



# News

*The oldest statewide historic preservation organization in Tennessee*

ASSOCIATION FOR THE PRESERVATION OF TENNESSEE ANTIQUITIES

FALL/WINTER 2013

## APTA Marking Program Grows

In 2008 Bob Notestine, our current Past President, presented the concept of an APTA historical marking program for recognizing significant historical properties in Tennessee. "Since we started the APTA Marker Program, the APTA has approved 20 properties as being historically significant in our state," said Bob, Chair of the APTA Marking Committee.

To be designated an historic site in Tennessee, a property must meet the following criteria: Embody distinctive characteristics or construction type and period prior to 1940; be associated with events that have made a significant contribution to Tennessee history; or be associated with the lives of persons significant in Tennessee history.

This year has seen more markings than ever. The **Holy Innocents Cemetery** and the **C.D Wilson** home in Arlington received their markers on a beautiful day in April. A celebratory luncheon was held afterwards with cupcakes decorated with a photo of the Wilson home. Also in April, the APTA recognized the historical significance of **Fiddlers Grove** in Wilson County. This property consists of several types of historical structures providing visitors with a broad view of the life early Tennesseans.

The **M.D. Anderson House** in Jackson was recognized in an early morning dedication in October. Built in 1870, the Anderson family home at 111 East Orleans Street served



*M.D. Anderson House*

as the birthplace of Monroe Dunaway "M.D." Anderson on June 29, 1873. In 1936, Anderson created a charitable trust, which upon his death in 1939 became the largest charitable trust in Texas history. Two years later, the M.D. Anderson Foundation used the trust to establish and fund the M.D. Anderson Cancer Center as part of the University of Texas System. In November, the **Fite-Fessenden Home** in

*continued on p. 2*



## President's Message

*by Frank McMeen, APTA President*

"Four score and seven years ago...oops...wrong President's message!

Three score and three years ago the founders of APTA began what is today Tennessee's oldest historic preservation organization. With such impressive homes as Belle Meade, the Glenmore Mansion, the Ramsey House, Woodruff-Fontaine and eleven other impressive structures and locations, we are an absolutely amazing organization.

Being 63 years old this year, we need to begin to plan for the next 63 years. As a professional fundraiser with more than 30 years behind me, there are two kinds of nonprofit organizations: (1) struggling and (2) endowed. Endowed organizations do not worry as much about growth or capital improvements.

More than two decades ago the APTA leadership established an endowment that has now surpassed \$531,000. While that seems like a lot of money—in the nonprofit world an endowment with 15 historic homes—that's a good beginning.

The West Tennessee Healthcare Foundation (where APTA funds are managed) presents the "Christmas Challenge" during the month of December. Donations to the WTH Foundation's APTA endowment are matched. With every \$3.00 you give to the APTA's endowment, the West Tennessee Healthcare Foundation will match it with \$1.00. Your \$30 gift becomes \$40. A \$300 gift to the APTA Endowment becomes \$400. A \$3,000 donation becomes \$4,000. A gift of \$30,000 becomes \$40,000. This is an amazing opportunity.

Start making your plans to make a gift to the APTA endowment during the month of December. You can send a gift in honor or memory of a loved one or friend. Your gift, no matter how large or small, will grow by a third! I don't know when any investment has received a 30% growth rate—CD's certainly don't do it. The stock market doesn't do it. Well, it is happening in the month of December with the West Tennessee Healthcare Foundation. Join with me in making a end-of-the-year donation to the APTA and getting my gift matched!



Visit us at [www.theapta.org](http://www.theapta.org)

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## Executive Director's Message

by Elliott McNiel, CAE, Executive Director

After an exhaustive process, the APTA has chosen National Trust Insurance Services, LLC to provide comprehensive insurance coverage to our Chapters. NTIS, LLC is an affiliated entity of the National Trust For Historic Preservation. The APTA Board of Directors made the decision last year that in order to ensure the proper coverage for each property a comprehensive policy including all chapters was worth investigating. Standard policies often do not cover the features that make historic properties special.

National Trust Insurance Services, LLC is the nation's leading distributor of insurance products specifically designed for historic properties. Their cornerstone product, Historic Property Replacement Cost Coverage, covers the cost to repair or replace with the same materials, workmanship and architectural features as the original building. The board appreciated the company's goal to "secure a comprehensive policy that will consider a number of factors, including proper valuation of a historic property, coverage that pays for restoration, and replacement cost coverage for furnishings such as antiques, oriental rugs, or fine arts."

It is vital that all the APTA properties are protected and preserved. The board is pleased to be able to take this step in ensuring that our properties will be preserved for generations to come.

### Marking Program, cont.



*Fite-Fessenden Home*

Lebanon was rewarded their marker. The home, now a museum, is a wonderful example of the simple Federal design and detailing. In December the APTA will mark its final property, **Blowing Cave Mill** in Sevieville. This will be the APTA's first mill to be selected for marking. The Blowing Cave Mill, built with native pine and river rock from the area, is an excellent example of the flour and corn mills constructed in the nineteenth century and one of the few remaining in Tennessee.

The application for the APTA historical marker may be found on our website at [www.theapta.org](http://www.theapta.org). Completed applications and photos must be submitted electronically to [apta1951@bellsouth.net](mailto:apta1951@bellsouth.net).

## MAURY COUNTY CHAPTER

by Adam Southern, President

The **Athenaeum Rectory** recently celebrated the arrival of a new artifact—a harp owned by Sallie Ward Smith-Gustine, daughter of Reverend and Mrs. Smith, the founders of the Athenaeum. Sallie was a very accomplished harpist, even playing her harp (the one we now own) for President James K. Polk. For her music, the President gave her a silver card case that we also have in our collection at the Athenaeum.

The harp was unveiled by the chapter president with the assistance of Linda Gupton, who gave a short history of the harp. Over 100 people came to view the new addition to the Athenaeum. An open house was held the weekend of the unveiling, offering free tours and a scavenger hunt.

In October, the Athenaeum hosted their annual **Ghostly Dinners**. During these events, staff and volunteers in period mourning clothing demonstrate and explain the mourning customs of the Antebellum South. Attendees are fed a meal similar to what mourners would have eaten following the burial of a loved one. Following the meal, ghost stories from the Athenaeum and Columbia's downtown are told.

Work is also underway for the annual "**Maury Christmas**" homes tour. This year, beautiful Skipwith Plantation, the Athenaeum, Elm Springs, the James K. Polk Home, and many others will be open to the public. Tickets are \$30.

For more information about any of our programs or events, please visit our website, [www.athenaeumrectory.com](http://www.athenaeumrectory.com).

# News from the APTA Chapters

## ARLINGTON CHAPTER

by Phyllis Kennedy, President, Arlington Chapter

The 2013-2014 year for the Arlington Chapter began with our annual **Independence Day Celebration** at Hughes-College Hill Park. Decked out in their red, white, and blue, children participated in the Children's Parade and families dressed for the Most Patriotic Family contest. All enjoyed music, popsicles, face painting, a photo booth, watermelon, complete with a seed-spitting challenge, and signing the Declaration of Independence with a feather pen.

The **Rachel H. K. Burrow Museum** was opened on the third Saturday (10am-4pm) of July through October with new exhibits each month. "Summertime in Arlington" was featured in July and August and included displays of old swimsuits, postcards, games, photos of local summer activities, and fishing tackle. In August, visitors to the Museum enjoyed a special "Elvis is in the Vault" exhibit with Elvis memorabilia from residents of Arlington. Sewing and canning displays were featured in September and October. Exhibits in the vault were "Processing Numbers" including calculators, computer cards, floppy disks, a cash register, and ledger books for September and "Halloween" displaying items from Halloween of yesteryear, for October. The Museum showcases permanent exhibits on the history of the building and the Town of Arlington and of a 1940s kitchen; new (temporary) exhibits are featured during Arlington in April, on third Saturday (10am-4pm) May-October, and on Parade Day in December.



Other Chapter activities included a very successful outdoor **Chili Supper** at the Blacksmith Shop. On October 19, our **Blacksmith Shop** was open with blacksmithing demonstrations by Bill Perry. Blacksmithing will be demonstrated again at this site on December 7.

Our **Historic Post Office** will be open on **November 10**, with a special exhibit honoring veterans of our community, past and present. Boards signed by veterans in or visiting our community will be on display.

For December, the Arlington Chapter will decorate the **Rachel H. K. Burrow Museum, Historic Post Office, Blacksmith Shop, and Harrell Farm Log Cabin** for the holiday season. Decorations on the Rachel H. K. Burrow Museum will be reminiscent of the 1950s with a theme of "A Christmas Story in Arlington." On December 7, the interior of the Museum will feature a special Christmas exhibit.

In addition to having our sites open, the Arlington Chapter will be sponsoring a number of events in 2014. These include our annual Memorial Day Service in May at the Arlington Cemetery, Membership Breakfast in June, and Independence Day Celebration on July 4 at Hughes-College Hill Park, and Chili Supper at the Blacksmith Shop in September. We also give special tours of our sites during the year by appointment.

## KNOXVILLE CHAPTER

### Historic Ramsey House Fall Events

by Judy LaRose, Executive Director

**September 21: Annual Country Market** – A day of fun and great shopping for the whole family! There were crafters, antiques dealers, organic produce, grass-fed beef, fall plants, dried flowers, kettle corn, old fashioned roasted peanuts, slow-churned ice cream and fresh fruit cobblers, as well as Mrs. Ramsey's Kitchen where you could get a hearty lunch including our incredible Wallace Barbecue. For the kids there were horse-drawn wagon rides to the pumpkin patch, face painting and more.

**October 22: A Haunting at Ramsey** – Thrills and chills were the order this spook-filled night when Jennifer Alexander of Bluemoon Productions and her friends from Freight Works come to occupy the Ramsey House and grounds. Celebrities and storytellers shared delightful frights as they relayed their ghost tales. In the Visitor's Center votes were cast for the favorite Halloween decorated cake. Dr. William Bass was on hand to sign his latest books and vendors sold their Halloween fare. No one went hungry as Cindy's Concessions was on hand with great food, and s'more packets to roast were on sale by the campfire to satisfy any sweet tooth.

**December 1-5: Enchanted Holiday Dinners** – For the first time Historic Ramsey House will be opening its doors to private parties of up to 10 people in the dining room that is furnished in period furniture. The home will be dressed in its holiday best, decorated with natural greenery, fresh fruit and nuts. The catered affair will be served by candlelight. A costumed docent will greet the guests at the door and give our guests interesting stories and history on the house and the family that was one of the founding families of Knoxville and made so many great contributions to the East Tennessee area. Please call Historic Ramsey House for more information on pricing and times, 865-546-0745.

**December 7: Wreath Making Workshop** – One of our most popular events is our Natural Wreath Making Workshop. Many come back to go home with a new wreath every year. Twelve noon starts the social with holiday cookies and hot mulled cider and the meeting of new friends. The class starts promptly at 1:00 p.m. You need to bring garden gloves and a pair of hand-held pruning shears; everything else will be provided.

**December 8: Annual Candlelight Tour** – Come and visit this beautifully decorated 1797 home as it would have been during the holidays. The home will be awash with candlelight and fresh evergreen, colorful fruit and nuts. Start your visit at the Visitor's Center with holiday treats and music. There is no charge for this event. Donations will be gratefully accepted.

## News from the APTA Chapters

### BELLE MEADE CHAPTER

#### *100 years of Christmas at Belle Meade Plantation*

*by John Lamb, Curator of Collections*

Telling the stories of Belle Meade and Christmas over a period of 100 years can be quite a daunting task, but we are up for the challenge. This holiday season, the rooms in the Belle Meade Mansion will serve as the backdrop for the interpretation of the history of the celebration of Christmas from 1853, the year the Belle Meade Mansion was completed, until 1953, when the Belle Meade opened as a museum.

In the 1850s, Christmas was a holiday many Americans simply ignored or celebrated in a very different way compared to what we know of modern Christmas. In the plantation South, Christmas was a time for planters to relax after the year's harvest. They entertained friends and family throughout December. Grand feasts were held at Christmas, and on many farms guns and firecrackers were set off with wild abandon. Enslaved people were given time off to be with their families, and big celebrations were held at the slave quarters with music, dancing, drinking, and feasting. Many planter families had no Christmas trees, lavish decorations, or store-bought presents wrapped in festive paper. After the Civil War, all that would change.

By the 1880s and 1890s, Southerners had begun to accept new ideas in the celebrating of Christmas. Shops throughout Nashville began to sell elaborate holiday decorations imported from Europe. Many shop owners placed ads in the Nashville newspapers for appropriate Christmas gifts for ladies, gentlemen, and especially children. Many ads contained images of French porcelain baby dolls, hide-covered hobbyhorses, and child-sized carriages and furniture. Gone were the days of exchanging small homemade gifts at Christmas. Southerners began to reap the benefits of industrialization and mass production.

At the dawn of the 20th century, many families had elaborate Christmas trees, festive holiday parties, and they exchanged expensive store-bought gifts. By the 1920s, Christmas trees boasted new electric lights, the old-fashioned red poinsettia turned pink, and Christmas carols were played over the radio in many living rooms.

During the years of the Great Depression and two world wars, Southerners continued celebrating Christmas even though times were hard. Christmas trees were a little sparser in the 1930s, and during the Second World War Americans rationed their metal and Christmas trees were seen with no electric lights, glass ornaments with no metallic silvering, and brand new plastic ornaments from Japan graced evergreen boughs.

By 1953, when the Belle Meade Mansion opened for public tours, members of the APTA decorated the mansion in the old antebellum style of the 1850s with simple greens on mantles, glowing candles, and festive music from the piano. By 1953, the celebration of Christmas came full circle at Belle Meade.

Come and visit Belle Meade this holiday season and experience 100 years of Christmas.



### BUCHANAN LOG HOUSE CHAPTER

In many of our endeavors, we have enjoyed a fun and successful past few months. Even though it rained on our day, the annual **Fish Fry & Silent Auction** enjoyed their most successful year. The Addison Museum, renovated last year, was outfitted with its HVAC system. This completes the work on the "structure"; we now are ready to begin acquiring appropriate furnishing for the 1840-1860 museum. In June, finally a new roof was installed on the Buchanan Log House.

A new venture for us was a **BBQ & Bluegrass Music Event** with barbecue provided by Bar-B-Cutie, Donelson, and bluegrass music provided by five bluegrass bands: Johnny Campbell & The Bluegrass Drifters (pictured); Colin O'Brien (fiddle and banjo and dancing—a real entertaining Irishman); Roland White and his wife (he's played with many famous groups); and Chris Carter and his group, plus two additional groups—a really fun time was had.



We continue to be involved with our community organizations. Currently, we serve on three committees for the Donelson-Hermitage Chamber of Commerce, and our Chapter president chairs one Chamber Committee. We have two Board members enrolled in the M-3 Leadership-Donelson Class this term; it's made up of others from our area and is a great opportunity for networking. (We had one Board member graduate last term.)

The annual **Folk Festival** took place in September, with Friday for school groups and Saturday for family participation. The Folk Festival continues to grow a little each year. The **19th Alabama Civilian Corps** set up an encampment a couple of days prior to the Folk Festival and remained on site, demonstrating their way of life throughout the festival. October 12 found Buchanan descendants and friends of Buchanan descendants on site to learn about the history and genealogy of the Buchanans, about the value of DNA in documenting genealogy, to share stories and information.

In late November, Mrs. Kelli Nolf Chilers, a professional interior designer, will decorate our Buchanan Log House, inside and outside, for the holidays in the way it would have been decorated in the time of the Buchanans, 1800-1840. It will be a perfect time to visit the Log House. Our annual Holiday Open House is scheduled for Sunday afternoon, December 8.

# News from the APTA Chapters

## HARDEMAN COUNTY CHAPTER

by Ken Savage, APTA Hardeman Co. Chapter, President

The Hardeman County Chapter held its **39th Annual Historic Home Tour** in conjunction this year with the Hardeman County Spring Festival. This event in Bolivar kicked off the Music on the Square that runs every Friday through October. This event was created by our local APTA chapter in 2008. This summer, **The Little Courthouse Museum** partnered with Blue Star Museum organization to bring more veterans and their families to our sites by offering free admissions to active duty service members. The program was successful.

This fall will bring more festivals in Hardeman County. On October 12 the **Ames Plantation** hosted their **Sixteenth Annual Heritage Festival**. This unique festival pleased everyone from the avid history buff to those with an appreciation of the diverse folk art of our past. Over 150 folk artists, demonstrators, reenactors, and musicians provided a day of entertainment and education unlike any in the area. It is like turning the clock back the 1850. APTA was represented at the festival.

October 12 was the **Hardeman County Fall Festival**. The Little Courthouse Museum opened and a special "Alamo" exhibit was sponsored by APTA. Not too many people connect Hardeman County to the Alamo, but Susanna Wilkerson married Almaron Dickinson in Hardeman County when she was just 15, on May 24, 1829, and two years later the couple moved to the Mexican province of Texas. Susanna Dickinson was one of two American survivors of the 1836 Battle of the Alamo during the Texas Revolution. The second survivor was her infant daughter.

Christmastime is always a special time at **The Pillars**. Our annual open house for members and the public will be on **December 7**. A walking tour and carriage tours of our three historic districts is also planned for that day.

Plan your next getaway to Hardeman County and Bolivar, for great music, food and maybe a little history lesson in one of the most historic towns in West Tennessee.

**Come to the Hardeman County Music Festival**  
Music, BBQ, Crafts & more on the Courthouse Square Bolivar, TN  
October 18 & 19

**APTA**  
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**Little Courthouse Museum**  
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Follow us on Facebook "The Pillars & Little Courthouse" online: [www.thepillars.com](http://www.thepillars.com)

## RUTHERFORD COUNTY CHAPTER

by Denise Carlton, President

When you imagine the iconic rural churches of the Southern Bible Belt, you envision a postcard picture much like the **Fosterville Church of Christ**, located at 11649 Fosterville Bell Buckle Road, at the southernmost edge of Rutherford County. As fitting, this church sits in a small historical village at the foot of a beautiful row of high hills, the largest called "Old Soap Stone." The exact date of the settlement is not known, but old rock fences are abundant. It carries the name given in 1820 to honor John Foster who established the first post office and wagon train service. A charter was granted in 1831 to build the first turnpike in Rutherford County to run from Nashville, Murfreesboro to Shelbyville. The Tennessee Gazette in 1834 lists the towns in Rutherford County as Jefferson, Readyville, Murfreesboro, Milton and Fosterville. By 1842, the turnpike and gatehouses were in place near Fosterville. The railroad came in the early 1850s and kids would sit on top of the surrounding hills to watch the railroad smokestacks of the trains coming from Murfreesboro to Christiana to Fosterville and out of sight to Bell Buckle.



The congregation began meeting in 1867, and the building came with a donation of land from Harb Gilmore. Built in 1886, it is rare for a Church of Christ building of this time period to be a wooden structure with so many unique design elements, including the steeple with a cross and the steeple window in the shape of a wagon wheel, with Masonic symbols found inside and the positioning of the structure. E. A. Elam, longtime president of Lipscomb University and a descendant of the community, preached the dedication service in 1889. The church survived tornadoes in 1890 and in 1923; the latter one devastated the surrounding railroad community and killed one of the prominent founding elders. The community rebuilt and the current minister, Jeff Adcock, is the ninth generation of his family to serve at this church.

The Rutherford County Chapter replaced an aging sign, previously placed by the APTA in 1986, honoring the church's 100th anniversary, with a refurbished historical marker. On Sunday afternoon, July 14, 2013, we joined in fellowship with the church membership and the Rutherford County Historical Society for a Fish Fry, made possible by Bubba Woodfin, cooked by Craig Lynch and trimmings provided by members and guests. There was a large crowd, plenty of food, historical artifacts on display, memories shared and the story of the recent restoration on the historic church. It was a wonderful day of sharing and great to see people proud of their building and preserving their heritage.

The Rutherford County Chapter is currently looking for new application for properties to be considered for our popular green and hand-forged sign that designates our historical and architectural interesting properties countywide. Members and their guests are sent invitations to marking of the properties with a reception, tour and history on Sunday afternoons, usually four times a year. Our annual luncheon meeting will be held in July. If you have a property and would like to submit an application for consideration or to become a member of our chapter, please contact Denise at 615-604-0401 or [carltondenise@gmail.com](mailto:carltondenise@gmail.com).

## Be Sure to Renew

Have you renewed your APTA membership? Our properties depend on the generosity of our members for support, and in return they offer their communities and visitors to our state a chance to relive Tennessee history. If you haven't renewed your membership, please do so today. So many fun and interesting events are happening, you don't want to miss them. The next time you renew your APTA membership, please remember to include your email address.

Special events at our properties  
can be found on our website:  
[www.theapta.org](http://www.theapta.org).



## MEMPHIS CHAPTER Woodruff-Fontaine House Museum

by A. J. Northrup, President

The air is still warm and sweet down by the river. But autumn has arrived! Memphians came out in full force for our annual **Mourning Memphis** exhibition that ran through November 3. We closed out the exhibition with our annual **Haunted Happenings** event. This year we added two additional events, **Supper for Dead Poets** and a **Mourning Tea**. One is an upscale Halloween party complete with a three-course supper and entertainment. The other is a membership-driven event featuring past president and director Jeanne Crawford speaking about the art of mourning.

Upcoming, after the coffin is carried out and the mourning is removed from mirrors... **Victorian Yuletide!** This is always a hit at the museum for membership and guests alike. Really, who doesn't love gloriously decorated trees and trim during the holidays? In the past years, we have themed each floor according to its function and decoration. The sheer bulk of trim we assemble is enough to make Santa gasp! Our plan this year is to create a bit of healthy competition among the membership. A member or group of members will draw a room to decorate as accurately as possible with authentic pieces. Attention to detail and history, not to mention holiday grandeur, will be some of the "team" goals in this project. We feel this is a great opportunity to build membership community and a tool to educate ourselves about our collective heritage, preservation of history, and personal holiday traditions. Pictures will be available on Facebook—be sure to take a peek.

Continuing, the plans to develop a brand new event site are coming along at a breakneck speed. A talented Memphis architect has been selected to help create the vision and assist in our plans. I can honestly say it has not been easy. The project is a true learning experience. Researching city documents and blueprints of the area and how the plumbing works has been eye opening to say the least...but, so rewarding! We can't wait to show it off! Construction will begin sometime mid-November and completed just before our first wedding in March!

**Mission Statement**  
The Association for the Preservation of Tennessee Antiquities (APTA) promotes and encourages active participation in the preservation of Tennessee's rich historic, cultural, architectural and archaeological heritage through restoration, education, advocacy and statewide cooperation.

ASSOCIATION FOR THE PRESERVATION

OF TENNESSEE ANTIQUITIES

APTA Headquarters, Belle Meade Mansion

110 Leake Avenue

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(615) 352-8247

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