



DAVIDSON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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

Fall 2012

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The History of the Davidson Ice House

The Davidson Ice House was built in 1922 for the Davidson Ice Company. The brick building was constructed and equipped by the Southern Ice Machine Company of Charlotte. A six-ton ice making plant, The Davidson Ice Company began delivering ice in May of 1922. Before the plant opened, ice was supplied to the Davidson area from plants in Mooresville and Charlotte, which had difficulty keeping up with the local demand.

The Davidson Ice Company was owned and managed by Green Lee Lilly, who had moved to Davidson from Virginia in the fall of 1921. The Lilly family built the Craftsman Bungalow brick home at 565 North Main Street in 1922. At some point during Lilly's ownership, the Davidson Ice Company became the Davidson Ice and Fuel Company.

Blanche Knox Parker, 95, recalls her family moving to Davidson in 1929 when her father, Adrien Knox, took a job managing the ice plant. They had been living in the country on a farm on Rocky River Road, moving to a rental house on South Street. Her father's office was located where Davidson Violins currently resides. Unfortunately, within a few years, the economic hardship of the Depression resulted in him losing his job.

By April of 1935, the Lilly family sold the Davidson Ice and Fuel Company to Hurman Lester Horton. The Horton family moved to Davidson from Kannapolis and built the brick home at 722 North Main Street. H. L. Horton also served as a town commissioner from 1940-51.

Continued on Page 3

Our Purpose

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

ICE **COAL** **WOOD**

FOR EXCELLENT QUALITY
AND PROMPT SERVICE
CALL

Davidson Ice & Fuel Co.

H. L. HORTON, Manager

*Ad in 1945 Davidson College Yearbook
Quips and Cranks*

DHS Events

*All programs are free and open to the public unless otherwise noted.
Please note dates, times and locations for each event.*

Ghost Stories at Beaver Dam Sunday, October 28, 5:00 pm

Local storyteller and children's book author, Sauni Wood will help set the mood for All Hallows' Eve with spooky tales. Stories will begin at 5:00 pm, appropriate for children grades K – 5. Light refreshments will be provided, courtesy of Armin's catering. Scarry fun!



Christmas in Davidson Thursday, November 29 thru Saturday, December 1

Please stop by the DHS table during Christmas in Davidson. We will have our annual holiday ornaments as well as our book, *One Town, Many Voices: A History of Davidson, North Carolina* for sale. On Thursday evening, from 6-9 pm, Jan Blodgett and Ralph Levering, authors of *One Town, Many Voices*, will be signing books at Main Street Books.

Coming in February 2013.....

Murdr̄ on South Str̄et!!

In February 1914, citizens throughout Mecklenburg County were shocked at news of a murder on South Street in Davidson. More details coming soon on this program about a scandalous case in Davidson's history!

Walk to Rocky River Mill Ruin Sunday, November 11, 4:00 pm Abersham Park

Please join DHS and the Davidson Lands Conservancy for a walking tour to the Rocky River Mill Ruin and the "Whale Rock" outcropping. This walk will combine a discussion of the history of the area with a nature walk on conserved rural land. We will meet at 3:45 pm at Abersham Park, located at the intersection of Grey Road and Shearer Road. The ruin and conserved land is in the nearby Runnymede neighborhood and we will caravan to the trailhead. The walk will begin at 4:00. Please note that while the walk is not strenuous, it will be "off-road," and hiking boots or good walking shoes are recommended.

Please register in advance for this free event at: whalerockhike.eventbrite.com#

Help Wanted!!

The DHS is looking for a volunteer to help with our scrap book project. This task involves sorting through our collected local history articles from the past few years.

For more information call or email:

Nancy Lingle at linge.nancy@gmail.com
704-516-8932

Continued from Page 1

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The Davidson Ice and Fuel Company delivered ice to families and businesses throughout the Davidson and Cornelius area. The building currently home to Restaurant X was the auto mechanical shop for the delivery trucks. Cornelius native, Dorothy Goodrum Fidler, 91, recalls the big wooden box, lined with tin, that her family kept on their porch for ice deliveries in the 1930's and 40's. Mr. Grady Caldwell (father of Kenneth Caldwell) delivered ice to them, using large iron tongs to move the ice from the truck to their ice box. Charlotte resident, Mary Boyer, also remembers the ice box on the porch at Grandmother Bessie May Sample's home on Concord Road in the 1930's. In addition to the ice box, she recalls the ice chart kept by the box that was set to indicate to the iceman how many pounds of ice to deliver that day.

The Davidson Ice House today.



By 1970's, the Davidson Ice and Fuel Company was owned by Harold B. Little, who also served as mayor of Cornelius from 1985-93. The company continued operating and making ice until November 1996, when Little sold it to the 1213 Company, LLC. The building was remodeled, and the space became home to the Ice House Gift Shop. In 2000, the space was converted to the Ice House Center for Creativity, Craft and Design. They moved to Cornelius in 2007 and exist today as the Cornelius Arts Center. Since 2007, the Ice House has been owned by Kathleen Rose's group, Urban Organic, LLC, and is currently home to the Campania restaurant and Davidson Violins.

Willie Parker Peace Award

The North Carolina Society of Historians has presented Dr. Jan Blodgett and Dr. Ralph Levering, authors of *One Town, Many Voices: A History of Davidson, North Carolina*, with the 2012 Willie Parker Peace History Book Award! The NCSH, whose mission is to collect and preserve North Carolina history, traditions, artifacts, genealogies and folklore, presents the Willie Parker Peace Award annually to "encourage the writing and publication of the history of a North Carolina county, institution or individual." The authors were honored at the 71st annual NCSH meeting on October 20 in Mooresville.

Congratulations to Dr. Blodgett and Dr. Levering for this well-deserved honor!

(For more information about the book, *One Town, Many Voices*, please visit the book website at www.onetownmanyvoices.com.)

A Note from the President

This is our first newsletter since winter of 2011 but DHS has not been idle in the interim. A major accomplishment (and preoccupation) during this period was the publication of *One Town, Many Voices: A History of Davidson, North Carolina*. Many volunteers stepped forward to lend a hand in transforming Jan Blodgett's and Ralph Levering's well researched manuscript into the handsome volume now available at local bookstores. Heartfelt thanks to all of you who helped make this happen. We also created a website for the book (www.onetownmanyvoices.com), completely redesigned the DHS website (www.davidsonhistoricalsociety.org), established DHS as a 501(c)3 non-profit organization and consolidated all of our historical books and artifacts into one air conditioned storage facility. In the coming year, we plan to continue to strengthen our relationships with other Davidson non-profits, Davidson College and the Town through collaboration on events and programs; energize the website as an up-to-date source for relevant information and news about the history of our town; boost our membership; and to find a downtown space to house a gallery and small office for DHS.

As Dave Malushizky steps down as President, I want to thank him for his dedication and leadership over the past two years. I will depend a great deal on him and the board for their guidance and experience in moving the organization forward. I would like to welcome our newest board, Ellyn Baezler. Ellyn lives, and is in the process of restoring, Mary Beatty's former home on Woodland Street. A native of Charlotte, she has lived in Davidson for 17 years and served previously as project manager of the Preservation Foundation, now a part of the Landmarks Commission. We look forward to her active involvement in the DHS.

Thank you for your continued support of the Davidson Historical Society. We hope you will join us for some of the outstanding programs we are hosting this fall (see page 2 for details). Please let us know if you have questions, comments or suggestions.



Ed Harris



DAVIDSON
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

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www.davidsonhistoricalsociety.org

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, toured historically significant sites in the area, and financed projects which promote the history of the area.