

PINTLALA HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

Next Meeting:

April 27, 2025 at 2:30 p.m.
Pintlala Baptist Church



c/o Pintlala Public Library
255 Federal Road
Hope Hull, Alabama 36043

Volume XXXIX, Number 2

www.pintlalahistoricalassociation.com

April 2025



Gary Burton visited grave of Rev. Hope Hull (1763-1818) for whom our community is named. Rev. Hull was known as the Father of Methodism in Georgia. He received a visit from a faithful Baptist Reverend!

2025 OFFICERS

President.....	Frank Elis	(334)315-8927
Program Chairperson	Alice T. Carter.....	(334)281-3708
Secretary.....	Karon Bailey	(334)224-9631
Treasurer.....	Ina Slade	(334)284-0337
Parliamentarian & Place 3	Jerrie Burton	(334)328-6661
Members at Large		
Place 1	Patsy Davis.....	(334)220-7004
Place 2	Daisy Anne Brady	(334)398-0636
Place 4	Alan Davis	(334)270-8657

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Tribute to Gary Porter Burton

Gary Burton and his wife, Jerrie, moved to the Pintlala community in 1972 when Gary had been called to serve as minister of Pintlala Baptist Church. He not only led his church but became a friend and servant to many community residents, not necessarily Baptists.

He developed relationships based on his interests and activities. There were many tennis games with fellow area ministers, bicycle rides that included a 100-mile ride to Geneva, Alabama with his friend, Duck Williams and most importantly for Pintlala Historical Association, Gary developed a deep curiosity about his new community. By 1993 he had been elected as president of PHA and served a second term in 1994. He returned to the office of president in 2005 and moved the organization ahead through 2024 for a total of 20 years as leader !

Gary was a goal-oriented leader, forward looking and all-around smart guy. He became respected by leaders of other history organizations throughout the state, professional historians and writers.

Personally, I appreciate his friendship with my mother who was among the founders of our organization. They had numerous back porch visits plotting to make PHA a success. I thank him for being my cemetery chaperone, map reader and editor.

We are fortunate to have the Burtons remain in Pintlala after Gary's retirement from Pintlala Baptist Church in 2024. For all of us affiliated with PHA, we love and thank Gary for his friendship and direction along with his wonderful sense of humor, albeit sometimes corny!

May God bless you, Gary.

Pintlala Historical Association

Alice Carter

FRIENDLY REMINDER

PHA dues were due in January. At the January meeting the membership voted to approve a motion to change dues to \$25.00 per year. This will help cover the increases in postage and printing expenses. PHA needs your support. Ina Slade, treasurer will be present at the April 27 meeting to accept your payment. Thank you!

IN MEMORIAM

Mr. Tony Allen, Montgomery

PHA PROGRAM

Pintlala Historical Association will meet on Sunday, April 27, 2025 at 2:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall of Pintlala Baptist Church. This is a change in date as Easter falls on our regular third Sunday meeting time.

Our program will be presented by Collier Neeley, Executive Director of Landmarks Foundation of Montgomery. He is a 10th generation Alabamian and influenced by his grandmother, our late dear friend, Mary Ann Neeley, past Director of Landmarks. Collier graduated from Ole Miss, earned a masters degree in Heritage Preservation from Georgia State. Several positions at other history organizations led him to Landmarks Foundation in 2019 where he specializes in Community Preservation, fundraising, and Community Development.



Collier Neeley

His program for PHA will center on reviving our knowledge of the Marquis de Lafayette, Revolutionary War hero who came to the aid of American forces under the command of George Washington. He visited Alabama in 1825 and was given a cordial welcome. His visit was recently celebrated with the reenactment of his 200 year-old visit! PHA was pleased to serve as one of the sponsoring organizations for a reception at Old Alabama Town marking the anniversary of Lafayette's Montgomery visit.

We welcome Collier to Pintlala!

ARTIST WITH PINTLALA TIES, PAINTED SERMONS THROUGH HER ART

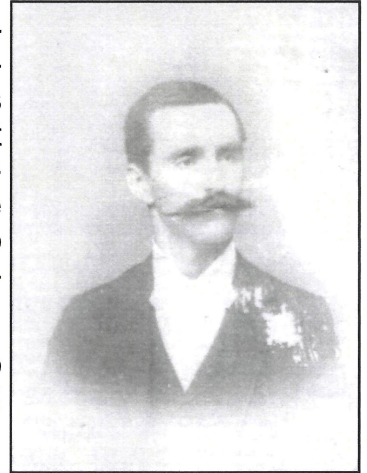
Alice T. Carter

Myrta Blanche Garrett Perry, daughter of James Davis Garrett (1866-1898) and Hattie Magdalene Mathews Garrett (1868-1903), was born in Mount Carmel, Alabama, home of her maternal grandparents, Albert Timothy Mathews and his wife Martha Frances Sellers Mathews .

Blanche was born in 1890, the second of five children born to James Davis and Hattie Garrett. Her siblings, listed in birth order were: Dr. James Dewitt Garrett (1888-1970), Iva Garrett Henry (1891-1977), Fannie Garrett Timmerman (1893-1965), and William Davis Garrett (1898-1979).

James Davis Garrett's family were prominent residents of the Mt. Willing community in Lowndes County, Alabama. He attended Highland Home College, Crenshaw County, Alabama, returned to Mt. Willing and established and served as principal of Mt. Willing High School. Garrett became ill with tuberculosis and felt that the climate in Texas would prove better for his condition. Family history reports that Garrett founded another college in Terrell, Texas. His health became tenuous and his family returned to Alabama. Garrett soon followed them back to Mt. Willing, only to succumb to tuberculosis in 1898. He is buried in the Mt. Willing cemetery.

The widow of James Davis Garrett, Hattie Mathews Garrett, remarried in 1901 to J. W. Rivers. During childbirth, Hattie and her infant passed away in 1903 and are buried together in Myrtlewood Cemetery, Fort Deposit, Alabama.



James Davis Garrett, 1866-1898, date unknown,
Courtesy Margery Henry



Hattie Mathews Garrett Rivers,
(1868-1903), date unknown,
Courtesy Margery Henry

These tragic turn of events left five young children orphaned. The five ranged in age 15 to five. Their father's sister, Fannie Garrett Shackelford had married Frank Shackelford of Pintlala in 1889. The childless couple lovingly reared the three girls and two boys, nieces and nephews of Fannie Garrett Shackelford. The five primarily grew up in Letohatchee, Alabama where Dr. Frank Shackelford had established a medical practice and a drug store. A small booklet published by the Fort Deposit Public School announcing students, teachers and curriculum for session 1900-1901 listed the three Garrett girls in the Primary Department and Dewitt Garrett was listed in the Intermediate Department. This session would have been prior to Hattie's death in 1903. The 1910 Federal Census enumerated Dr. Shackelford in Letohatchee, Lowndes County, Alabama with wife, Fannie and the five Garrett children. By 1916, Dr. and Mrs. Shackelford had moved to Pintlala. and their new two-story home on Highway 31. (now occupied by Sam and Lindsay Moore). The 1920 Federal Census for Frank Shackelford

lists one remaining Garrett child in the household and that was Iva Garrett, age 27. She married the next year to James Porter Henry and the couple remained in the Pintlala community.

Myrta Blanche Garrett, second child of James Davis and Hattie Mathews Garrett, capped off her academic life as a student at Southern Female College for Girls in LaGrange, Georgia. Here Blanche participated in her only formal art education class, otherwise she was a self-taught artist. Blanche married Andrew Eugene Perry in 1913 at age 23. Perry owned a highway and bridge construction company necessitating the Perry family move quite frequently. Their first child, a son, Andrew Eugene Perry, Jr. arrived in 1914 and a daughter, Myrta Blanche, was born in 1921. Their



Garrett Children: front: Myrta Blanche, Will Davis, Fannie; back: Iva, James Dewitt, ca. 1900, Courtesy Margery Henry



Blanche Garrett Perry, date unknown
digitalcommons.acu.edu

mother's health had continued to deteriorate due to her chronic tuberculosis. By 1924 the family moved to Denver, Colorado clinging to hope that the climate there might be more conducive to better health for Blanche. In 1924 she was told by physicians that she only had two months to live. Andrew Perry had his wife admitted to Agnes Phipps Tuberculosis Sanatorium in Denver. Blanche wrote in her autobiography that her stay at the Sanatorium was for 14 months. After her dismissal, her recuperation included five years as a bed patient and five more years as a semi-invalid. Miraculously, her health slowly improved which Blanche attributed to "my happy disposition, my faith in God and the beauty I saw in the mountains." These thoughts were shared with reporter, Dick Prouty, of the Denver Post, around 1936.

Additionally, Blanche's sister, Fannie Timmerman, a resident of Alabama, also contracted tuberculosis and travelled to Denver to enter Phipps Sanatorium, overlapping by some months the time frame of Blanche's hospitalization there.

In 1935 Blanche and another woman painted a background mural for the baptistry at the Sherman Street Church of Christ in Denver. Blanche and her family had always been devoted members of this denomination. Blanche's second baptistry painting had been a solo effort on her part for the Park Hill Church of Christ in Denver.



Andrew and Blanche Perry, date unknown,
Courtesy Margery Henry

A viewer of her work once pointed out that she had included clouds in the shape of a dove, considered a symbol of the Holy Spirit. This was an "ah-ha moment" for Blanche. She realized that she could use her artistic talents as a way to present a type of sermon. Her baptistry paintings contain an abundance of religious symbolism such as flowing rivers (Jordan) crosses, doves, animals, plants and trees created by God.

Abilene Christian University in Texas attributes Blanche with at least 222 baptistry paintings throughout the United States and a few foreign countries.



L to R: Gene Perry, Jr. (son of Blanche), Iva Garrett Henry (sister of Blanche) and Blanche Garrett Perry, date unknown, Courtesy Margery Henry

Blanche Perry did not charge churches for her time or talents, she did ask that the recipients bear the cost of materials used and shipping. The majority of the canvases were created in Perry's home studio, Denver. Blanche would include written or typed instructions for how the canvas should be hung and proper lighting, listing each Christian symbol found in a particular painting. She often listed associated scripture for each symbol.



Myrta Blanche Elliott (Myrta), daughter of Blanche Perry, date unknown, Courtesy Margery Henry



The five adult Garrett siblings, L to R: Dewitt Garrett, Blanche Garrett Perry, Iva Garrett Henry, Fannie Garrett Timmerman and Will Davis Garrett, date unknown, Courtesy Margery Henry

Mrs. Perry's works were so frequently requested that she was unable to keep pace with the requests. Her art work began in 1935 and lasted until around 1955 when she would have been 65 years old. Mrs. Perry lived to be 91 years old!

Faith Filled Life

Life for Blanche Perry was not an easy one, sadness seemed to always be near, including the death of her parents while still a child, chronic illness, loss of her second child, Frances Isabel Perry, at only ten months of age. Her third child, Myrta Blanche (known as Myrta) was sent to live with another family when her brother Gene Perry, Jr. also contracted tuberculosis. In order to protect Myrta's health, the Perrys felt it best to remove her from their home where mother and son recuperated together. All of these circumstances could have been defeating for the family but as stated previously, Blanche possessed a positive attitude and a strong faith in God. In 1935 she had recovered enough, physically, to begin her painting career.

Montgomery County Baptistry Paintings

Over the years, Churches of Christ, possibly numbering four, and local family members were recipients of Blanche's art and generosity. Baptistry paintings documented for this article are:

Capitol Heights Church of Christ, Montgomery, est. 1929

The baptistry painting for this church was remembered by local artist, Clydetta Fulmer. The painting itself has not been located for a number of years.



Capitol Heights Church of Christ, at one time there was a baptistry painting in the church by Blanche Perry, but has been missing for many years, Courtesy Clydetta Fulmer

Ramer Church of Christ, Ramer



Ramer Church of Christ, est. 1940, grew from the Church of Christ in the Chesser community, baptismal painting by Blanche Perry, signed and dated 1949, painting photo courtesy Bruce Strickland and Theresa Henderson and building photo courtesy Diane Helms

Strata Church of Christ, Strata, est. 1870

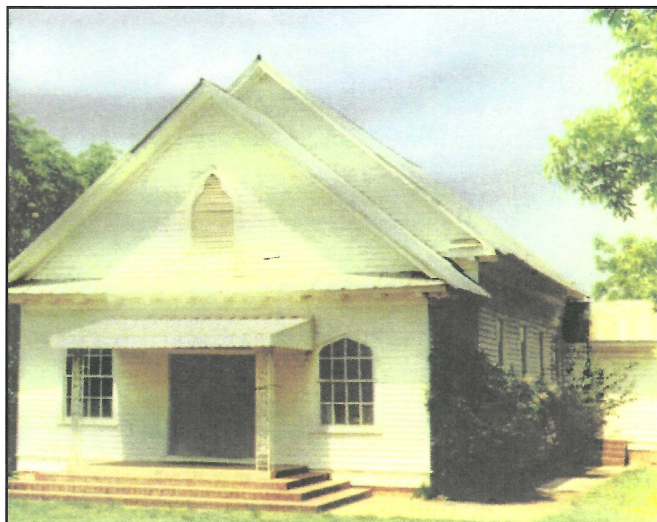
This baptismal painting is in place after being moved to a new brick church in 1960. The artist's signature is no longer visible as the painting was either trimmed to fit the new space or is folded under and not accessible. The church is now owned by an African American congregation.



Church photo courtesy Clydetta Fulmer and painting photo courtesy Alice Carter

Liberty Church of Christ, Hope Hull/Pintlala, est. 1894

The baptistry painting for this church is still in place and survived a move to a new building in 1975



Wood frame Liberty Church of Christ building in Hope Hull contained a baptistry painting by Blanche Perry, Courtesy Margery Henry



Baptistry painting by Blanche Perry, installed in 1941, signed and dated, given in tribute to Dr. and Mrs. Frank Shackelford, Courtesy Ina Slade

A lengthy composition from Blanche regarding the pastoral scene presented to Liberty Church of Christ in February 1941. This painting was presented as a tribute to Dr. Frank and Fannie Shackelford who had reared her and her orphaned siblings. A transcription of an excerpt from this document, shared with me by Margery Henry, follows:

TO THE CHURCH OF CHRIST AT HOPE HULL, ALABAMA

February 1941

In tribute to my beloved Uncle Frank and Aunt Fannie I present this picture, a small expression of my love and gratitude to them. They made it possible for me to develop my little talent, and inspired in me a desire to use this small talent for the Lord. I did not know how that would be accomplished, many years passed before I was given the opportunity to proclaim the Gospel by brush. I pray this picture will be just that to you. If it be of any worth, if it influences the life of any one, I pray the credit be given to those dear souls who inspired it.

Jack Welch, retired professor at Abilene Christian University wrote an article "The Figure of a Woman" in *Wineskins Magazine*. This included Blanche Perry's thoughts regarding her art:

"...I realized that a door was opened to me to preach the gospel in a peculiar way, and a means whereby I could glorify God, with paintings of those visible evidences of his creation. All my life I had wondered how I could glorify God with a talent. The thought of painting baptistries from coast to coast never entered my mind. Now each picture I paint unfolds lovely thoughts found in the Bible in types, figures, and symbols. "

**A collection of Blanche Perry paintings and other media belonging to
Henry family members follow:**
(selected works examples of various media)

Collection of Patsy and Dwight Davis, photos courtesy Patsy



Pink Blossoms in Green Vase, 1942; Trees, 1973, wedding gift to Dwight and Patsy Davis, created in pastels; Lilacs, 1965



Bluebird plaque created in plaster, 1960

Two paintings from the collection of Iva Kate and Tony Hopper



Woodland scene in antique frame, 1965, Wedding gift to Tony and Iva Kate Hopper,
Courtesy Iva Kate Hopper



Nature scene with mountains, 1956, Gift to Myrt and Joe Hall for their new home on Teague Road (now Hyundai Blvd.) The Halls are parents of Iva Kate and Patsy.
Courtesy Iva Kate Hopper.

Blanche Perry art from collection of Margery Henry



Ducks on lake, date unknown

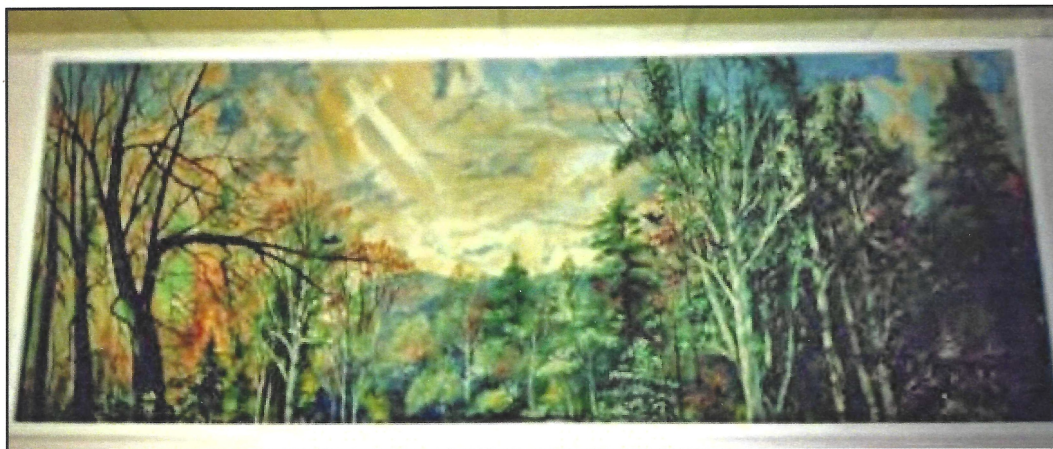


Ceramic Bowl, date unknown



Trees and water painting, date unknown,

Partial view of baptistry painting from Prattville Church of Christ Courtesy of Virginia Elliott and Theresa Henderson



SOURCES

BOOKS

KIMBROUGH, EARL. *MISS POLLY: THE LIFE AND TIMES OF MARY LUMPKIN BARNES, 1811-1891*. COBB PUBLISHING, 2021.

STOUGH, DURDEN. *HISTORY OF THE CATOMA STREET CHURCH OF CHRIST 1879-1973*

DIRECTORY

Directory 1937 Capitol Heights Church Of Christ, Montgomery, Alabama, 1937

FAMILY ARCHIVES ORGANIZED AND MAINTAINED BY MARGERY B. HENRY

Scrap Book Compiled by Iva Garrett Henry

Autobiography of Blanche Garrett Perry

Blanche Garrett Perry, Tribute to Dr. Frank and Fannie Shackelford, 1941

FILES

Ramer Church Of Christ, Undated, Ramer Branch Library

INTERVIEWS

CLYDETTA FULMER, APRIL 2025

MARGERY HENRY, VARIOUS DATES IN FEBRUARY, MARCH AND APRIL, 2025

MARK JONES, MARCH 2025

MILTON SLAUSON, APRIL 2025

PERIODICALS

WINESKINS. Jack Welch. The Figure of a Woman, v. 2, p. 27, May 1993

Ancestry.com

Census Records

Acknowledgements

My deepest appreciation to :

Margery Henry for her time and willingness to gather materials regarding Blanche Perry.

Clydetta Fulmer for lending me publications related to Churches of Christ in the Montgomery area and images of the same.

Mark Jones, minister at Liberty Church and Carleton Harrison, minister at Strata Church for allowing me to view the Perry baptistry paintings in their churches

Diane Helms, Bruce Strickland and Theresa Henderson for providing images of churches and paintings and Raymond and Virginia Elliott for Prattville image and information

Sisters Iva Kate Hopper and Patsy Davis for sharing their Perry art works

Erica Pye, of Abilene Christian University Library for putting me on the right track to Perry archives

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 1976

The Montgomery Advertiser

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SECOND FRONT

The Montgomery Advertiser



Catoma School As It Appeared at 1923 Dedication Ceremony



School As It Looks Today Without the Porch

—Advertiser Photo by Pat Brown

Parents Help Refurbish Catoma School

By WANDA McCLUSKY
Advertiser Staff Writer

Children reading under the trees and taking "nature walks," mothers "washing" library books, fathers painting and clearing land—this scene would be difficult to construct at a city school, or many others, but apparently is typical at Catoma Elementary School.

Catoma is located just outside Montgomery, off Highway 80 W., and is part of the Montgomery County School System.

For the past few years, the school has had a resurgence of community support, and visitors get the impression that parents, and others in the area, can't do enough for the school.

Catoma first opened in 1922 and has needed refurbishing—and is getting it.

The school board redid the bathrooms and has supplied materials for some other projects but other equipment has been bought by the PTA, and much of the work has been done by parents and other in-

terested citizens in the community.

The completed improvements include:

—Remodeling the principal's office with the addition of carpet, paneling and curtains;

—Establishing a teacher's room ("lounge" or "workroom") which includes fresh paint, carpet, drapes and furnishings;

—Setting up an office (paneled), adjacent to the kitchen, for the lunchroom manager;

—Clearing off baseball-football fields on the school grounds and supplying fencing and lighting;

—Constructing a concession stand with restroom facilities.

In the classrooms, the major improvements appear to be in the form of equipment and materials purchases, including television sets (for ETV programs), earphones and other audio equipment, overhead projectors and screens, shelves, carts, tables and chairs.

Projects in the works now include converting a large classroom into a school library, cleaning and refinishing floors, resurfacing the

main hallway and placing furniture in the front hall.

Future plans call for new stage curtains, sidewalks and replanting shrubbery.

Time is given by some in the community who have no children in the school, including a woman who advises the student newspaper and directs plays and the postman who did some painting.

Catoma School is the smallest regular school in the system here, with an enrollment of about 175. And principal Joseph Armistead says its patrons are "not wealthy people" but last year the PTA raised more than \$2,000 for the school and hopes to do the same this year.

In addition to some of the items mentioned above, the money is used for paper towels, first aid supplies and athletic equipment (and the organization's in-house expenses such as prizes and refreshments).

Accreditation will bring this school a part-time secretary (the

principal presently has none) and a half-time librarian and an art, music teacher.

There must be some disadvantages for students and teachers at a small rural school, and an apparent one at Catoma is that some grades are combined. That is, second and third graders, for example, meet in one classroom and have one teacher.

Principal Armistead insists the situation need not be a problem, however, because elementary teachers use grouping anyway and the distinction between grades can be an artificial one.

In regard to the community spirit and help: is it impossible for this type atmosphere to exist at a large, city school?

Armistead thinks many of the same things could be done anywhere, and he says he believes in running an "open" school.

"It's not my school. I don't own it; the teachers don't own it. The community does."

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—Principal Armistead



Principal in New Office

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 1976

The Montgomery Advertiser

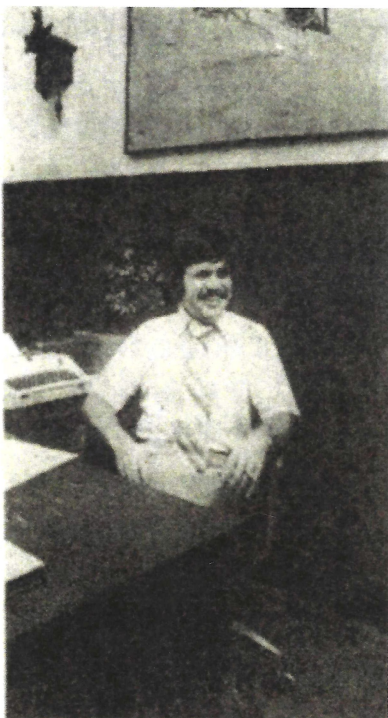
PAGE 11

SECOND FRONT

The Montgomery Advertiser



Catoma School As It Appeared at 1923 Dedication Ceremony



Principal in New Office



School As It Looks Today Without the Porch

—Advertiser Photo by Pat Barnes

Monday, September 20, 1976

Second Front

The Montgomery Advertiser

Parents Help Refurbish Catoma School

By Wanda McClusky

Advertiser Staff Writer

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**PINTLALA HISTORICAL
ASSOCIATION**

*c/o Pintlala Public Library
255 Federal Road
Hope Hull, AL 36043*

NEXT MEETING

**APRIL 27, 2025
2:30 P.M.
PINTLALA BAPTIST
CHURCH**

Join the Pintlala Historical Association

Please mail completed form & dues to:

Pintlala Historical Association

Ina Slade, Treasurer

15212 Highway 31

Hope Hull, Alabama 36043

Name _____

Address _____

City, State Zip _____

Phone (Home & Office) _____

E-Mail Address _____

Areas of Interest _____

If you are interested in genealogy, please indicate family surnames _____

\$15.00 Annual Dues