**The Samuel J. Brockwell House**

**211 Henderson Street**

**Constructed 1925**

**Architect: George Watts Carr, Sr., AIA**

**Builder: Brodie S. Thompson**

**Restoration/Renovation Architect: James M. Webb, AIA, AICP**

**Current Occupant:**

**The Gamma Lambda Chapter of Phi Mu Fraternity**

**by Debra Pickrel**

**President, Gamma Lambda Chapter Association (alumnae)**

Phi Mu Fraternity was installed at the University of North Carolina on November 14, 1964, and this year marks its fiftieth anniversary. The chapter rented the Mallette-Wilson-Maurice House in 1964, then the historic yet at-risk **Samuel J. Brockwell House at 211 Henderson Street** in spring 1965. That fall, the sisterhood moved to the more commodious Charles T. Woollen House at 311 East Franklin Street, which it rented through spring 1969. During the interim years, the fraternity’s house corporation **saved the Brockwell House** by purchasing it, then working to rezone, restore, renovate, and expand it for use as the chapter’s permanent home.

Renowned Chapel Hill preservationist **Ola Maie Foushee** (wife of former Chapel Hill Mayor John Foushee, a respected real estate and insurance business owner), who would later become a Gamma Lambda Phi Mu alumna initiate and whose daughter June was a charter member of the chapter, played a key role in advocating and obtaining the Brockwell House for the fraternity. Working in partnership with **Nanette Fields**, a current member of the Chapel Hill Historical Society board of directors and the chapter’s first house corporation director (and a Phi Mu from Howard College, now Samford University), the two women prevented the impending destruction of **a Chapel Hill residence that holds remarkable significance on multiple levels—its architect(s), builder, and occupants were all illustrious North Carolinians** who played prominent roles in the history of the town and the state. And **UNC’s famed Dean of Women, Katherine Carmichael**, a proponent of sororities, and a member of the Greek community herself, also supported and actively contributed to the success of Phi Mu’s arrangement.

***The following supplemental text is excerpted from* The Story of a Sisterhood: The Gamma Lambda Chapter of Phi Mu Fraternity at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill *by Debra Pickrel, a history written for the chapter’s fiftieth anniversary. It is to remain confidential among Preservation Chapel Hill officials until its November 14, 2014 release within the fraternity’s book that commemorates the occasion.***

**The House**

On February 17, 1965, while nine Phi Mu sisters and a housemother were residing at 211 Henderson Street (rented as a boarding house), Nanette Fields received a letter from realtor and agent John A. Cates relaying an offer of the option to purchase the Brockwell site: “I have purchased this property for a parking lot, however, since you have indicated some interest…I have found some other land that would suit my purposes.”[[1]](#endnote-1)

On January 1, 1966, acting on the considered risk that a special use permit for Greek use could be obtained, the Gamma Lambda House Corporation, via Fields and Ola Maie Foushee, purchased the “Brockwell Homeplace” house and lots for $75,000. from realtor and agent John A. Cates with a $7500. down payment and an offer to make final settlement on or before April 1.[[2]](#endnote-2)

The following month, Fields and Foushee visited Dean Carmichael to deliver the good news about the house purchase and to let her know that, after moving the sisters to more commodious quarters, they were renting 211 to the petitioning colony of Phi Sigma Kappa fraternity. “The Brockwell property is not now zoned for fraternities or sororities,” Carmichael subsequently wrote to Charles E. Edge, influential fellow member of the Faculty Committee on Fraternities and Sororities. “Since Mrs. Fields and Mrs. Foushee know Chapel Hill real estate, I have confidence that they will be able so to move that the Phi Mus will not be in financial jeopardy…The hearing before the Board of Aldermen and the Zoning Board occurs on February 28. I want you to know that I would be pleased if Phi Mu could secure a change of zone and special use permit, so that the sorority could occupy the property.”[[3]](#endnote-3)

On March 30, 1966, Fields received the news that would pave the way for Phi Mu’s permanent home to be realized. Chapel Hill Town Manager Robert H. Peck advised her that the Board of Aldermen had approved the special use permit request. “You may proceed with your plans for this property,” he said. While the requirements were stringent—“A parking space had to be guaranteed for every person in the house, whether or not they owned a car,” Foushee said—Phi Mu sailed through the process due to a sympathetic Board of Aldermen (Greek housing in town was virtually impossible to secure by this point for several reasons), the Town Planning Board, and friendly neighbors, all members of notable Chapel Hill families.**[[4]](#endnote-4)**

On March 12, 1968, a second deed was granted to the new “profit-making” entity, the Gamma Lambda of Phi Mu Fraternity House Corporation, by Myrtle Sugg Brockwell, which conveyed the Brockwell estate land, and by the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, which conveyed a 15-foot strip of access land that would become the fraternity’s parking lot. Two-hundred-fifty thousand dollars was paid to NCNB for the land (the house represented approximately $75,000 of this) and $25,000 to the Convention. This transaction was the final step needed for the long-awaited renaissance and expansion of the Brockwell House to proceed.[[5]](#endnote-5)

On August 20, 1968, the restoration and renovation plans for 211 Henderson Street were completed by prominent North Carolina architect James M. Webb (“Jim”) of City Planning and Architectural Associates, Chapel Hill, and copied to Fields and Hutchins Construction Company, Inc. of Durham. Three weeks later, on Sunday, September 9, at 2 p.m., ground was broken for construction on Phi Mu’s new home.[[6]](#endnote-6)

Fields was mistress of ceremonies on that sunny fall day, accompanied by the restoration/renovation architect Jim Webb, as well as Carmichael, who praised and congratulated the chapter. Foushee underscored the importance of saving old Chapel Hill residences from demolition, commending the fraternity for this accomplishment and thanking the neighbors for their support of the project. This sentiment was echoed by John Allcott, president of the Chapel Hill Historical Society and Phillips Russell, prominent historian and biographer.[[7]](#endnote-7)

The same year, Fields, Foushee, and Jane McCracken (who also contributed to the establishment of the chapter and procurement of the house) were in the first group of alumnae initiated into UNC’s new Society of Hellenas as honorary members in recognition of their significant contributions to Carolina’s Greek system and to the local active chapters of their sororities. Only Phi Mu and Delta Delta Delta had three initiates each.[[8]](#endnote-8)

On February 12, 1969, the *Chapel Hill Newspaper* reported that construction at 211 Henderson Street was due to be completed in early May. The house would be air-conditioned throughout at a time when UNC dormitories were not.”[[9]](#endnote-9) Phi Mu alumna Mrs. Alex (Sallie Cowell) Shepard described it as “a dream come true.”She praised Webb’s “major feat” in “retaining the architectural characteristics of the original house while rebuilding and adapting it to sorority living.” Webb “zealously supervised” the project, the newspaper reporter relayed, complementing the “qualities inherent in the original design” that allowed his vision to be realized. “There are old houses and old houses,” Webb said, “but the Brockwell house…provided an excellent basis on which to expand its original architectural charm into a practically new but unified building.” The house had long been neglected and presented many challenges. “[The builder often] assured us that it would be cheaper to tear down the old house and start from scratch,” Fields said, but those involved in the project were determined that it would succeed. “I lost many a night’s sleep for fear it would be torn down before Phi Mu could get it,” Foushee reflected. “Its location within walking distance of the campus, its fine Dutch Colonial lines, and the fine neighborhood made it ideal for girls.” “We had promised the neighbors to retain as much of the old house as possible,” Fields added.[[10]](#endnote-10)

Original aspects of the house that Webb was able to preserve comprised its main beams; the library, including its marble-hearth fireplace—with a cast-iron fireplace screen that was a gift to the chapter from the architect—and oak floors; the impressive foyer with its turned staircase and oak floors; and the living room, which was more than doubled in width and made narrower in length, providing a seating area outside the sustained parlor (used as a dining room by the Brockwells). The exterior portico was removed and the sun room subsumed to allow for the living room enlargement and the major addition to the house, which included the dining room and gallery, chapter room (now the television room), and upstairs sleeping quarters. The original front door and exterior sidelights were also retained.[[11]](#endnote-11) As a result of this work, the Brockwells’ library became Phi Mu’s parlor; and their parlor, its library, now the study room.

Reconfigurations in the house included the first floor’s back spaces on its west side and north end—a bathroom, breakfast room, and the kitchen—into a two-room housemother’s apartment with a kitchenette and two bathrooms (one for the housemother, one for the chapter). The two upstairs bathrooms were altered, the floor’s three fireplaces along with the back staircase from the servant’s bedroom were removed, and one of the bedrooms became the lounge connector to short hall. The house’s garage was eliminated to make way for a northern exit drive.[[12]](#endnote-12) Several neighbors donated shrubbery to help restore the house’s original plantings, much of which was lost while it was under construction.[[13]](#endnote-13) Work was completed in June 1969, and the chapter soon moved into its new quarters.[[14]](#endnote-14)

**The Architects**

**The Brockwells’ Architect: George Watts Carr, Sr., AIA**

Born in 1893 in Durham, Carr was educated at Davidson College and the Eastman Business School in Poughkeepsie, New York. He was hired in 1926 by the venerable Winston-Salem architecture firm Northup and O’Brien to supervise its Durham area projects. From 1927 to 1961, he had an eponymous practice in Durham, which continued under other names and is active today. Carr is credited as having the greatest single role of any architect in creating the period revival look of Forest Hills, an elegant Durham community listed on the National Register of Historic Places.[[15]](#endnote-15)

Carr laid out the roads in Forest Hills and designed many of its houses in Colonial Revival styles, including seven residences on Oak Drive, one of which was his own (c.1924-25). His work in the area ranges from sparsely ornamented buildings such as the Forest Hills Clubhouse to ornate homes with richly appointed elements and embellishments. Carr’s most elaborate commission in the neighborhood was Pinecrest, the 1927 Tudor Revival mansion built for Forest Hills’ developer, James O. Cobb. It was later the home of Mary Duke Biddle Trent Semens.[[16]](#endnote-16)

Carr also designed houses for Durham’s prestigious Hope Valley neighborhood and Chapel Hill’s Gimghoul neighborhood; structures for UNC (including the 1939 renovations to the Carolina Inn), North Carolina State University and North Carolina Central University; and hospitals including Durham’s Veterans Hospital. The largest single project on which his firm worked was the 2,000-bed Marine Hospital at Camp Lejeune. He was also named to the advisory panel for planning at the United States Capitol and grounds.[[17]](#endnote-17)

The recipient of honor awards from the AIA North Carolina chapter, Carr served as its president from 1938-1939. His son Robert ("Judge") W. Carr became associated with the firm and later continued his father’s practice in his own name, as it is known today. George Watt's Carr's grandson, Edgar Toms Carr, is also a member of the firm. Carr became less active in his practice in 1974, but continued as a consulting architect with Carr, Harrison, Pruden and DePasquale until his death in 1975.[[18]](#endnote-18)

**Phi Mu’s Architect: James M. Webb, AIA, AICP**

Born in 1908 in Aguascalientes, Mexico, where his father worked for the Guggenheim family’s mines, “Jim” Webb grew up in California. Just five years old when his father died, he moved with his mother and brother John to a ranch in the San Gabriel Valley where the three made a living in orange farming. He said the experience piqued his interest in designing and building. Selling the ranch just before the 1929 stock market crash, the family paid off the mortgage and moved to Berkeley.[[19]](#endnote-19)

Entering Pomona College in 1926 to study metallurgy and mining and follow in his father’s footsteps, Webb dropped out after a year to study architecture with his brother at the University of California at Berkeley. Taking a hiatus from college during the Great Depression, he worked at a building materials and manufacturing firm, returning to complete his degree in 1936.

Webb worked for two San Francisco architects including William Wurster (1895-1973) who once worked at the renowned New York firm of Delano and Aldrich, designer for a number of Gilded Age magnates. Webb was best known for inventing the "Bay Area Style," an informal version of California Ranch that adapted to hilly sites and extended living space out into the surrounding nature. He left Wurster’s firm when he was drafted into World War II army duty in 1942. After the war, he received a master’s degree in planning from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in 1946 and moved to Chapel Hill to join UNC’s faculty as an associate professor, becoming the first faculty member of its new Department of City and Regional Planning. The department would go on to become one of the top five in the country and a leading resource for the state.[[20]](#endnote-20)

Webb’s brother John moved from San Francisco to Chapel Hill in 1949 and set up shop with him in a corner room of the old Methodist Church building (1853, Greek Revival) at 201 East Rosemary Street on the northeast corner of its intersection with Henderson Street. John left in 1953. From 1955 to 1957, Robert E. Stipe worked with Webb in city planning, leaving to join the faculty of UNC’s Institute of Government. Donald E. Stewart and then Robert E. Anderson joined the firm, which changed its name to City Planning and Architecture Associates (CPAA) in 1960. Leaving the partnership in 1969, Webb bought his building in 1970, remodeled it as rental offices, and remained in place, changing the firm’s name back to the original James M. Webb, AIA and AICP. The rest of the firm moved to the Professional Building on Estes Drive. In 1973, he took on an associate, a former CPAA apprentice, Roman Kolodij.[[21]](#endnote-21)

Webb received the 1957 AIA North Carolina Award of Merit for his residential work and was a member of the committee that established Chapel Hill’s first zoning ordinance. He ceased teaching in 1974 when he retired at 66, becoming professor emeritus of architecture. [[22]](#endnote-22)

Webb played a role in some of the most significant developments in the state, including Research Triangle Park, the Raleigh State Capitol facility, Carmichael Auditorium, and the Horace Williams House, and also generated a residential legacy in Chapel Hill of some 125 to 150 homes, many of them in the modern style. He served for fourteen years on Chapel Hill’s Appearance Commission, six years on the Historic District Commission, and was president of the Chapel Hill Historical Society. He also had a keen interest in historic renovations, landscape design, gardening, and antique collection. Webb married Barbara Henderson Kelly in 1957, becoming stepfather to her three young sons. They divorced in the 1970s. Webb died in 2000.[[23]](#endnote-23)

**The Occupants**

The Brockwell House has a storied history. Designed by one of the state’s leading architects and constructed by the area’s premier builder, it was owned by one of the town’s most notable residents, Samuel (Sam) Jackson Brockwell (1870-1940), and his wife, Pernean Frances (Fannie) Sugg Brockwell (1877-1963).[[24]](#endnote-24)

An Orange County native and the son of a farmer, Brockwell was a born entrepreneur and an esteemed philanthropist. A pioneer builder in the town’s business district, he was a department store merchant, proprietor of the Pickwick Theater—the town’s first movie house—and also ran the first regular jitney service between Chapel Hill and Durham in the early days of the automobile. Fannie was the daughter of a local carpenter and worked as a book binder prior to their marriage.[[25]](#endnote-25)

Brockwell owned land in several area locales, first acquiring two tracts in 1895, when he paid his parents, Andrew Jackson and Elizabeth Brockwell, $1250. (approximately $35,000. today) for land near Borland’s Creek outside of town. A Franklin Street acquisition from H.H. “Hoot” Patterson, who owned a general merchandise store on Franklin Street east of Henderson Street, was made in 1900. Another followed in 1911, comprising land on the east side of Columbia Street near Rosemary Street on which Brockwell would live prior to 211. In 1919, he acquired additional property, the location of which is not recorded, from W.P. Jordan, the husband of Fannie’s sister Annie.[[26]](#endnote-26) An April 12, 1921, a bequeath of land came to him from the Jordans, conveying the property on which 211 Henderson Street stands. Tabitha Sugg, Fannie's mother, is also mentioned in this transaction.[[27]](#endnote-27)

On March 19, 1925, the *Chapel Hill Weekly* announced that Brockwell was to “build a new home of Dutch Colonial design on the west side of Henderson Street near the home of Mr. and Mrs. (Annie Sugg) W.P. Jordan” where he and his wife would reside. Their plan was to sell or rent their house “at the corner of Columbia Street and Rosemary Lane.”[[28]](#endnote-28) The Brockwells’ new residence was completed later that year, and they moved in on December 3, their twenty-second wedding anniversary.[[29]](#endnote-29) The Jordans lived just next door at number 215, which Phi Mu would later own for some years and refer to as “Little House.”

George Watts Carr, Sr. (1893-1975) of Durham, known as “Watts,” was the architect of the Brockwells’ new home. The nephew of George Washington Watts, a co-founder of the American Tobacco Company with James Buchanan Duke, Carr planned many of the area’s finest houses.[[30]](#endnote-30) He was also the first cousin “once removed” of George Watts Hill, for whom UNC’s Alumni Center is named, via his mother and Hill’s grandfather.

Carr’s design for the Brockwell House was a gracious two-story residence designed to mesh with its distinctive neighborhood. “The gambrel roof was a favorite of my grandfather,” said Edgar T. Carr, AIA, of successor firm Robert W. Carr, Inc. Architects, commenting on 211. “A number of his early houses had that roof form, including, in part, his own house in Forest Hills.”[[31]](#endnote-31)

B.S., or Brodie (“braw-dee”), Thompson (1884-1971), who constructed 211, lived nearby at 214 Henderson Street (1920). One of Chapel Hill’s finest builders in the 1920s and ’30s, his structures were noted for their high-quality materials and workmanship. Thompson also built 210 Henderson Street (1917), home of Mabel Thompson Hill (1893-1983), a young woman who was the pianist at Brockwell’s Pickwick Theater from 1913-1928,[[32]](#endnote-32) and number 310, as well as residences in other areas of town. His large projects included the five houses in Big Fraternity Court on South Columbia Street, and the Village Apartments east of University Presbyterian Church. Downtown, he constructed the 1924 Brockwell Building (the third Pickwick location), the Strowd Building, and the original Carolina Theater. After World War II, he supervised the construction of Morehead Planetarium.[[33]](#endnote-33)

Just a few blocks away from Brockwell’s genteel neighborhood, his entrepreneurial spirit came to life in several prescient businesses of the day, headquartered on Franklin Street in a variety of locations.

**Serving the People: In the Mercantile Business**

In 1902, Brockwell, a local grocery merchant at the time, constructed Franklin Street’s first brick department store at the corner of Columbia Street (101 and 103 East Franklin today) on the land he acquired from Hoot Patterson. Initially three stories, it was originally occupied by Brockwell’s grocery business in the eastern space (his partner in which was Adolphus Tilley), and the Andrews’ Cash Store Company, a general store run by Samuel Weldon Andrews, in the western corner shop space.[[34]](#endnote-34)

Andrews was an experienced merchant who had previously run the Farmer’s Alliance Meat Market across the street as well as the Newton Cotton Mill Store. Elected sheriff in 1904, he sold the entire interest in his company to Brockwell in 1906. Brockwell then operated both businesses, running the grocery store while Fannie served as the milliner, or shopkeeper, of the dry goods sector. The 1911 Sanborn map of the building notes rooms for rent on the second floor, and the Masonic Hall and additional rooms for rent on the third floor, which was removed before 1915.[[35]](#endnote-35) These endeavors were only the beginning of Brockwell’s interests in the budding business district of Chapel Hill. Just a few years later, the Brockwell Building would contain a public locale of different kind…a legendary showplace where the stars of the silver screen appeared daily.

**Going to the Picture Show: The Pickwick and Peanut Pelting**

“The latest addition to the charms of Chapel Hill is The Pickwick, a theatre for musical comedies and moving picture shows…the first door east of Brockwell’s building,” *The Tar Heel* reported on November 13, 1909. “Its bill of attraction will commence as soon as the University Power Plant can furnish the electricity.”[[36]](#endnote-36)

Movies first came to Chapel Hill in 1901—silent until the arrival of “talkies” in 1929[[37]](#endnote-37)—and the Pickwick Theater was the first public venue in which to see them. Over the course of its celebrated history, the theater would reside in three locations in multiple iterations. It opened in 1909 in a single-bay storefront at 11 East Franklin Street (105 East Franklin today) adjacent to Brockwell’s Building. *The Tar Heel* ran its first advertisement, on November 10, and reported on its frenzied success several weeks later: “Since [The Pickwick opened], the stately and artistic ticket office has been massed and thronged by surging, anxious, not-to-be-forbidden students and otherwise.”[[38]](#endnote-38)

Brockwell purchased the Pickwick from Earnest Remington of Winston-Salem in 1911 with plans to convert his two stores into a skating rink and operate the two entities as the Chapel Hill Amusement Company. The plan for the rink was short-lived, however, as, after Sheriff Andrews decided not to run for a third term that same year, he bought his business back from Brockwell and resumed it in October. At some point between this time and fall 1914, Brockwell closed his remaining retail business and moved the Pickwick from its location next door into his building’s eastern section.[[39]](#endnote-39) There, it would enjoy improved quarters…and a colorful unfolding history.

Featuring “High-Class Motion Pictures” accompanied by “Instrumental Music,” the Pickwick showcased silent film celebrities including Lionel Barrymore, Lon Chaney, Charlie Chaplin, Douglas Fairbanks, Tom Mix, and Rin-Tin-Tin to enthusiastic audiences daily. But there was a far less savory activity that nearly everyone participated in there, as well—peanut throwing. Chapel Hill authors described the scene: “[Pickwick was] a movie house, meeting place, social function and roughhouse,” said Bill Prouty. “Everybody who was anybody in the student body felt he must show himself [there] at least two to three times a week [for one of the two afternoon or evening shows].” “[The] first show [was] a hazardous adventure,” said Jane Toy Coolidge. “If you wanted to watch the picture, you went to the second show.”[[40]](#endnote-40)

Peanuts could be purchased from an outside vendor before the show, and the tradition of pitching them at the heads of VIP students was a customary occurrence inside. Students could be seen rushing in, their coats pulled over their heads for protection against the barrage as they headed to an out of range seat. Those without such a defense could leave the theater with “a knotty head and stinging ears.” And the dates of the campus “Mr. Bigs” were considered fair game, as well. Acorns picked up on campus before the show and pop bottles sent rolling down the theater’s slick, inclined wooden floor were also weapons of choice. Silent movies? Those shown at the Pickwick were anything but due to this daily barrage, the “echoing moans of the wounded…guffaws…and quaint lines shouted into the flapping but silent mouths of the actors…almost always more risqué than the printed dialogue flashed on the screen,” said Prouty. If the film was not focused well enough to hit the screen, shouts of “frame it” would emit from the rowdy audience, part of a veritable lingo from which the operator took his cues. “Pickwick Mabel,” who would later become the Brockwells’ neighbor as Mrs. Vernon A. Hill, added unique drama to this chaos. She adeptly played the venue’s upright piano, situated below the screen, at two shows a night. Watching the screen, she was “ready to suggest comedy or tragedy, and when the picture [reel] broke down entirely, threw herself into the breach with music, music, music,” according to author Cornelia Spencer Love’s firsthand account. “Mabel kept her temper and stuck to her job with unflappable equanimity,” said Coolidge. “She was a good sport but drew the line between equanimity and dirt. The student audience soon found this out and respected her unspoken rule.” After several years of solo play, an orchestra began to accompany Mabel, either during shows or playing alternate shows,[[41]](#endnote-41) perhaps further easing the pain of propelled peanuts.

Four years after the Pickwick moved into the Brockwell Building, looming competition would provide the impetus for the theater’s next location. In September 1915, Chapel Hill Mayor William S. Robeson and Strowd Motor Company founder Bruce Strowd announced that they were building a two-story, 480 capacity, 50' x 100' picture venue with “modern improvements and a novel balcony” on the south side of Franklin Street, just west of the alley next to the University Athletic Shop (Carolina Coffee Shop today). The structure would cost $5000. and would also contain a garage and second floor rooms for rent. “After all these years, competition is about to break up the monopoly which has existed here from time immemorial,” *The Charlotte Observer* proclaimed when it heard the news.[[42]](#endnote-42)

Reportedly saying that he would “spend more than any $5000. rather than be run out of business,” Brockwell fired back, announcing that he would build a 600 capacity, 24' x 130' picture venue that would be touted as the largest in the state on a lot next door to his competitors. The project would provide an innovative combination of the new movie house (tickets would be five cents), a café, a cigar stand, a garage, a dormitory (rooms for rent), and more. The current Pickwick would continue business as usual, resulting in “a feast of films” in three Chapel Hill movie venues enthused the *Tar Heel*.[[43]](#endnote-43)

Brockwell purchased his lot in October 1915 and construction began two months later. When the development was completed with the features promised, Brockwell decided to close the extant Pickwick and name the new venue as its successor. This allowed Andrews to rent the vacated space and expand his grocery and dry goods business into separate entities in both of the building’s spaces.[[44]](#endnote-44)

Chancellor Emeritus House described the new Pickwick as “an elegant theater for the times. The feature of features…was the first showing of *The Birth of a Nation* in Chapel Hill. This picture, with an accompanying orchestra and sound effects, was stupendous.” Yet the peanut throwing continued. A 1916 broadside advertisement for the theater warned: "Notice! We wish to call your attention again to the fact that peanut throwing must be confined to the front half of the building. We do not want to be forced to rope off a 'peanut ring' but will do so if you insist on throwing from the back of the house." George Watts Hill, class of 1922, concurred: "…You had to sit in the back…because if you sat even three rows down, somebody'd hit you with raw peanuts on the back of the head."[[45]](#endnote-45)

Despite all of the competitive hoopla, Roberson and Strowd’s the Tar Heel Theater was no match for the famed Pickwick—it lasted only into 1916, after which a store moved into its place. The new Pickwick had its own challenge in 1919 when it was closed during the vicious influenza epidemic that swept the state. It was deemed ready to reopen on February 23, 1920, when the threat had diminished. True tragedy struck, however, when the Pickwick burned on February 9, 1924. Gerrard Hall, a venue where some of the first motion pictures in town had been shown, served as a temporary film viewing venue until yet a replacement theater could be built.

On April 1, 1924, the *Tar Heel* announced that the new building, which would be “one of Chapel Hill’s handsomest structures,” would be ready by May 1. The expanded theater, which subsumed the former O’Kelly Tailoring shop space to the east, was designed by university architects Atwood and Nash and comprised a 50' x 95' foot space with a capacity of 750.[[46]](#endnote-46)

*The Chapel Hill Weekly* described the venue as a “really modern movie theater, fireproof, with good exit facilities, comfortable seats, and ample ventilation.” The entrance scheme mirrored those “that had found favor in many cities”—using the street frontage for two stores with a corridor between them serving as the entrance and lobby of the theater, with the space behind the stores allotted for the auditorium, which contained two rear exits to assuage customers’ “uneasiness about fire danger.” “There is more than one reason to look forward with pleasure to the new regime,” the newspaper observed. “For one thing, the hoodlum behavior which has attended the nightly performances at the Pickwick is no longer to be part of the entertainment.”[[47]](#endnote-47)

The reborn Pickwick finally opened on Saturday, May 31. “Such a throng turned up that two or three hundred had to be denied admission to the first show, and, by the time this was over, enough of a crowd had come to fill the hall for the second,” enthused the *Chapel Hill Weekly*. Customer contentment was a key consideration. The venue provided "a new projection machine and comfortable seats “as well as “a new lantern of the most modern type” so that “the eyes of the spectators will not suffer.” The theater’s ventilation system, which included ventilating and exhaust fans, allowed it to operate in the summer for the first time.[[48]](#endnote-48)

Though Brockwell promoted the Pickwick in a 1925 *Yackety Yack* advertisement as “Almost a Part of North Carolina”—which it was—serious competition would soon begin to encroach on its business. The primary culprit was the Carolina Theater (later the Village Theater, then the Varsity), located in the 1927 Sorrell Building across the street. On November 28 of that year, Brockwell, who had been leasing the Pickwick to W.S. Roberson, announced that he would be taking over the operation of his theater himself after a few days of repairs and refurbishing. The venue’s new manager was to be Vernon A. Hill, Brockwell’s neighbor and “Pickwick Mabel’s” husband. But the Carolina Theater kept the pressure on, making town history when it became the first to show “talkies” in 1929. The Pickwick’s 1931 closure is often attributed to the Great Depression, but it is likely that rivals sounded its death knell instead.[[49]](#endnote-49)

The Pickwick was vacant for a few years and even served as a town courtroom until Brockwell’s lease offer to North Carolina Theaters, Inc. (which also owned the Carolina Theater) became effective in 1938. Renamed the “Pick,” the renewed theater reopened that July, managed by E. Carrington Smith, who also managed the renovated Carolina.[[50]](#endnote-50)

Following her husband’s death, Fannie Brockwell renewed the theater building's lease to North Carolina Theaters, Inc., in 1942. Around June of that year, the Pickwick was renamed the Carolina, then reverted to the name Pickwick when a new Carolina was constructed. For two or three years, there were three competing theaters in Chapel Hill, all managed by Carrington Smith. The Pick Theater closed for good in 1946. Around 1953, the structure was radically remodeled as the J.B. Robbins Department Store, which operated until 1969, and in the 1980s, was transformed once again as the Franklin Centre.[[51]](#endnote-51) Though the years quickly passed, the town’s pioneering movie house would forever be remembered by former students and local residents alike…meet me at the Pickwick…peanuts and all.

**At Your Service: Automobile and Jitney Businesses**

In the early years of the twentieth century, the burgeoning age of motorization began to change the way students and town residents traveled. Progressive Brockwell took an interest in this new transportation mode and jumped into the fray with his own related businesses in addition to his Pickwick Theater enterprise.

Brockwell’s first jitney service, the B&B Auto Station, was located in a freestanding, midblock wooden structure on the south side of Franklin Street. He ran it in partnership with local businessman Theo E. Best, a Chapel Hill Gun Club compatriot and shooting champion.

Advertised in the 1913 *Yackety Yack* as “unexcelled automobile service at your command at all hours,” the venture was one of several such burgeoning businesses in town. Competition among the town’s jitney businesses was fierce, and every advantage counted. Capturing the tenor of the time, when Pendergraft’s reverend asked him how his business was going, he acerbically replied: “Well, Parson, I’m a‘readin’ my Bible and a’tellin them to go to hell.” Chancellor Emeritus House recalled the scene years later: “As I saw Franklin Street [in 1912], it was a dusty red avenue cut through a forest of magnificent trees. There were four passenger automobiles [that] navigated the dust or the mud from Durham to Chapel Hill. They were owned by Sam Brockwell, Joe Durham, Pearly [C.S. “Kern”] Pendergraft, and Tank Hunter. The way you used an automobile, if you had the money, was to go down the street and see who was going to Durham, and get you up a crowd. Each person would pay fifty centers for the round-trip. The automobile would go and come according to your arrangements that way. Those automobiles, incidentally, were Cadillacs.” Determined to stay a step ahead of his rivals, Brockwell was the first among them to purchase the new eight cylinder Cadillac from the local Harris Motor Car Company, a model described by the *Durham Morning Herald* as “creating a sensation everywhere…giving splendid satisfaction.”[[52]](#endnote-52)

By 1916, Brockwell was operating the Pickwick in its new location as well as the B&B, which may have moved into the space in his new building designated “auto station” on the December 1915 Sanborn map. He remained in partnership with Theo Best until 1919, when he began to advertise as the “S.J. Brockwell Auto Station.” Described as “next to the post office,” its exact location is uncertain, as the post office was located in a small frame building at the corner of Franklin and Henderson streets at this time. The station’s site may have been related to Jordan’s 1919 land grant to Brockwell, perhaps further validated by the Brockwell-Jordan Auto Station, which was in operation by 1921.[[53]](#endnote-53)

The days of Chapel Hill’s privately-owned jitney ventures were numbered by the 1920s. Discussion about an interurban railroad connecting Chapel Hill and Durham began as early as 1915, and individual automobile ownership was also on the rise. In 1925, three local livery (vehicles for hire) services including the Brockwell-Jordan were bought by the Safety Coach Line, and W.P. Jordan became the company’s local station manager.[[54]](#endnote-54)

**A Higher Calling: Designing and Building a New Church**

Sam Brockwell was a lifelong member of the Orange United Methodist Church, located several miles north of Chapel Hill, to which he and Fannie contributed abundantly. Founded in 1882, the congregation determined in 1924 that a new church was needed to house its growing constituency. Brockwell headed the building committee and supervised the construction of the new structure, the result of which the congregation’s Reverend John W. Autry described as “a most exciting building…one of the most beautiful country churches I ever saw.”[[55]](#endnote-55)

On June 1, 1925, a “homecoming” celebration including an outdoor dinner was held: “That the new church is standing today is due to S.J. Brockwell more than to any other man,” Autry said. “He and his wife designed it, incorporating the communion rail and pulpit from the old church…[[56]](#endnote-56) Painted white, with a fireproof roof of a dark color, it is simple and in perfect taste.”[[57]](#endnote-57)

A collection was taken to offset the new building’s $800. construction debt. The amount due was reduced to $575. through pledges, leaving some church leaders to believe that it might be best to wait a year to make another fundraising attempt. But Brockwell stepped in, proposing that that if $75. more were given, he would fund the remaining $500. balance (approaching $7000. today). The scheme worked, thus erasing the rest of the debt. He also contributed $120. for the church tower’s 900-pound bell. Financial support from Brockwell also allowed several young men and women to attend UNC, and numerous charitable agencies also benefitted from his altruism.[[58]](#endnote-58)

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The Brockwells lived at 211 Henderson Street until Sam’s death from pulmonary tuberculosis on November 2, 1940. His funeral services were held in the church he largely financed. Fannie continued living at 211 until her death in 1963. The Brockwells are buried in the Old Chapel Hill Cemetery along with their infant son.[[59]](#endnote-59)

A successful and visionary entrepreneur, community leader, and generous philanthropist, Sam Brockwell unknowingly shared traits with the Phi Mu chapter that would one day inhabit his house. The Brockwells’ lives and Sam’s pioneering professions played major roles in the development of Chapel Hill’s history and culture.

###

**Debra Pickrel** is principal of Pickrel Communications in New York, a comprehensive marketing consultancy that fuels architecture, interior design, and historic preservation businesses.

Co-author of the award-winning books *Frank Lloyd Wright in New York: The Plaza Years, 1954-1959* (foreword by CBS’s Mike Wallace) and *The Luxembourg Consulate on Beekman Place: Three Portraits in Time*, as well as the booklet *A Day in Turtle Bay: Twenty Sites to See* (foreword by Walter Cronkite), she has edited numerous other titles and has written for design publications including *Architectural Record*, *Metropolis*, and *Preservation*. Prior to launching her consultancy in 2001, she held senior executive marketing positions at several national magazines.

Debra holds an MA in historic preservation from Goucher College in Baltimore and a BA in journalism from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where she recently served on the General Alumni Association board of directors.

**ENDNOTES**

**Abbreviations**

CHHS – Chapel Hill Historical Society

CHPS – Chapel Hill Preservation Society

DKC – Dean Katherine Carmichael

DWAR – Dean of Women Annual Reports

DWC – Dean of Women Correspondence

DTH – *Daily Tar Heel*

FCFS – Faculty Committee on Fraternities and Sororities

GLCPMF – Gamma Lambda Chapter of Phi Mu Fraternity

UNCCH – The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

All **Dean of Women Correspondence** and **Dean of Women Annual Reports** citations are from the Records of the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, 1920-1990 (#40124), Series 1: Office of the Vice Chancellor in the University Archives, Manuscripts Department, Wilson Library, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, unless otherwise noted.

All **Sororities: Panhellenic Council**; **Sororities: Alumnae Board**; **Sororities: 1946-1975**;and **Sororities Rushing: 1974** citations are from the Records of the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, 1920-1990 (#40124), Series 10: Student Organizations and Activities, Subseries 2: Fraternities and Sororities in the University Archives, Manuscripts Department, Wilson Library, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, unless otherwise noted.

1. John A. Cates, letter to Fields, February 17, 1965, Master File: Phi Mu Fraternity, Administrative Documents - 1964-1993, the GLCPMF of the UNCCH Records #40419-z, University Archives, The Wilson Library, UNCCH. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Offer to Purchase, Chapel Hill Realty, Gamma Lambda House Corporation to John A. Cates, realtor and agent, January 1, 1966. Myrtle Sugg Etheridge and John Allen and Anne Cates acquired the property upon Fannie Brockwell’s death on August 1, 1963. (Orange County Building Records, Hillsborough, NC, Deeds, Vol. 206, 87 and 398.) [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Visit to Carmichael: DKC, memorandum to Mr. Charles E. Edge, 313 Bingham Hall, February 12, 1966, UNC-CH OF&SCL files. Chi Omega had recently purchased 311 Franklin Street, and Phi Mu began renting from them in March. DKC support: DKC, memorandum to Edge, February 12, 1966, UNC-CH OF&SCL files. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. Special Use Permit approval: Peck, letter to Fields, March 20, 1966, The GLCPMF of the UNCCH Records #40419-z, 1962-2002, Administrative Documents, 1964-1993 and undated, University Archives, The Wilson Library, UNCCH. Stringent requirements: “Phi Mu Sorority Preserves a Little of Old Chapel Hill,” *Chapel Hill Weekly*, September 17, 1969, 6. [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. Acquiring the land: Orange County Building Records, Hillsborough, NC, Deeds, Vol. 215, 513. Efforts of Fields: Handwritten note, Mrs. Adele Williamson to Mrs. Nanette Fields, March 28, 1969. The house represented an investment of $300,000. in 1969, which approaches $2 million today.(“Phi Mu Sorority Preserves a Little of Old Chapel Hill,” *Chapel Hill Weekly*, September 17, 1969, 6.) [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. Plans: Cover page document, Gamma Lambda House Corporation files of Nanette Fields, November 12, 2013. Date and time: program, Groundbreaking at 211 Henderson Street. [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. Fields’s presentation: “Phi Mu Breaks Ground for New Sorority House,” *Durham Morning Herald*, September 11, 1968, pg. unknown. House Corporation members and Nesbit: program, Groundbreaking at 211 Henderson Street. [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. “Hellenas Honors Sorority Alumnae,” Jan Hanson, *The Carolina Greek*, May 6, 1968, 7. Foushee became Gamma Lambda’s alumnae president. The Society of Hellenas was discontinued at UNC in the 1900-91 school year. UNC’s two prominent Greek honor societies, both coed, are Order of Omega, which honors outstanding UNC and Greek leadership, requiring a minimum 3.0 cumulative GPA and junior or senior status, and Gamma Sigma Alpha, an academic honorary requiring a cumulative grade point average of 3.5 or above at the start of the junior year or during any semester of the junior or senior years. [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
9. “On Schedule,” *The Chapel Hill Newspaper*, February 12, 1969, pg. unknown. [↑](#endnote-ref-9)
10. “Phi Mu Sorority Preserves a Little of Old Chapel Hill,” 6. Sallie Shepard was the wife of Alexander Hurlbutt Shepard, assistant vice president and treasurer of the UNC System from 1965-1968. Two of Shepard’s brothers were Tar Heel basketball coaches: Norman for one undefeated season, 1923-1924, for which the team was awarded the national championship; and Bo from 1931-1935. [↑](#endnote-ref-10)
11. Generally: City Planning and Architectural Associates - 201 East Rosemary St. (James Webb), Phi Mu Fraternity Architectural Plans, Proposed Site Plan – 2/5/66, corrected 2/26/66, Plat and Location of Area; and Phi Mu Sorority House, Henderson Street, Chapel Hill, NC, Contract Drawings – 8/20/68, revised 12/10/68. Both from the GLCPMF of the UNCCH Records, University Archives, The Wilson Library, UNCCH. The front door and exterior sidelights were replaced of necessity in 2007. The parlor, foyer, and chapter room floors were replaced with new hardwood in 2013. [↑](#endnote-ref-11)
12. Generally: Ibid. A bathroom was removed in 2007 to expand the house director’s quarters. [↑](#endnote-ref-12)
13. “Phi Mu House Becomes a Reality,” *The Gamma Lambda Triangle*, Sept. 1969, Vol. 1, No. 1, 1 and 2, and “Phi Mu Sorority Preserves a Little of Old Chapel Hill,” Chapel Hill Weekly, Sept. 17, 1969, pg. unknown. Information from Nanette Fields, conversation with author, June 8, 2013. [↑](#endnote-ref-13)
14. “Phi Mu Sorority Preserves a Little of Old Chapel Hill,” *Chapel Hill Weekly*, Sept. 17, 1969, 6. [↑](#endnote-ref-14)
15. Background: North Carolina Architects & Builders – A Biographical Dictionary, Northup and O'Brien (1916-1953), ncarchitects.lib.ncsu.edu, January 12, 2014. 1927-1961: Carr, George Watts, Sr., OpenDurham.org, January 12, 2014. [↑](#endnote-ref-15)
16. Forest Hills roads: Email to author from Edgar T. Carr, January 23, 2014. Forest Hills and Pinecrest: 1050 West Forest Hills Boulevard, OpenDurham.org, January 23, 2014. Oak Drive and home ranges: Carr, George Watts, Sr., OpenDurham.org, January 12, 2014. Pinecrest: Email to author, Edgar T. Carr, January 23, 2014. Forest Hills and Pinecrest: 1050 West Forest Hills Boulevard, OpenDurham.org, January 23, 2014. [↑](#endnote-ref-16)
17. Carr, George Watts, Sr., Ibid. Carr also collaborated on the designs of the Cherry Point Marine Air Base, the Carolina Ports Authority Terminal at Morehead City, and several buildings at the US Naval Academy at Annapolis. [↑](#endnote-ref-17)
18. Ibid. The firm’s successive names: George Watts Carr, Architects (1926-1962); Carr, Harrison, Pruden & DePasquale (1962-1977); Carr, Harrison, Pruden, Inc., Architects (1977-1981); and Robert W. Carr, Inc. Architects (1981-present). [↑](#endnote-ref-18)
19. Richard Burnett, “Making His Mark: Architect/Planner James Webb Has Had a Hand in Arranging Much of the Local Landscape,” *The Chapel Hill Newspaper*, February 10, 1985, 1E and 20E. Year, place of birth, Guggenheim mines, and Covina: “Jim and John Webb,” Triangle Modernist Houses website, trianglemodernisthouses.com, January 12, 2014. Mother’s name: “Webb’s Architectural Firm Opened in 1949,” *The Chapel Hill Newspaper*, October 18, 1981, 11A and 13A. Historical notes: Ralph M. Watkins (assembled by John Douglas Eyre), *Historical Notes 1978-1987,The Chapel Hill Newspaper* (CHHS, Chapel Hill, NC, 2001), 37-38. [↑](#endnote-ref-19)
20. Burnett, 1E and 20E. Bay Area Style: “Jim and John Webb,” trianglemodernisthouses.com, January 12, 2014. 1927, stopping in 1930, 1936 graduation year, 1942, pulmonary tuberculosis, 1946, and Jack A. Parker: “Webb’s Architectural Firm Opened in 1949,” *The Chapel Hill Newspaper*, October 18, 1981, 11A and 13A. Historical Notes: Watkins (assembled by Eyre), 37-38. [↑](#endnote-ref-20)
21. Generally, M. Ruth Little, 160; and “Webb’s Architectural Firm Opened in 1949,” *The Chapel Hill Newspaper*, October 18, 1981, 11A. [↑](#endnote-ref-21)
22. “Webb’s Architectural Firm Opened in 1949,” 11A and 13A. Historical notes: Watkins (assembled by Eyre), 37-38. [↑](#endnote-ref-22)
23. Significant developments and roles: Burnett, 1E and 20E. Webb’s mother-in-law, Lucile Henderson, was dean of UNC’s School of Library Science. Appalachian State: “Webb’s Architectural Firm Opened in 1949,” 11A and 13A. Historical notes: Watkins (assembled by Eyre), 37-38. Webb also remodeled UNC’s Kappa Kappa Gamma house in 1958; designed the interstitial structure between the two sections of the Chi Omega house, completed in 1971; and designed the Alpha Chi Omega house, completed in 1979. Family: “Jim and John Webb,” trianglemodernisthouses.com, January 12, 2014. UNC faculty including Albert Coates, founder of the Institute of Government, former UNC dean Cecil Shepes, and journalist Walter Spearman commissioned Webb to design their homes. [↑](#endnote-ref-23)
24. Samuel J. Brockwell was the son of Andrew Jackson (1824-1909) and Elizabeth Mason Brockwell (1829-1896). He had a middle school education. His wife Fannie was a high school graduate. (United States Federal Census: Year, 1940; Census Place: Chapel Hill, Orange County, NC; 31.) The Brockwells married on December 3, 1903. [↑](#endnote-ref-24)
25. Son of a farmer: United States Federal Census: Year, 1880; Census Place: Chapel Hill, Orange County, NC; 8. Brockwell was born near Orange Church, NC. Note: “Theater” is the correct spelling in reference to the Pickwick, though “theatre” is sometimes used in published references. Jitney Service: Margaret A. Blanchard (edited by), *Facing Tomorrow, Understanding Yesterday, A History of Orange United Methodist Church, Since 1882* (Chapel Hill, NC and Dallas: Taylor Publishing, 1992), 23. Fannie details: United States Federal Census: Year, 1910; Census Place: Chapel Hill, Orange County, NC; 6. Fannie’s parents were William M. and Tabatha A. Sugg. [↑](#endnote-ref-25)
26. Two tracts: Orange County Building Offices, Hillsborough, NC, Deeds, Vol. 57, 186, 10/26/1895. Additional land acquisitions: Orange County Building Offices, Hillsborough, NC, Deeds, Vol. 56, 367, 10/16/1900; Vol. 64, 171, 8/26/1911; Vol. 76, 350, 11/22/1919. 1895 approximate payment equivalent: Bureau of Labor Statistics website, January 26, 2014. Patterson’s nickname and store location: Bernard Lee Bryant, Jr., “Occupants and Structures of Franklin Street, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, at Five Year Intervals, 1793-1998” (study, 1998; copy by CHHS, 1999), 1899-1903. [↑](#endnote-ref-26)
27. Orange County Building Offices, Hillsborough, N.C., Deeds, Vol. 78, 547. The land was given to the Brockwells for "ten dollars and natural love and affection," a common descriptor for family land grants in the day. The property was originally owned by the H.H. Patterson heirs. [↑](#endnote-ref-27)
28. “Brockwells to New Home,” *The Chapel Hill Weekly*, March 19, 1925, 1. [↑](#endnote-ref-28)
29. “Neighborhood Notes,” *The Chapel Hill Weekly*, Dec. 11, 1925, 3. [↑](#endnote-ref-29)
30. “Phi Mu Breaks Ground for New Sorority House,” *Durham Morning Herald*, September 11, 1968, pg. unknown. [↑](#endnote-ref-30)
31. Email to author from Edgar T. Carr, Robert W. Carr, Inc. Architects, January 23, 2014. Forest Hills and Pinecrest from OpenDurham.org, 1050 West Forest Hills Boulevard, January 23, 2014. [↑](#endnote-ref-31)
32. Finest builders: “Brodie Thompson, Master Builder,” Doug Eyre, *Chapel Hill News*, October 25, 2000, pg. unknown. Other residences Thompson constructed in Chapel Hill are located around East Rosemary Street and North Boundary Street (104, 206, and 209 North Boundary and 523 and 601 East Rosemary) as well along East Franklin Street (603, 614, 619, 623, 625, and 729). Dates of Mrs. Hill as pianist: Professor Emeritus Paul W. Wager, “The Movie Theatres of Chapel Hill-Carrboro,” Historical Notes from the CHHS, February 25, 1979, 1. 210 Henderson Street: History of 210 Henderson Street, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, Prepared for the Women’s Center in Cooperation with the CHPS, Sarah Moye, January 2009, 2. This building is now the Compass Center for Women and Families. Brockwell Building date: M. Ruth Little, 59-60. [↑](#endnote-ref-32)
33. Doug Eyre, “Brodie Thompson, Master Builder,” *Chapel Hill News*, October 25, 2000, pg. unknown. [↑](#endnote-ref-33)
34. Grocery merchant: United States Federal Census: Year, 1900; Census Place: Chapel Hill, Orange County, NC, 6.) 1902: *The News*, Sept. 11, 1902, 1. First brick: “Business Leader Taken by Death, *The News and Observer*, Nov. 3, 1940, pg. unknown. In 1793, when the cornerstone was laid for the university and the town began to develop, this site was a vacant lot owned by a farmer, then a blacksmith’s shop, a dry goods shop, a men’s clothing store, and part of Hardgrave Place, home to a number of African-American families following the Civil War. In 1878, the Ruffin Cheek Butcher Shop (later “Beef Market”) opened there, which remained until the Brockwell Building was constructed. (Bryant, Jr., 1793-1878.) Three stories: Bryant, Jr., 1899-1903. First brick structure: Wager, 1. Brockwell’s building, which housed Chapel Hill establishments including Sloan’s Drug Store and the Mayberry Ice Cream Parlour across its history, is today occupied by Spanky’s restaurant (western section) and Starbuck’s Coffee (eastern section). Andrews’s Cash Store Company:*The News*, September 11, 2012, 1. [↑](#endnote-ref-34)
35. Experienced merchant: Bill Rhodes Weaver, “He’s Noted for Stories and Music,” *Durham Herald-Sun*, November 9, 1941, pg. unknown. Sold interest: *Orange County Observer*, April 5, 1906, 3. The Brockwells’ business roles: United States Federal Census, Year: 1910; Census Place: Chapel Hill, Orange, North Carolina; District 0135; 12. Occupants: Sanborn map excerpt, March 1911, and *The News*, September 11, 1901, 1. The third floor does not appear on the December 1915 Sanborn map. It was apparently removed “when the weight of the materials threatened to collapse the entire structure.” (James Vickers, *Images of America: Chapel Hill* (Arcadia, Charleston, S.C.) 1996, 72.) [↑](#endnote-ref-35)
36. 100 Years of Movies in Chapel Hill, 2009 Calendar (CHHS, Chapel Hill, NC, 2009). [↑](#endnote-ref-36)
37. Talkies arrival: The CHHS 1999 Calendar (C&F Graphics of Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill, NC, 1998). [↑](#endnote-ref-37)
38. Storefront: “The Pickwick Theatre,” Freepages on Ancestry.com, <http://bit.ly/1n5N6YU>, March 30, 2014. The Pickwick purportedly supplanted the Leigh Meat Market and Ice Plant, which opened after 1903. The Sid L. Herndon Hardware was located to its east (indicated on the 1903 and 1908 street diagrams). (Bryant, Jr., 1899-1903 and 1904-1908). First ad: 100 Years of Movies in Chapel Hill. Sweetfrog Frozen Yogurt currently occupies 105 East Franklin Street. [↑](#endnote-ref-38)
39. Purchase and plan: *The Tar Heel*, March 11, 1911, 3, and April 25, 1911, 2. Generally: Bryant Jr. reference – 1909-1913, 196; *The Tar Heel*, October 3, 1911, 4; Weaver, “He’s Noted for Stories and Music.” Andrews served two three-year terms as sheriff. He was also the Orange County Register of Deeds for twelve years. Closed and moved: Herndon Hardware Company advertisement, *The Tar Heel*, September 7, 1914, 2; and “The Pickwick Theatre,” March 30, 2014. [↑](#endnote-ref-39)
40. High-Class: Pickwick Theater ad, The Yackety Yack, 1911. Stars names: William W. Prouty, *Bill Prouty’s Chapel Hill* (Chapel Hill Historical Society, Chapel Hill, NC, 1979), 21. Chapel Hill authors: Ibid, and Jane Toy Coolidge, *Growing Up with Chapel Hill: The Village from 1901-1925* (The CHHS, Chapel Hill, NC, 1977), 68. [↑](#endnote-ref-40)
41. Peanut pelting: Prouty, *Bill Prouty’s Chapel Hill,* 19-20. Daily barrage: Ibid, 20-21. Frame it: Bill Rhodes Weaver, “Old Pickwick Theater Once Only Fit for Respectables,” *The Daily Tar Heel*, November 6, 1938, 6. Pickwick Mabel: Coolidge, 68. Upright piano: William W. Prouty, 20. Playing style: Cornelia Spencer Love, *When Chapel Hill Was a Village…,* (CHHS, Chapel Hill, NC, 1976),55. Cornelia Spencer Love was the granddaughter of Cornelia Phillips Spencer, for whom Spencer, the first dormitory for women at UNC, was named. Kept her temper: Coolidge, 68. Orchestra: “The Pickwick Theatre,” February 2, 2014. [↑](#endnote-ref-41)
42. Announcement and location “Buildings Going Up: Tar Heel Theatre and Pickwick II—Movies,” *The Tar Heel*, January 15, 1916, 1. Modern improvements: “Pick Quakes—2 New Movie Mansions,” *The Tar Heel*, September 24, 1915, 1.Roberson would eventually serve three terms as mayor. Strowd Motor Company was founded in 1914 and sold Fords. Competition: “Competition Broken: Noticeable Increase in Business Activities at Chapel Hill,” *The Charlotte Observer*, September 24, 1915, 9. [↑](#endnote-ref-42)
43. Largest in the state: “The Pickwick Theatre,” March 30, 2014. Expenditure, location, contents: “Pick Quakes—2 New Movie Mansions,” *The Tar Heel*, September 24, 1915, 1. [↑](#endnote-ref-43)
44. Lot purchase: “The Pickwick Theatre,” March 30, 2014. Chapel Hill Mayor W. S. Roberson became proprietor of the new Pickwick theater and L. J. Phipps became its manager (Phipps was later a trustee for North Carolina Theaters, Inc.) by the early 1920s. Pickwick move: Bryant, Jr., “Occupants and Structures of Franklin Street, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, at Five Year Intervals, 1793-1998,” 1914-1918. [↑](#endnote-ref-44)
45. Pickwick description: House, 115-116. 1916 ad: Pickwick Theater, “Almost a Part of Carolina,” Duke University Libraries, Digital Collection, item # bdsnc092009, [www.library.duke.edu](http://www.library.duke.edu), February 2, 2014. Hill description: “The Pickwick Theatre,” February 2, 2014. [↑](#endnote-ref-45)
46. Lasted only: Final Tar Heel Theater ad, *The Yackety Yack*, 1916. Reopening: “Pickwick Will Open 23rd of This Month,” *The Tar Heel*, February 21, 1920, 1. Burned: “A New Theatre,” *The Tar Heel*, February 9, 1924, 2. Handsomest: “New Pickwick Will Be Ready by May 1,” *The Tar Heel*, April 1, 1924, 1. Expanded: “New Pickwick Theater Will Open Saturday,” *The Tar Heel*, May 30, 1924, 1. Architects and size: “New Pickwick Will Be Ready by May 1,” 1. Capacity: “New Pickwick Theatre Will Open Saturday,” 1. [↑](#endnote-ref-46)
47. Description: “A New Pickwick is Being Built,” *The Chapel Hill Weekly*, February 28, 1924, 1. The theater expanded by subsuming the former O’Kelly Tailoring shop space to the east. (“New Pickwick Theater Will Open Saturday,” *The Tar Heel*, May 30, 1924, 1.) Hoodlum behavior: Coolidge, pg. unknown. [↑](#endnote-ref-47)
48. Projection and seats: “The Pickwick Theatre,” March 30, 2014. Lantern: “New Pickwick Opens,” *The Chapel Hill Weekly*, June 5, 1924, 1. Ventilation: “Pickwick Runs All Summer,” *The Chapel Hill Weekly*, June 20, 1924, pg. unknown. [↑](#endnote-ref-48)
49. Almost a part: *Yackety Yack*, 1925, 414. “See the Best Pictures – Paramount, Goldwyn, Metro, and First National Pictures at the Pickwick Theatre,” the advertisement announced. Primary culprit: Wager, 1, and “About Us,” Varsity Theater website, <http://varsityonfranklin.com/aboutus.asp>, May 14, 2014. Brockwell taking over and new manager: “Brockwell to Run Pickwick,” *The Chapel Hill Weekly*, November 28, 1927, 1. Talkies: The CHHS 1999 Calendar. 1931 closure: The Pickwick Theatre,” March 30, 2014. [↑](#endnote-ref-49)
50. Ibid. “After the theater sat vacant for a few years, Brockwell leased it to North Carolina Theaters, Inc. in 1935 (which also owned the Carolina Theater, later the Varsity Theater), and the theater was renamed the Pick Theater; however, due to some financial difficulties Brockwell had in 1925, when the Bank of Chapel Hill obtained a deed of trust on the property, the lease was renegotiated and became effective in July 1938 (to end in August 1945). North Carolina Theaters, Inc. emplaced E. Carrington Smith (the manager of the Carolina Theater) as the manager of the Pick.” (Ibid.) [↑](#endnote-ref-50)
51. Renewed lease: Ibid. Name changes: Ralph M. Watkins, “Chapel Hill Theaters,” *The Chapel Hill Newspaper*, May 2, 1985, pg. unknown. Closure and remodelings: “The Pickwick Theatre,” March 30, 2014. Today, Johnny T-Shirt occupies 128 East Franklin Street in Franklin Centre. The entrance into the inner court of shops was the location of the Pickwick Theater entrance. Brockwell’s Franklin Street properties weren't sold until many years after his death by his widow. (“The Pickwick Theatre,” March 30, 2014.) [↑](#endnote-ref-51)
52. B&B: Sanborn Map excerpt, south side of Franklin Street, midblock between the Carolina Coffee Shop alley and South Columbia Street. December 15, 1915. Today, Subway at 122 East Franklin Street approximates the location of the B&B. Orders for jitney service to Durham could be left at the nearby Levy’s News Stand (*The Tar Heel*, January 14, 1915, 2.) Best: Bryant, Jr., 1914-1918. Chapel Hill Gun Club: *The Charlotte Observer*, November 5, 1906, 2. Unexcelled: *The Yackety Yack*, Vol. 13, 1913, 369. Pendergraft quote: James Vickers, *Images of America: Chapel Hill*, 73. Recalled the scene: House, pg. unknown. Four passenger: “A Chapel Hill Historical Society Evening of Reminiscing about Chapel Hill,” *Town & Gown*, *The Chapel Hill Weekly*, Vol. II, 1967-68, 13. Eight cylinder: “Second Shipment Cadillacs,” *Durham Morning Herald*, February 9, 1915, 3. [↑](#endnote-ref-52)
53. Location: Sanborn Map, excerpt, south block of Franklin Street between the Carolina Coffee Shop alley and South Columbia Street, December 15, 1915. S.J. Brockwell advertisement: *The Tar Heel*, March 14, 1919. From 1900 to 1915, the U.S. Post Office operated two doors east of the University Athletic Shop (the Carolina Coffee Shop today), then moved by 1915 to a small frame building at the corner of Franklin and Henderson streets. This was replaced by the brick U.S. Post Office in 1937 (includes the Court Building today). The location of the S.J. Brockwell Auto Station may have been related to W.P. Jordan’s November 22, 1919, land grant to Brockwell. Site: “The Pickwick Theatre,” March 30, 2014. [↑](#endnote-ref-53)
54. Interurban railroad: “Competition Broken: Noticeable Increase in Business Activities at Chapel Hill,” *The Charlotte Observer*, September 24, 1915, 9. Livery services bought: “Safety Coach Buys ’Em Out,” *Chapel Hill Weekly*, August 7, 1925, 1. [↑](#endnote-ref-54)
55. Lifelong, contributions: “Business Leader Taken by Death,” *The News and Observer*, November 3, 1940, pg. unknown. Founding and description: Blanchard,18. [↑](#endnote-ref-55)
56. Communion rail and pulpit: Ibid, 23. [↑](#endnote-ref-56)
57. “New Orange Church Opened: Fine Feast Served in Grove,” *The Chapel Hill Weekly*, June 5, 1924, pg. unknown. [↑](#endnote-ref-57)
58. Collection and debt: “Crowd at Homecoming,” *The Chapel Hill Weekly*, June 19, 1925, 1. Bell contribution: Blanchard,23. Altruism: “Business Leader Taken by Death,” *The News and Observer*, Nov. 3, 1940, pg. unknown. [↑](#endnote-ref-58)
59. Blanchard, 23. Brockwell had a long-term history with tuberculosis and nearly died in 1908 from a “white lightening” remedy prescribed by his doctor that resulted in lead poisoning. (*The Raleigh Times*, October 26, 1908, 8.) Old Chapel Hill Cemetery is located at the corner of Country Club and South Roads. The Brockwells’ son Gerald Sugg Brockwell lived from September 7-12, 1904. [↑](#endnote-ref-59)