orchestra and Dan Seals. Local performing groups make their home on the

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