



EAST POINT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

SUMMER 2012

EST. 1979

A Look At The Early Days Up To 1900

The City of East Point, Georgia is celebrating the 125th Anniversary of its founding (1887 to 2012). However, our roots go back more than 65 years before 1887. The land on which we are situated was acquired by the State of Georgia in 1821 in the Treaty of Indian Springs from the Creek Indians. From this land acquisition five new counties were created: Henry, Dooly, Fayette, Houston and Monroe.

It was in the 14th Land District of the new Henry County that our community began to take shape. Through the 1820's and 1830's the farmers and settlers came. By the 1840's/1850's the railroads were in place. Railroads came to East Point on their way to Atlanta. In 1845 the Macon and Western Railroad (later the Central of Georgia Railroad) completed construction of its line from Macon to Atlanta. The Atlanta and LaGrange Railroad (later the Atlanta and West Point Railroad) played an important role in giving East Point its name. This line gave the area additional rail service and created a boom for industries located in East Point. The area around the junction of the two railroads became known as east point because the location was the eastern point of construction of the Atlanta and LaGrange Railroad's tracks. There was no formal name, but was simply a geographical reference in the Railroad Chief Engineer's report. The name East Point first occurred in official records when a United States Post Office was established here on March 13, 1851.

East Point has resided in three different counties. First, Henry County (1821 to 1822). Then we were merged into the newly formed DeKalb County (1822 to 1853) and finally became a part of present day Fulton County (1853 to present).

Through the 1850's farming flourished, homes were built and our community was growing. Then in 1861, the devastation of war came to East Point and for four years the people dug in, hung on and survived. These were hardy pioneers and after 1865 rebuilding and emergence began anew.

Through the late 1860's and the 1870's we had our first churches. Business that were open included a general store, a shoe repair shop, a blacksmith shop, a drug store and three or four saloons. There was also a jug factory and a "National Distillery." Of several mills in the greater East Point area the two closest in, being little more than a half mile apart, were the Thomas W. Connally grist mill just off of present day Connally Drive in the area we know as "Dead Man's Curve. Then there was the John L. Conley mill located in the heart of "Frog Hollow" on the Central Park School site. This mill ginned cotton and ground corn meal for the government distillery just downstream.

In the 1880's, talk turned to the formation of a City of East Point and after some years of planning the dream became reality. The town of East Point received its charter on August 10, 1887. The town's boundaries formed a rectangle extending three-fourths of a mile north of the junction of the railroads, five-eighths of a mile south of the junction and a half-mile east and west of this point. The government was to consist of a board of seven aldermen to be chosen annually in elections conforming to those by which members of the Georgia General Assembly were elected. The townspeople were to elect a chairman of the first Board of Alderman and any other officer needed to govern the town, such as a marshal or treasurer. The marshal was to be the only paid officer. Over the next few years the Charter was amended to add greater powers and responsibilities such as the authority to provide for public services, utilities and schools.

In 1896 the city's first school, "Central School," was built on the site of our present day City Hall. In 1899, the city established the first official Volunteer Fire Department. Law enforcement continued under the Town Marshall until 1907 with the changeover to a Police Department and a Police Chief. By 1900 we had reached a population in excess of 1,300 and were well on our way.

– Charles Strickland, President



**YOU ARE INVITED TO
AN EPHS OPEN HOUSE
TO CELEBRATE EAST POINT'S
125TH BIRTHDAY
FRIDAY, AUGUST 10TH
5-8 P.M.**

We will be serving coffee, iced tea and desserts
and sharing stories and photos about
East Point's past.

East Point Centennial Quilt

A History Lesson in Needlework - Part Two: Industry and Manufacturing

In 1987, members of 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. The quilt is on display at the East Point Historical Society. This is the second in a series of East Point history lessons, as reflected in a sampling of the quilt's squares.

Many of East Point's early industries were related to agricultural products that supported farming, the primary economic foundation after the Civil War. From the mid to the early 20th century, manufacturing expanded from on site farm locations to over a dozen factories along the railroad lines. This fragile agricultural economy fell victim to changes in transportation and industry and did not survive the depression era of the 1930s.



The Connally Mill was part of an extensive plantation that was first established by three brothers in the 1830s. Located along Connally Road, the farming operation included a grist mill and dam, the ruins of which still exist.



The White Hickory Wagon Company was one of East Point's first industrial enterprises. Established in 1884 by B.M. Blount, it supplied 15,000 wagons a year for farming communities throughout the Southeast until 1930 when motorized vehicles became predominant. One of the original buildings survives today as the Wagon Works.

The Couch brothers established their manufacturing factory close by in 1902 and complemented the wagon works by producing horse collars, among the 15 patents they held for farm products and processes. The site was later occupied by the William Armstrong Smith Company, a manufacturer of road marking paint.



Southern Saw was incorporated into McDonough Power Equipment, now Snapper, Inc.

From 1890 Southern Saw Works made specialty saws for the prosperous lumber business in Georgia but by the early 1950s converted to "Snappin' Turtle" mowers to serve the growing home lawn care industry of the suburbs. With numerous innovations for design and safety and through several mergers and reorganizations,



From peach baskets, to man hole covers, to fertilizer and cotton oil machinery, the Atlanta Utility Works manufactured products that reflected changing industrial needs. The structure that housed the Atlanta Utility Works survives and can be seen along Martin Street, south of the MARTA station.



downtown Atlanta's Eiseman building that was incorporated into the Five Points MARTA Station.

The Atlanta Terra Cotta Company was founded in the early 1900s at the current site of Tri-Cities Shopping Center. Utilizing nearby natural springs, the factory made terra cotta pipes, tiles and decorative building trim until 1943 when the demand for building materials changed to glass and steel. One surviving example of their work is the façade of



In 1908, B.M. Blount opened a second factory for the production of horse-drawn carriages and buggies. Today, this building is known as the Buggy Works.

(Continued on next page)

Part Two: Industry and Manufacturing (Continued)

In addition to a U.S. Distillery, cotton gin operations and bottle factories, East Point's early businesses included a broad range of industries and services such as department stores, groceries, hardware stores, pharmacies, service stations and banks.



– Carole Griffith, former EPHS Board Member

The Founding of the City of East Point – An Earth Shattering Event

On the evening of August 31, 1886, East Point residents met on the first floor of Captain A.J. Lyle's general store (it was the northwest corner, which is the current site of the Grady Clinic), discussing whether East Point should become a city. At around 9:50 P.M., the building began to shake violently. Everyone ran for their lives without a motion to adjourn—the movement of the earth was enough to empty the building onto the streets, including Masons on the second floor.

The Charleston, SC earthquake that disrupted plans of our city fathers, killed at least 60 in Charleston, caused structural damage on Tybee Island and was felt on Bermuda. At Magnitude 7.3, this intraplate earthquake was the largest recorded on the east coast.

In June 1887, the Georgia General Assembly passed bill of incorporation for the city, and Governor John Brown Gordon signed it on August 10—thus East Point was officially born.

Therefore, we will be celebrating the 125th birthday on August 10 & 11. Please come and commemorate our city's 125th. For more information about events, please visit these sites: <http://www.eastpoinths.org> and <http://www.downtowneastpoint.com> and <http://www.eastpointcity.org>

– D. Gordon Draves, Vice President

Uniting Long Lost Cousins

What are the odds? On May 18, I attended New South Associates' Archaeology Day at their headquarters in the Britt-Tuggle House in Stone Mountain, GA, and met a War of 1812 soldier—John Hopkins. He was portraying what his 5th great grandfather, Major General Allen Daniel, may have looked like when he was in charge of Fort Daniel—the oldest settlement in Gwinnet County, near Buford. Malcolm McDuffie (EPHS) joined me for an event there the next Saturday.

In conversations with John, we learned that he was a Headland High School graduate, was also descendent of Connally and Strickland families, and he brought out his BIG family history book with 8" of genealogy. So, the three of us planned to tour Connally Nature Park (CNP) and Connally Family Cemetery. On May 23, we three met at CNP with Malcolm's wife Maxine, daughter Deborah, and another Utoy Cemetery Association member, Terry White. We had a great two-hour walk around the park, and found that Terry is also a Strickland descendant—he and John's ancestor Solomon Strickland was a Revolutionary War soldier.

At Connally Cemetery, it was gratifying to show John the grave of Thomas Whipple Connally who was the son of David Connally, the brother of John's direct ancestor Margaret 'Peggy' Connally Jones—their father was Thomas Connally. After lunch, we went to Utoy Cemetery in SW Atlanta to see markers including War of 1812 soldiers—Malcolm's 3rd great grandfather Capt. Isom (Isham) Hendon and Terry's 5th great grandfather Pvt. Jacob "Jake" White, were honored on June 23 by Society of the War of 1812. That was a good way to start the Bicentennial of the War of 1812.

On September 8, Utoy Cemetery will have a grave marking ceremony for soldiers of the Revolutionary War beginning at 11 AM. For more information, please call me at 404 766-3456.

Then John and I went to the East Point Historical Society. I had written Charles Strickland, our newly appointed EPHS President about his cousin. He doubtfully joined us, but after seeing John's book, Charles unrolled his 5' long genealogy chart, and after some calculating, Charles announced that they were cousins—6th cousins once removed—common ancestor Jacob Strickland—second generation born in US. Also, Terry and Charles are cousins to about the same degree.

Uniting Long Lost Cousins (Continued)

What are the odds? Well, pretty good—John, Charles, Terry and I like history, archeology, and genealogy and frequently we may ask, “Who was your grandmother” (or great grandparents, great-great grands)? But three cousin combinations in one day were definitely pretty good. Maybe EPHS can help you find a relative in our files, or a house you lived in, or school you attended, so please visit us with your questions.

– D. Gordon Draves, Vice President

Home again, Home again, Jiggety-Jog

One of my new neighbors, Mr. Herbert Eugene Barfield, is actually a veteran Frog Hollow resident whose Grandfather, Rhodie B. McDuffie, was a highly venerated East Point City Council Member in the 1930s.

**Expression of Sympathy
By City of East Point**

In the passing of Alderman R. B. (Uncle Rhodie) McDuffie our city sustained the loss of one of our staunchest citizens, one whose stainless character fortified a long and useful service to a loyal constituency; fulfilling every measure of duty intrusted to him by an appreciative people and his associates in a wide field of public service.

We recognize in this dispensation of Providence that death loves “A shining mark” and that not only in this body is there a deep sense of loss, but that the people in every sphere of life of our community feel that a noble and upright man has been called to his eternal reward.

It is therefore fitting that we in our capacity as the governing body of our city tender to the family and a host of sorrowing friends this sincere token of our deep sympathy in this our common loss.

Be it therefore resolved by the Mayor and Aldermen of the City of East Point that a copy of this expression of our deep sense of loss be entered on our minutes, and that a copy of same be tendered to this bereaved family.

H. J. CARMICHAEL, Mayor
T. W. FOWLER, City Clerk

Eugene’s First Cousin Laura Foust, and her husband Tom, recently welcomed him back into their family’s home just in time to celebrate his 90th birthday!

Not many of us get to go back to a childhood home to live. I’ve been curious to know what emotions and memories this move stirred up for Mr. Barfield, or “Dip” as he’s better known. That’s the nickname his uncle Ralph gave the precocious kid who kept dipping into his pockets for change.

A trip down memory lane with him recalls a time when everything west of Semmes was forest and springs with water so pure he and his friends would drink it right out of the stream. “Spring 1 was for drinking and Spring 2 was for skinny-dipping,” says Dip with a twinkle in his

eye. He was a ladies man from the beginning, I’m thinking just like his grandfather, if the old newspaper clip below is any gage!



Chatting on the porch with Dip Barfield

In the 1930s, Dip worked delivering groceries for Ralph Snow, who owned the neighborhood grocery store at the SW corner of Ware & Semmes. Mr. Snow was a shrewd businessman, staying open until midnight on Saturdays, and hiring neighborhood boys to make deliveries by bicycles he’d buy and provide them. Back then, the A&P store at Ware and Church wasn’t open as many hours, so Snow scooped up a lot of the A&P’s business.

Left to his own devices, Dip was quite the young prankster and likely had a pretty lively reputation. Like the day he and his friend Billy Lee snuck into the unlocked back door of a neighborhood church and decided to skinny dip in the baptismal pool. And the time he helped himself to a local bakery’s cinnamon roll, just freshly delivered to the bakery’s front door stoop on his morning paper delivery route. Then helped himself to a bottle of just delivered milk from the doorstep of the house at Spring and Semmes to wash it down.

One of the pranks I won’t mention here, as we have a growing group of urban chicken farmers, involved his friend Donald Duncan, who was known as the chicken whisperer. Mostly things were harmless and kids growing up back then explored the wonders of nature around them for some real 3-D experiences.

When Dip was older, he worked as an usher at the Fairfax, a movie theatre that was at the corner of Linwood and Main. This was back before desegregation. Dip can still remember how African-Americans would pay for their entry at a separate ticket booth and then they would proceed up to the balcony where their seating was.

Some of Dip’s fondest memories are of working as a carhop for tips every Sunday at Adamson & Pounds Drive-In Restaurant. He remembers they had a great cook, Beulah, who made the best Brunswick Stew, still one of his favorite foods, which brought folks from all around.

Dip could fill my day with stories of childhood exploits and great restaurants that have come and gone, but I’ll save that for our next porch chat.

– Holly Keyes, Secretary

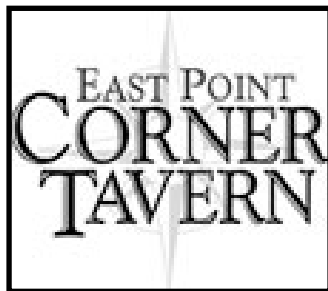
Thank-You to our Corporate Sponsors

It is through the support of businesses like you that we are able to keep the history of East Point alive and accessible to the public at the East Point Historical Society Museum and Research Facility.



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Remember to Visit Us Online

The EPHS is enjoying a thriving online presence. We now have over 300 members on Facebook! Our online community shares stories and photos and helps reconnect people.

Please visit our official website at www.eastpoinths.org and follow the link to our Facebook page.

See you soon!



2012 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, \$ _____

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Email address: _____

EPHS is a nonprofit organization that depends on your membership and generosity in order to operate.

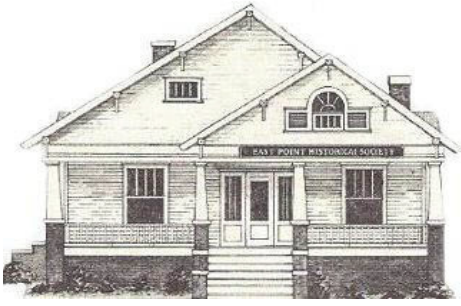
We welcome your contribution whether it be your time or monetary donation.

Thanks for
your
support!



PLEASE COMPLETE THIS FORM, CUT IT OUT AND SEND TO THE FOLLOWING ADDRESS:

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



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Hours of operation:
Thursdays, 1-4 p.m.
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*Bringing the Past to the
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of the Future*



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