

Highland County Historical Society celebrates 50th anniversary, Part XXIV

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Two local dog heroes have stood out lately: Karson has his own biography and Homer his modeling and advertising career. But, an overlooked dog in plain sight at the Highland House is this white porcelain poodle. She was surely created in the image of a beloved dog herself, don't you think?



Who/what gets historical status and what doesn't?

When we lived in Maysville, Ky. in the late 1970s, we learned a lot about their local hero, Simon Kenton. There is a Simon Kenton museum in nearby Old Washington.

It is told there that Daniel Boone became more famous than Simon Kenton only because there was a secretary accompanying Boone who wrote down everything that happened, but Kenton had only word of mouth to memorialize his exploits.

Simon Kenton became our favorite frontiersman. Bob and Trevon were in the outdoor drama "Simon Kenton" by Marion N. Waggoner, who also authored "Tecumseh." We read Allan Eckert books of historical fiction and when we moved to the Hillsboro area, we coincidentally located on a road surveyed and laid out by Simon Kenton himself. All to say that history is a combination of fact and tale, recorded and told by interested people and gifted to the future.

Even in this Highland County Historical Society 50th anniversary year of articles featuring items in the Highland House Museum, very few pieces of the innumerable holdings are being memorialized. It would take many, many visits for one to give them all justice, but they are waiting for you, preserved by dedicated people past and present. As in Daniel Boone's case, leaders, workers and recorders are preserving and reporting.

Well, now more about our porcelain dog whom I will call "Winnie Lee" (talk about creative license), after her first owner. We know, because a faithful secretary recorded it. She has been in the Highland House since June 1998, a quiet resident of 17 years sitting on a shelf of the corner cupboard in the Music Room.

She was donated by Elaine Breuer along with this story: "The dog belonged to Winnie Lee Roberts of Mowrystown. As a young woman, she saw this in a general store in Mowrystown and saved her egg money to buy the dog."

Thelma Roberts Chaney received the dog and a year before Thelma died, she gave it to Elaine Breuer." And thanks to Ms. Breuer, all of us in Highland County and beyond can enjoy it now.

Our poodle dog figurine is 19th century Staffordshire porcelain. "The geography of Staffordshire" according to collectorsweekly.com, "in central England conspired to make it a center for slipware and other types of lead-glazed earthenware. Thick layers of clay lay only a few feet below the surface. In fact, there was so much of the stuff within easy reach that 18th century potters routinely dug clay right out of the roads, thus giving us the origin of the phrase 'pot hole.'"

Keep recording the past and present for the future. It's our way of honoring both woman and man's best friend.