

SMHS Newsletter, No. 2, 2015



Stone Mountain Historic Society Newsletter April 2015

Growing Our Society

For a number of years, the Historical Society has looked for ways to increase the potential of the marvelous house and lot that were donated to us in 2005 and to make it more self-sustaining. We hope we have earned your trust in our stewardship as room after room has been converted for use and enjoyment by our members and the community. The DeKalb Master Gardeners have worked their magic on the side and back gardens, creating beautiful walkways and outdoor rooms. We are hard at work developing a research and genealogical library and have cultivated a small but growing artifact and archival collection. We hope you are pleased with our efforts!

To build on this success story, we held a strategic planning session in 2014. For many in attendance, the lack of parking was a major challenge to our growth. The imposing Neoclassical residence built for George Riley and Sarah Hardeman Wells sits high on the ridge that gave the street its name with a shallow setback and ribbon like sideyards. Its original lot was likely much larger to accommodate the size of the house and, historically, the Wells Family, either by carriage or car, would have accessed their home from Forrest Avenue. That tradition ended with the subdivision of the back of the lot in the 1950s.

Officers and Board



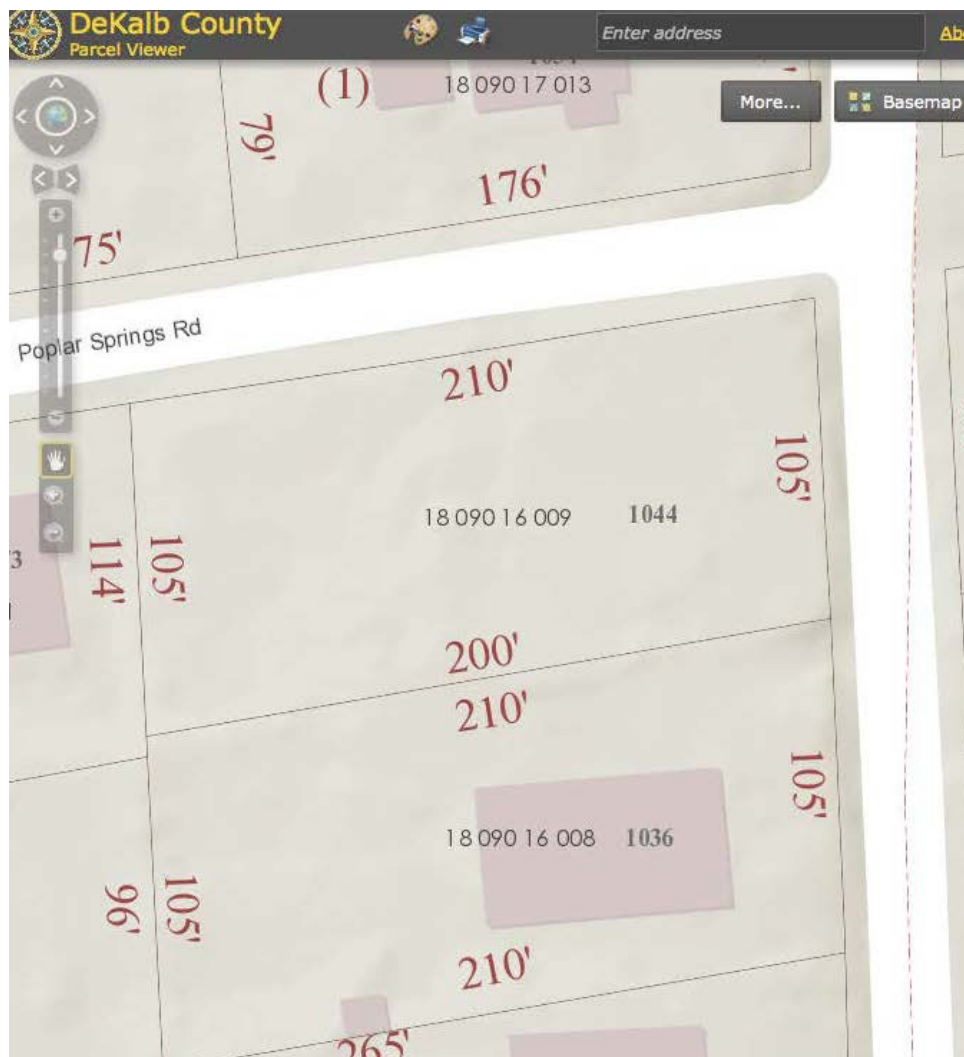
Mary Beth Reed
Jo Ann Florence
Rusty Hamby
Theresa Hamby
Kathryn Wright
Jim McCurdy
Pat Miller
Susan Devine
Sally Kellogg
Chakira Johnson

Wells Brown Interpretive Plan

Compiled by the Heritage Preservation Program, Georgia State University, Issues and Interpretations of Public History Class: Marcy Breffle, Nathan Brown, Joshua Curtis, Lisa Flaherty, Laurel Lamb, Courtney Nix, Raul Pino, Julie Renner, Alexandra Troxell, Charles Turner, and Megan Warley under the direction of Dr. Kathryn Wilson, Fall 2014. Please let us know if you would like to see a copy.

Upon possession of the property in 2005, Society members worked with the City's Planning and Zoning to establish a single parking space in the north side yard (a handicap space) attached to the non-historic Ridge Avenue driveway. While the space is needed and much used, it does not provide relief particularly on event nights where members tote food and supplies from sometimes as far as a block away. Elderly members also have difficulty attending functions due to the lack of convenient access. Accordingly, the need for some environmentally sensitive parking was given strong priority in our strategic planning process.

A larger concern was the need to make the house financially self-sustaining through occasional use as a small event space. Several challenges arise on this score. We are not permitted to open our upper story to the public until we have added a new second story door. This could entail a rear addition that might significantly decrease our back yard space. Loss of yard area within our lot is meaningful particularly if small outdoor weddings are a consideration. The lack of adequate parking is a further challenge to becoming a successful event space.



We are delighted to announce that GSU students will return this fall to create an exhibit plan for one of our rooms!



Happy Easter!



Deviled Egg Chicks

Makes 6 servings

- 6 hard-cooked eggs
- 1/4 cup shredded Parmesan cheese
- 1/4 cup prepared ranch salad dressing
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- Dash pepper
- 5 carrot chips
- 12 capers
- Fresh dill sprigs

January 2015 started with a bang when we heard that the Marks Lot, the vacant lot adjacent to the Wells Brown House (1044 Ridge Avenue, Parcel 18 090 16 009, see below), suddenly went on the market. The lot, which sits on the corner of Poplar and Ridge to the north of our property, offers many solutions to some of our strategic planning concerns as well as opportunities. It seemed like a dream come true. Recognizing that time was of the essence and that the lot was our best shot at achieving growth, we quickly moved forward with obtaining a loan and acquired the lot for \$30,000, getting it off the market and into our possession.

Our vision is to “reimagine” the Society property using both lots to move our mission forward. At the very least, its acquisition allows us to consider more greenspace and gardens, additional parking, and potentially a small structure. We are delighted and excited by what lies ahead but we need your help to make this a success.

We are kicking off a capital campaign with a goal of \$50,000. We need \$30,000 to pay off the loan and an additional \$20,000 to begin the planning process for the property’s development. Our goal this year is to simply pay off the loan, maintain the property, and get our creative juices going on how to integrate it into the Society’s property. We are asking members for their financial help to get this done. If you can afford to donate one thousand dollars, one hundred dollars, or ten dollars, please consider making a tax-deductible donation. We will honor those who give \$1,000 with their names inscribed on a granite marker to be placed within the garden. For donations of \$2,500 or greater, a granite bench will be placed in the garden inscribed with the donor’s name. We already have three donors and are looking for more to meet this year’s goal.

We are also working hard on developing fundraisers as part of this campaign. First up is a Spaghetti Supper at Wells Cargo on Monday April 13th at 6:00pm! Hilda and Lynn Wells have graciously allowed the use of their historic restaurant and are donating the spaghetti, sauce, salad, and bread! \$15 for adults and \$5 for children. Great place for a meal in the village on a Monday night and a good cause. Come join us!

We will keep you posted on our progress on our website. Please help us to extend our beautiful historic fence around this new property and create a legacy for the next generation of Stone Mountain.

Cemetery Cleanup Days

Hello Historical Society members! The Downtown Development Authority (DDA) Design Committee has come up with dates for four days in 2015 to clean up the historic Stone Mountain Cemetery. The dates are May 2, July 11, September 19, and November 14. The Design committee plans to meet with any available volunteers between 9:00 and 11:00 am. Keep DeKalb Beautiful has loaned tools including pick up sticks, gloves, safety vests, trash bags, recycling bags, and yard debris bags. They’ve also donated Keep DeKalb Beautiful T-Shirts. We hope to see you all there!

Directions

Cut a thin slice from the bottom of each egg so it sits flat. Cut the top third from each egg. Carefully remove yolks and place in a small bowl; mash with a fork. Add cheese, salad dressing, mustard and pepper; stir until well blended. Spoon into the egg white bottoms; replace tops.

Cut 12 feet and 12 small triangles for beaks from carrot chips. Gently press the capers into the filling for eyes; add beaks. Insert a dill sprig in top of eggs for tuft of feathers. Place feet in front of chicks. Refrigerate until serving.

Yield: 1/2 dozen.

Historic View Above



This view of the depot area was taken circa 1910, showing passengers disembarking the train. Note the school in the background. Photo courtesy of Lady Mary McConnell and Dr. George Coletti.

Upcoming Fundraiser

The Stone Mountain Historical Society's

SPAGHETTI SUPPER

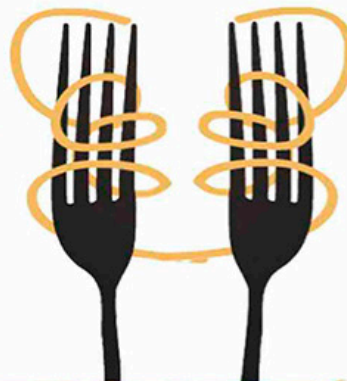
Monday April 13 - 6-8pm



Wells Cargo Café, 953 Main St.,
Stone Mountain, GA 30083

*The Stone Mountain Historical Society and Wells
Cargo serving up some village history with sauce!*

Spaghetti, salad, and bread
generously provided by the
Wells Family in this great
historic village restaurant.
Dessert compliments of the
Stone Mountain Historical
Society.



Adults
\$15

Children
\$5

Help the Stone Mountain Historical Society create a
village jewel! All funds raised will go toward the purchase
and development of the Society's new property.



Upcoming Events

Down the Dixie Highway airs on Georgia Public Broadcasting, April 7 at 8:00pm. Many of the interviews were completed at the Wells Brown House and Stone Mountain is well represented. Produced by GPB in collaboration with GDOT and New South Associates.

“Society” Spaghetti Dinner Fundraiser, April 13, 6:00-8:00, Wells Cargo Cafe. Please join us and bring a friend for dinner for a great cause! First seating at 6. Adults \$15, Children, \$5.

Spring Meeting, April 23rd, 7:00pm Susan Kellogg Library, 952 Leon St., Stone Mountain, 30083

Lord Aeck and Sargent Architect David Steele will present a talk on the depot’s beautifully completed exterior renovation and lead a walking tour of the depot highlighting architectural clues that tell its history. Refreshments Served.

One Place Study Work Group meets every third Thursday from 7-8:30 to research Stone Mountain’ history. Come join us at the Wells Brown House! For more information, contact Mary Beth Reed (mbreed@newsouthassoc.com)

In Honor of Jack Rhodes (1947-2015)



Jack Rhodes, a long time member and friend to the Society, passed away last week unexpectedly. A native of Savannah, he moved to Stone Mountain where he attended Stone Mountain High School and later Emory University. He spent his professional legal career practicing in Decatur with Weeks and Candler and McCurdy Candler. Mr. Rhodes played an instrumental role in the donation of the Wells Brown House to the Society in 2005 and we are greatly in his debt. We offer our heartfelt condolences to his family.