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@HarrimanCHHCO

401 Morgan Avenue, Harriman



# Newsletter

September 2024

*Custodians of the Past. Stewards for the Future*

CHHCO IS OPEN TO ALL INDIVIDUALS INTERESTED IN PRESERVING AND PROTECTING HISTORIC HARRIMAN. MEMBERS NEED NOT BE A RESIDENT IN A HISTORIC DISTRICT TO BE ACTIVE.



**Living in  
a  
Historic  
District  
Means  
Living in  
a  
Legacy**

**WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU AT  
THE 2024 HAUNTINGS OF HARRIMAN!**

*Share this QR Code with others!*



## **Harriman's Great Flood of 1929 - Can It Happen Again?**

Most of our CHHCO membership has heard of the Great Emory River Flood of 1929. The flood waters started quietly rising on the sleeping residents on the pre-dawn hours of Saturday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>. The history of the events that surrounded this flood are documented in great detail in Chapter 10 of Walter Pulliam's "Harriman: The Town That Temperance Built," commonly referred to as Harriman's Blue Book.

This flood event resulted from a series of four storm systems between February 26<sup>th</sup> and March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1929. The fourth storm, starting on March 22<sup>nd</sup>, causing 6 to 11 inches of rain over the nearby Cumberland plateau and Walden Ridge. The most intense rainfall fell around Spencer, Rock Island, Crossville, and Wartburg.

The Blue Book has the first-hand account of the flood by Amos Steuchser, assistant water superintendent of HUB's predecessor utility company, and reflects the real tragedy of flash floods. Amos, going to the water plant when the river first started to rise over the bank, instead assisted in evacuating the family of Lon Branam, the Water Superintendent who lived along the river. Unfortunately, Lon and his wife were swept away trying to get to high ground in the rising flood waters. Amos was carrying their 8 year old son, Gene, through the rising flood waters and lost hold of Gene when they were bowled over by debris.



*Lower Morgan Ave Looking Towards River*

In total, twenty people drowned, fifty homes and nearly all businesses along the Emory washed away. Few businesses rebuilt, and with the Great Depression beginning a few months later, Harriman's economy would not recover until the World War II effort brought a new secret industry into the region.



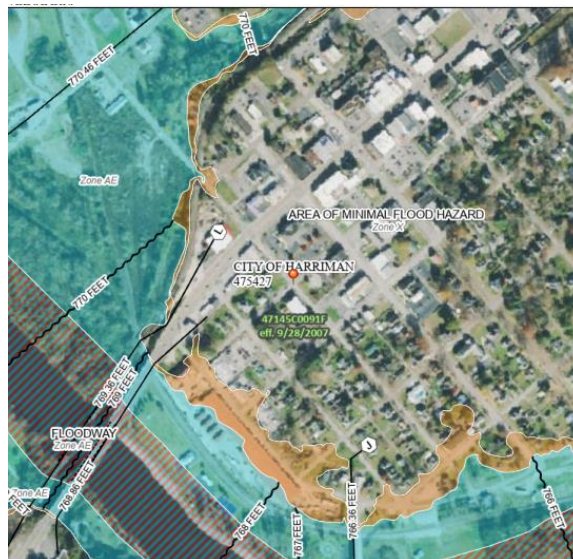
*Clinton & Morgan, Looking Towards River*

With the recent flooding disaster just Northeast of us, it does raise the question if this could ever happen again in Harriman. The effects of over 20 inches of rain from Hurricane Helene on the mountains separating North Carolina and Tennessee clearly reflects that predicting unprecedented flooding nearly impossible. So yes, an unprecedented flood could occur again in Harriman.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has created flood maps to reflect 100 year (1% chance) and 500 year (.02% chance) flood zones. The following map is part of a National Flood Hazard Layer FIRMette for the City of Harriman just North of the Emory River. These maps are available for all flood prone areas of the United States. However, several times areas will flood that are outside the flood hazard maps. In some cases, these may be localized ground flash floods caused by significant downpours opposed to cresting rivers. However as witnessed in Erwin, Tennessee, "flash flooding" can occur from weather systems that exceed the computer-generated models and forecasts.

None of the Historic Districts in Harriman are in flood zones. A few low-lying residential areas near the river (tan-shaded areas) are in the 500 year floodplain and appears to be a little lower than areas shown to be flooded from 1929

photos. The blue shaded areas are in the 100 year floodplain, which is all of the Riverfront Park and Flour Mill Flats area, including street department and HUB equipment facilities.



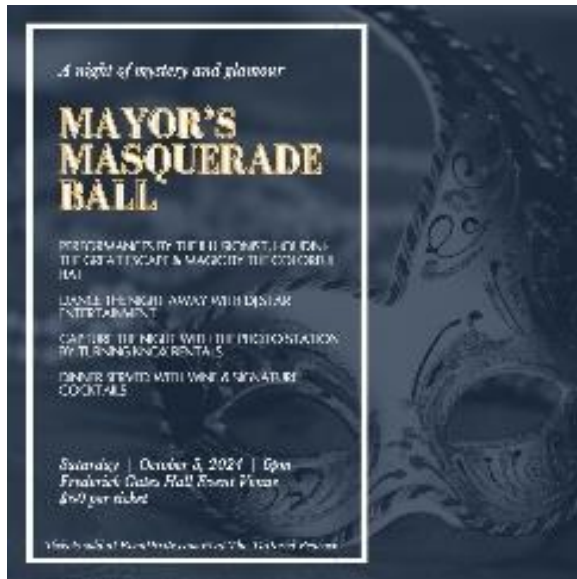
Based on the terrain of downtown Harriman and the Cornstalk Heights Historic Districts, it's safe to say these are well outside of reach of Emory River flooding. However, it can never be ruled out that low lying areas outside the known flood zones, such as Harriman's Community Center, could some day wake up to an unanticipated flood. Let us pray, however, that the type of flood disaster Harriman has experienced in the past, and is going on to the northeast of us, never occurs in this region again.



WHOLE BUILDINGS WERE WASHED AWAY



## October Party Opportunities in Harriman

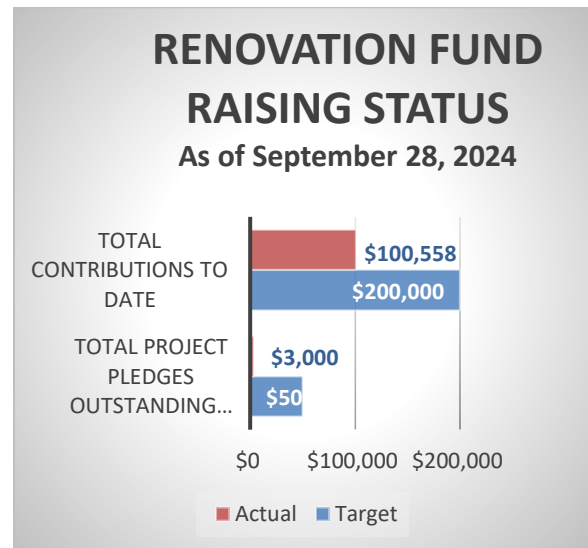


**October 18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup>**

**A Hauntings Story will be told inside of Harriman Hall! If not volunteering for the Tour, come participate and bring friends for the opportunity to see the inside!**

## Next Harriman Hall Workday is October 26<sup>th</sup>

We're making progress, and we look forward to inviting everyone to come inside during the Hauntings Tours for the first time!



All donations go directly to the renovation of Harriman Hall and are not used for any of the organization's operating expenses.

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

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. Donations can be sent to:

CHCO  
401 Morgan Ave  
Harriman, TN 37748

# CHHCO Community Calendar

## October 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5 <div>  </div>
6	7	8	9	10 <div> <b>7:00 CHHCO Board Meeting</b> 408 N. Roane                     </div>	11	12 <div>  </div>
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21 <div>  </div>	22	23	24	25 <div>  </div>	26 <div> <b>9-noon Harriman Hall Workday</b> </div>
27	28 <div>  </div>	29 <div>  </div>	30	31		