

HISTORIC RESOURCE TASK FORCE
May 9, 2001 – 3:30 P.M.
BASEMENT CONFERENCE ROOM

1. Approval of Minutes
2. Status of Court Square Project
3. Charlottesville Tour Book Status
4. Discussion of New State Historic Markers
5. Discussion of Local Markers
6. Other Business

NOTE: You can park in the Market Street Parking Garage. Bring your ticket into the office with you to be stamped for two hours free.

**Historic Resources Task Force
Minutes
April 11, 2001
Basement Conference Room
3:30 p.m.**

Present:

Mark Beliles
Mary Hill Caperton
Winston Churchill Gooding
Rick Britton
Frances Fife

Others Present:

Brain DeLvecchio
Satyendra Singh Huja

The Minutes of March 14, 2001 were approved with the following changes, Lynn Heetderks was present and Sue Webber was the guest.

Mr. Huja reviewed the status of the Historic Court Square project, he commented that the archeological survey has been completed. As a result of this survey, adjustments have been made to the area near Park Street and the location of the newspaper boxes. Mr. Huja also commented that the project committee has met and agreed upon a design and now the consultants are working on the details for bid documents. They hope to have the bid out by late fall with the hope of construction to begin next spring. Mr. Huja also stated that Albemarle County has agreed to contribute \$250,000 and that we have requested a transfer of \$400,00 from the landscape island project. Mr. Huja commented that under the present funding we would be able to do the sidewalks on all four sides of the courthouse, crosswalks, under grounding of the utilities in front of the courthouse, as well as on the Park Street side and replacement of the retaining wall. If additional funds are available, we will do the sidewalks across the street especially on Park Street. The Albemarle County funds are to be used to make improvements on the County property. Mary Hill Caperton felt that we should do some research on grants for additional money to complete this project

Mr. Huja commented that the Mr. Garrett Smith has asked for \$2,250 additional funds for the layout cost. Mr. Smith's schedule is that they will finish the photography in April, editing in May and design in June. Mr. Britton stated that the current booklet would be 8,200 pages. It was the feeling of the committee that the booklet was too long and that the booklet should be made smaller and more manageable. Mr. Britton said that an extended version could be on the website. Mr. Beliles indicated that the Lexus group is waiting for specifications for printing.

There was a discussion of the state historic markers for the future. One, which was agreed upon, was a marker for Georgia O'Keefe on 1212 Wertland Street. There was also a discussion of a marker near the University Chapel dealing with the Union Occupation of Charlottesville.

Mr. Brian DeLVecchio stated that he would like to get suggestions of the Historic Resources Task Force as to a location of the markers. The locations that were discussed are near the University Chapel, Near Booker House and near The Corner.

Mr. Huja will investigate the installation of local historic markers. The Historic Resources Task Force Members distributed the descriptions for the future markers, which included First Baptist Church, Mount Zion Baptist Church, The University Corner, Vinegar Hill and Jackson Price Burley High School. (See attachments)

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m. The next meeting will be May 9, 2001.

JACKSON PRICE BURLEY HIGH SCHOOL

*Majestically among the hills
Neith' God's great azure sky,
Stands proudly with its arms outstretched
Our own dear Burley High*

Jackson Price Burley High School was built in 1950 by the J.W. Daniel's Construction Company. The school, Jackson Price Burley, is named after the distinguished educator, citizen and church worker, Mr. Jackson Price Burley. Burley was opened for classes in September 1951. Jackson P. Burley was a high school for sixteen years. During the period before this there were high schools for Blacks in Charlottesville and Albemarle County. The three schools, which existed before 1950, were Esmont High School, Jefferson High School and Albemarle Training School.

In 1948 the County School Board decided to unite the Black high school in Albemarle County and Charlottesville. The reason for uniting the schools was to provide better facilities. The Joint Committee for Control of Burley was the governing and the policy making board. This board also selected the site for the erection of the school. The Joint Committee secured the site from Mrs. Burley for the price of \$18,000. The seventeen acres is located on Rose Hill Drive.

During the first year of occupancy a total of 542 students enrolled. Twenty-six teachers, principal, Mr. Shaw, assistant principal, Mr. Smith, a secretary, two cafeteria workers, and six bus drivers served this group of students.

In 1952, Mr. Mobley became principal of Burley and served for seven years with Mr. Simmons as assistant principal. Mr. Al Scott served as principal for the last eight years of the school with Mr. Griffin as assistant principal.

The teachers making their mark at Burley over the next sixteen years were: Mrs. McCoy, Mrs. McCreary, Mrs. Faulkner, Mrs. Bryson, Mrs. Brown, and the secretary Mrs. Murray.

Jackson Price Burley High School was still young as an institution, yet the sixteen years still embraced the idea of education. Several of its departments, including the Fine Arts Program, the Science and Math Programs, the Athletic Teams, the Art Club, the Debate team, the Future Farmers of America Club, Chorus and many other areas, made a difference. Many of Burley's students went on to colleges, opened businesses and joined the world of work. They became great parents and took their place in society on every level.

Burley closed its door as a high school in June 1967.

Vinegar Hill

by Rick Britton

"Vinegar Hill"--bordered loosely by Preston Ave., West Main St., and Fourth St.--was one of downtown Charlottesville's first western neighborhoods. Established by Irish families in the early 1800s, and incorporated into Charlottesville in 1835, it was first called "Random Row" (perhaps because of the random way the houses were erected).

Some sources maintain that "Vinegar Hill" was named after a battle near Enniscorthy, Ireland (at which an agrarian revolt was crushed in 1798) and others that it referred to the illicit sale of whiskey here in liquor casks marked "vinegar." A rowdy part of town--where fracas often broke out between the patrons of rival taverns--during its early years "Vinegar Hill" was ruled by the O'Tooles, the O'Tracys, and the O'Donovans. Local tradition has it that National League pitcher Charlie Ferguson--a 4-time 20 game winner in the mid-1880s--was born and raised in this section of town.

African Americans first moved onto the "Hill" after the Civil War. Forty years later the neighborhood was predominantly black. From the 1920s to the early 1960s "Vinegar Hill" was Charlottesville's principal black business district--with furniture stores, restaurants, poolrooms, barbershops, cleaners, grocers, confectioners, second-hand clothiers, and drug stores--serving both black and white townspeople, as well as U.Va. students. Busy during the day, at night the "Hill" became the vibrant center of the black community's social life.

One of the area's institutions was Inge's Store at 333 West Main St. First opened for business in 1891, Inge's was a favorite meeting place and one of the few businesses that offered blacks rooms for the night. James P. Bibb, owner of Bibb's Fish Market, was known as "the Mayor of Vinegar Hill" in the neighborhood's waning years.

In 1960, noting the community's large number of substandard homes, the voters of Charlottesville decided to redevelop the 20-acre "Vinegar Hill." Because of a poll tax many of the neighborhood's residents were denied a say in their own future. In 1961 the housing authority began buying up properties and tearing them down. By March of 1965 one church, 30 businesses, and 158 families--140 of which were black--had been relocated. Today "Vinegar Hill" is just a memory.

The University "Corner" by Coy Barefoot & Rick Britton

"The Corner," wrote historian Virginius Dabney, has been the "rendezvous of students from time immemorial." In the early 1900s, "the Corner"--so-named by U.Va. students--referred to the sparse collection of stores and businesses at the intersection of University Ave. and the entrance to the University Grounds -- once literally just a corner. In the intervening 100 years the area has grown into a commercial district bustling with around-the-clock activity.

The blocks between 14th and Chancellor Streets still retain many memories of "the Corner's" early years. The C&O Railroad bridge--erected in 1901 when the intersection was dug out underneath the tracks--became known as the "Bridge of Scores" soon thereafter because it was covered with the results of U.Va. sporting events.

Chancellor's Drugstore was located at 1411-1415 University Ave. (built in 1914). The Corner Building (1914), at 1412 University Ave., once housed a post office, book store, clothing store, and tea room, making it Central Virginia's first "strip mall." Across the street the beautiful Senff Gateway--built by Henry Bacon who designed the Lincoln Memorial--was erected in 1915.

The Anderson Brothers Bookstore building (1891), 1415 University Ave., included two floors of student apartments upstairs. The sidewalk level held "The Corner's" most popular student bookstore--Anderson Bros., which closed in 1988--and a sporting goods business.

The alley behind "The Corner," once considered 15th St., was an after-class haven for students. It featured the University Billiard Parlor, opened in 1904 by ex-Marine Johnny LaRowe who later coached the University's boxing team, and the Kitch Inn diner (c. 1922) famous for its all-night waffle specials.

Lloyd's Rexall Drugstore operated at 1515 University Ave. (1927) from 1957-1993, and the University Cafeteria--the "Uni-Caf," at 1517 (1920)--was much-frequented from 1942-1983. Two of "The Corner's" institutions, however, are but a few doors away. The Virginian Restaurant, 1521 University Ave. (1923), is a U.Va. tradition, one of the oldest eateries in the city. Mincer's Pipe Shop opened at its 1527 address (1923) in 1954.

Tree-lined Elliewood Ave. is Charlottesville's liveliest dead-end street. Named in 1910 for Ellie Wood Page (1894-1986), whose mother ran a boarding house, Elliewood Ave. became a busy thoroughfare of restaurants and shops in the 1970s.

Mount Zion Baptist Church, 1867

The origin of Mount Zion is traced back to 1867. Although the founding fathers had roots in a white Baptist church that began earlier, they began meeting independently from house to house after the Civil War. An original frame structure was erected in 1867 and expanded several times. In 1878 lots were given to the church by Brother Samuel White on which the present structure was erected. Mount Zion is now listed in the Virginia Landmark Register June 19, 1991 and the National Register of Historical Places October 15, 1992.

The founding minister was Spotswood Jones. As of the end of the 20th century, the church had had twelve other ministers: S. W. Smith, Jesse Heardon, J. Francis Robinson, Royal Hardy, C. W. T. Barnes, S. W. Thurston, William Strassner, E. Lloyd Jemison, Herman H. Watts, Emmett Green, James Hamilton and Alvin Edwards. Mount Zion is also the mother of the following churches: Rose Hill Baptist, Ebenezer Baptist and Zion Union Baptist.

In the twentieth century the church has been influential in Charlottesville's history in the struggle for civil rights, hosting many prominent national speakers and leaders. Rev. Alvin Edwards has served as Mayor and chairman of the local Democratic Party.

First Baptist Church, 1863

Prior to the Civil War slaves and free blacks worshipped under segregated conditions in the balcony of the white Charlottesville Baptist Church founded in the 1820s. Led by Fairfax Taylor, a free black who had bought his freedom some time earlier, 800 members were given permission to separate from the parent church in 1863. Taylor was an outspoken leader for the rights of blacks during Reconstruction and also a licensed minister with the church,

The first black pastor was William Gibbons in 1868. As of the end of the 20th century, the church had had fifteen other ministers: W. J. Barnett, M. T. Lewis, Alexander Truatt, R. Alonzo Scott, L. B. Goodall, R. C. Quarles, L. A. Perkins, C. M. Long, C. L. Aiken, H. E. Williams, Benjamin Bunn, and Bruce Beard (three ministers before Gibbons were white until state laws were changed: John T. Randolph, James Fife, John W. George).

The original site of the church was the Delevan Hospital and so the church was first called Delevan Baptist Church. In 1868 they bought the property and it was eventually razed to make way for the present structure built in 1883. It became the First Colored Baptist Church of Charlottesville.

Many members have been prominent leaders in the community. Gibbon's wife Isabella was one of the first African-Americans to lead a public school in the city. Others such as Benjamin Tonsler, Nannie Cox Jackson, Virginia Murray, Mary Grier and Rebecca McGinnis were also influential leaders in education. Deacon George Inge was chairman of the local Republican Party in 1900 and frequent host of Booker T. Washington. Later in the 20th century its members served in leadership of the Democratic Party. Rev. Benjamin Bunn founded the local NAACP and worked tirelessly for desegregation.

CORRECTED

**Historic Resources Task Force
Minutes
March 14, 2001
Basement Conference Room
3:30 p.m.**

Present:

**Mark Beliles
Mary Hill Caperton
Winston Churchill Gooding
Rick Britton
Ben Ford
Lynn Heetderks**

Others Present:

Sue Webber

The meeting began at 3:30 p.m. The committee discussed the status of the Tour Book. **The Committee is still waiting to hear from the contact from at Lexis.** Mr. Britton acknowledged that it looks positive that Lexis will be interested. The committee will put together a budget and the format that they hope for. 5000 copies are planned for the first printing and. The money has been spent thus far on the graphic artist. Maps are very expensive to reproduce and the committee is still selecting photos.

There was an announcement of the April 4th dedication of the Vandergrift marker as well as the March 15th dedication of the Woolen Mills and General Hospital markers. The committee is still gathering text for additional local markers.

Sue Webber spoke to the committee about the concerns for the maintenance of The Maplewood Cemetery. The neighborhood is requesting the return of a full time maintenance person. There seemed to be less damage and matters were attended to right away when the maintenance person was there every day. The neighborhood is asking that the cemetery not be gated. Ms. Webber is going to meet with the officer who works the nightshift in that neighborhood. The officer can not drive into the cemetery and can only drive by the perimeter.

It was suggested that more activities such as neighborhood picnics and a festival would make more people aware of the treasure.

Ben Ford commented that it is an archeological site as well.

Lynn Heetderks commented that there are databases and records at the historical society. The possibility of an inexpensive map could be printed and distributed at the Historical Society, Visitors Center and other sites.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m. The next meeting will be April 11, 2001.