

Est. 1979

EAST POINT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

FALL 2015

President's Note

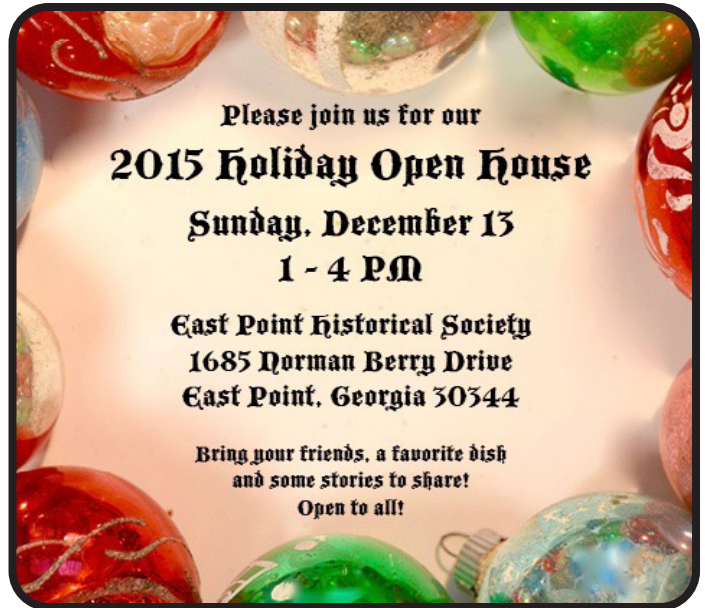
As we approach the end of yet another year we are hosting our annual Holiday Open House. This is our way of saying Thank You to our supporters, residents and friends. Details are found elsewhere in this newsletter.

We are increasingly receiving inquiries concerning facts and information about East Point. The Atlanta Journal-Constitution publishes a weekly column called "Actual Factual Georgia" wherein they attempt to answer questions sent in by readers. One question was "How did the City of East Point get its name?" The AJC reached out to us and we were able to supply concrete information as to how our name came out of the creation of the railroads. The AJC reporter used our information and his column was a tribute to our City. On another occasion we received a call regarding the location of "bank vaults" in the city. Seems a music production company is working on a music video to be shot inside a bank vault. We were able to provide eight or nine possible locations. We still have not heard the final outcome. More and more we receive inquiries regarding Hillcrest Cemetery. Weekly we are assisting families on confirming burials in Hillcrest as well as many times helping locate the actual burial plots.

The East Point Historical Society is the only public repository of information on our city's past, the only public records of our African-American community and the only source of information on local houses and buildings. All historical information on our Civic Block came from the Society. Most people don't realize that the Society is entirely supported by dues and donations. While we most graciously appreciate the fact the City of East Point provides our building and supporting utilities we must look after the day to day maintenance on the property. This extends from the simplest electrical or plumbing problems to larger more serious areas like heating and air conditioning. To preserve the artifacts, photos and files we have collected, we must have air conditioning, but our air conditioner was stolen. A new one is a vital need.

Individual donations of \$10 per person or \$15 for a household are our only source of revenue. We are registered with the IRS as a nonprofit, and all donations are legally tax deductible. In this newsletter you will find a form to include with your donation. Even more important, we need your time. Please volunteer whenever you can; any oral histories, family histories or family photos you may have would be especially welcome.

Charles Strickland - President, EPHS



East Washington Neighborhood Association Community Cleanup Campaign 2015

The East Washington Neighborhood Association hosted the greatest cleanup campaign ever on Saturday, July 11, 2015 organized by Mrs. Joan Warren and Mr. Charles Barlow, Neighborhood President. The community recognizes the strong need for us to come together and help to improve some of the conditions that have long plagued our area. There are an abundance of boarded-up houses, absentee landlords, run-down properties and just trash in and around certain areas in the East Washington Community. We decided to roll up our sleeves and tackle the problem full force.

Thanks to Major Tony Mabry of the EP Police Department and Karen Renee, EP City Council, Ward B At Large, for working with us. Also a special thanks to Mr. Thomas Calloway, President, Colonial Hill Neighborhood Association. The interest in this cleanup campaign extended outside of the East Point area to include Mr. Ernesto Bergeron, a developer interested in improving our community and other communities in and around the City of East Point.

Moving forward the East Washington community will plan monthly cleanups and everyone is invited to participate. We want to beautify our community, one street at a time and yes, we do have pride on the east side of the City of East Point. Great job!!!

Mr. Charles Barlow - Board Member, EPHS

East Point from 1500's to 1917

What we now know as East Point began as a trading path for the local Muskogean (Creek) Indians long before the first educated settlers of European ancestry arrived. This is important as these people wrote down what they saw instead of verbally transmitting the history to their descendants. Stone Age implements have been found in the Utoy Creek valley, whose tributaries begin at East Point, and the current site that is Fort McPherson.

The waters east of East Point flow into the Atlantic and west of East Point into the Gulf of Mexico. The ridge that was selected for the railroads to be built on is a mini continental divide. In the 1820s, Charlestonians built the first railroad in America. The original locomotive, the "Best Friend of Charleston", sits at the Norfolk Southern Regional Headquarters in downtown Atlanta. The State of Georgia's answer to the new technology of the early 1800s was the establishment of its own railroads to facilitate the movement of cargo. East Point was born as a rail line to the newly established areas of Alabama (formerly part of Georgia) with an Eastern and Western point of the line.

The next time we hear about the area known as East Point is in 1864 during the American Civil War. Three US Armies converged upon Atlanta, a major logistics hub in the south. A factory, the "Buggy Works", was in operation at East Point and produced horse drawn ambulances for use by the Army of the CSA.

In late July 1864, General Sherman, the Commanding General of the three US Armies besieging Atlanta, formed a plan to cut the railroad lines between East Point and Atlanta. East Point and the Utoy Creek valley that begins here played an important part in the siege of Atlanta.

On August 6, 1864, the Battle of Utoy Creek was fought by US Forces under General Schofield and the Army of Ohio and a portion of the Army of the Cumberland, in an attempt to break through the southern defenses along the Sand Town Road (now Cascade Road in SW Atlanta). 850 US Soldiers were killed in the two armies during the assault and over 1000 were wounded, with only three dozen Southern casualties. Several hundred captured Union troops were moved down the East Point Road (now Dodson Drive) to Sand Town (Campbellton) Road and then staged at East Point near the railroad before being imprisoned at Andersonville, GA.

Small CSA units, Adams' Brigade and the famous "Kentucky Orphan Brigades", were dispatched to prepare temporary defensive works west of the railroads along the ridge where the USAR Center now is, overlooking Hillcrest Cemetery at the crest of the ridge.

Later, during the Siege of Atlanta in August 1864, following the Battle of Utoy Creek, US General John

M. Schofield's XXIII Army Corps faced CSA troops of Hardee's Corps at East Point. The Hopewell Methodist Church established on the Connolly Farm between Connolly Drive and Headland existed until the siege. Union artillery targeted the steeple on the high ground west of the current Plantation Drive, as Confederate troops occupied the ground east of Utoy Creek. The church burned and was later relocated to its current site in downtown East Point. Southern defenses overlooked the Connolly Saw Mill (Site of US Hwy 166) and the Connolly Grist Mill, and stretched in a Southeastern direction crossing the current Headland Drive at the Water Reservoir at Headland and Delowe Drives. An advanced trench line existed on Delowe (until destroyed last summer), at the former Woman's Club and Connolly Hills School on Delowe Drive.

There was a main line of entrenchments west of Kimmeridge Drive that ran to the current Ben Hill Road. These defenses continued across Taylor Ave near the cell phone tower and crossed the railroad near Lyle Avenue above Woodward Academy, the current College Park Cemetery, the current Atlanta Hartsfield Jackson Airport, and ended at Lees Mill in College Park near Georgia State Highway 85.

Union entrenchments followed the East Point Road (now Dodson Drive) from Cascade Heights to the Atlanta Christian College, Point University site. After the fall of Atlanta, the Union Army of Tennessee occupied entrenchments east of the railroad near Newels Recycling and Jefferson Park, extending to the high ground along South Fulton Hospital in a semicircular position. These works were attacked by a unit of the Georgia Militia in October 1864.

After Reconstruction, US Forces occupied Camp McPherson served by the East Point Post Office and remained affiliated with East Point as unincorporated Fulton County until 1941, when it was annexed by the City of Atlanta. In 1917-1918, US Regular Army Soldiers trained and practiced for trench warfare in former Civil War entrenchments along Stanton Road down to the site of Hillcrest Cemetery.

East Point evolved after the Civil War and Reconstruction to be one of the top 20 industrial cities in Georgia until the turn of the 20th century.

Perry Bennett - Board Member, EPHS

East Point's Centennial Quilt:

A History Lesson in Needlework
Part Seven: East Point's Centennial

In 1987 the East Point Woman's Club stitched together a quilt to commemorate East Point's Centennial. Each of the 49 squares helps tell the story of East Point's history, historic landmarks and prominent businesses. The quilt is a unique and beautiful piece of craftsmanship and artwork. This is the last in a series of history lessons that are reflected in samplings of the

quilt's squares. This article highlights the East Point Woman's Club and East Point Historical Society, both major sponsors of the Centennial Celebration in 1987.



Photo credit - Steven Bramlett

Centennial Quilt

The quilt was displayed at the City Auditorium in 1987 where it hung until 2011 when it was moved to the East Point Historical Society. There it is maintained and displayed in memory of Steven Bramlett, the Society's devoted volunteer curator for many years before he died in 2011.



East Point Woman's Club

The East Point Woman's Club was founded in 1910 by a group of civic-minded women. In 1912, they joined the national General Federation of Women's Clubs. From 1920 until 1963, the Club's headquarters was a bungalow on Church Street (now the site of Victory Park). After a devastating fire, a new club was built and it is now the headquarters of the Sigma Zeta Foundation. The Woman's Club has long championed a variety of community projects such as health services, town beautification, World Wars I and II

efforts, and the Georgia Federation's state project at Tallulah Falls School in the north Georgia mountains.

East Point Historical Society and Historical House

In 1979, the Woman's Club urged the formation of the East Point Historical Society to collect and preserve East Point's history. At first, the Society worked out of the City Hall Annex (at that time, the old Post Office on Main Street). In 1988, the Society moved to its present location on the former site of the Spring Street Pool, and before that, the Cold Springs Cue Grounds. The historic Morgan House was moved from East Point Street to this location and has served as the Society's headquarters ever since. The Society has an extensive collection of artifacts, photographs, maps and records that document East Point's long and varied history.

Carole Griffith - Ex-Officio Board Member, EPHS

Visit Us Online...

The EPHS is enjoying a thriving online presence. We just reached 1,000 members in our Facebook group! Our online community shares stories and photos and helps reconnect people.

Please visit our official website at www.eastpoinths.org or join our group if you're on Facebook, and we also have an instagram account!

...or In Person!

Learn more about East Point history and see first hand the collection of artifacts, photographs, maps and records that further illustrate East Point's history.

We are located at 1685 Norman Berry Drive, East Point, GA. Our phone number is 404-766-4656.

Our hours are as follow:
Thursday, 12 p.m.-3 p.m.
Saturday, 11 a.m.-3 p.m.

2016 EPHS Annual membership

I/we would like to renew my/our annual membership at the following membership level and help bring East Point's past to the present for the benefit of the future:

- Single, \$10
- Family, \$15
- Corporate, \$50
- Donation of any amount gratefully accepted, \$ _____

EPHS is a nonprofit organization that depends on your membership and generosity in order to operate.
We welcome your contribution whether it be your time or monetary donation.

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Email address: _____

Please complete this form and send to the following address with your check:

East Point Historical Society
 P.O. Box 90675
 East Point, Georgia 30364-0675

Or visit us in person:
 1685 Norman Berry Drive,
 East Point, GA.
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