

Get a good taste of the NC mountains

BY ALAN HODGE
Special to The Herald

Famous far and wide as the apple growing center of North Carolina, the Hendersonville and Flat Rock area also offers a surprisingly eclectic blend of attractions and amusements. Located less than 100 miles from Gaston and Cleveland counties, Hendersonville and Flat Rock give a good taste of the mountains without having to drive a long way.

Even as early as the 1800s, Hendersonville and Flat Rock were known for their cool summer climate. Since so many rich folks from South Carolina came there to escape the blistering Low Country heat, the area was once called "Little Charleston of the Mountains." Recognizing its past, the Flat Rock area is listed on the National Register of Historical Places.

One of the premier attractions is the Flat Rock Playhouse, also known as the State Theater of North Carolina. Called one of the "ten best seasonal theaters in the country," the Flat Rock Playhouse has presented over 300 productions during its half century of existence.

The theater and its Vagabond Players stage shows from late-May through mid-October. For more information, call 1-828-693-0731. The theater is located on Hwy. 25 South in Flat Rock.

Not far from the Flat Rock Playhouse is the home of poet and author Carl Sandburg. Called "Connemara," Sandburg's farm was originally built in 1838 and was the place he spent the last 22 years of his life. Besides Connemara's beauty and the fact that Sandburg wrote some of his best work there, is the story of

Mrs. Sandburg and the prize goats she raised.

A serene little spiritual oasis, St. John in the Wilderness Church at Flat Rock was originally built as a private chapel on the estate of Charles and Susan Barings. The church was transferred to the Episcopal Diocese of Western North Carolina in 1936.

The cemetery at St. John in the Wilderness Church contains several interesting graves. These include Christopher Memminger who was the first secretary of the Confederate States treasury, several family members of Declaration of Independence signers, and General Edward King, leader of the Bataan Death March during WWII. The church and cemetery are open daily from 9 a.m. until 1 p.m. and is located on Hwy. 25 South.

A Flat Rock landmark, the 1852 Woodfield Inn is located on 28 acres of landscaped grounds. Once used as a Confederate headquarters, the Woodfield Inn is on the National Register of Historic Places.

An elegant structure complete with a sweeping veranda and large patio, the Woodfield Inn is renowned for its fine dining and period decorated rooms. Call 1-828-693-6016 or 1-800-533-6016 to find out more. The Woodfield Inn is also located right on Hwy. 25 South.

Just a few miles north of Flat Rock, Hendersonville is a thriving city that caters to the lifestyles of all age groups. Besides being a popular travel destination, Hendersonville is also on of the top retirement locations in the nation.

Hendersonville has many stops with interesting things to see and do. One of the most unique is the statue of an angel

said to be the inspiration for Thomas Wolfe's novel "Look Homeward Angel." The statue is in Oakdale Cemetery on Hwy. 64 near downtown. Look for the statue on the Johnson family plot.

One of the largest farmers' markets in North Carolina is located at the corner of 2nd Avenue and Church Street in Hendersonville. Known as the Henderson County Farmers Curb Market, this tradition has been in operation since 1924. Sellers at the market have to be residents of Henderson County.

Items available for purchase includes flowers, fruit, toys, vegetables, baked goods, jams and jellies, and crafts. The market is open 8 a.m. until 1 p.m. Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday from May-December. Days of operation for January through April are Tuesday and Saturday.

A colorful look at the past is available at the restored Hendersonville Depot. Located on Maple Street off 7th Avenue, the Depot is restored to its original color and features a Southern Railway caboose.

Inside the former baggage room, the Apple Valley Railroad Club has an HO scale model train layout with over 600 feet of track. The depot is open year round on Saturdays 10 a.m. until 2 p.m.

Fans of old planes will enjoy a visit to the Western North Carolina Air Museum at the Hendersonville Airport. The state's first air museum, this facility has several restored vintage aircraft on display as well as other aviation memorabilia. Admission is free, and the museum is open Wednesday, Saturday, and Sunday from 12



Foothills Equestrian Nature Center, Tryon
Photo courtesy of NC Division of Tourism, Film and Sports Development

noon until 6 p.m.

Another Hendersonville attraction is the Johnson Farm. A restored example of late 19th and early 20th century agricultural life, the Johnson Farm was originally the home of tobacco magnate Oliver Moss and dates to 1876. Structures at the farm include the original brick main house, smokehouse, granary, tool shed, barn, and cottage. It's located on Hwy. 191 North across from Rugby Middle School.

The Johnson Farm was placed on the National Register

of Historic Places in 1987 and was also willed to the Henderson County Board of Education by the Johnson family that same year. The farm is open 9 a.m. until 2:30 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday from May to October and 9 a.m. until 2:30 p.m. Wednesday through Saturday from November through April.

Other attractions just outside Hendersonville and Flat Rock include the Brevard Music Center in Brevard, the Cradle of Forestry Historic Site in Pisgah National Forest, the Foothills

Equestrian Nature Center, Western North Carolina Agricultural Center, Blue Ridge Parkway, Folk Art Center, North Carolina Arboretum, and much more.

To find out more about travel and cultural attractions in the Hendersonville and Flat Rock region, call Henderson County Travel and Tourism at 1-800-828-4244, or visit their website at www.historichendersonville.org or www.historicflatrock.org. Both Hendersonville and Flat Rock are right along Interstate 26 between Asheville and Spartanburg, S.C.

LARGEST PRE-OWNED INVENTORY IN GASTON COUNTY!

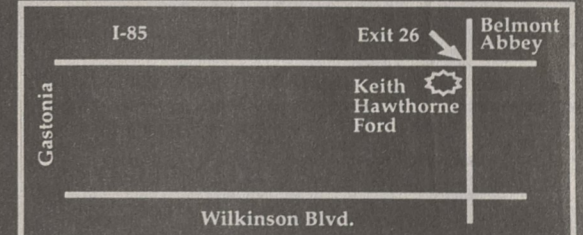
 97 Ford F250 Crew Cab XLT 4x4 Powerstroke Diesel America's Most Wanted! SAVE	 00 Ford Ranger XLT 4x4 Quad Doors, Power Package \$17,387	 97 Lincoln Towncar Leather, Roof, Gorgeous \$17,344	 97 Pontiac Grand Am 4Dr., Auto, PW, Immaculate Condition! \$8,381	 96 Chevy Blazer LT 4 Door, Leather, Gorgeous! \$10,451	 98 Ford Mustang GT 5 Speed, Power Package, Alloys, One Bad Pony! \$16,443
 99 Ford Windstar LX Quad Seats, Load up the Family! \$14,911	 98 Pontiac Firebird T-Tops, Auto, Sporty, Fun! \$11,983	 00 Crown Victoria LX Power Seat, Immaculate \$19,987	 2001 Ford Escape Auto, V6, CD, Hottest SUV in USA! \$20,911	 99 Plymouth Voyager Quad Seats, Rear Air, Alloys, Load Up the Family! \$16,867	 00 Ford Mustang Power Package, Low Miles, Blowout Prices! \$15,646
 98 Ford Windstar GL Rear Air, Mama's Limol! \$11,244	 98 Ford Mustang Power Package, Gotta See! \$9,929	 98 Chevy Z-71 C1500 Silverado Two Tone, 3rd Door, Extra Nice \$21,444	 01 Ford Expedition XLT 3rd Seat, Rear Air, A Steal @ \$24,890	 98 Ford Explorer Leather, Sunroof, Wheel, windows/Locks, Tilt, Cassette, CD, All the Toys \$16,904	 99 Ford Explorer XLT Leather, Roof, 4x4, Power Seats, Too Much to List. \$19,464
 97 Ford T-bird Automatic, Windows/Locks, Cassette, All Power, Save Today! \$9,996	 99 Dodge Durango Limited Edition, Custom Paint, Leather, Better Hurry! \$20,947	 98 Ford F150 XLT Supercab #1 Selling Truck in America \$17,644	 95 Ford F150 Auto, Lots of Extras, Local Trade Won't Last \$9,175	 01 Ford Focus SE Wheels, Power Package, Program Special \$11,787	 95 Ford Ranger STX Supercab 4x4 Auto, V6, Hard to Find! \$10,977
 98 Toyota Tacoma Supercab 4x4 Auto, Pwr. Pack, Local Trade, Gorgeous \$17,977	 97 Honda Accord LX Auto, Power Package, #1 Import \$12,241	 2000 Ford Taurus SE Auto, Power Package, Power Seat, Alloys, Large Selection, Starting At \$11,977	 94 Honda Civic EX Coupe, Roof, Wheel, Power Package \$7,977	 97 Nissan Maxima SE Roof, Local Trade, Better Hurry! \$15,919	 97 Ranger Xtra Cab XLT Automatic, V6, Power Package, Ready to Roll! \$10,641

CARS UNDER \$10,900

97 Ford Taurus SE Power Package, Power Seat, Rainbow of Colors \$8,741	98 Ford Taurus SE Roof, Alloys, Immaculate! \$10,646	99 Ford Escort LX Auto, Gas Saver. \$9,494	93 Ford Aerostar Get Away Van! \$5,351	98 Ford Contour Power Package, Auto, Gotta See! \$8,987	95 Pontiac Firebird Hurry! \$9,471
--	--	--	--	---	--



BIG
ENOUGH TO SERVE YOU,
SMALL
ENOUGH TO KNOW YOU.



825-5186