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Newsletter

September 2020

Custodians of the Past. Stewards for the Future



Editor's Note: This is the second in a series of Harriman's History as prepared by CHHCO Historian W. Tom Scandlyn.

Changing of the Guard – Harriman, 1950

The tumult and the shouting dies;
The Captains and the Kings depart:
Still stands Thine ancient sacrifice,
An humble and a contrite heart.
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget
Lest we forget

Rudyard Kipling (1897)

1950 ended a decade of tumult for our world, our nation and even our town. It saw the emergence of nuclear energy that came not as source of civil energy but in the destructive form of a bomb. This had brought two Japanese cities to ruin. Meanwhile the most aggressive political alliance of the modern world had been stopped cold. The rest of the world was left to engage in a new warfare call "cold war." Atheistic

communism began to pour out of Russia into the neighboring countries and the world was left in panic.



The HPD show off the results of a Moonshine Raid, sometime in early 1950s

Source: Images of America Harriman, John Norris Brown

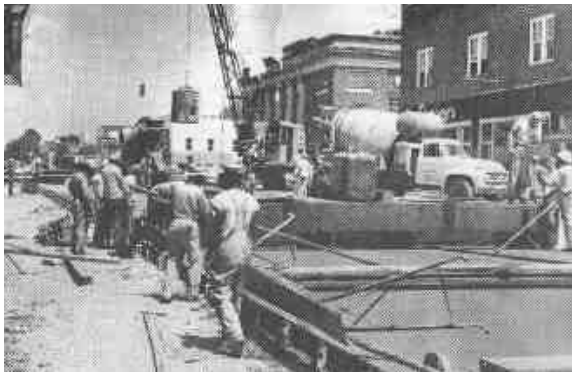
On the homefront in Harriman, things were also changing. But not all the changes were visible to outside observation. The town was now sixty years old. Many old families that had been here many years began to die away. Population was on the move. People from outside the area were pouring into the new city of Oak Ridge only 25 miles away. The Oak Ridge laboratory and uranium enrichment plants had been a secret project to start. It culminated in the detonation of the first atomic bomb.

The Oak Ridge project displaced farms, families, and communities. Many of these families came to Harriman and Rockwood. The S. K. Collins family owned a farm now covered by the Y-12 plant. Some like the Fernde Irwin family had been displaced by Norris Dam in Campbell County were displaced again by Oak Ridge. The Crawford Cumberland Presbyterian Church, once pastored by John Henry Davidson, moved from the Oak Ridge plant site to Harriman. It worshipped in the former First Methodist Episcopal Church at Crescent and Cumberland until it later burned.

A new sense of prosperity came with the new high paying Oak Ridge jobs. All businesses

prospered but particularly the lumber companies owned by the Christmas, Scandlyn, and Stowers families. The Scandlyn Lumber Company was located on the highway to Oak Ridge and particularly benefited from the post war building in Oak Ridge.

To others the new people were not welcome. Their ways were foreign and liberal to conservative Harriman. One lady who came to Harriman said she came here at the same time with her family for an unrelated reason. They attended services at First Presbyterian Church for three weeks before anyone spoke to them, assuming they were part of Oak Ridge. She said the friendliest gesture they got from the congregation was that Mrs. T. C. Farnham would turn, smile, and wave. Not until after it became apparent they were not connected to Oak Ridge did the wall of ice come down. One citizen said "Oak Ridge brought the scrappings of the earth to town."



Widening of Roane St (Hwy 27) in downtown Harriman occurred in 1957. Note the two story structure to upper right is the current E2 Sports at Roane & Queen. The 2nd floor burned some time after that picture was taken, and was never rebuilt

Source: [Harriman: The Town that Temperance Built](#), Walter T. Pulliam

In appearance, Harriman did not change a lot in these years. The elementary school was destroyed by fire. A plan to rebuild it on the site of the Cumberland Street [now Killeffer] Park was thwarted by concern that the original land grant for the park precluded such use. So a new Central Elementary School was erected on the site of the old one.

It must be noted that the greatest toll on both nation and town of the 1940s was the loss of life of its young people in the war. Most churches

had a flag of stars to represent those of its congregation in service. If a member died in battle, the star was change to gold. Nancy Oran recalled being at First Presbyterian Church and seeing Mrs. B. L. Sadler come in to sew on two gold stars for young men that had died.

Big news happened on the industrial front. The Harriman Hosiery Mills in downtown Harriman was sold to Burlington Industries. The Burlington attorneys in Greensboro insisted on a no-competition clause stating the Tarwater family could not engage in another hosiery business inside the City of Harriman. So in 1949, J. L. Tarwater, Tom Tarwater, Jr. and George Ed Wilson (three first cousins) founded Roane Hosiery, building a new plant on the east side of Harriman just outside the city limit. This new plant eventually employed 1500 people. Both plants prospered many years but the Tarwaters outlasted the big corporation of Burlington and Kaiser-Roth.



The new four lane highway gave a new look to downtown Harriman, especially with new night lighting

Source: [Harriman: The Town that Temperance Built](#), Walter T. Pulliam

Perhaps the most remembered but least understood trends of the 1940s was the emergence of a political powerhouse, the Browder family. The Browders were displaced from the Wheat Community by Oak Ridge. They founded the Harriman Oil Company from two service stations and parlayed into an empire of gasoline distribution, transportation, real estate, automobile dealerships, hotels and restaurants. With help from Democrat Governor Frank Clement, they had the planned Interstate 40 re-routed to cross the mountain at Harriman.



William Hamilton Browder Bridge (Hwy 27) became the progressive access point to downtown Harriman in 1957

Source: Harriman: The Town that Temperance Built, Walter T. Pulliam

Other changes were in the works but completion were yet to come. Those were exciting years for Harriman nearing its pinnacle of success.



The Harriman Business Association sponsored a ping-pong ball drop in Downtown Harriman on May 23, 1959. The ping-pong ball drop was also repeated during a Hooray for Harriman event in the 1990s.

Source: Harriman: The Town that Temperance Built, Walter T. Pulliam

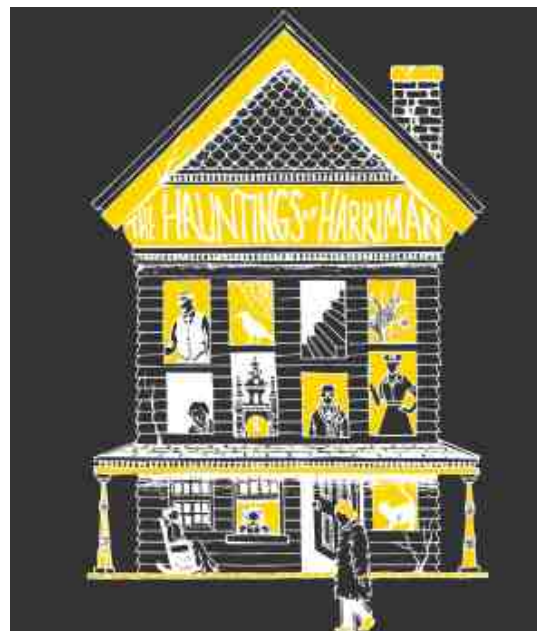
Hauntings of Historic Harriman is Nearly Here



The Spirits in Harriman are used to being socially distanced, but nevertheless have been coached to be on their best aloof behavior. Advance ticket sales have begun, and the tour times are moved up to start at 7:00 opposed to 7:30. All ticket prices are \$15.

This year the tour groups will be smaller (most of the time made up of people who came together), and starting points will begin at both the first and last story tellers (those starting at the "last" story will rotate opposite and finish at the "first" story).

Have you seen this year's Hauntings T-shirt? The creativity of Heidi Barton has teamed up with the capabilities of Samantha Lloyd & staff at E2 Sports/Beyond All Measure in Downtown Harriman.



Thanks also to all our T-shirt Sponsors, who are listed on the back of the shirts. Shirt sizes Adult Small to Adult XL are \$15 each, and Adult 2XL-4XL are \$17 each. Supplies are limited, and pre-orders are already being taken! Get yours before your preferred size is gone by contacting Aaron & Beth Johnson (865) 382-9647, or at ticket booth on the day of the tours.



More details will be outlined as this year's Celebration is finalized. Should you have any questions or wish to volunteer yourself or a group (including groups performing live Christmas music), contact Bruce & Diana Knobloch at 882-1472. Let's all work together to create a festive historic outdoor celebration to remember!

We're nearly Ready for the Final Morgan Ave Facade Renovation

Another recent workday on September 22nd with nearly 25 volunteers completed the main sanctuary and lower level interior clean-out, thanks again to the use of dump truck and dumping fee donated by Emory Site Solutions. Removal of carpet over a section of the raised platform revealed significant wood damage but can be reframed and finished.

CHHCO's Outdoors Christmas Tour of Homes Plans are Progressing



A group of interested residents and Natasha West of the City of Harriman met together this past Sunday afternoon to brainstorm how this year's Tour of Homes would be conducted outside. All residents, and indeed throughout the City of Harriman, are encouraged to exceptionally decorate outside for Christmas this year. From approximately 5 to 9 Friday and Saturday nights of the 2nd weekend of December (11th & 12th), a driving tour route through our historic streets will provide 12 (as in the number of days of Christmas) themed decorations/presentations. The Downtown Harriman Businesses are also being invited to remain open those evenings and create special events for the Christmas season. The Christmas Celebration is also being coordinated with the City of Harriman, and the Riverfront decorations will be part of the total Celebration experience for our visitors.



We are also blessed with a new relationship with volunteers arranged through Focus Roane, a non-profit organization that supports cleanup and renovation throughout Roane County. Their Volunteer Coordinator Yvonne Yates, herself a Harriman resident, noticed this past month the Historic Harriman banner and the progress on the church renovation. She then sought out CHHCO and through her contacts doubled the size of our volunteers this past weekend!





And of course, what would a volunteer group be without the social interaction that comes with it. Thank you to our meal hostesses, and Thank you to all the Volunteers!



Renovation Funds

Contributions continue to come in, and we're just about where we need to be to fully fund the Morgan Avenue façade renovation! The painting of the façade is being scheduled, and once that is complete the restoration of the original church windows will begin.

Those interested in designated gifts are suggested to support the window restoration at a donation of \$1,500 per Sanctuary window. The funds will go directly to replacing any broken glass, repairs to the sashes, repainting of sashes and trim, and installation of protective plexiglass to the exterior. To recognize those that fund the window restoration, a nameplate will be added to the inside of the window using wording chosen by the donor, such as:

**Window Restoration Sponsored by
[Your Name Here]
In Memory [or Honor] of _____**

Won't you commit to restoring an original window?

Please send your donations to:

CHHCO
PO Box 611
Harriman, TN 37748

Donation Levels	Cumulative Level of Donations
Preservation Leader	\$25,000 or Greater
Preservation Guardian	\$10,000 - \$24,999
Preservation Steward	\$5,000 - \$9,999
Sustaining Donor	\$1,000 - \$4,999
Supporting Donor	\$500 - \$999
Contributing Donor	\$100 - \$499

All donors contributing towards the cost of renovation and equipment will be recognized according to their cumulative level of giving, on a permanent plaque to be placed at the completion of the facility renovations. Cornstalk Heights Historical Community Organization is a 501(c)(3) organization, and donations are therefore eligible as a tax deductible charitable contribution to the full extent of the law.

