

Highland County Historical Society celebrates 50th anniversary, Part VII

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We are concentrating on the history of the Highland County Historical Society but we acknowledge that the Highland House itself has a long and varied history. She has worn many hats.



This article quotes, almost verbatim, from its history as told, author not attributed, in the ""Museum Self-guided Tour.""

The land on which the Highland House stands is traced back to a deed to D.M. Fallis, who lived in a log cabin on this site in 1830. We jump to 1840 when Peter Leake Ayres bought part of the lot from the Rev. Henry W. and Mrs. Turner. The original brick house was completed in 1844.

The home was sold in July of 1853 to James Rosa. In May of 1866, it was purchased by Dr. James M. Johnston, a Civil War veteran who built a double deck porch on the southeast corner of the building.

In April of 1870, the Highland Institute Board bought the house and planned to use it as a boarding house for girls at the Institute, however, this never took place. It was at this time that the name, "Highland" was applied to the house. What happened in the next 17 years is not fully explained here. Was it a vacant building until renovated? An interesting gap to research.

An 1887 advertisement for the Highland House stated: "Highland House – Joseph Gaskill, Proprietor, J.M. Woodland, Clerk. House newly remodeled, First Class in every respect. Corner Main and East Streets. Feed stable attached."

We are left to imagine its elegance.

Gaskill had enclosed the porches in 1844, and built the stable which was torn down in 1923.

Are there pictures of the stable? Max Petzold probably knows.

In 1889, Sam and Jane Scott bought the Highland House as an investment.

They hired Col. Cary T. Pope as manager and the Highland House became one of the leading hotels in the country.

In 1905, Highland House was purchased by Mrs. Kate Doorley and quickly became an

East Main Street institution famous for fine foods. After Mrs. Doorley passed away in 1949, her daughter, June, continued to operate the Highland House as a hotel until 1964.

In 1964, Helen Boyd purchased the building shortly after which, in 1965, the Highland County Historical Society Highland House Museum was established.

The HCHS membership and community have inherited so very much. This particular hat of mine is off to ALL the folks who have created and cared for the Highland House Museum.