

ly stated that more than 100 summer homes are situated in and around Highlands. Including summer camps, the number will probably reach 150. The most beautiful of the residences are on Satulah mountain, where six have been erected.

A census of Highlands taken last winter shows a population of 547. In the summer the population reaches 2,500.

Five artificial lakes, the largest of which is formed by the municipal dam, are located at Highlands. These are Mirror, Lindenwood, Harbison, Ravenel and the Municipal lake. The Harbison and Ravenel lakes are smaller than the other three and are privately owned. Lindenwood lake is used for bathing and boating.

W. S. Davis, the mayor of Highlands, was asked for a sketch of recent developments in the town. The three most important projects are the establishment of the gravity water supply system, the erection of the municipal dam for lights and power, and the development of Highlands Estates.

An ample water supply is furnished from 12 springs on government property, four miles from town. The system was completed in 1925 at a cost of \$45,000 for which the town voted bonds. An additional \$5,000 was voted for a sewage system. The watershed is north of town, the water being carried to the houses through a six inch main.

In 1926, \$105,000 in bonds were voted for the erection of a municipal dam and power plant on the Cullasaja river, two miles west of town. A concrete arch dam, 28 feet high, was constructed. The waters of the lake cover 76 acres. This development was also made on the property of the Nantahala National forest. Three hundred horse power are generated at the power house, and the amount can be doubled by the addition of another unit. Mr. Davis reports that practically every business house and residence in Highlands is using lights and water. The bonds for sewage, water and lights make a total of \$155,000 spent by the Town of Highlands within three years for municipal improvements.

The latest and biggest development in Highlands is the golf course on the Highlands Estates. A complete story of this new development appears in this issue of The Press. Mayor Davis states: "With the completion of highway No. 28 and this

a section surpassing anything in the way of scenic beauty to be found in this country."

The people of Highlands use superlatives when they speak of anything that pertains to their town and the nearby scenic attractions. No where can one find more friendly, more progressive people. It is as natural for a Highlander to greet a stranger with a smile and a handshake as for the average man to go to dinner at twelve o'clock. When one enjoys the hospitality of a Highlander one can feel that the host is not forcing himself to be friendly; it is second nature for a Highlander to be cordial.

Majority Favor Cowee Road

A prominent citizen of Cowee township was in Franklin Tuesday and stated that a great majority of the citizens of that township favor building a hardsurfaced road from highway No. 286 to the head of Cowee.

Press want ads bring the buyer and seller together.

World's Largest Mica Crystal Owned by Local Masonic Lodge

This Crystal is Now in State Museum at Raleigh—Interesting Facts About Masonic Building.

Investigation of the early history of the old Masonic Hall at Franklin brought to light the story of the world's largest mica crystal.

Junaluska Lodge No. 145, the local Masonic organization, owns the crystal. It is of gigantic proportions, and is kept in the state museum at Raleigh. According to "Uncle Bill" Stallcup, 86-year-old Civil War veteran and the oldest member of Junaluska Lodge, the crystal is larger than a peck measure—possibly as large as a half bushel. It is understood that as much as \$500 has been offered for the crystal, a sum the local Masons did not accept.

Opinions differ, but either C. D. and Ell Bowers or their mother gave to the local lodge, in its early history, property which was sold and converted into money. Before the sale of the property, however, the huge mica crystal was taken from a mine on the land and became a permanent possession of Junaluska Lodge. The proceeds from the property's sale now amount to nine or ten thousand dollars.

Junaluska Lodge was organized in 1852. Julius T. Siler was the first Worshipful Master, states T. J. Johnston, local attorney. The first application for membership came from Maxwell R. Slagle.

For a number of years in its earlier history the lodge met over the old Robinson store. The store, long since torn away, stood on the corner near the present Robinson house. Only the older Masons remember the time referred to. It was probably about 1870 that the lodge began meeting in its present quarters.

According to the opinion of two or three Masons, the old Masonic Hall antedates 1870, but records at the office of the register of deeds show that the property was deeded by Captain William M. Addington and wife jointly to the Masons and the Sons of Temperance for the sum of \$175.

was to be used as the site for the erection of a female academy. The top floor was to be used as the meeting place of the Masons and the Sons of Temperance. The latter organization has long since ceased to function, with the result that the Masons came into full possession of the property and building.

A portion of the old deed reads: "William M. Addington and wife, Virginia R. Addington, for the sum of \$175 paid by the 'Master and Wardens of Junaluska Lodge No. 145, Ancient York Masons of North Carolina, the receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged, have given, granted, bargained, sold, aliened, released, conveyed and confirmed, and we do by these presents give, grant, (etc.) unto the said 'Master and Wardens of Junaluska Lodge No. 145 Ancient York Masons' and their successors in office in free simple forever, in trust for the purpose of erecting and keeping up a Female Academy in the Town of Franklin, North Carolina, and a Masonic Hall, the money for which has been contributed by the 'Macon Division No. 46 Sons of Temperance' of North Carolina and by Junaluska Lodge No. 145, Ancient York Masons of North Carolina."

The hall was never used for a female academy, but the lower floor was used for the common school until about 1888. T. J. Johnson, Lee Crawford, Mrs. C. C. Cunningham, Mrs. Will Sellers and Miss Lillie Rankin are among the number who at one time attended school in the old hall. Major N. P. Rankin at one time taught the school.

Some years ago when the school building at Franklin burned, the Masonic Hall was again converted into a temporary school house for the grammar grades. It has been used

by Sunday school classes; it has been considered by the president of a business college as the possible location of a branch of the college; it houses the public library.

The library, according to Prof. M. D. Billings, county superintendent of schools, was established in 1902. The efforts of Jule Robinson, Miss Kate Robinson, Miss Lassie Kelly and Miss Elizabeth Kelly were largely responsible for its establishment. The donation of books from private libraries, and the use of cash donations for the purchase of new books made possible the acquisition of several thousand volumes. The work of the Robinsons and Kellys is to be commended, for few small towns have a similar collection of standard and classical works.

Due, however, to the impracticability of employing a full time librarian, full use of the library has never been made. It has been open at intervals, and again the doors have been closed. At times it has been open on two or three afternoons during the week, but the work of those who have served as librarians has been gratis.

Junaluska Lodge, with a present membership of 116, has prospered over a period of 76 years. Among its membership are included many of the more prominent of Franklin's citizens. The present officers are: Frank I. Murray, Worshipful Master; Henry Cabe, Senior Warden; E. W. Long, Junior Warden; Frank Bryson, secretary; M. D. Billings, treasurer.

The first heavy timber structure erected in Franklin, the remodeled Junaluska Inn, still stands. It is very nearly a century old. There are numerous buildings in town closely associated with early events, and concerning which interesting incidents might be unearthed. The old court house, the old Munday, Pendergrass, Bryson and Robinson houses all are rich in associations with early events.

In the early days the state granted tracts to the various churches on which the church buildings were erected. The reminiscences of Major N. P. Rankin show that the first grant was to the Baptists in 1830. In 1835 the Methodists received a land grant for their church, and an additional ten acres for the erection of a male academy. The building erected is the

present Presbyterian church was originally established several miles from town, and was called Ebenezer. Later the present church building was erected in Franklin. The Episcopal church was established in 1881, following which the present building was constructed.

Few, however, of these buildings, if any, are more closely associated with the progress of the town following the Civil War than the old Masonic Hall. Trimmings in two shades of brown paint, with the white paint scaling off, with sagging doors, spindling colonial columns, and with its tower slightly askew, it still belongs as much to the present as to the past.

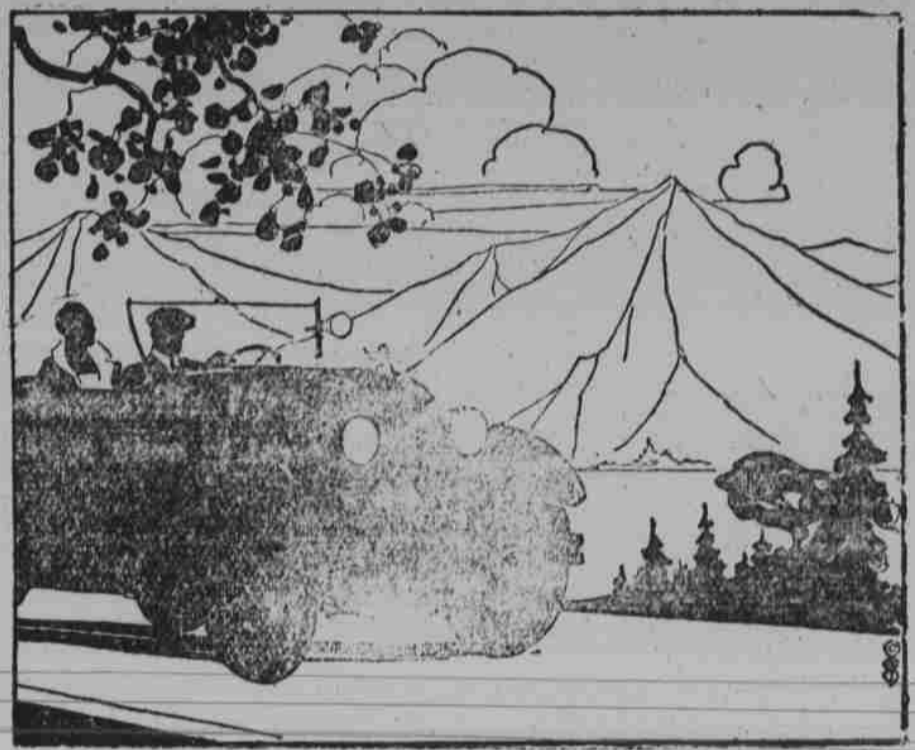
Iotla Locals

Mrs. Arvil Fouts and little son, J. A., of Winston-Salem, are visiting home folks on Iotla.

Mr. Harry Ray is all smiles now-a-days, as its a girl. Born June 15, little Audrey Avanel. Both mother and baby are doing nicely.

We are glad to state that Mr. J. D. Roland, after a long spell of sickness, is improving some.

Mr. J. H. Roland, of Ft. Leavenworth, recently visited his mother and father, Mr. and Mrs. J. D. Roland.



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