

April in Talladega

Some great legal minds are coming together in Talladega April 13 and 14, not in the courtroom, but in the streets of the city's Silk Stocking District to host the "April in Talladega" pilgrimage.

Attorneys **Mark and Jeanne Dowdle Rasco** are co-chairs of this year's pilgrimage which features a weekend family event of historic home tours, cooking demonstrations, special art and artifact exhibits, a vintage children's section, cemetery tours, and musical entertainment. The tour draws visitors from across the state and raises funds for community projects.

Mark Rasco is a graduate of Auburn University and the University of Alabama School of Law where he served on the

Student Bar Association as a school senator. He is a partner in the firm of Gaines & Rasco PC. He is president of the Graham Elementary School PTO and an active member of the Talladega County Farmers Federation, and has served as president of the Talladega County Cattleman's Association and the Talladega Kiwanis Club.

Jeanne Rasco is also a graduate of Auburn University and the University of Alabama School of Law, where she was elected president of the Student Bar Association and received the Dean Thomas Christopher award for her contributions to the law center and legal education. Jeanne now has her own private

law practice. She currently serves as president of the Talladega County Bar Association and is vice chair of the Talladega City Schools Foundation. A Rotarian and Girl Scout troop leader, Jeanne has also served as president of the Junior Welfare League and United Way of North Talladega County. Mark and Jeanne are members of First Presbyterian Church and have two children.

Other lawyers joining the April in Talladega lineup are homeowners **Clint Thomas** and **Jim Malone**.

The Victorian-style Boswell-Devries-Thomas Home owned by Clint and his wife Shellye was built in 1890 and is listed on the National Register of Historic



At the McEldery-Malone home are ASB members Jim Malone, Clint Thomas, Jeanne Rasco and Mark Rasco.

Places. Clint, Shellye and their two children are involved in historic preservation and have spent many hours working on their South Street East home. Clint's office is located in Calera and he is also a professor teaching contract law at the Birmingham School of Law. He is a graduate of Auburn University and the Cumberland School of Law at Samford University and earned an LL.M. in taxation from the University of Alabama School of Law. He is the author of a legal textbook and a novel and enjoys collecting antiques and big-game hunting and is a member of Safari Club International.

Restoration of the 7,000-square-foot Thomas Home has been a great adventure with 22 rooms and 11 fireplaces designed by architect Frank Lockwood. Legend has it that the original owner, Dr. Harry Boswell, constructed and flew an airplane just days before the Wright Brothers' successful airplane flight, but he failed to receive any publicity for his aviation attempt.

Attorney Jim Malone was born and raised in Talladega and now practices in Lineville. He is a graduate of Auburn University and Emory University and has served as a municipal judge for the cities of Lineville and Ashland for 14 years. He is the father of two college-age children and very active in the community. He has

been a member of the Talladega Rotary Club for 15 years and is active in district activities, including serving as chair of the Youth Exchange program.

A member of First United Methodist Church, Jim enjoys outdoor activities on the farm, travel, fishing, yard work, and "handiwork" around the home originally purchased by his grandparents in 1949. The Victorian-style McEldery-Malone home was built in 1905.

Many new attractions will offer something for everyone as "Talladega Entertains" during its annual April in Talladega pilgrimage April 13 and 14. Headlining the weekend are cooking classes by renowned chef Frank Stitt, noted author and cook Betty Sims and outdoor cooking experts from Bad Byron's and the Alabama Cattlemen's Association. Unique art exhibits and "talking tents" featuring a variety of topics from history to architecture to Indian artifacts will bring added flavor to the tour of historic homes along South Street East. Also new to this year's pilgrimage is a special vintage children's section including storytelling and a Keller Kids area to creatively learn about the everyday life of persons who are deaf and blind.

The Heritage Hall Museum will pay special tribute to portrait artist, the late

Sarah Whitson. Whitson studied under several renowned artists and taught in Birmingham at the Little House on Linden and in Talladega for more than 45 years. The exhibit will feature several works recently discovered in her studio. An extensive Indian artifact collection by Walter Farr, president of the Hillsboro Archeological Society, will also be featured at Heritage Hall.

An antique car show, a sundown tour of Oak Hill Cemetery, English Tea at the Gables and a Taste of Talladega luncheon catered by Café Royale at the newly restored North Hill Manor round out a spring day of activities. In the evening, pilgrimage guests can enjoy a musical comedy, "Three Redneck Tenors," at Talladega's historic Ritz Theater. Tickets for the Friday or Saturday evening performances may be purchased through the Ritz Theater.

Special events such as cooking demonstrations, teas, luncheons and cemetery tours require an additional ticket with the purchase of general admission. General admission tickets are good for the two days of the tour. More information and tickets for April in Talladega are now available online through www.talladegachamber.com or by contacting the Talladega Chamber of Commerce, P. O. Drawer A, Talladega 35161.



The Boswell-Devries-Thomas home



The McEldery-Malone home