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Newsletter

November 2020

Custodians of the Past. Stewards for the Future

Happy Thanksgiving, a Blessed Christmas Season, and the Best for the New Year!



Editor's Note: This is the fourth in a series of Harriman's History as prepared by CHHCO Historian W. Tom Scandlyn, who lived it.

Change and Decay

**"Change and decay in all around I see,
O Thou who changest not, abide with me."**

Henry Francis Lyte

It was the 1960's, and things were not well. The world was in a frenzy. Often called "transitional years," small town America neither understood them nor could see an acceptable end. Harriman, which began as the "Utopia of Temperance" had always been a safe haven from the world's commotion. But in 1960 it had passed into a new world. With modern communication and transportation, the old blankets of protection no longer sufficed to protect the small town. Issues of the larger world began to encroach and take their toll. Most of the experiences of that day were not understood, and even to this day have not been resolved.

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As communicated through previous editions of this Newsletter, we will not hold our annual Christmas Tour of Homes as we traditionally would. Yet this is a special year, being the 130th Anniversary of The Great Land Sale and the 30th Anniversary of the establishment of both the Cornstalk Heights Historic District and the Roane Street Commercial Historic District. We therefore wanted to still celebrate and showcase our unique community, and this will be done by means of a driving tour using our guest's personal vehicles to experience the outdoors Christmas Celebration of Lights of our decorated homes, enhanced by music, live performers, vocalists and instrumentalists, all at safe distances outdoors!

More than any other Christmas season, now is the time to create joy for others which also influences our personal attitudes and emotions. Those who have been preparing special venues have been very enthusiastic, and as a result other neighbors have been motivated to add a little something extra this year. We encourage everyone, especially those along the tour route, to create a festive environment at your individual homes. Others will appreciate your efforts, and you will feel better as a result of it, too.

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Change and Decay (Continued from Pg 1)



“Vintage” City Christmas Decorations, ca 1960s

The 1960’s did have a positive side. There was a continued prosperity from the post-war era pumping money through the community. Beautiful new homes continued to dot the landscape. J. L. Tarwater, Rhea Browder, and Ben Edd Scandlyn built expensive new homes on the hillsides and at the lake. But these are not the dominant memories. A roster of darker issues took center stage.

The decade began with the 1960 execution of William Tines, a black man who in 1957 broke out of Brushy Mountain State Prison. Following the railroad into the Harriman area, he entered the countryside home of Mr. & Mrs. Luther Nichols (Margret Scandlyn). Tines assaulted and raped the housekeeper, 45 year-old Bertha Gilmore Riggs. Tines left Riggs bloody and near death. The sheriff deputies were soon on the scene. The struggle had knocked the telephone receiver its base, which allowed people listening on the party line to hear what was going on. Among those who heard was Rigg’s employer, Margret Nichols who was trying to call home to tell Riggs she would not be home for lunch. The guilt of Tines is not in question, but the trial had a number of issues that today would not be accepted. Tines was already in prison for the murder of two black men. But it was the rape of the white housekeeper that brought him the death penalty.

Another strange incident was the 1962 suicide/murder attack of Chester Brumley on his son’s wife, Betty Adkisson Brumley, in the parking lot of Cas Walker’s Super Market at Midtown. Mr. Brumley, a quiet married man, church going, had been a World War II bomb maker. He entered the car of his daughter-in-law, detonating a home made bomb. Chester Brumley died

immediately. Betty Brumley died several day later. She had two small children.

National movements including civil rights, the role of women, assassination of the President and later other shook the soul of the nation. In addition, a poisonous theology movement beginning in the 1920s called “Modernism” advanced. By the 1960s, this movement had infected every strata of American churches. Leaders such as Presbyterian Eugene Carson Blake and Episcopalian Bishop James Pike embraced this movement whole-heartedly. Harriman, on the other hand, was not so flexible. The First Presbyterian Church of Harriman with 15 millionaire families became divided. One side felt that the local church could continue to bear witness to its parent denomination. The other side found this idea intolerable. In 1965 the church split, and it caused a rift among Harriman’s most prominent families. The best of friends suddenly wanted no association, no business dealings, no social club connections, and no woman’s club or Bible club associations. The final Sunday of one Presbyterian Church in Harriman was Easter 1965.

The late 1960s proved a downhill path for Harriman as well as the USA. Completion of I-40 from Knoxville to Harriman began the decline of downtown Harriman as a shopping district. Likewise, our nation saw more assassinations, warfare, and riots.



Harriman Diamond Jubilee, August 1965

One of the bright spots for Harriman in the 1960s is the Diamond Jubilee, celebrated in August 1965

Most significant to Harriman was that one bitterly cold night in February 1969, when it lost its beautiful Greek Revival high school building to arson. Much about that is still not know. Lance Douglas, a fifth grader at that time, recently

wrote that he remembered his family stood on the porch of the McCartt house on Trenton Street watching the fire. The heat was intense, but the air so cold tears froze on their face as they cried.



Much died in Harriman that night. The classic columned portico was a call to something greater. Education was the doorway to a greater calling. Harriman had always been very proud of its school system, but it was never to be again. Seventy-five years of progress evaporated that night. Those crying at the sidelines understood that. They cried because there was nothing else that could be done.

So the decline begins. Inertia will continue it on this path and even today we hope and work toward a better way.

Author's PS: I feel a certain apology is in order discussing so many dark issues. But those were the times. Thanks be to God they were the exception and not the norm.



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Let me assure you, ***no one is being asked to remove your personal vehicles from the streets.*** We are a living, active historic community, not an outdoor museum. Viewing of homes and hearing the sounds of the season are possible regardless of any cars parked along the street.

Through traffic will need to drive on alternate streets, however any resident or guest of resident will be given access by traffic assistants at the intersections. Further, we are not anticipating traffic anywhere near the volume for Trunk or Treat. We estimate 200-300 cars/night, or approximately 1 vehicle/ min.



The Christmas Tour of Homes is an annual CHCO fundraiser for community improvements, and our focus at this time is the renovation of the old Christian Church at the corner of Cumberland and Morgan. CHCO has named this facility "***Historic***" ***Harriman Hall*** in honor of the namesake of the city. The end point of the driving tour is at Harriman Hall, and while we are not lighting it or adding Christmas decorations, we do intend to showcase the progress made over the last 12 months on the facility.

The beginning of the tour route is in front of the Carnegie Library, as all our Christmas Tours have started there. The one-way route shown on the



last page notes “Featured Homes” as those families who have informed CHHCO of their special decorating themes. An abbreviated reading of Dicken’s Christmas Carol, special music venues, and of course Santa will also be positioned along the tour route. We also recommend our visitors to take in the Downtown Businesses and the David Webb Riverfront Park, where the City of Harriman has extensive decorations and Courts of Praise is planning a live Nativity presentation as well.

We thank all of you for your support this year and for throughout the past! Each of us has a different connection to the community, which

may range from a lifetime of residency to a relative “newby” to the Historic District. Yet, we all want a safe and caring community which does more for each other than for ourselves. Thank you for what you do in support in making things happen for all to enjoy.



Historic Harriman Hall Renovation

The CHHCO community has had its challenges with COVID, and we are thankful for those who have survived through the disease! As a result, we have scaled back our social work activities on the Hall. Unfortunately, this has also impacted our contracted services that may be short of completing the exterior painting by the date of the Christmas Celebration tours.

Nevertheless, we are proud of the progress and the facility will still be featured on the tour. As the weather warms and crews are again available to work, we will resume renovation activities. For the month of December and possibly into early 2021, enjoy the “fruits of our labors” and reflect what has been accomplished, and not so much on what else we wanted to accomplish. It will happen ...

Those interested in end of year gifts are encouraged to consider the donation levels listed below. All donations by donors will be

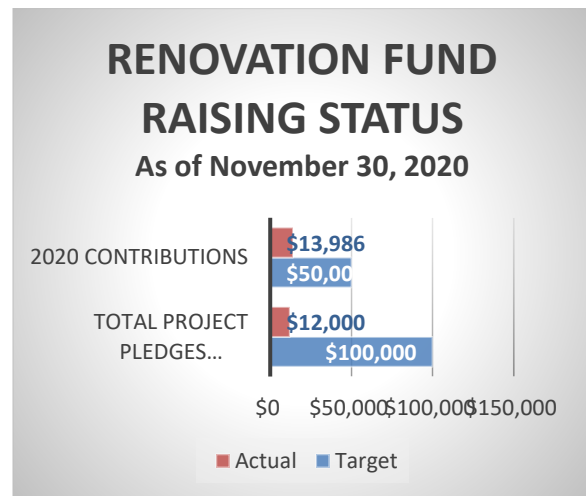
recognized on a cumulative level for the entire renovation project. Therefore, your end of year gift can increase the recognition of your total donations, and also benefits the project by providing seed funds for the next phase of work.

Please send your donations to:

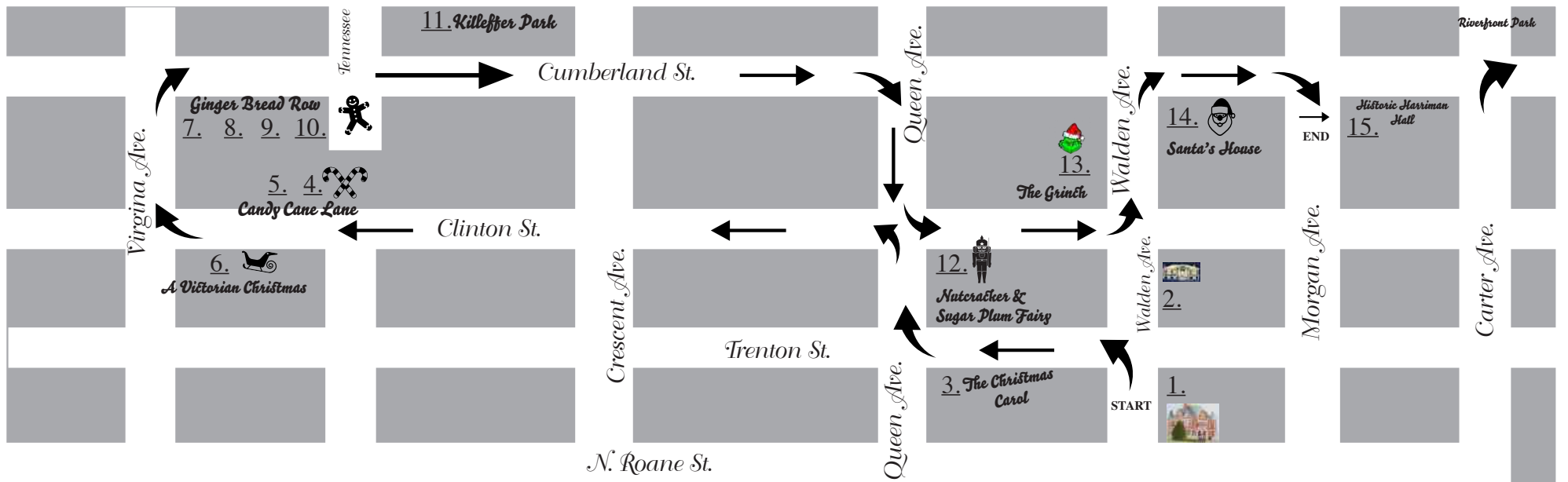
CHHCO
PO Box 611
Harriman, TN 37748

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

In addition, designated gifts can be given in honor/memory of individuals of your choice. Specific project needs can be discussed; however it is suggested to support the continuing window restoration at a donation level of \$1,500 per Sanctuary window.



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.



Featured Homes and Historic Places

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|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>1. The Temperance Building
330 N. Roane St.
<i>Start of "Christmas Celebration of Lights"</i></p> | <p>6. Chase - McPherson Residence
727 Clinton St.
<i>"A Victorian Christmas"</i></p> | <p>11. Killeffer Park
Cumberland St.</p> |
| <p>2. Harriman Historic Carnegie Library
601 Walden Ave.</p> | <p>7. Sutton Residence
509 Cumberland St.
<i>"Ginger Bread Row"</i></p> | <p>12. Barton Residence
431 Clinton St.
<i>"Nutcracker & Sugar Plum Fairy"</i></p> |
| <p>3. Harriman United Methodist Church
601 Queen Ave.
<i>"The Christmas Carol"</i></p> | <p>8. Marney - Peterson Residence
717 Cumberland St.
<i>"Gingerbread Row"</i></p> | <p>13. Pitcock Residence
414 Walden Ave.
<i>"The Grinch"</i></p> |
| <p>4. Burgess Residence
708 Clinton St.
<i>"Candy Cane Lane"</i></p> | <p>9. Tarwater - Knobloch Residence
709 Cumberland St.
<i>"Gingerbread Row"</i></p> | <p>14. Gibson - Becker Residence
403 Walden Ave.
<i>"Santa's House"</i></p> |
| <p>5. Hendrick - Branham Residence
710 Clinton St.
<i>"Candy Cane Lane"</i></p> | <p>10. Johnson Residence
701 Cumberland St.
<i>"Gingerbread Row"</i></p> | <p>15. Historic Harriman Hall
401 Morgan Ave.</p> |