

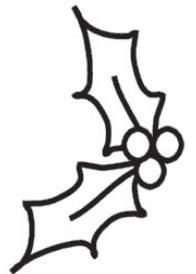
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MEMPHIS HERITAGE KEYSTONE

November - December 2014 | Vol. 17. Issue 5



Support Memphis Heritage this 2014 Holiday Season and get your shopping done in one place!

Memphis Heritage reminds everyone that we have many ways to give a great gift and support Historic Preservation in our community. Memberships to Memphis Heritage make terrific gifts and show your family and friends that you care about making your community a place to be proud of.

MHI Memberships start at \$35.00. Or for a donation of \$15 per name MHI will send out a gift card letting your friends know that you made a donation in their name as a Holiday gift and we'll even include one of our 2015 MHI Calendars. Just send us your list and we will do the rest!

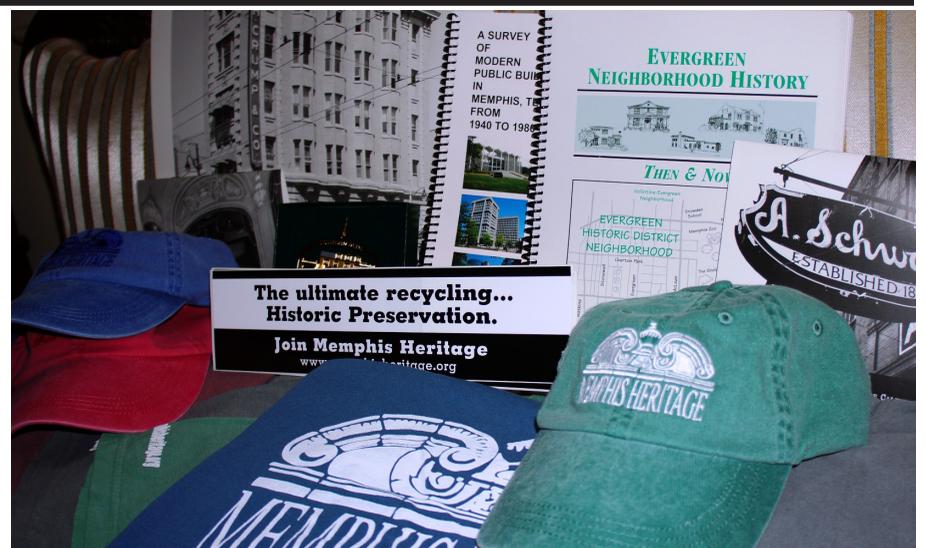
We also have our Howard Hall ornament that is in limited quantities. This three dimensional brass ornament looks great hanging alone or on your tree. Our heavy cotton T-shirts, short and long sleeves and cool baseball caps are seasonal favorites.

We have a few of the Evergreen Neighborhood Histories available. And of course everyone

loves to get one of the magnificent Newman photographs to hang in their home or office, available in 8 x 10 to mural size.

MHI will once again be selling a special gift item this holiday season, The Memphis City Dining Cards. This offering gives folks discounts at favorite restaurants and supports Memphis Heritage at the same time. To get more details and how you can purchase a set of The Memphis Dining Cards go to our website www.memphisheritage.org. This cleverly designed deck of discount cards make great stocking stuffers.

Don't miss out on these great holiday gifts for that preservationist or history buff! Give us a call at (901)2727.2727 or email us at info@memphisheritage.org or go to our website www.memphisheritage.org and see how easy it is for you to do all of your shopping in one place. And the best part is that all proceeds from the sale of these great gift items support the mission of Memphis Heritage.



ADAPT-A-DOOR "6" NOV 8th

As we go to press we are excited about our upcoming Adapt-a-Door 6. We are so thankful for our generous presenting sponsor, Delta Door and Hardware.



Once again our great food will be provided by Bardog Tavern, The Slider Inn and Tart. We are so grateful that Aldo and Clif and their team have been with us since the first Adapt-a-Door back in 2008.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

The Zoo We knew
The Richards House
Handwerker Gingerbread Playhouse
Historic Properties Trading Block
Updates on Memphis Landmarks
Read more at:
www.memphisheritage.org

Other major sponsors include Dillard Door and Entrance Control, The Memphis Flyer, Kathy Manning Loeb, Yuletide Office Solutions, and The Commercial Appeal.

Memphis Flyer

Along with the following: Marty Gorman, Cato Fashion, Chris Sullivan, Laurence & Susan Chan, John Griffin, Joey Hagan, Old City Millworks/Posey Hedges, Leigh Gilliland, Jeff Wamble, and Carl Raff.



And thanyou to all of our creative "door" Artists who without these amazing works there would be no fundraiser and to our host committee and of course to our MHI volunteers that make it all happen!



Will McGown's "Poker Table"

The Handwerker Gingerbread Playhouse

The Handwerker Gingerbread Playhouse is an important historical building located behind the Woodruff-Fontaine house in Victorian Village at 680 Adams. The actual James Lee Memorial property was dissolved when the James Lee House was purchased from the city.



The presence of the playhouse in Victorian Village provides an excellent example of successful historical conservation when public minded citizens, business leaders and elected officials work together. The Queen Anne 'gingerbread' style playhouse was originally built by

a descendant of Boniface Handwerker, John Valentine Handwerker. The family's patriarch and family arrived in Memphis in 1849 and he was the first organist at St. Peter's Catholic Church and taught music at St. Agnes Academy. Boniface Handwerker died with many other Memphians when the steamboat Bulletin II exploded on the Mississippi River in 1855. The family stayed in Memphis and over the years made contributions to the community in medicine, religion, music and science. Professor John George Handwerker, Boniface's eldest son, survived the Bulletin II tragedy and became the first conductor of the Memphis Symphonetta. John Valentine Handwerker became a pharmacist and maintained his practice and pharmacy without interruption during both yellow fever epidemics. He later became a doctor which was common for pharmacists at that time.

When he died in 1928, he was the oldest practicing doctor in Memphis. Dr. John V. Handwerker built the Playhouse for his daughters on Jackson Avenue in 1890. The inspiration for the design was taken from a nearby stable and at the time only included the front 100 square foot portion of the current structure. The original structure included Queen Anne style trim, the turret with stained glass and a red tin roof. The Playhouse was later moved to North Thomas Street and was expanded in 1907, and again in 1927, to include space for an office for Dr. Handwerker after he retired and closed his pharmacy on Main Street.

The Playhouse was donated to the Association for the Preservation of Tennessee Antiquities by the Handwerker family in 1972 and relocated to Victorian Village by the Memphis Board of Realtors the same year. Before it was moved to the James Lee property, the building was selected by the Historic American Building Survey in West Tennessee to have architectural drawings of it made and placed in the National Architectural Archive in the Library of Congress. This recognition places the Playhouse on the National Register of Historic Places. The playhouse has



MEMPHIS HERITAGE KEYSTONE

The Keystone is a publication of Memphis Heritage, Inc. Memphis Heritage's mission is to stimulate an appreciation for our heritage and preserve historic places. Our offices are at 2282 Madison Avenue. You can write to us or call us at 901-272-2727. Or visit our website at www.memphisheritage.org.

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recently been restored to its original white and red color scheme. The Playhouse hosts weddings, birthdays and numerous other events. The Woodruff-Fontaine House Museum including carriage houses, Helen Pigeon playhouse and the Handwerker cottage is maintained by the Memphis Chapter of the Association for the Preservation of Tennessee. Antiquities.

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The Zoo We knew

I recently had occasion to look for some Memphis Zoo history to verify data I needed to write an article about it. To my surprise any history of the Zoo in Overton Park is almost nonexistent. It opened between 1904 and 1906 with 23 cages of animals. Other than that there is little illuminating information for public consumption. I worked at the Zoo over 60 years ago and have lots of memories. To reinforce my own recollections I called on an old friend, Donne Walden, to help me construct some concept of the 1950's-60's Zoo. He had worked with me and began his tenure there even longer ago than I did – March 1, 1950. The Zoo was at that time known as the largest FREE ZOO in the United States. Memphian Abe Plough of Plough Incorporated, made a large donation each year to make improvements and to keep the zoo free.

Between the two of us we came up with some interesting stories about people, animals, and others happenings during our decade of working at the Zoo. I began working there shortly before my tenth birthday in the spring of 1953. My job, on weekends only, was to rent baby strollers to the public (I was the first person to be hired for that duty). They rented for fifty cents per day. The customer had only to sign a log with a name and address and the check-out time. As the day progressed I'd enter the return time of each buggy and keep the miniature vehicles wiped clean. That was quite a responsibility for a nine-year-old. Unfortunately, we were not as germ conscious then as we are today so the hygiene applied to the strollers was pretty rudimentary.

Donne, in the meantime was the Zoo's photographer, taking pictures in an enclosed building (formerly a popcorn stand) and developing the prints in one minute. The snapshots cost a quarter. The untold thousands of pictures taken and preserved at that photo booth is amazing to consider. Almost half the people from the Memphis area remember and/or have pictures that were taken there. They remain unfazed to this day; they just do not fade.

We vividly recall the free circus that commenced at 2:30 each afternoon. In the 50's the ringmaster was Tommy O'Brien, with a history at Cole Brothers Circus, and his wife, Marguerite, who put on a forty-five minute spectacular for a gallery full of smiling and cheering kids and adults. There were elephants, horses, ponies, dogs, a camel, as well as human acrobats and aerialists. Clowns added to the fun. Tommy was a master animal handler and in his silk shirt and whip, was a commanding presence. . I never hear a recording of



Donne Walden in the very first picture taken at the Photo Stand at the Zoo –March 1, 1950

Artie Shaw's song "Frenesi" that I don't think of the good old days watching that circus. The record was played as part of the show each day and the melody could be heard all over the park.

When he was not doing a circus performance, Tommy was in charge of a pony track, providing rides around a quarter-mile track for kids at ten cents a ride. He was also one of the Zoo's managers. Tommy took a baby guerilla home with him for several weeks one time to be sure it received proper feeding during the night. The Zoo's then Director, Mr. Nick Melroy, brought the circus to the Zoo in the late 1940's. He had been a lion tamer at Cole's and a tattoo artist. Word is Melroy practiced the art of tattooing at the Zoo, informally, in the house on the grounds where he lived. The housing comprised part of his compensation as Director.

Getting back to the picture booth for a minute, we used a direct-positive camera that reversed everything it saw. Therefore, the backdrop had to be printed backward. We used a scene showing the original front gates of the Zoo with the current date thumb-tacked in every day. Today, that scene has been recreated near the front entrance to the Zoo. A number of the pictures taken in the 50's and 60's are posted there. Donne took most of them and, starting in 1954, I, too, was a photographer. Donne recalls the original backdrop

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was some rocks and water with the words, "Memphis Zoo" as its title. Donne says an old man named Smith painted the scene and keeping a bottle of whiskey in the dark room for frequent nips. Perhaps painting scenes in reverse was easier when he was not totally sober. He later painted the new scene with the Zoo gates. We added dates to the pictures in the early 1950's. That was an ingenious idea in those days that sold a lot of pictures.

I cannot leave out our boss, Charlie R. Bell, the one who innovated the idea of a picture stand and who was responsible for the strollers as well. Over the years he owned or managed rides, carnival games, and other enterprises at the Zoo, Fairgrounds, Riverside Park, and elsewhere. He referred to himself as a "Concessionaire". He was much more than that. He had the gift of gab and could sell anything to anyone. He talked the patrons of the picture stand into multiple copies (at a quarter apiece) of the pictures he sold. "How about one with the grandmothers?" he'd croak. Some of those folks spent five or ten dollars on pictures and souvenir frames (ten or twenty-five cents each). They went away happy with their purchases and often came back before leaving for more pictures. Sometimes the take for the day was about one-hundred dollars. That was a fortune in the 1950's.

Part 2 to follow in the New Year!



Charlie Lambert, Suzanne McDonald (holding a chimp) and Donne Walden
At Zoo in 1950's

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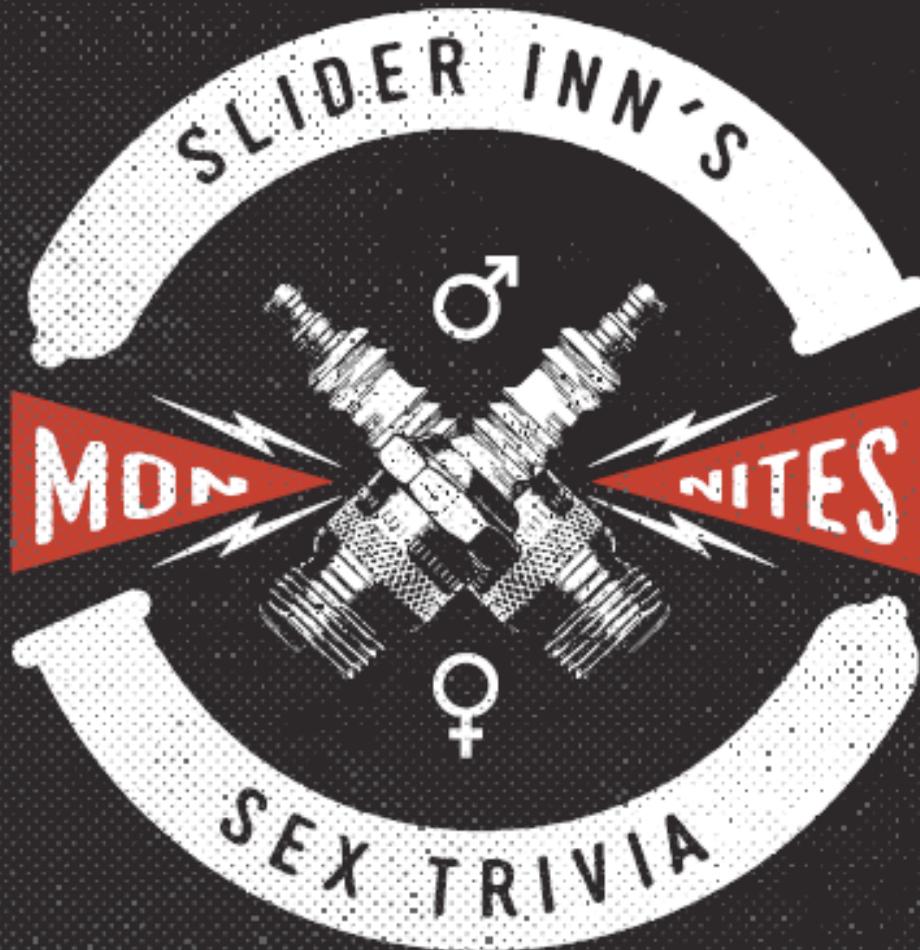
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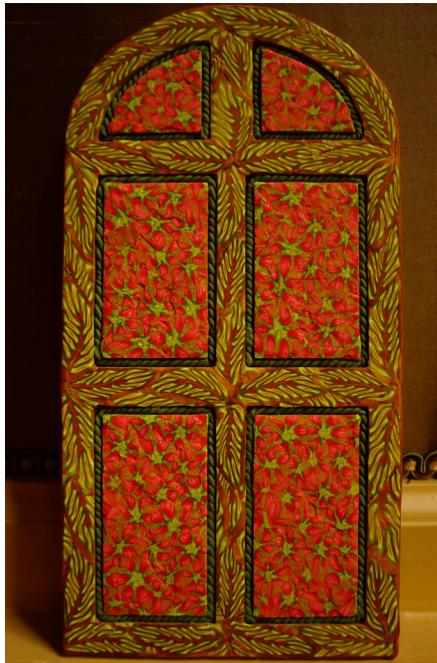
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ADAPT-A-DOOR 2014 PREVIEW



"Garden Door"
Lisa Tribo



"Memphis Entertainment Table"
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Memphis Heritage's Annual Holiday and 2015 Calendar Release Party Thursday, December 11

Our annual party welcoming the holiday season and the unveiling the 2015 Memphis Heritage Calendar will once again be held in partnership with the local US Green Build Council's Holiday event. This fun party will be held on Thursday, December 11th at Howard Hall from 6:00 till 8:00pm. This will be our 4th year to celebrate with USGBC. DRUM ROLL.....We are very excited to announce that our 2015 MHI calendar honors the long and successful 100 year history of Malco

Theatres, Inc., a true historic part of Memphis and the regional entertainment scene. Our 2015 Calendars are available for purchase at the following retailers: The Arcade Restaurant, Diane's Gifts, Burkes Books, Brooks Art Museum Gift Shop, Maggie's Pharm, Dabbles, The Art Center, Dixon Gallery Gift Shop. Current members of Memphis Heritage are invited to this annual party where they can pick up their free 2015 calendar. If you are not a current member of MHI you can join or rejoin at the door. This is a great opportunity to bring friends and family so they can become members of MHI and join in the festivities.



Available now - 2015 Calendar
honoring MALCO THEATRES

Updates on Memphis Landmarks

ROWLAND DARNELL HOUSE (AKA 19th Century Club)

In early September the plaintiffs dropped their appeal of the case involving the January 2013 sale of the historic Rowland Darnell Home. Most involved thought that the next step would certainly be demolition, the original plan by the owners that purchased the historic property at auction. Much to our surprise the owners made the decision to restore and reuse the property. We are thrilled and grateful and have offered our support as the owners move forward with this exciting restoration project. Archer Custom Builders will do the work. We are very grateful to all of those who generously donated money that paid for all court fees and costs that ultimately lead to this happy ending.

ASHLAR HALL

After it was revealed thru the media that Robert (Prince Mongo) Hodges had quitclaimed Ashlar Hall to Kenny Medlin, Environmental Court determined after several months that Mr. Medlin would be given the opportunity to continue working on plans to restore the building. Work has been done on the property site, garbage has been cleaned

up, etc. The latest information we have about the potential use of the property relates to a program that would work to help reestablish veterans when they return from service to civilian life. Find Save Ashlar Hall group on Facebook.

TN BREWERY

Memphis Heritage coordinated a community meeting on Jan. 23 at Howard Hall to brainstorm and gain feedback from anyone interested in the future of the landmark TN Brewery. One popular idea was to create a sort of buzz around the property by working on a "pre-revitalization" concept; using the property for a month long use similar to Pop Up businesses and The Brewery Untapped was born. Through this exciting and successful program potential buyers gained interest in the reuse of the historic property. At this time a group lead by local businessman Billy Orgel are planning on closing on the property in the next month. For the latest information and to follow the ongoing story go to the Facebook group, Save the TN Brewery.

Memphis Heritage will continue to work closely with the owners and any person or group(s) that are interested in joining

the cause to celebrate our community's historic treasures and create plans that will work to prevent demolition on these irreplaceable icons. Contact us by calling 901-272-2727 or email info@memphisheritage.org.

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There will be plenty of activities for the entire family to enjoy throughout the day and the event is free to all.

Saturday December 13th : 10am to 7pm

Sunday December 14th : 1pm to 5pm

For more information, contact the Covington - Tipton County Chamber of Commerce, 901-476-9727 or visit www.covington-tiptoncochamber.com
find us on facebook Dickens Christmas Covington Tennessee

Dickens Christmas on the Square

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November 7th: 10am - 6pm

November 8th: 10am - 5pm

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Tennessee Brewery	495 Tennessee St	\$1,200,000	60,000	1890	Romanesque Revival	UNDER CONTRACT
Old Memphis Humane Shelter	463 N. Front St	\$ 950,000	6,771	1936	Art Deco	Garland Co. (901)527-7779
Ashlar Hall	1397 Central	owned by Urban Renaissance Initiative run by Kenny Medlin. Trial period currently running to determine whether this new owner will have the capacity to restore the property so that it can be repurposed				
Clayborne Temple	294 Hernando St	\$ 600,000	20,000	1891	Romanesque Revival	Sam Mitchell, KW Commercial (901)569-2307
Bradford-Maywell House	648 Poplar Ave	\$ 159,000	3,785	1859	Federal with Italianate details	James Rasberry, Rasberry CRE (901)722-8234
Elam Homestead	1428 Fox St.	\$ 31,000,	3,600	1840	Log house	(foreclosure) MOVOTO R.E. (888) 766-8686

The Memphis Heritage Advocacy Committee is looking forward to working with property owners, agents and buyers. Our goal is to act as liaison with all interested parties in order to prevent inappropriate demolitions and work toward proposals that will be favorable to historic properties. If you would like to promote your historic property for sale via The Keystone, or are interested in a property from our listings, please contact our office at 901.272.2727.