

BIRMINGHAM HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Newsletter

May 2005

RESTORE AMERICA

The theme of Preservation Week 2005, "Restore America: Communities as a Crossroads," calls upon citizens coast to coast to rededicate our best efforts to show that preservation truly is a vital effective force for shaping, enriching, and celebrating the rich diversity of our nation. The National Trust created

Preservation Week in 1971 to spotlight grassroots preservation efforts around the county.

Preservation Week 2005 is the time to celebrate Birmingham's special places and those whose innovative ways help ensure that future generations will celebrate them too.

2005

Preservation Awards

This year's awards salute great efforts to save historic places and revive them with sensitivity to historic fabric and neighborhood.

Phoenix Building (1927, 1950)
1710 Second Avenue North



O.V. Hunt, Birmingham Public Library Archives



Beverly Taylor, The Birmingham News

Owner & Developer: Phoenix Arts, LLC, Ben, Anna, and Jeremy Erdreich, Carl Hess
 Architect: Erdreich Architects, Jeremy Erdreich, principal in charge; Doug Shaddix, project manager; Jeremiah Wade, draftsman
 Contractor: Harrell Contracting Group, LLC, Jackson, Mississippi, Don Parks, project manager; Wade Gray, job superintendent
 Terra Cotta Restoration: JJ Morley Enterprises Inc, John Morley

For Alabama's first mixed-income lofts

South Central Bell Telephone & Telegraph Company grew up here, and so did lots of other businesses since the building's footprint was doubled to 200 by 140 feet in 1950. Today, 74 "industrial"-style — 25-foot-wide and 60-foot deep — lofts welcome enthusiastic renters. "Industrial" translates to all systems — heat, air, water, electrical, structural — exposed with pipes and

ductwork showing. The recent renovation demolished scores of partitioned offices and went down to the concrete shell, but took care to preserve the lobby and the varnished doors and their surrounds. The exterior has been lovingly restored, with particular care for the terra cotta and copper storefront framing.

Taylor Carriage Co.-Ballard Building (c.1904)
2214 Second Avenue North



Owners: Patrick & Janice Ballard
 Architect: Cohen & Company, Tammy Cohen, president, Stan Corson, project manager
 Contractors: Richardson Construction Co., Joe Halbrook

For salvaging and saving

With dog and daughter, the Ballards moved from the outer blurbs to the city center, following a nine-month marathon do-it-yourself (with some help) renovation. Roof leaks, described as "Niagara Falls" were repaired, and salvaged beams reappeared as stair treads. The couple removed, planed, and refinished *all* the ceiling beadboard. Walls of multi-colored painted plaster received clear coatings following lots of wallpaper stripping. Contrary to the norm in home remodeling, the Ballards still speak to one another and conduct a law practice, together, in the building.



Kress Building (1937)

301 19th Street North



Wes Frazier



National Building Museum, gift of Genesco, Inc.



Wes Frazier

For returning a grande dame to glory

Best described as a monumental Superstore — Birmingham's 100-by-150-foot Kress Building — comprised four stories with a penthouse and two basements when it opened for retail sales in 1937. Kress company designers built it for the ages. The exterior featured creamy terra cotta, display windows, and entrances trimmed with shiny metals and the oversized Kress signs. Inside were high ceilings, lavish terrazzo floors, and a ladies' lounge.

The recent renovation for the law firm restored the terra cotta, terrazzo, metal, and gilded finishes; reoriented the entrance

to 19th Street (the original Third Avenue entrance now serves as an emergency exit); and constructed a new interior stair from the lobby to the mezzanine and upper floors, linking these spaces and flooding them with light. The basement now serves as a home for Summerfest Theatre. The lounge and penthouse have become an in-house conference center and employee breakroom. Cohen & Company and Wiggins Childs have redesigned it for the ages!

Owner: Wiggins Childs Quinn and Pantazis, PC; Rocco Calamusa Jr., managing partner
 Developer: John Lauriello, Southpace Properties, Julie Gieger, project coordinator
 Architects: Cohen & Company, Tammy Cohen, president, Stan Corson, project manager
 Contractors: Charles & Vinzant Construction Co., Mike Hearn, project manager; Andy Anderson, project supervisor



Penny (1950s)

2700 First Avenue North

Owner: Birmingham Hide & Tallow Co., Owen Vickers
 Master Signmaker: Barry Crick
 Project Cheerleader: Christy Crick

For saving the Penny dog

Folks heading along the First Avenue Viaduct (built 1950) always look for the Penny dog. Gold Seal Products made "Penny", the sign and the canned dog food at the building now occupied by the hide and tallow company (est. 1900) where Christy Crick works.

Barry Crick, best known for keeping Vulcan's lights glowing, rehabbed "Penny," getting the old parts and motors working so that she wags her tail and blinks her eyes as she once did.



“The County Home” Jefferson County Rehabilitation & Health Center (1931, with additions) 200 N. Pine Hill Road, Ketona

Owner: Jefferson County Commission, Commissioner Betty Fine Collins
Oversight: Jefferson County General Services, Billy Morace Jr., Jeff Smith, Ricky Childers
Director: Patrick Nicovich
Architect: Paul B. Krebs & Associates-Architecture & Engineering, Robert W. Gray, project principal; David Breedlove, design architect; Eddie Griffith and Jennifer Hughes, team members
Contractor: Duncan & Thompson Construction Services, Tommy Duncan & Curtis Thompson; Jerry Nabors, project superintendent



For compassionate care amidst distinguished buildings

The County Home at Ketona opened in 1931 to care for the elderly poor folk. America’s founding fathers would be right at home here. Architects Turner & Van Arman’s campus included a replica of George Washington’s Mount Vernon, an Italian Renaissance bell tower, and cloistered courtyards leading to Colonial Revival style chapels. Lots of nursing facilities were later built at the site . . . which became a “jumble of buildings.” The current redo demolished and

rebuilt nursing facilities and a new visitor entrance and restored the arcades and sunny courtyards, as well as the interior of the chapel.

For the rescue and reuse of historic schools

Center Point School (1924) 2209 Center Point Parkway

Developer/tenant: City of Center Point, Tom Henderson, mayor (pictured with his wife)
Partner: JCCEO’s Head Start Program, Gayle Cunningham, director

City officials and Head Start students moved right in. The city clerk took the school office; the firemen the gymnasium; and Head Start classrooms and the lunch room. It’s a remarkably fine fit, and a fitting model for future projects.



Robinson School (1906) East Lake

City of Birmingham Schools: Wayman Shiver Jr., superintendent; Virginia Volker, board member
South East Lake Neighborhood: Angela Anderson, president; Dana Cockrell, vice President

As a new school rises in the playground, school board officials will stabilize the 1906 school and neighborhood leaders will find and support the future uses of this historic school as a center for community education.



Zoe’s in Forest Park (1920s) 3815 Clairmont Avenue

Owner: Deborah Bashinsky
Contractor: Bhatte Environmental, Johnny Roberts, principal; Martin Peacock

For working hard to make it right

To its new owner, “it was real obvious to get rid that drop ceiling and carpet,” open up transom windows and back door, and restore and enhance the newly found finishes. “We need to honor these old buildings,” she continued, and she did! The Bhatte crew finished the exemplary job in **seven weeks!!!**



Cobb Lane Bed and Breakfast (c.1889)

1309 19th Street South

Innkeepers: Ira and Sheila Chaffin

For pioneering historic hospitality

It took about a year of trying “not to ruin the house” while installing new wiring, bathrooms, food service and safety equipment, paint, general fix-up, and truck loads of antiques . . . but eight public hearings and 35 inspections later, the Chaffins’ eight B & B quarters will welcome guests.



Oak Hill Cemetery (est. 1871)

1120 19th Street North

For assessing resources and developing a conservation plan

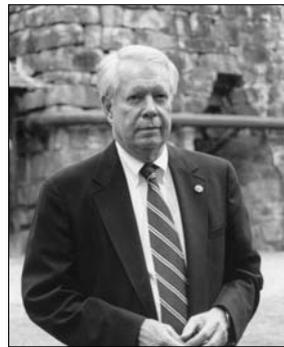
Oak Hill Cemetery Memorial Association, Stuart Oates, director; Steve Coleman, president; David Herring, Steve Coleman, Jim Porter; Larry Greer; Walter Henley, trustees

Specialists found much to admire: an intact landscape with *fabulous* statuary, a caretaker’s cottage, barn, and chapel; extensive and detailed interment, management, and landscape records; and a board dedicated to preserving and interpreting the site.

**Special Award
Tannehill Ironworks and the
Iron & Steel Museum of Alabama**

12632 Confederate Parkway, McCalla

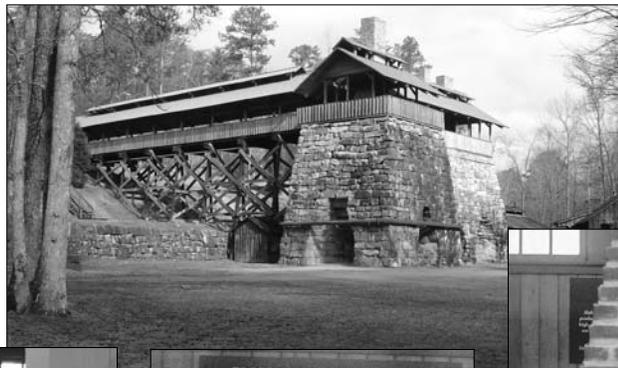
For exemplary collections and exhibits on 19th-century ironmaking



Jim Bennett

Tannehill Ironworks Historical State Park, Jim Bennett, commissioner & chairman of the museum committee, Marty Everse, parks administrator, Vicki Kes, director, museum & education at the museum; Rusty Crouthers, restoration specialist; Ted Burnett, master tradesman

For Jim Bennett, work at Tannehill began in 1969 when the state established a commission to develop the historic site, a ruin since its destruction by federal cavalry in 1865. Other awardees have also given decades of service, working together as a terrifically talented team. Today, the 1,500-acre historical park welcomes upwards of 400,000 annual visitors, the furnaces have been reconstructed, and a superb collection acquired and interpreted to tell the story of how iron was made and used by farmers and as munitions during the Civil War.



Vicki Kes

Marty Everse



Rusty Crouthers



Ted Burnett



One Sloss Quarters
Birmingham, Alabama 35222

Join us for
Preservation Awards

May 12, 2005, 5:00 p.m.

Phoenix Building

1710 Second Avenue North

Visitor Entrance, “The County Home”
courtesy of Krebs & Associates

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