



Davidson Historical Society

Fall 2008

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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.

Remembering The Hub

All around us are subtle clues that tell us things about our town's history. We pass by them almost every day, usually without much notice. Take a look under the green awning at 123 North Main Street. Hidden underneath you will find evidence of a shop that closed over thirty years ago: The Hub.

The Hub, a combination soda shop and notions store, was opened in October 1962 by local businessman Ralph Quackenbush. The business was designed to fill the void that was left when Hugo Sapp's College Cut-Rate Pharmacy closed in the same location about a year prior after serving the students and townspeople for more than two decades. In addition to soda fountain fare, The Hub offered magazines, LP records, school supplies, paperback books and other items that were not available at the college union at the time. Not long after opening, The Hub also became a Greyhound bus terminal, where customers could buy tickets and cargo could be handled and stored.



Can you spot this sign at 123 N Main?



Ralph Quackenbush behind the counter at The Hub

The Hub was a popular haunt for both the college students and the youth in town. At the request of the students, it was open until 2 am to provide them with a late night destination. It was also the only place in town with a grill. One specialty item available was the "Triple R" burger, which stood for "Ralph's Raunchy Repast." Named by a college student (possibly the student who first requested it), the "Triple R" consisted of two hamburgers on toast with relish, mustard, ketchup and onions. Local kids would come to The Hub not only to enjoy something delicious from the grill, but to hopefully find one of Davidson's first-team All-American basketball players – like Fred Hetzel, Dick Snyder, or Mike Maloy (also Davidson's first black basketball player) – hanging around.

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Events Calendar

2008-2009

Programs are at 4 p.m. at Davidson Town Hall unless otherwise noted.

Sunday, September 21, 2008

Tour of Currie & Stough Houses

559 & 612 N. Main St

This program is a real treat for Davidson residents new and old! The Currie home was built in 1911 by Dr. Archibald Currie, a Davidson College professor who taught for over 41 years while also pursuing a career as an active attorney. His wife, Lucy Martin Currie ("Miss Lucy") was the sister of Davidson College president W. J. Martin.



Currie House circa 1980

Current owners, Kris and Michele Kolbinsky Krider will open their home to DHS members and share their renovation stories. Tish Kimbrough will be there to share some Currie family stories.

Also open for viewing is the Stough House, 612 N. Main Street, owned by Dave and Sherry Malushizky. This home was originally built for Professor and Mrs. Lewis Schenk in 1930 by Will Potts, builder of many Davidson homes. S. T. Stough, local businessman and postmaster, and his family occupied the home for many years.

Please note that this is for current DHS members only. Not currently a member? Not a problem! You may join today using the membership form (see insert) or you may join at the membership table the day of the home tour (at 559 N. Main).

Sunday, November 16, 2008

Life Before the Lake

Believe it or not, Lake Norman hasn't always existed! Come learn about our area before Duke Power built the Cowans Ford dam. Cindy Jacobs, Mooresville historian and author of a new book, [Around Lake Norman](#), will lead a panel discussion about the area before and during the creation of Lake Norman.

This program is part of "DavidsonREADS," a community-wide program of Davidson Parks and Recreation, the Public Library, and Main Street Books. Look for more activities and speakers this fall. The book for DavidsonREADS is *One Foot in Eden* by Ron Rash.

Sunday, January 18, 2009

History of Sports at Davidson College

Sterling Martin, Davidson College alumnus ('63) and athlete, who recently retired after over 40 years with the college athletic department and as Director of the Lake Campus, will discuss the history of Davidson College sports.

Come find out how the Wildcats got their name!

Sunday, March 15, 2009

The Mecklenburg Declaration of

For more than 200 years, the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence (aka Meck Dec) has caused a stir. Its signing date, May 20, 1775, is on the NC state flag. Meck Dec celebrations have brought four presidents, a first lady, and a decorated general to Charlotte. However, no original copies of this document have ever been found, leading some to question whether it ever existed.

Jane Johnson, Carolina Room librarian at the Charlotte-Mecklenburg public library, will discuss the history and controversy behind this celebrated document.

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The Hub was the first food establishment in town to serve all patrons equally, regardless of race. According to a 1963 Davidsonian article, The Hub was one of only four local facilities that had opened their doors to all local citizens and students without regard to race. The other facilities were the town library and the restrooms at both Cliff Archer's Gulf station and Bill Gurley's Esso station.

The Hub closed in 1976. As Ralph Quackenbush recalls, it just seemed to be a good time to close. Ralph had become more interested in furniture restoration, a business that would allow him to cut back on his working hours. There was also a little more competition in town - the College Union now offered more retail services to students and Lefty Driesell's Wildcat Den had opened next door several years earlier.



The Hub is the storefront on the right

After closing The Hub, Ralph opened The Workbench, a furniture restoration store, in the same location. A few years later, Ralph moved The Workbench to Cornelius when Tom Clark, who had purchased the building from Louise Sloan around 1974, decided to use the space for his own business.

Keep your eyes open for those hidden clues to Davidson's history! Let us know if you discover something interesting. We would love to help you learn more about it or to share it with other DHS members.

Special thanks to Ralph Quackenbush for his contributions to this article.

Sources:

The Davidsonian, September 21, 1962, p. 4.

The Davidsonian, September 27, 1963, p. 3.

Mecklenburg Gazette, September 27, 1962, p. 1.

A page from history...

This advertisement appeared in the 1971 Quips & Cranks

Shared by the Davidson College Archives.



Campus Life Revolves Around . . .

THE HUB

9:00 to 8:00

- FOOD
- CARDS
- SCHOOL SUPPLIES
- MAGAZINES
- BOOKS
- NOTIONS
- CIGARETTES
- RECORDS
- FILM
- CANDY

D•H•S

A Note from the President...

We are very excited about the coming DHS year! We have some wonderful programs planned - we hope you will join us. See page 2 for the dates and details.

Last year, we began work on the Davidson photo archival project. We scanned and documented over 100 photos into the college archives. Thanks to all who stopped by our booth at Town Day to look at our photo display, especially those who helped us identify the people and places in the photos. This year we will continue to seek out old photos of Davidson for archiving. If you have any photos you would like to share (you will be able to keep the originals), please contact us. We would love to add them to the DHS collection!

This past spring we published a new edition of the popular "Details of Downtown Davidson" brochure. If you didn't happen to get a copy at our booth at the recent Concert on the Green, you can pick one up at Main Street Books, The Village Store, or the Village Inn.

Many thanks to our departing board members – Carol Barber, Jan Blodgett, and Christy Shi. We really appreciate all the time and energy you have devoted to DHS over the years. You will be missed! Welcome to new board members Stu Gray, Jackie Torrence and Ron Donaldson. We are looking forward to a great year.

Finally, we hope you will consider being a part of the DHS family by becoming a member or, if you have been a member, renewing your membership for the year. *Now* is a great time to join!

Margaret Kuras



Davidson Historical Society

Post Office Box 144
Davidson, NC 28036

704-892-6022

www.davidsonhistoricalsociety.org

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