



# Davidson Historical Society

January 2004

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## Our Purpose

*The Davidson Historical Society promotes an understanding and appreciation of the history of Davidson, North Carolina and its surrounding area.*

## Historic Mt. Mourne – In the Midst of Change

Sunday, January 18, 2004

4 p.m., Davidson Town Hall

How much do you know about the Mt. Mourne community, Davidson's neighbor to the north? You are probably familiar with many of the new landmarks such as the Lake Norman Regional Medical Center and the Lowe's Corporate Campus, but what do you know about the historical landmarks of this community?

The Mt. Mourne community developed around Centre Church, which was established in 1765, more than 70 years prior to the establishment of Davidson College. In fact, General William Lee Davidson, for whom Davidson College is named, was reared and resided in the Centre congregation. Among the many historical sites in this community, there



*Crowfield Academy marker  
on Highway 115N,  
2 miles north of Davidson College*

are several existing antebellum plantation houses and the sites of the Crowfield Academy (est. 1760) and of the

Revolutionary War battle at Torrence Tavern (1781).



*Mott House on Langtree Road, 1885*

On January 18, Lewis Alexander, chairman of the Iredell Historic Properties Commission, and O.C. Stonestreet III, Iredell County historian, will discuss many of the historic sites of the Mt. Mourne community and the challenges to preserve them in the midst of development. Please join us to learn more about this community that lies at the heart of our roots!

## A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT

Well, it will be more than one word because I have so many people to thank for the success of the nutcracker display at the Community Room of the Davidson Town Library during Christmas in Davidson:

- Cissi Lyles and Betty Newbold for sharing their collections;
- India Erb for displaying them;
- Suzanne Sadler from The Garden Tender for the buckets of Christmas greenery;
- Martha Montgomery for her supervision of the children's activities;
- Caroline Plyler for organizing the group of excellent docents;
- Margaret Kuras, John & Caroline Plyler, Allyson Ray, Jeanette Roberts and Lovenia Summerville for serving as docents;
- The Board members for all their help in various capacities including staffing the sales table;
- And to Nancy Dishman and the Davidson Town Library for their gracious permission to use the Library's Community Room.

In spite of some weather issues around 300 people came to view the display of over 100 nutcrackers. Nightly winners of the nutcracker drawing were:

Alix Bowman of Davidson on Wednesday, Ed Dixon of Charlotte on Thursday,

Rose Schotte of Troutman on Friday, Margaret Kuras of Mt. Mourne was the winner of the large nutcracker in the drawing which was open to members of the Davidson Historical Society.

All in all, it was a grand success!

*Rupert*  
Rupert Barber

*A very special  
thank you  
goes to  
Karen Fesperman  
for designing the  
society's first newsletter  
in October.  
It was a  
resounding success  
for our first attempt at  
a newsletter!*

## Puckett Regales with Tales of the Past

A standing room only crowd greeted James Puckett at the November 16, 2003 meeting of the Davidson Historical Society. James, son of the late Olin and Virginia Puckett, and now a medical doctor living in Asheville, spoke about his recently published book, *Olin, Oskeegum, and Gizmo*. James' book, published by Blackwell Ink, recounts his growing up in Davidson in the 50's and 60's. His autobiographical pages tell a charming story of coming of age amid "town and gown" in our small college town.

Many in the audience knew James as a youngster and enjoyed reminiscing with him about earlier times and eccentric characters. It was a great opportunity for "ole timers" to remember the "good ole days" and for newcomers to learn about some town history.



*James Puckett (seated) with  
DHS President Rupert Barber*

James and his wife, Margaret, were warmly greeted by members of the DHS, and a book signing followed his talk. Many thanks to Main Street Books for providing copies of *Olin, Oskeegum, and Gizmo* for sale on the afternoon of the meeting.

# Join Us in Preserving Local History

Become a member of the Davidson Historical Society! Your support will help DHS offer programming that preserves the past.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is my check for membership in the Davidson Historical Society:  
\$10—Individual Membership \$15—Family Membership

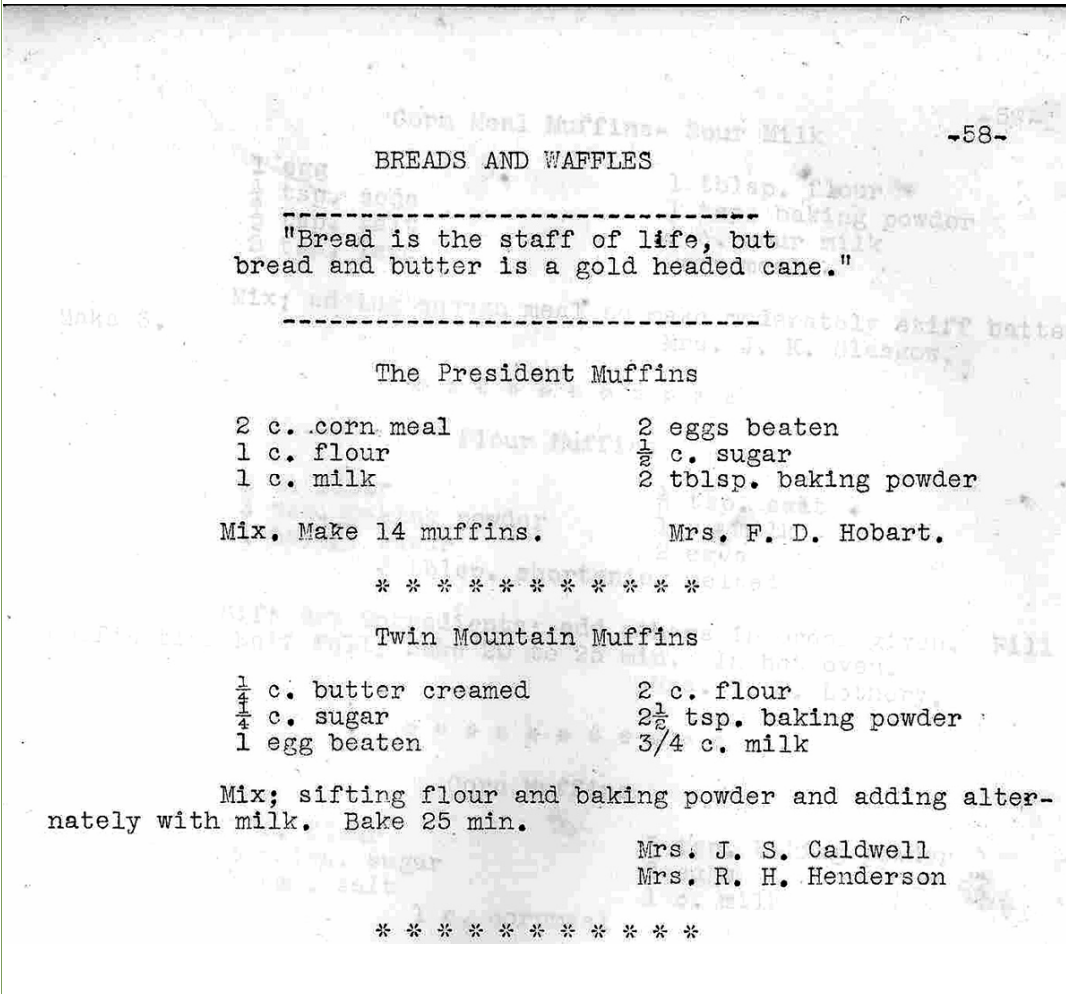
Fill out form, enclose check and mail to:

Davidson Historical Society  
PO Box 144  
Davidson, NC 28036

*Would you like to be more involved? We need your help! Circle an area where you would like to participate:*

- Town Tour Leader
- Oral History Project
- Displays
- In-School Projects
- Informational Table
- Telephoning
- Program Planning
- Board Member

## A page from history...



*Reprinted from  
The Davidson Cook Book,  
circa 1928  
Published by the Civic Club*



## Davidson Historical Society

Post Office Box 144  
Davidson, NC 28036

*We don't just talk about Davidson's past...  
We are working to preserve it.*

The Davidson Historical Society was founded in the late 1980's by a group of concerned citizens led by Taylor and Irene Blackwell. Over the years DHS has presented programs by outstanding local and regional personalities on varying topics as well as touring historically significant sites in the area.

# D•H•S

## Events Calendar 2003-2004

All programs are free and open to the public.  
Programs are at 4 p.m. at Davidson Town Hall unless otherwise noted.

Sunday, January 18, 2004

### **Historic Mt. Mourne – In the Midst of Change**

*See article on first page*

Sunday, March 21, 2004

### **Davidson: Namesake of General William Lee Davidson**

The minutes of the Presbytery of Concord for August 1835 record "It was resolved that the Manual Labor Institution which we are about to build be called Davidson College as a tribute to the memory of that distinguished and excellent man Gen. Wm Davidson, who in the ardor of patriotism, fearlessly contending for the Liberty of his country fell (universally lamented) in the Battle at Cowan's Ford." Who was this "universally lamented" gentleman and what role did he play in American and North Carolina history? Come find out, when Dr. Malcolm Lester, Professor Emeritus, will discuss the life and legacy of Gen. William Lee Davidson, for whom both the town and college were named.