

Highland County Historical Society celebrates 50th anniversary, Part XXII

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

As you have been reading this paper, you know that the Highland County Historical Society is celebrating the 50th anniversary of its founding.



Our weekly articles are highlighting some of the contributors and contributions to the Society that have developed the Highland House into a superior museum during the last half century. You also know, from reading and visually observing, that two-thirds of the south wall has had to be rebuilt.

Well, in an amazingly short time, the wall has been rebuilt and the brick laid. It is stunningly beautiful thanks to the dynamic duo of Brad Tira and Wayne Dance. Resulting inside work and the ramp are still under way, but the (at one time very daunting project to this new Board of Directors) wall reconstruction is done!

Because we wanted to use original brick for authenticity, as the brick was taken down, it was sorted into sound and un reusable brick. The inner layers of brick turned out to be too soft to reuse. The good brick was then cleaned piece by piece and saved on pallets. Would there be enough? It would be close.

Now we come to a very large carved stone slab that had been leaning against the back wall of the HH and moved, during construction, to lean against the log cabin. The contractors noted that it was exactly a brick thick and could be used and, thus displayed and protected forever, in the wall.

So from where did this Union Schools piece come? The Union School preceded Webster School, but how did the Historical Society get this identifying stone, Jean Wallis? "Well, it was donated by Larry Snoddy. He got it at auction. He still lives around here, but I don't know exactly where."

Well, we searched him out and he so graciously gave us this wonderful story and further, agreed to this photo.

When the upper level was taken off the old Union School Building, a Mr. Welch of the St. Martin area did the work. This stone slab was taken to his home and used as a step. After he passed away, his estate held an auction.

Representatives of the Historical Society were there to purchase a bell which they didn't get. Larry Snoddy looked at the Union School stone slab and mentioned to his dad, Ernest, that he thought it was pretty neat. He bid it in! He and his dad hauled it away in

their pickup truck. He later asked Historical Society member Joe "Uncle Orrie" Rockhold if the society wanted it.

He said he'd check and the answer was yes! Joe Rockhold and Charlie Harsha (grandfather of our Board member Justin Harsha), with equipment from his monument business, moved this large stone slab to the museum grounds and leaned it against the back foundation where it has remained until this day – well, actually, until a few weeks ago. Today, it is part of the wall!

I haven't yet determined the actual date of this gift but Mr. Snoddy says it was in the mid to late '60s and that he was given a one-year honorary membership in appreciation. There is no doubt that he – and all others who assist in the preservation of Highland County history – are given permanent appreciation.

And to prevent any misinterpretation that the slab indicates that the HH was once Union School, there will be a plaque attached to indicate the history of the slab.

Have I mentioned gifts and gratitude?