

Highland County Historical Society celebrates 50th anniversary, Part XVIII

50th anniversary celebration May 20

**By Pamela Nickell
H.C. Historical Society**

During the past week, in preparation for the rebuilding of the back wall of the Highland House, our Building and Grounds Chair, Steve Holland, has begun to move items out of the Pioneer Hall. He will be assisted this week by capable volunteers to whom we give great appreciation. Risking the repetition of old news, both floors and the attic have to be cleared 10 or so feet into the museum and a false wall built before reconstruction can start on the brick outer wall and foundation.



On the second floor, in the Hall of Fame area of the upper rear hallway is a printing press and type which will also have to be temporarily relocated.

It appears in the museum records as the 445th accession of the Highland House, a gift from Dr. J.R. McBride who used it during his high school days to print class information. During the late 1800s, though, it had been used in the book/stationery store of Mr. Jacob Sayler. (Sometimes spelled Saylor in the references.)

Jacob Sayler was a remarkable man earning six references by Elsie Johnson Ayres in her book, *Hills of Highland*. Mr. Sayler was involved in the Temperance movement actually helping to build a canvas 'tabernacle' in front of Dunn's drugstore in January 1874. He assisted Morgan's Raiders. He owned a jewelry store and a book store. He was an amateur but serious geologist who roamed and hunted in the Fort Hill area actually finding mastodon bones. And he was the grandfather of artist Irene Detwiler.

"The Sayler family arrived in Hillsboro with few assets and very little money" in 1846. They became part of "the financial, social, and religious life of the town for nearly a century." (*Hills of Highland* p. 742.)

Imagine the stories that could have come off this printing press! However, it probably would have been used mainly to print ads (Maybe Temperance fliers?) and, later in Dr. McBride's youth, school news.

Also, imagine the effort it would take to operate it compared to what I am doing here, just typing away and then forwarding to Rory after which it magically appears not only in newspaper print but online. Might there be even better historical records available to

future generations because it is so much simpler to record and preserve now?

The answer to that seems obvious, but ever thankfully, so many people through the ages have felt a need to record their thoughts and history no matter what the method available to them.

The Highland County Historical Society will celebrate its 50th anniversary on May 20 from 5-7 p.m. at the Highland House. (Even though it will be in disarray due to the wall repair, what an auspicious way to begin the next 50 years!) Hope you join the happy throng!