



Highlands Historical Society



Fall 2022

To preserve and promote the rich heritage of Highlands

Highlands, N.C.

All Roads Lead To Highlands – But They Didn't Always!

Originally, at the end of the Civil War there were no roads to Highlands. When Highlands was founded in 1875 the nearest road of any consequence was a primitive wagon road that started in Walhalla, climbed the mountains north of Walhalla, forded the Chattooga River before arriving in Cashiers Valley. Soon after the town's founding a fork was created in the road up Wildcat Cliffs and met the extension of East Main Street. Indeed it was the only way in or out of Highlands by horse-drawn hack. Good citizens who made it as far as Walhalla would



have no inkling of the long, arduous two day trip still ahead to Highlands. It required an overnight stay in the Russell House on the SC bank of the Chattooga River.



ROAD TO CASHIERS

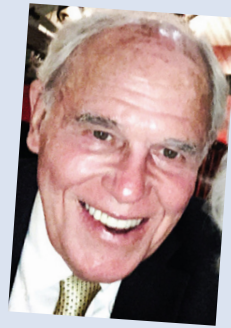
In 1880 if you wished to make a trip to Cashiers you would have to wait 20 years. In 1902 Ravenel completed the seven miles of his turnpike to the outskirts to Cashiers, where he set up a toll booth to recoup the expenses. *– continued on back page*

GNAT RIDGE ROAD TO GEORGIA

If the route to Walhalla was difficult the Gnat Ridge road which extended today's Glen Falls Road into Georgia was outright dangerous. However by 1913 work on the Scaly Road was fully underway. By 1919 it was being called the Dillard Road. Deliveries by this road took several days.



President's Letter October 2022



2022 was a great year for Highlands Historical Society. We opened the museum this year with eight new exhibits featuring the Cultural Gems of Highlands. Physical improvements were made with new lighting in the museum along with repairs and painting at the Prince House. There was a dedication ceremony honoring Ran Shaffner with a plaque in his honor. Our annual fund raiser, Big Hats Bow Ties, was successful financially and we received great reviews from those who attended. Kelsey Kids program was two weeks with different age groups. The Dahlia Festival was expanded with a Thursday night event at The Bascom and events on our campus. We could not have achieved this without your generous support and are extremely thankful.

Harry

Harry McDonald,
President



OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

- Harry McDonald, President
- Kim Daugherty, Vice President
- Sherry Holt, Treasurer
- Susan Clarkson, Secretary
- Phil Potts, Tammy Lowe, Dennis DeWolf,
- Dollie Swanson, Kevin FitzPatrick,
- Carlton Cole, Tracy Foor,
- Mike Thompson, Oliver Young,
- Anna Wilson
- Obie Oakley, Ex Officio
- Lance Hardin, Archivist
- Ran Shaffner, Archivist Emeritus
- Bill Lands, Art Director

RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

We hope you will renew now
 Family \$50 • Individual \$35
 Sustainer \$100 • Business \$250
 Promoter \$500 • Preserver \$1,000
 Protector \$2,500 • Highlander \$5,000
 And we hope you will add a donation,
 as many of you have done so generously in
 the past. To join or renew membership by check
 or credit card, visit <https://highlandshistory.com>.

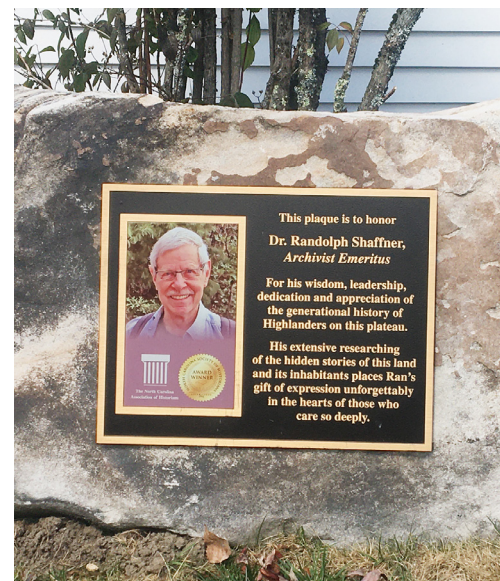
Highlands Historical Society
P.O. Box 670, Highlands, NC 28741

WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT!



Ran Shaffner Recognition

On opening weekend HHS recognized Ran Shaffner, Archivist Emeritus, with a reception and a plaque on the grounds of the Historic Village. The plaque honors Ran's "wisdom, leadership, and appreciation" of Highlands' special history, and our gratitude for Ran's "extensive researching of the hidden stories of this land." At left Ran is congratulated by former six-year HHS president, Obie Oakley Thanks again for all your many contributions, Ran!



Big Hats + Bow Ties = Big Time!

The Big Hats, Bow Ties fundraiser was a great success this year. This is the comment from one of the attendees: "Hats of to the Highlands Historical Society for a great party. Beautiful mountain setting, cool breeze, pretty flowers and delicious food for a festive day. Thank you all for your efforts."



"The Gilded Age"

The 12th Annual Dazzling Dahlia Festival, with the theme "The Gilded Age," was a huge success! A little rain could not diminish the enthusiasm surrounding many new events, including a kick-off reception at The Bascom on Thursday, limited edition poster sales, and heritage activities on the Historic Village grounds. Many thanks to the Dahlia Festival committee for all their hard work – they are the ones who are truly "dazzling!"

Highlands Historical Society

12th Annual

The Gilded Age

12th Annual

Dazzling Dahlias

FESTIVAL

September 10th & 11th

Follow the dahlia trail map, to discover dazzling dahlia vignettes. Beginning at The Bascom, and ending at Highlands Historical Village.

Dahlia trail maps will be available at The Bascom, the Visitor Center, Kelsey-Hutchinson Founders Park, and Highlands Historical Village.

All Roads Lead To Highlands *– continued from front page*

TERRIBLE ROAD CONDITIONS

As proud as the people of Highlands were of the completed roads to the outside world, the roads were far from ideal. They were passable, but in those days passable meant rocky, frequently muddy, always in need of repair and sometime downright dangerous.

THE RAILROAD THAT NEVER WAS

From the first days that Kelsey set foot in Highlands, he knew from personal experience that the isolated



town would need the service of a railroad. In 1882 the Highlands Railroad Company was formed to construct a railroad line to some point on the Rabun Gap Railroad in Georgia. No progress developed by 1887 and Highlanders began to lose heart. This was the year Kelsey abandoned Highlands to found the new town of Linville, NC. His interest shifted to the towering grandeur of Grandfather Mountain.

CONSTRUCTION OF THE GORGE ROAD

This massive project entailed in 1927 blasting a narrow ledge along solid granite 200 feet above the river. It was unique that it didn't follow the river bank but wound its way along the side of the age-old granite wall. The road passed the thundering torrent of Dry Falls and nearing



it's end, swerved into the gaping maw of Bridal Veil Falls, the only road in the state to pass under a water fall. In 1958 the town approved constructing a bypass on the outside of the falls.