Dear Aiken County Historical Society Member:

I want to thank Rodger Stroup for his excellent program on the history of railroading in South Carolina at the September general meeting of the ACHS. That is one program that should/could be videotaped and shown to school children and others around South Carolina.

Thank you very much for those that have paid your 2013 ACHS dues. Your dues help support our programs and are greatly appreciated by the Board. If anyone has not paid your dues yet, just send them in or bring them to the meeting on the 24th.

Your membership dues help us fund a $1000 scholarship at USCA for a student from Aiken County who is hopefully majoring in history.

2013 promises to be an especially outstanding year for the ACHS because we plan to erect three official State historical markers. The first will be unveiled for the Aiken Graded School at our upcoming winter general meeting. The second will mark the location of William Gregg’s home site on top of Kalmia Hills near the Shadow Oaks Nursing Home. We hope that will be ready for the April/May general meeting. The third official State historical marker will be for the Aiken Prep School. The school’s old campus has been taken over by Mead Hall Episcopal School, but existed for 96 years on Barnwell Ave. in downtown Aiken. It is truly one of Aiken’s most historic properties and should have a historical marker.

The Aiken Graded School historical marker will be the 18th marker the Aiken County Historical Society has erected since 1999 when we reorganized our fifty-plus year old organization. I have been told that our organization has erected more historical markers since 1999 than any other organization in South Carolina. I want to especially thank the Watson Brown Foundation for the grant that paid the entire $2075 for the Aiken Graded marker. This is the second historical marker for which they have paid. They are a great friend to local historical societies.

Please make your plans to attend the ACHS general meeting on February 24th, 3:00 p.m., at the Smith-Hazel Recreation Center on Kershaw Street (the Aiken Graded School once stood on the grounds of the Smith-Hazel Center). Our speaker will be Mr. Zack Townsend, a former student at the Aiken Graded School, and whose father was principal of the school from 1934 to 1944. He has many memories of the school and of Aiken in general. You will enjoy his talk. Mr. Townsend just celebrated his 50th anniversary in the law profession. He still practices law in Orangeburg today.

Finally, please make your plans to attend the Cat’s Meow Gala on April 13th at the Aiken County Historical Museum. The 29 Barn Cats of Aiken will be auctioned that night with all proceeds going to help pay the mortgage on the Gaston Livery Stable.

Allen Riddick
President
Aiken County Historical Society
We had a smaller crowd than normal for this meeting.

Left to right, Jane C. Davis, Margaret Marion, and Gail Ebner

Speaker Rodger Stroup

Joyce Riddick and Doris Baumgarten discuss the program

Speaker Rodger Stroup during presentation

Robert Stack and Coleen Reed serve refreshments to Nancy Moseley.
The Aiken County Historical Society will unveil a historical marker for the Aiken Graded School. Our guest speaker will be Zack E. Townsend, Esquire. He is a former student at Aiken Graded School, a Schofield High School Graduate, a Benedict College Graduate in 1958, and a South Carolina State College School of Law Graduate in 1963. He was admitted to the S.C. Bar in 1963 and is still practicing in Orangeburg.

Refreshments will be served after the unveiling.

2013 ACHS Membership Form

Dues are now being accepted.

Anyone wishing to join the Aiken County Historical Society is cordially invited to do so. Please complete the application below and mail it with your dues to:

Aiken County Historical Society
P.O. Box 1775
Aiken, SC 29802

Name:_____________________________________________Membership Type:_________________
Address:_____________________________________________________________________________
City, State, Zip:______________________________________Phone:___________________________
E-mail:______________________________________________________________________________

Single:   $15             Corporate:   $50
Family:   $20             Donor:   $100
Patron:   $25             Benefactor:   $500
            Life:    $1000

One Time Donation: $________________________
The one time donation is for those members who have already paid their dues, but would like to contribute directly toward our Historical Marker Fund. We also encourage others who may not want to become an ACHS member, but would like to make a contribution to our organization.
December 3, 1924

For many years, the town of Aiken has been using a rickety, old hall for a graded school house for Negro children. But, the patrons of the school got tired of this, and asked for a new, modern school building for their children. They were told if they would find and purchase a site, the town would furnish the money to put up the building. Therefore, the Colored people got busy, and raised $3500 and bought 8 acres of land on the outskirts of town and they presented the deeds to the Board of Trustees. The Trustees asked the Legislature, through the Representatives from Aiken County, to allow the citizens of the town to raise by a special levy, money to erect a modern school building for Negroes. And the building is nearing completion. The Colored people are preparing to have their Emancipation celebration in this new school building. When it is completed, it will be one of the best in the State. I met two other prominent Colored men. One was Prof. W.D. Drake, principal of the Colored graded school, and C.E. Ball, a brick mason who is supervising the construction of the new school building. He informed me that the new school has 10 classrooms, a library, and an auditorium that will seat 600 people. It will be steam heated, lighted with electric lights and will have a domestic science room with equipment.

August 20, 1924

The corner stone of the public school building was laid on Sunday afternoon, with appropriate exercises. The cornerstone was laid by Dr. C.C. Johnson, Grand Master of the Colored Masonic Order. And appropriate addresses were made by Mr. J.T. Shuler, chairman of the school board, and Prof. W. Jay McGarrity. C. Elliott Ball, who has taken great interest in the erection of this new school building, was master-of-ceremonies.

CORNER STONE

ERECTED 1924

AIKEN PUBLIC SCHOOL FOR COLORED CHILDREN

J.T. SHULER, CHAIRMAN OF SCHOOL BOARD

GEDDINGS CUSHMAN, CLERK OF SCHOOL BOARD

W.M. EUBANKS, H. SUDLOW, C.ELLIOTT BALL, REPRESENTING COLORED PEOPLE
W. JAY McGARRITY, CITY SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

CECIL SEIGLER, COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION

J.J. BALDWIN, ARCHITECT, ANDERSON, SOUTH CAROLINA

June 10, 1925

A petition was received from the new Colored school asking for an appropriation to help furnish the school building. On motion of Alderman Cushman, the sum of $250 was made for this purpose.

October 21, 1925

The Aiken public school has enrolled 271 pupils up to last Monday. The attendance will steadily grow and is expected that there will be 300 students soon.

October 2, 1969

The Aiken Graded School was closed………..School officials said maintenance costs were too high to warrant continued use. Integration was another factor. Former Aiken Graded students are now attending Eustis Park, North Aiken, Pine Crest, Aiken Elementary, and Millbrook.

OTHER FACTS

The Aiken Graded School was one of nearly 500 “Rosenwald Schools” built in South Carolina for African-American students and partially funded by Julius Rosenwald, part owner of the Sears and Roebuck Company. He contributed a small portion of each school’s cost as long as everyone else did their share. Locals also contributed “sweat equity” toward the completion of the school. The school’s financial contributions went as follows:

<table>
<thead>
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<th>TOTAL COST</th>
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<tr>
<td>NEGROES</td>
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<tr>
<td>WHITES</td>
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<tr>
<td>PUBLIC</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROSENWALD</td>
<td>$1,500</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Dr. CC Johnson
was an early advocate of the Aiken Graded School and helped raise money for the school.

C. Elliott Ball
was a local brick mason who supervised construction of the Aiken Graded School. He also was the Master-of-Ceremony at the laying of the school’s corner stone.
Dr. Zack Townsend
Dr. Townsend was the Principal at Aiken Graded School from 1934 to 1944.

Mable Ball Hill
Daughter of C. Elliott Ball
Teacher at Aiken Graded School

C. Elliott Ball
Daughter of C. Elliott Ball
Teacher at Aiken Graded School
Don’t miss out, come twist & shout, at the Cat’s Meow Gala & Auction coming up in April!

I will be there, all dressed up and ready to party!

More information inside this newsletter.