NOMINATION OF HISTORIC BUILDING, STRUCTURE, SITE, OR OBJECT
PHILADELPHIA REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

SUBMIT ALL ATTACHED MATERIALS ON PAPER AND IN ELECTRONIC FORM (CD, EMAIL, FLASH DRIVE)
ELECTRONIC FILES MUST BE WORD OR WORD COMPATIBLE

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1. ADDRESS OF HISTORIC RESOURCE *(must comply with an Office of Property Assessment address)*

Street address: **106 E. Sharpnack Street**

Postal code: **19144**

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2. NAME OF HISTORIC RESOURCE

Name: **The Douglas Political Club aka The Hattie Hill Huckabee House**

Current Name: **The Douglas Political Club**

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3. TYPE OF HISTORIC RESOURCE

☒ Building ☐ Structure ☐ Site ☐ Object

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4. PROPERTY INFORMATION

Condition: ☐ excellent ☐ good ☒ fair ☐ poor ☐ ruins

Occupancy: ☐ occupied ☐ vacant ☐ under construction ☒ unknown

Current use: Clubhouse

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5. BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Please attach a narrative description and site/plot plan of the resource's boundaries.

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6. DESCRIPTION

Please attach a narrative description and photographs of the resource's physical appearance, site, setting, and surroundings.

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7. SIGNIFICANCE

Please attach a narrative Statement of Significance citing the Criteria for Designation the resource satisfies.

Period of Significance (from year to year): ca.1853-56; 1921-61

Date(s) of construction: **ca.1853-56**

Architects: **Unknown**

Builders: **John Hergesheimer and Joseph Silvius**

Original owner: **John Hergesheimer and Joseph Silvius**

CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION:

The historic resource satisfies the following criteria for designation (check all that apply):

☒ (a) Has significant character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the City, Commonwealth or Nation or is associated with the life of a person significant in the past; or,

☐ (b) Is associated with an event of importance to the history of the City, Commonwealth or Nation; or,

☐ (c) Reflects the environment in an era characterized by a distinctive architectural style; or,

☐ (d) Embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or engineering specimen; or,

☐ (e) Is the work of a designer, architect, landscape architect or designer, or engineer whose work has significantly influenced the historical, architectural, economic, social, or cultural development of the City, Commonwealth or Nation; or,

☐ (f) Contains elements of design, detail, materials or craftsmanship which represent a significant innovation; or,

☐ (g) Is part of or related to a square, park or other distinctive area which should be preserved according to an historic, cultural or architectural motif; or,

☐ (h) Owing to its unique location or singular physical characteristic, represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community or City; or,

☐ (i) Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in pre-history or history; or

☒ (j) Exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social or historical heritage of the community.

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8. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Please attach a bibliography.

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9. NOMINATOR

Organization: **East Mt. Airy Neighbors**

Author: **Oscar Beisert, Architectural Historian**

Date: **22 March 2024**

Email: **Keeper@KeepingPhiladelphia.org**

Nominator ☐ is ☒ is not the property owner.

PHC USE ONLY

Date of Receipt: 22 March 2024

☑ Correct-Complete ☐ Incorrect-Incomplete Date: 12 June 2024

Date of Notice Issuance: 13 June 2024

Property Owner at Time of Notice:

Name: Douglas Political Club

Address: 106 E Sharpnack St

City: Philadelphia State: PA Postal Code: 19119

Date(s) Reviewed by the Committee on Historic Designation: _____

Date(s) Reviewed by the Historical Commission: _____

Date of Final Action: _____

☐ Designated ☐ Rejected

Nomination

for the

Philadelphia Register of Historic Places

Figure 1. The Douglas Political Club, 106 E. Sharpnack Street, Primary (Northwest) and Side (Southwest) Elevations. Source: Oscar Beisert, 2022.

The Douglas Political Club

aka The Hattie Hill Huckabee House

Erected ca.1853-56

-

106 E. Sharpnack Street
Mt. Airy
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Figure 2. The boundary for the proposed designation is delineated in blue. Source: Atlas, City of Philadelphia.

5. BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundary for the proposed designation is as follows:

All that lot or piece of ground with the buildings and improvements thereon erected SITUATE in the City of Philadelphia on the southeasterly side of Sharpnack Street BEGINNING at a point of said Sharpnack Street and Magnolia Street thence extending along the said side of Sharpnack Street northeastwardly sixty feet to a three-foot wide alley laid out for the use of this and other ground adjoining on the northeast thereof running southeastwardly from said Sharpnack Street thence along the same southeastwardly one hundred and eighteen feet, eleven and five-eighths inches more or less to the line of land now or late of George Billmeyer thence with the same southwestwardly sixty-one feet, two inches to the northeast side of said Magnolia Street thence along the same northwestwardly one hundred and nineteen feet and one-quarter inches to the place of beginning.

Figure 3. The Douglas Political Club, 106 E. Sharpnack Street, Primary (Northwest) and Side (Southwest) Elevations. Source: Oscar Beisert, 2023.

6. PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

The Douglas Political Club at 106 E. Sharpnack Street is a two-and-one-half-story masonry house that stands on a corner lot in the Mt. Airy neighborhood of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The setting of the subject house is a medium-sized, corner lot, which extends from the southeast side of E. Sharpnack Street. There is yard space at the front, side, and rear of the subject building. The yard is fenced by matured plantings, including a topiary hedge, and the remains of an iron hairpin fence.

The Douglas Political Club is comprised of two volumes: the main block (ca.1853-56) and the rear addition (Post 1942). The main block is a two-and-one-half-story stone structure that is clad in stucco, which has been concealed by faux-lapped siding. The rear addition is a two-story masonry building that appends the rear of the main volume. Overall, the main volume represents a typical detached Federal and/or Germantown Vernacular style dwelling.

Figure 4. The subject property, showing both the primary (northwest) elevation and the side yard from E. Sharpnack Street. Source: Oscar Beisert, 2023.

Figure 5. The Douglas Political Club, 106 E. Sharpnack Street, Side (Northeast) and Primary (Northwest) Elevations. Source: Oscar Beisert, 2023.

The primary (northwest) elevation is three bays in width with an entry door at the northernmost bay, which is concealed by a projecting vestibule of concrete block construction, featuring a single entry door. The vestibule is non-contributing. The two additional bays that serve the first floor are windows that have been infilled. The northerly window features an air-conditioning unit, while the southerly window features glass block. Rising above the first-floor windows, the original fenestration of the second floor is basically intact, though the three openings feature replacement units. The roof features a large gable-front dormer, which originally had two windows, one of which has been covered in faux-lapped siding. The roof is clad in asphalt shingles.

The northeast elevation is largely a blind stucco-clad wall with five openings—two at the basement level; two on the second floor; and one on the third floor. The basement windows are set within an exposed rubble stone foundation. The second-floor windows include an original opening with a replacement unit and a small new window, both of which are near the center of the elevation. The third, half-story, located within the gable, features a fanlight at center. The northeast elevation of the rear volume appears to be a blind stucco-clad wall.

Figure 6. Looking northeast at the Douglas Political Club, showing the southwest and southeast elevations. Source: Oscar Beisert, 2023.

The southwest elevation includes both the main and rear volumes. The main volume is two-and-one-half stories with two windows per floor. The two first floor windows have been infilled—the northern with glass block and the southern with an air-conditioning unit. Immediately above the first-floor openings, the second-floor windows feature replacement units. The gable end of the third, half-story features two windows, one placed on each side of the interior chimney.

The rear volume is two stories featuring five openings on the first floor and four on the second. The first floor features four windows, all filled with glass block, and a pedestrian door. Three of the second-floor windows have also been infilled with glass block, though one opening features a replacement unit.

The southeast (rear) elevation of the main volume is limited to the roof, which features a single dormer. The rear (southeast) elevation of the rear volume features two openings on the first floor—a pedestrian door and an infilled window. The second floor features two infilled window openings and a pedestrian door accessed by a metal staircase.

Figure 7. Top: The Douglas Political Club at 106 E. Sharpnack Street in context. Source: Oscar Beisert, 2023. Figure 8. Middle: The side (southwest) and rear (southeast) elevations of the Douglas Political Club. Source: Oscar Beisert, 2023. Figure 9. The side (southwest) elevation of the Douglas Political Club from the sidewalk on Magnolia Street. Source: Oscar Beisert, 2023.

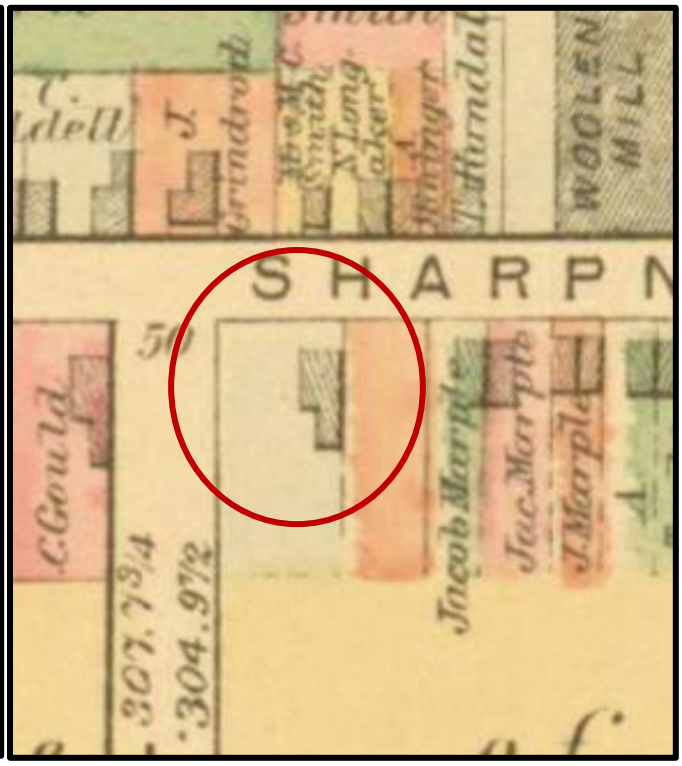


Figure 10. Left: The Douglas Political Club at 106 E. Sharpnack Street in January 1942. Source: Philadelphia Tribune, 17 January 1942, 8. Figure 11. Right: Atlas of Germantown, 1871, showing the subject property (circled). Source: Greater Philadelphia GeoHistory Network.

7. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Douglas Political Club at 106 E. Sharpnack Street in the Mt. Airy neighborhood of Philadelphia is a significant historic resource that merits designation by the Philadelphia Historical Commission and inclusion on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. The building satisfies the following Criteria for Designation as enumerated in Section 14-1004 of the Philadelphia Code:

a) *Has significant character, interest, or value as part of the development, heritage, or cultural characteristics of the City, Commonwealth, or Nation or is associated with a person significant in the past; and*

j) *Exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social or historical heritage of the community.*

The period of significance for the subject property dates to the time of construction in ca.1853-56, as well as the period related to African American history from 1921 to 1961.

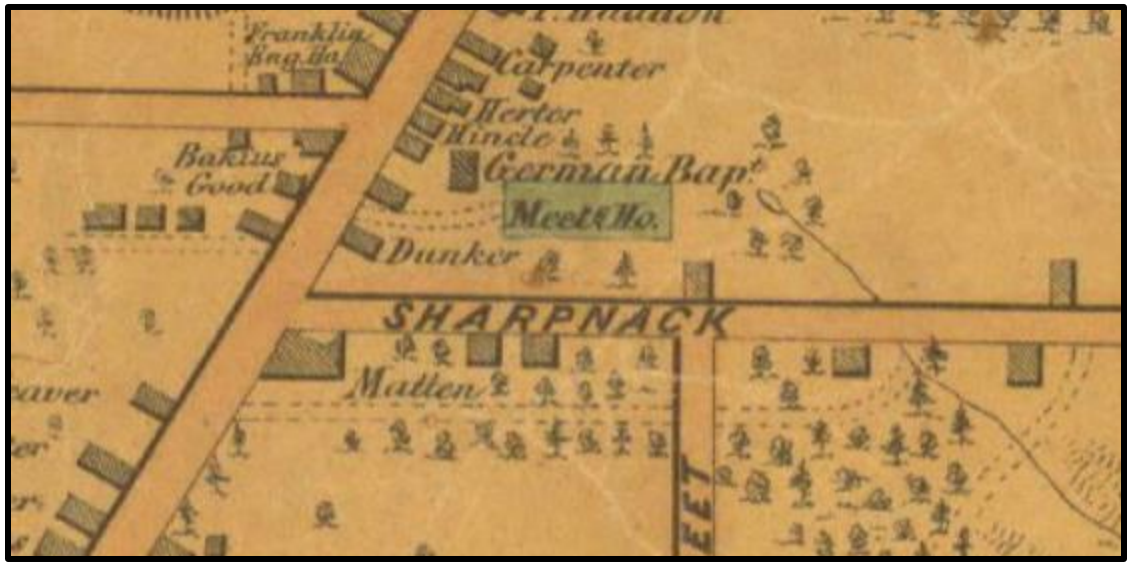
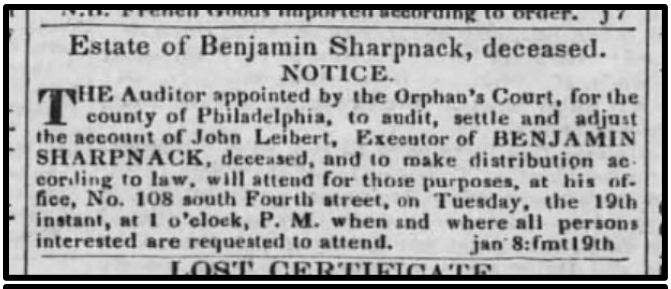


Figure 12. Map of the Township of Germantown, Philadelphia County, Penn., 1851, Greater Philadelphia GeoHistory Network.

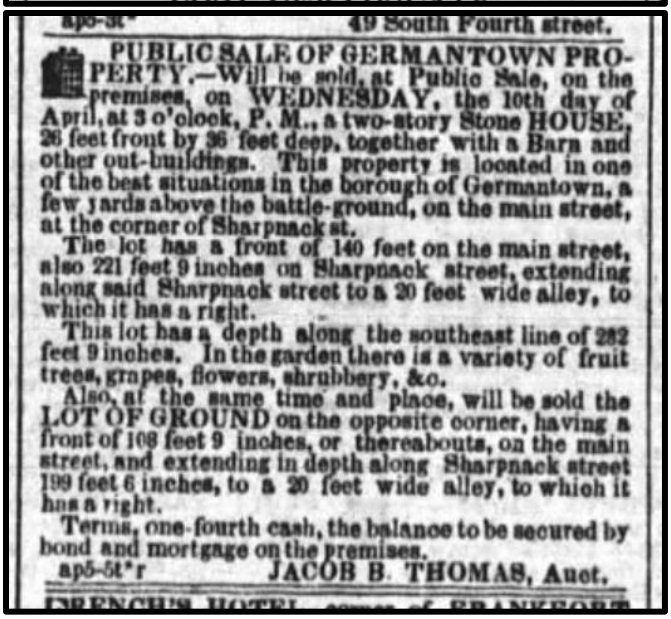
Criterion A and J

The subject building represents the early development and heritage of East Mt. Airy, as it transformed from a Germanic village to a dense town-like community, and eventually a suburb of Philadelphia. In 1849, as part of the settlement of the Estate of Benjamin Sharpnack, the thoroughfare known as Sharpnack Street was opened, extending from Germantown Avenue, immediately above the Sharpnack House, to the northeast. The newly established street initially included several houses and one factory. Joseph Randall & Bros. built the first buildings of the Franklin Hosiery Yarn Mills between 1856 and 1865.[1] Before that, the first houses were constructed between 1849 and 1856, which included the subject building. This house is one of several that was developed in partnership with John Hergesheimer, a house carpenter, and a descendent of the Sharpnack family. The subject building is one of the oldest houses standing on E. Sharpnack Street and represents the initial phase of its development and heritage, satisfying Criterion A and J.

[1] "Joseph Randall & Brothers, Franklin Yarn Mills," Plate 2053, Greater Philadelphia GeoHistory Network.



Estate of Benjamin Sharpnack, deceased.
NOTICE.
THE Auditor appointed by the Orphan's Court, for the county of Philadelphia, to audit, settle and adjust the account of John Leibert, Executor of BENJAMIN SHARPNACK, deceased, and to make distribution according to law, will attend for those purposes, at his office, No. 108 south Fourth street, on Tuesday, the 19th instant, at 1 o'clock, P. M. when and where all persons interested are requested to attend. jan 8:fmt19th



49 South Fourth street.
PUBLIC SALE OF GERMANTOWN PROPERTY.—Will be sold, at Public Sale, on the premises, on WEDNESDAY, the 10th day of April, at 3 o'clock, P. M., a two-story Stone HOUSE, 26 feet front by 36 feet deep, together with a Barn and other out-buildings. This property is located in one of the best situations in the borough of Germantown, a few yards above the battle-ground, on the main street, at the corner of Sharpnack st.
The lot has a front of 140 feet on the main street, also 221 feet 9 inches on Sharpnack street, extending along said Sharpnack street to a 20 feet wide alley, to which it has a right.
This lot has a depth along the southeast line of 282 feet 9 inches. In the garden there is a variety of fruit trees, grapes, flowers, shrubbery, &c.
Also, at the same time and place, will be sold the LOT OF GROUND on the opposite corner, having a front of 108 feet 9 inches, or thereabouts, on the main street, and extending in depth along Sharpnack street 199 feet 6 inches, to a 20 feet wide alley, to which it has a right.
Terms, one-fourth cash, the balance to be secured by bond and mortgage on the premises.
ap5-5t*r JACOB B. THOMAS, Auct.

Figure 13. Top: "Notice of the Estate of Benjamin Sharpnack, deceased," The Philadelphia Inquirer, 18 January 1836, 1. Figure 14. Bottom: "Public Sale of Germantown Property.," Public Ledger, 5 April 1850, 3. Source: Newspapers.com.

Historic Context: The Development of E. Sharpnack Street

The land upon which the subject building stands was once part of a larger tract that was owned by Benjamin Sharpnack (1779-1834), a prominent merchant and Dunker, who died unmarried and without issue. After he passed away in 1834, his unmarried sisters, Mary Sharpnack (1777-1841) and Sarah Sharpnack (1773-1849), occupied the old family house, which stood at what is now the east corner of Germantown Avenue and Sharpnack Street.[2] The Sharpnack House had been the domicile of their parents, Henry Sharpnack (1733-1820) and Sarah Nyse Sharpnack (1749-1822), and was just a stone's throw from the Church of the Brethren, where the elder Sharpnacks too were prominent Dunkers.[3] In 1849, after the deaths of both Mary and Sarah Sharpnack, as well as Elizabeth Sharpnack Hergesheimer (1765-1846), another daughter of Henry Sharpnack, and all of the Elizabeth Sharpnack Hergesheimer's children, the Estate of Benjamin Sharpnack was divided among his heirs: 1. Ann Catherine Sharpnack Stook (1809-1871), the wife of Samuel A. Stook and the only daughter of John Sharpnack (1769-1821), another son of Henry Sharpnack; and 2. the

[2] "Stook's Appeal.," *Pennsylvania State Reports.* Vol. XX. Containing Reports of Cases Adjudged By The Supreme Court of Pennsylvania. (Philadelphia: Kay & Brother, 1853), 349.
[3] Thomas B. Shoemaker. "A List of the Inhabitants of Germantown and Chestnut Hill in 1809.," *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, Vol. XV. (Philadelphia: HSP, 1891), 468.

eight grandchildren of Elizabeth Sharpnack Hergesheimer.[4] Stook contested the estate, which led to "Stook's Appeal," a lawsuit ultimately adjudicated by the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania and published afterward in 1853.

Despite "Stook's Appeal," it appears that Sharpnack Street was opened in 1849, as it is referenced in a real estate advertisement for the Sharpnack House the next year.[5] The development of the street was also reported on by the *Germantown Telegraph* in December 1851, which included a notice that houses were to be constructed.[6] The subject property was part of a larger parcel that was first sold by John Leibert, the executor of the Estate of Benjamin Sharpnack, to Henry Fricke, a merchant of Northern Liberties. It was during Fricke's ownership that eight lots were created on the southeast side of the newly opened street. In 1853, Henry and Elizabeth Fricke deeded the subject property to John Hergesheimer and Joseph Silvius, both house carpenters of Germantown, which led to the development of the subject property.[7] On June 13, 1856, John Hergesheimer deeded the subject property with the subject house, newly completed, to Joseph Silvius for $1,850.[8] The subject property was later sold to Benjamin L. Langstroth, a gentleman, for $3,000.[9] Langstroth held the property until July 31, 1866, when he sold it to Solon Brownwell, an engineer formerly of Iowa, recently having relocated to Philadelphia, for $3,000.[10] Bronwell then subdivided the property into two lots, creating the subject property in its present form. In 1868, Bronwell sold the subject property to Job Bird, a merchant of Germantown, who then flipped the property to Rachel Stewart, the wife of Henry R. Stewart, of Germantown for $3,500.[11] Rachel Stewart resided in the subject house until her death on February 15, 1898, after which time Robert Thomas, Executor of the Estate of Rachel Stewart, sold the subject property to John Clark, a blacksmith of Germantown, which was effective on April 27, 1899.[12]

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[4] "Stook's Appeal.," *Pennsylvania State Reports. Vol. XX. Containing Reports of Cases Adjudged By The Supreme Court of Pennsylvania*. (Philadelphia: Kay & Brother, 1853), 349.
[5] "Public Sale of Germantown Property.," *Public Ledger,* 5 April 1850, 3.
[6] *Germantown Telegraph*, December 1851.
[7] Deed: Henry and Elizabeth Fricke to John Hergesheimer and Joseph Silvius, 29 July 1853, Philadelphia Deed Book T. H., No. 104, p. 136, City Archives of Philadelphia.
[8] Deed: John Hergesheimer and Margaret, his wife, to Joseph Silvius and Sarah, his wife, 13 June 1856, Philadelphia Deed Book R. D. W., No. 129, p. 428, City Archives of Philadelphia.
[9] Deed: Joseph Silvius and Sarah, his wife, to Benjamin L. Langstroth, 25 January 1861, Philadelphia Deed Book A. C. H., No. 3, p. 46, City Archives of Philadelphia.
[10] Deed: Benjamin L. Langstroth, and Margaret, his wife, 31 July 1866, Philadelphia Deed Book L. R. B., No. 201, p. 107, City Archives of Philadelphia.
[11] Deed: Job Bird, and, Margaret, his wife, to Rachel Stewart, the wife of Henry R. Stewart, 24 May 1872, Philadelphia Deed Book J.A.H., No. 251, p. 273, City Archives of Philadelphia.
[12] Deed: Robert Thomas, Executor of the Estate of Rachel Stewart, to John Clark, 27 April 1899, Philadelphia Deed Book J. V., No. 17, p. 393, City Archives of Philadelphia.

THE SOUTH'S LEADING WEEKLY JOURNAL AND ADVERTISING MEDIUM THAT BRINGS RESULTS

THE BIRMINGHAM REPORTER

EXPONENT OF JUSTICE AND FAIR PLAY TO ALL SPECIAL PRIVILEGES TO NONE

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF MASONS AND EASTERN STARS OF ALABAMA AND KNIGHTS AND LADIES OF HONOR OF THE WORLD

Vol. 30, No. 16 — BIRMINGHAM, ALA., SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 1932 — PRICE 5 CENTS

DR. MOTON COMMITTEE HEAD

Negro Boys May Know Fate Monday

SCOTTSBORO DECISION AWAITED

PROGRAM ON NEGRO EDUCATION TO BE BROADCAST NOV. 10

FORCES WAY INTO CHURCH

COMMISSION TO INVESTIGATE SLAVERY CHARGES IN MISSISSIPPI CONSTRUCTION CAMPS

DAY OF "WHEELBARROW TOUR" NEAR

POPULAR BUSINESS MAN SUCCUMBS TO PNEUMONIA

MEN AND WOMEN FLOCK TO FLORAL PYTHIAN-CALANTHE MEET; ENTHUSIASM RUNS HIGH

MRS. B. E. HUCKABEE PASSES SUDDENLY IN PENNSYLVANIA

WILLIE PETERSON DEFENSE IN NEED OF FUNDS

COLORED DIVISION READY FOR TENTH CHEST APPEAL

"OKAY AMERICA" TO STAR NEGRO ORCHESTRA AND DANCER

Figure 15. An article on the death of Hattie Hill Huckabee appeared on the front page of *The Birmingham Reporter* on November 5, 1932. Source: Newspapers.com.

Criteria A and J

The subject building represents a period when Sharpnack Street was a local center of the African American community in East Mt. Airy, satisfying Criteria A and J. From 1921 to 1941, the subject building was occupied as a residence by Benjamin E. Huckabee, an important African American physician of Birmingham, Alabama, and, his wife, Harriet "Hattie" Hill Huckabee, an important African American educator and community leader. Beginning in the early 1940s, the subject building became home to the Douglas Political Club, an organization that represents the political, social, and historical heritage of the African American community in Mt. Airy, satisfying Criterion J.[13]

[13] Reg. Plan No. 52-N-A-7-A, New Historical Index, City of Philadelphia.

Figure 16. Hattie Hill Huckabee's grandmother, Harriet Hamilton, and four of her children, including Uncle Charlie, Aunt Rhett, Homer Hill, Sr.—Hattie's father, and Aunt June. Source: Rebecca Motley, Ancestry.com.

Biography of Harriet "Hattie" Hill Huckabee

Harriet "Hattie" Hill Huckabee was born on August 10, ca.1867-70, in Greensboro, Hale County, Alabama, the daughter of Homer Hill (1845-1914) and Mildred "Milly" Edmonia Watt (1845-1928).[14] Homer Hill was a farmer, and the son of Fabius Fenelon Hill (1817-1885), a plantation owner and enslaver, and Harriet Hamilton (1828-1911), who was possibly an enslaved African American woman. According to Rebecca Motley, M.D., the Hill family historian and a great-great niece of Hattie Hill Huckabee, it appears that Fabius Fenelon Hill was in favor of educating his children, despite their social status in society as being of a mixed racial background. This led to a legacy of education in the Hill family. It appears that Homer and Milly Hill had approximately twelve children, many of whom were educated, becoming educators themselves.[15] Milly Watt Hill was the daughter of Captain Hugh Washington Watt, V (1813-1872), and a Cajun woman from Louisiana, which led to a similar family of mixed racial background.[16]

[14] Hill Family Tree, Ancestry.com.
[15] Clark Family Tree, Ancestry.com.
[16] Hill Family Tree, Ancestry.com.

Figure 17. Left: Homer Hill, "Nationally Known Headwaiter and Social Service Worker," the brother of Hattie Hill Huckabee. Source: Rebecca Motley, Ancestry.com. Figure 18. Right: Milly Watt Hill (on right), her sister, Martha Watt (on left), and an unidentified child in front of a house in Alabama. Source: Rebecca Motley, Ancestry.com.

When the time came, Hattie attended the Tullibody Academy in Greensboro, known as one of the first and "better Negro schools" in the rural district near the farm upon which she was raised.[17] Tullibody was significant, as it was established in a "brush arbor" on or near the McFadden Plantation in ca.1870 by William Burns Paterson, a pioneer and apostle in "Negro Education in Alabama."[18] Hattie went on to attend the State Normal School for Colored Students in Montgomery, Alabama, from which she graduated in 1893.[19] The State Normal School ultimately became Alabama State University, one of America's Historically Black Colleges. She would later attend the Summer Normal School for Teachers in 1912, 1913, and 1914 at Hampton Institute, Virginia.[20] Immediately after graduation, Hattie's initial teaching position was at her first school: the Tullibody Academy.[21]

Hattie married Benjamin E. Huckabee, M. D. (Dr. Huckabee), an important African American educator and physician, also from Greensboro, on November 16, 1886.[22] Dr. Huckabee was a "teacher of the Colored Public School" with roughly 70 students when he and Hattie were married.[23] He was also prominent in the African American community's Republican Party.[24] By 1889, he was principal of the "Colored Public School" at Greensboro, which was still referred to as the Tullibody Academy in the 1890s.[25] The Huckabees raised the following children: Willie C. Huckabee (1898-1910); Robert Huckabee (b.1911); Dempsey Butler Huckabee (1911-1967); and Zacra Huckabee (b.1916).[26] Dr. Huckabee's father, Edward Huckabee had been enslaved by Robert Huckabee in Greene County, Alabama, and, during the Civil War, Ed Huckabee accompanied his

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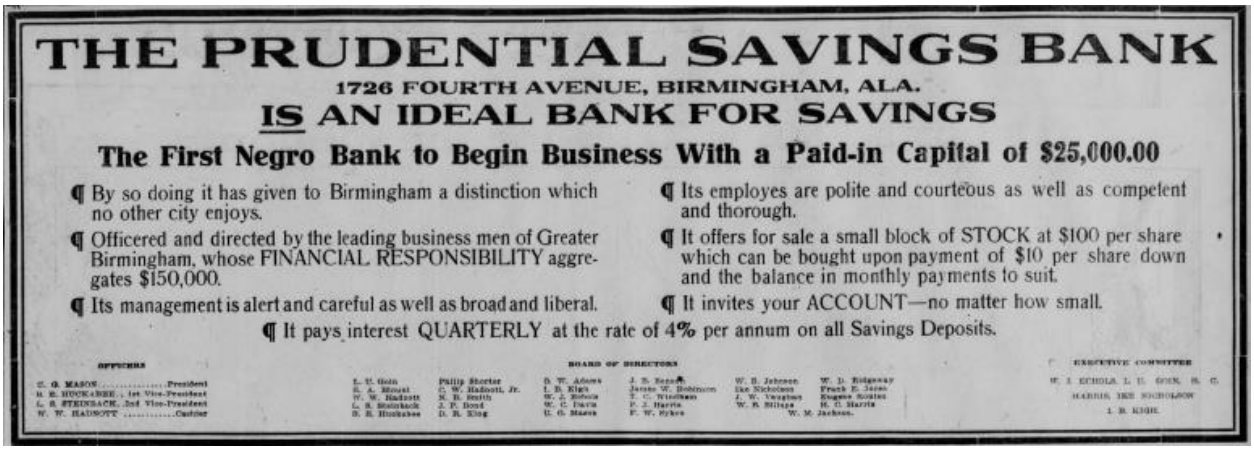
[17] *The Alabama Beacon*, 1877.
[18] Robert G. Sherer. "William Burns Paterson: Pioneer as well as Apostle of Negro Education in Alabama.," *The Alabama Historical Quarterly,* Summer 1974.
[19] *Who's Who of the Colored Race: A General Biographical Dictionary of Men and Women of African Descent.* (Chicago, 1915), 145.
[20] *Who's Who of the Colored Race: A General Biographical Dictionary of Men and Women of African Descent.* (Chicago, 1915), 146.
[21] *Who's Who of the Colored Race: A General Biographical Dictionary of Men and Women of African Descent.* (Chicago, 1915), 146.
[22] *Alabama, Marriages, 1816-1957*. Salt Lake City, Utah: FamilySearch, 2013.
[23] *The Eutaw Whig and Observer,* 18 November 1886, 3.
[24] "Republican Convention," *Greensboro Watchman*, 24 June 1886, 2.
[25] *The Alabama Beacon*, 7 May 1889, 4.; and *The Alabama Beacon*, 10 May 1893, 3.
[26] Hill Family Tree, Ancestry.com.

enslaver, Robert Huckabee, as a ”body servant.” After the war, Ed Huckabee moved to Greensboro, where he married Ophelia Walton, who had been the maid of Miss Jesse Walton. The elder Huckabee soon opened a barber shop of local fame at Greensboro.[27]


THE PRUDENTIAL SAVINGS BANK

1726 FOURTH AVENUE, BIRMINGHAM, ALA.

IS AN IDEAL BANK FOR SAVINGS

The First Negro Bank to Begin Business With a Paid-in Capital of $25,000.00

¶ By so doing it has given to Birmingham a distinction which no other city enjoys.

¶ Officered and directed by the leading business men of Greater Birmingham, whose FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY aggregates $150,000.

¶ Its management is alert and careful as well as broad and liberal.

¶ Its employes are polite and courteous as well as competent and thorough.

¶ It offers for sale a small block of STOCK at $100 per share which can be bought upon payment of $10 per share down and the balance in monthly payments to suit.

¶ It invites your ACCOUNT—no matter how small.

¶ It pays interest QUARTERLY at the rate of 4% per annum on all Savings Deposits.

OFFICERS

C. G. MASON .....President
H. E. HUCKABEE, 1st Vice-President
L. S. STEINBACH, 2nd Vice-President
W. W. HADNOTT .....Cashier

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

L. U. Goin, R. A. Mount, W. W. Hadnott, L. S. Steinbach, S. E. Huckabee, Philip Shorter, C. W. Hadnott, Jr., N. B. Smith, J. P. Bond, D. R. King, D. W. Adams, I. B. Kigh, W. J. Robson, W. C. Davis, U. G. Mason, J. B. Bennett, James W. Robinson, T. C. Windham, P. J. Harris, F. W. Sykes, W. B. Johnson, Ike Nicholson, J. W. Vaughan, W. B. Billups, W. M. Jackson, W. D. Ridgeway, Frank E. Jones, Eugene Scotus, H. C. Harris

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

W. J. ECHOLS, L. U. GOIN, S. C. HARRIS, IKE NICHOLSON, I. B. KIGH.

Figure 19 An advertisement for the Prudential Savings Bank of which Dr. Huckabee was the 1st Vice President. Source: *The Age-Herald*, 16 October 1910.

After Dr. Huckabee shifted from education to the practice of medicine between 1904 and 1906, the family moved to Birmingham, Jefferson County, Alabama, where Hattie became a teacher at an African American school at both Fossil’s Graded School and Rosedale. She was not only an educator for the Jefferson County Schools, she owned her own home in Birmingham.[28] By July 1910, Dr. Huckabee was a co-founder and 1st Vice President of the Prudential Savings Bank in Birmingham, which was advertised as “The First Negro Bank to Begin Business With a Paid-in Capital of $25,000.00.”[29] He continued as 1st Vice President through the mid-1910s.[30] This position demonstrates the prominence of the Huckabee family during the early twentieth century.

Figure 20. Second Annual Convention of Negro Women at Tuscaloosa, Ala., September 1-10, 1917, which included Hattie Hill Huckabee. Source: *Christian Observer*, 3 October 1917, 11.

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[27] J. B. Reid. “The Story of a Loyal Colored Friend.,” *The Age-Herald,* 3 September 1911.
[28] J. B. Reid. “The Story of a Loyal Colored Friend.,” *The Age-Herald*, 3 September 1911.
[29] “New Bank – Institution Conducted By Negroes Will Open for Business,” *The Age-Herald*, 24 July 1910.; and *The Age-Herald*, 16 October 1910.
[30] “Prudential Savings Bank – Annual Meeting of Stockholders of the Negro Institute Held,” *The Age-Herald*, 6 January 1915.

In 1914, Hattie was appointed a Supervising Industrial Teacher or a Jeanes Supervisor for "64 Negro Schools," which was a new "Programme For Negro Teachers," serving Jefferson County.[31] Mrs. J. B. Reid reported in *The Age-Herald* on this "Industrial Work," including a quote from Hattie Hill Huckabee:

> My first year's work as superintendent of the industrial training of our people is now closing. I have supervised 64 schools. I began work on November 2. Until then I had only taught at Rosedale and Fossill. Now, however, I have learned a valuable lesson from this opportunity.
>
> This has been a hard year, and our people have suffered. I have devoted much time in needy communities teaching how to use a little in a great many ways. There have been placed five sewing machines and three cook stoves into schools this term. In schools around mining camps we have borrowed kitchens, and the girls have been taught to sew, cook and clean house. This is a means of fitting our young for better service and I trust for the continued help from the teachers of the Jefferson County colored schools.[32]

It was at this time that Hattie's career shifted from educating students in the classroom to looking at the bigger picture of education in terms of industrial and vocational training in Jefferson County. This position was subsidized by the Jeanes Fund, which was created by Anna T. Jeanes (1822-1907), a Quaker philanthropist from Philadelphia.[33] The Jeanes Supervisors were a contingency of Black teachers who worked in African American schools throughout the American South between 1908 and 1968. This program had a major impact on the quality of education for African Americans.[34] Active in many organizations, Hattie was elected Vice President of the Negro State Teachers' Association in April 1920.[35] Throughout the Huckabees' time in Birmingham, Hattie was active in a Presbyterian congregation, and regularly attended church functions.[36]

It appears that the Huckabees first moved to Philadelphia in 1921, when they purchase the subject property from the Estate of John Clark, a blacksmith.[37] Hattie Hill Huckabee was soon installed in the prominent African American social circles of Philadelphia. In 1929, Hattie Hill Huckabee established the Women's Civic and Welfare Club of the 22nd Ward, Germantown, which was one of the important civic, community, and social organizations for African American women in East Mt. Airy and the larger realm of Germantown. Naturally, she served as president of the organization from the time of its founding until her death in 1932. The advent of this organization was timely, providing a local response to the Crash of 1929, when the need for charity and community service was in great demand. When the club celebrated its first anniversary in October 1930, the organization boasted over 200 active members with branches in other parts of Philadelphia. According to the *Philadelphia Tribune*, the purpose of the Women's Civic and

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[31] "Programme For Negro Teachers," *The Age-Herald*, 13 September 1914.
[32] J. B. Reid. "The Industrial Work of 64 Negro Schools," *The Age-Herald*, 19 April 1915.
[33] *The Birmingham Reporter*, 16 March 1918, 2.
[34] Daniel Kreisman. "The Next Needed Thing, The Impact of the Jeanes Fund on Black Schooling in the South, 1900-1930.," *The Journal of Human Resources*, Spring 2017, 573-620.)
[35] "N. S. T. A. Closes Meeting," *The Birmingham News,* 4 April 1920, 43. =
[36] "Church News," *The Presbyterian of the South*, 3 October 1917, 12.
[37] Deed: The Estate of John Clark and Emily, his wife, to Benjamin E. Huckabee, 12 May 1921, Philadelphia Deed Book J. M. H., No. 1145, p. 123, City Archives of Philadelphia.

Welfare Club was "Charity work among the poor colored families in this vicinity."[38] Hattie was an active member of the Women's Republican Club of the Twenty-Second Ward as well, serving as treasurer by 1929.[39]

During her tenure as president, the Women's Civic and Welfare Club opened a Community Kitchen at 36 E. Sharpnack Street, where Hattie and her fellow club members served "meals to the unemployed families, colored and white, of this section of the city." As president of a relatively new organization, she was literally in the kitchen with her fellow clubwomen, preparing the meals. In a nine-week period, the organization served over 3,700 meals.[40] The *Philadelphia Tribune* reported on the "W. C. and W. Club Meeting" in February 1932, presided over by Hattie Hill Huckabee. At that time, it was stated the club had grown significantly to more than 500 members.[41]

In 1931, the Men's Civic and Welfare Club of Germantown and the 22nd Ward, a partner club, was established "at the home of Mrs. Hattie Huckabee, of 106 E. Sharpnack street," for the purpose of conducting "social, political and educational work among the colored people" of the community.[42]

During this period, the property at 106 E. Sharpnack Street must have been a hive of activity. The 1930 census lists as residents of the property: Dr. and Hattie Huckabee, their adopted children (Dempsey B. Huckabee, Robert Huckabee, and Zacra C. Huckabee) as well as two boarders and five roomers.[43]

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[38] "Women's Civic and Welfare Club Celebrates Anniversary; Churchmen Meet At Germant'n," *Philadelphia Tribune,* 9 October 1930, 13.
[39] "Germantown Women Discuss Recent Primaries at Meeting; Miles of Streets Improved," *Philadelphia Tribune*, 26 September 1929, 12.
[40] "Women Feed Thousands Both Black and White; Other Germantown News," *Philadelphia Tribune*, 12 February 1931, 13.
[41] "Germantown News," *Philadelphia Tribune,* 11 February 1932, 14.
[42] "Germantown Choir In Monthly Musicale; Men Organize Club," *Philadelphia Tribune*, 5 February 1931, 13.
[43] United States of America, Bureau of the Census. *Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930*. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1930. T626, 2,667 rolls.

Communist Friends Of Scottsboro Boys Mob American Embassy In Paris

City Edition

The Philadelphia Tribune

ELECTION DAY Tuesday, Nov. 8th Don't Forget To Vote!

VOLUME XLVIII, NO. 50 SIXTEEN PAGES PHILADELPHIA, PA., THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 1932 SIXTEEN PAGES Six Cents in Philadelphia and Suburbs—Ten Cents Elsewhere

Hoover Declares For Equal Opportunity For Negroes

Paris "Reds" Ask Justice For Ala. Boys

36 Organizations Present Petitions In Their Favor

Many Negro Delegates

Foresee Riots if the Scottsboro Boys Are Condemned

Heads Commission

DR. E. E. MOTON

County To Pay Cost Of Willie Brown's Appeal

Judge McDevitt So Rules and Appoints Alexander and Nix

Mrs. Hattie Huckabee Drops Dead In Home

Tide Swings to Hoover As Campaign Nears End

Would Appoint To West Point And Annapolis

Congressman Beck Says He Would Send Negroes to These Schools

Speaking For Hoover

MRS. WILDA R. TOWNSEND

Continue Fight To Save Bureau Of Legal Aid

Thousand Had Wage Differences Settled Free By Bureau

Leader of 30th Ward Is Among Hoover's Escort

Negro Teachers Barred From High Schools

Mrs. Townsend Touring West For Hoover

New Jersey Orator Visits Nine States For President

Figure 21. The front page of the *Philadelphia Tribune*, where an article on the death of Hattie Hill Huckabee is front and center, as published on November 3, 1932. Source: Proquest Historical Newspapers: *Philadelphia Tribune*.

In May 1932, Hattie penned "Mother's Day And Its Lesson To Youth," which was published in the *Philadelphia Tribune*. Later that year, on November 1, 1932, Hattie died "without warning" in the subject building. The *Philadelphia Tribune* conveyed that "she fell from a chair in which she was sitting in the kitchen, and before any appreciable aid could be ministered, had succumbed." The article went on to state that Hattie was "one of Philadelphia's most prominent civic and welfare workers."[44] The news of her demise was also published on the front page of *The Birmingham Reporter*.[45] Her funeral took place on Saturday, November 5, 1932, at the Faith Presbyterian Church, of which she was a member. The chief eulogy was given by Rev. Dr. Ellison of Newark, New Jersey with remarks by Rev. L. C. Coleman of the Lombard St. Central Presbyterian Church and other ministers. Hattie was buried in Fairview Cemetery.[46]

[44] "Mrs. Hattie Huckabee Drops Dead In Home," *Philadelphia Tribune*, 3 November 1932, 1.
[45] "Mrs. B.E. Huckabee Passes Suddenly In Pennsylvania," *The Birmingham Reporter,* 5 November 1932, 1.
[46] "Funeral Rites Held For Mrs. H.B. Huckabee," *Philadelphia Tribune*, 10 November 1932, 2.

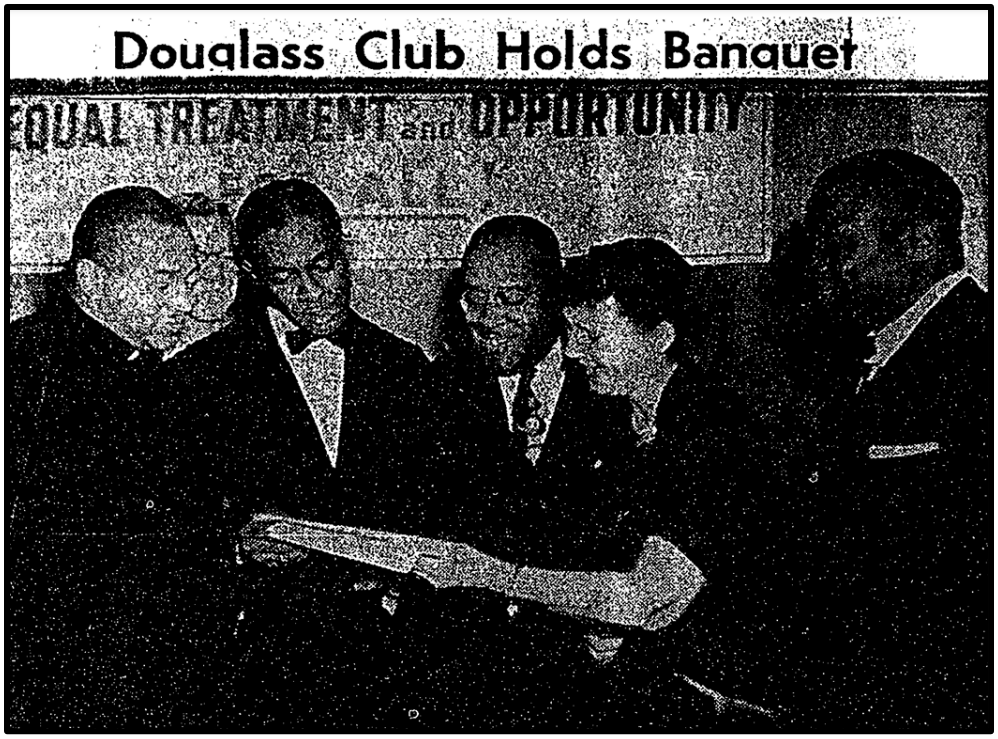

Figure 22. A photograph from the 21st anniversary banquet of the Douglas Political Club, showing Rev. Henry H. Nichols, Andrew Hoffman, William Wilmore, Rev. E. Luther Cummingham, Mrs. Constance Dallas, and Rev. Marshall L. Shepard. Source: *Philadelphia Tribune*, 4 November 1952, 16. Source: Proquest Historical Newspapers: *Philadelphia Tribune.*

Historic Context: Douglas Political Club

The Douglas Political Club of the 22nd Ward, Germantown, was founded in ca.1931-32, as "one of the largest organizations of political workers in Philadelphia." When the organization purchased the subject building in 1941, Catherine Taylor of the *Philadelphia Tribune* reported that "a group of hard working men of Germantown met one evening in 1931 and formed themselves into a club known as the Douglass Political Club."[47] Attorney Holland is said to have been instrumental in starting the organization.[48] In its earliest years, the organization met at the Young Women's Christian Association at 6128 Germantown Avenue. In February 1932, the officers included R. L. Myers, president; Smith Pierce, vice-president; R. L. Pierce, secretary; G. R. Peck, assistant sectary; Henry Bynum, assistant secretary; Benjamin E. Stickney, treasurer; Anthony James, chaplain; Wilbert R. Dixon, sergeant-at-arms.[49] The organization held its first "mass meeting" at the Janes Methodist Episcopal Church, Haines Street east of Germantown Avenue, on a Friday evening in March 1932. The speaker of the evening was Hattie Hill Huckabee, who then occupied the subject building as her residence, which would eventually become the organization's clubhouse. She spoke of "Cooperation" and the life of Frederick Douglas.[50]

By April 1932, the organization reported 275 members from the local community. At their meeting that month, the club hosted Councilman-elect Edwin Emhardt as their speaker. The organization had a clubhouse at 80 E. Sharpnack Street by January 1935, at which time new officers were

[47] "Germantown," *Philadelphia Tribune*, 17 January 1942, 8.
[48] "Councilman Elect Speaks," *Philadelphia Tribune*, 14 April 1932, 13.
[49] "Douglas Political Club," *Philadelphia Tribune*, 25 February 1932, 6.
[50] "Douglas Political Club Meets in G't'n," *Philadelphia Tribune*, 17 March 1932, 2.

elected: Clifford W. Thorton, president; Thomas Harris, vice president; Lawrence Pollard, recording secretary; Alexander Washington, assistant recording secretary; Joseph Colver, financial secretary; William McCallum, assistant financial secretary; Benjamin Stickney, treasurer; Frank Fuller, chaplain; and Daniel Williams, sergeant-at-arms.[51] Over the years the organization celebrated the birthday of their namesake, Frederick Douglas. In February 1937, the fourth Douglas celebration took place in their clubhouse at 80 E. Sharpnack Street. The officers at that time included Clifford. W. Thorton, president; Lawrence Pollard, recording secretary; Joseph Colver, financial secretary; and Benjamin E. Stickney, treasurer. The event was reported on in the *Philadelphia Tribune* by Miss Loerna Branch, who lived at 68 E. Sharpnack Street.[52]

In November 1941, the subject building was purchased from the Huckabee family. By January 1942, "all modern improvements, including recreational facilities" were made by the club members. The new building was opened for use by the Douglas Political Club under the leadership of Lawrence Pollard, president; Robert Burgess, vice president; Robert Holton, financial secretary; Harry Poindexter, treasurer; Phillip Smith, chaplain; Lewis Patterson, recording secretary; Samuel Arnold, assistant financial secretary; and Larry Riley, recording secretary. Abe Price, the oldest member of the club, installed the officers.[53]

Figure 23. Left: A bust of Frederick Douglas is presented to the Douglas Political Club at the time of the 26th Anniversary on February 12, 1958, showing Joseph Paige, Carlyle Tucker, Esq., Linwood Price, and William H. Jones. Source: *Philadelphia Tribune,* 18 February 1958, 12. Figure 24. Right: Installation of officers of the Douglas Political Club, Inc., for 1959. Source: *Philadelphia Tribune*, 23 December 1958, 20.

In 1958, the Douglas Political Club again elected officers at their clubhouse, the subject property. The new officers included: Joseph Paige, president; Linwood Price, 1st vice president; Lawrence Pollard, 2nd vice president; Artis Ray, Jr., treasurer; etc.[54]

[51] "Clubs," *Philadelphia Tribune*, 10 January 1935, 14.
[52] "Douglas Political Club Holds 4th Anniversary," *Philadelphia Tribune,* 25 February 1937, 14.
[53] "Germantown," *Philadelphia Tribune,* 17 January 1942, 8.
[54] "Installs Officers," *Philadelphia Tribune*, 23 December 1958, 20.

ENTERTAINMENT

Douglas Political Club, Inc., 106 East Sharpnack St., presents for its members, Feb. 15, 16, Johnny Stollabott Quartet; Feb. 22, 23, Sidney Francis & His Mellotones; March 1, 2, featuring Miss Janie Mickens, vocalist. The little band with the Lynn Hope sound. . . . March 22, 23, Cabby Dixon and His Quintet. . . . March 29, 30, featuring Cabby Dixon on Vibes. Admission by Membership Cards only.

For reservation call GE 8-4990, Your Entertainment Committee, Roland, Chairman.

RALLY: Entertainment! Music!

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 26 at 8:30 P.M.

RANDY DIXON, Your M. C.

Featured Speaker:

SAM PIERCE

Col. Chas. E. Young Amer. Legion Marching Band

DOUGLAS POLITICAL CLUB

106 E. SHARPNACK ST. — GERMANTOWN

Figure 25. Top left: An advertisement for Entertainment at the subject property in 1958. Source: *Philadelphia Tribun*e, 11 February 1958, 12. Source: Proquest Historical Newspapers: Philadelphia Tribune. Figure 26. Top right: The annual Christmas party for neighborhood children in 1953. Source: "Neighborhood Children Guests," *Philadelphia Tribune*, 6 January 1953, 8. Figure 27. Middle: An advertisement for entertainment at the subject property in 1956. Source: *Philadelphia Tribune*, 23 October 1956, 14. Figure 28.Bottom: Summer camp contingency in 1955, showing Ula Mae Spencer, Doris Platt, Claude Waterford, Barbara Jones, Betty Ann Clark, C. Berton, Richard Roebuck, Anthony Woodward, and Barry Davis. Source: *Philadelphia Tribune,* 20 August 1955, 7.

From the time of its founding and into the period of its longtime clubhouse, the Douglas Political Club served as a multi-faceted community organization for Black men of all classes in East Mt. Airy and the larger area known as Germantown. The organization was involved in cultural, patriotic, political, and social engagements and matters, serving not just as a political club, but as a civic organization. The nomination examines the first thirty years of the organization's history, though it continues to the present day in 2024. By 1958, after more than twenty-five years, when discussing issues related to the youth of the community, the *Philadelphia Tribune* characterized the Douglas Political Club as having a "towering stature as a leader" in the neighborhood.[55] The need for such an organization is shown in its immediate ascension to a place of importance and respect, being represented at local events and meetings in its earliest years.[56] The organization participated in Memorial Day ceremonies with other local organizations, as well as cross-cultural events, socio-economic discussions and labors, etc.[57] The Association of Chartered Clubs of Philadelphia was founded in the subject building in December 1957.[58] While some activities were philosophical and highly political, the daily efforts of the organization were very much community-based, providing entertainment and various forms of intellectual and physical nourishment. In time, the organization regularly sponsored camping excursions for youth, including sending children to Camp University, Pennsylvania.[59] By the early 1950s, the clubhouse was home to the organization's annual Christmas party, which included over 100 children in 1953. The *Philadelphia Tribune* reported, that the "children enjoyed an afternoon of movies, games, and contests with delicious refreshments."[60] In 1959 and 1961, the event included more than 300 children.[61] In the 1950s, the organization began hosting an annual charity fashion show at the subject property.[62] Many events at the Douglas Political Club were hosted and organized by their Ladies Auxiliary, which was active for many years.[63] The Civic Committee of the Douglas Political Club was charged with conducting community work over the years.[64] Additionally, the subject building was also a social hall for the community.[65]

While less active in more recent years, the Douglas Political Club was an important community organization that occupied the subject building from 1942 to the present, representing the cultural, economic, political, social, and historical heritage of the community, satisfying Criteria A and J.

Conclusion

The spirit of civic duty and community betterment in the African American community pervades this historic resource, starting with the legacy of Hattie Hill Huckabee and carried forward by the Douglas Political Club. The subject building represents both the development of civic life by a single individual and the decades of organizational service that followed, satisfying Criteria A and J.

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[55] Charles Thomas. "Germantown Roundup," *Philadelphia Tribune*, 24 June 1958, 16.
[56] *Philadelphia Tribune*, 21 November 1935, 14.
[57] "Germantown Marks Memorial Day," *Philadelphia Tribune,* 2 June 1953, 3.
[58] "Ass'n Chartered Clubs Elect New Officers," *Philadelphia Tribune,* 7 December 1957, 7.
[59] "Sponsors Campers," *Philadelphia Tribune*, 18 August 1956, 4.
[60] "Neighborhood Children Guests," *Philadelphia Tribune*, 6 January 1953, 8.
[61] "Douglas Club Party," *Philadelphia Tribune*, 29 December 1959, 9.; and "Children's Christmas Party," *Philadelphia Tribune,* 3 January 1961, 8.
[62] "Annual Charity Fashion Show," *Philadelphia Tribune*, 28 June 1958, 24.
[63] *Philadelphia Tribune,* 27 June 1959, 24.
[64] "Germantown Gems," *Philadelphia Tribune,* 9 February 1957, 5.
[65] "Gtn. High Graduates Honored At A Party," *Philadelphia Tribune,* 3 February 1953, 13.

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This nomination was submitted by East Mount Airy Neighbors (EMAN) under the leadership of Linda Bell, President, and Evonne Tisdale, an EMAN board member, who organized the effort. Compiled by the Keeping Society of Philadelphia, Oscar Beisert, Architectural Historian and Historic Preservationist, was the principal author with assistance from J.M. Duffin, Archivist and Historian.

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