

TATTNALL COUNTY ARCHIVES

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

MS 007

Alexander Hotel Papers

Descriptive Summary:

Creator Information:	Tattnall County Historic Preservation
Title:	Alexander Hotel Papers
Collection Identifier:	MS 007
Accession History:	Accession date: Prior to 2015
Method of Accession:	No deed of gift, box from group members
Date Span of Material:	1980-2000
Extent:	2 linear feet (2 banker boxes)
Archivist & Finding Aid Author:	Sandra Wingate & Janisse Ray
Languages:	English
Repository:	Tattnall County Archives

Administrative Information:

Location Information:	Shelves: 1 st Jail Cell
Accession Restrictions:	None
Custodial History:	This material was stored in the Archives by members of the Tattnall County Historic Preservation, especially Ruth Anderson and Mary Ann Carter, and was present when the current Collections policy was put in place in 2019.
Accession Number:	None
Preferred Citation:	Alexander Hotel Papers, MS 001, Tattnall County Archives, Reidsville
Copyright Notice:	Consult the archivist for details.

Subjects & Genres:

Alexander Hotel
Reidsville, Georgia
Tattnall County, Georgia
National Register of Historic Places
Georgia Historic Resources Survey

Tattnall County Historic Preservation
Senator Jack Hill
Mary Helen Stanfield White

Biographical Note:

The Alexander Hotel (later known as the Stanfield Hotel) was constructed around 1892 as a residence, boarding house, and office for a physician, Dr. Orlando Alexander. The architecture style is Victorian Eastlake. Its fancy gingerbread trim became popular at that time because the jigsaw had recently been invented. The hotel was one of three in town and was needed because Tattnall was a much larger county at the time, containing parts of Toombs and Evans counties. Reidsville was the county seat, and when court was in session, those having business at court would travel to Reidsville and stay for the duration of court.

Dr. Alexander's daughter, Willie Alexander, married an attorney who became a judge, David Lester "D.L." Stanfield, and in the 1930s they added a wing on the northern side of the building for additional boarders. The hotel then was home to schoolteachers and newlyweds, as well as out-of-town travelers. Judge Stanfield was an active temperance worker and an avid reader.

There are several outbuildings on the property, including a mule barn, a pit greenhouse, and another which served as the pharmacy for Dr. Alexander's drugs.

The hotel enjoyed several "firsts" in town – it had the first electricity, furnished by a Delco plant out back, and it had the first phone service in town.

Tattnall County Historic Preservation was formed in 1980 by persons interested in seeing the Alexander Hotel restored and turned into a public use facility. The group worked closely with Mary Helen Stanfield White, daughter of Judge D.L. and Mrs. Willie Stanfield, who had moved to Atlanta and had worked 42 years with the Center for Disease Control.

The hotel and one acre of land was deeded to the nonprofit organization in September 1981. Volunteers began working on the building not long after.

The original Restoration Committee was made up of Jack Hill, long-time state senator (until his death in April 2020); Kinny Dorsey; and Sam Lawson.

After extensive preparation, a National Register listing application was submitted in 1980 and was listed by the National Review Board effective 1982. This group was very active locally. They proceeded with fundraisers and grant-writing, and over the course of the next decade, restored the building completely. Afterward, for a time, until the costs became prohibitive, the building was rented out as a meeting place, Chamber of Commerce offices, and rooms for local civic organizations. With time, the keys were turned over to the Sons of the Confederacy, who continued to meet in the Hotel but were not able to maintain it.

Mary Helen Stanfield White died in 2009.

In 2019 the Preservation Society reformed and began to raise interest again in the structure and to raise funds for upkeep.

Scope and Content:

This collection includes 2 series:

- 1.) Folders pertaining to the Alexander Hotel preservation, restoration, and maintenance.
- 2.) Historical photos pertaining to these subjects.

Arrangement:

Because the Preservation Society has been revived, and documents in this collection may be used more frequently, we have arranged the material in archival folders in alphabetical order.

Detailed Description of the Collection and Box Content:

Box 1: Organization Material

Ace Hardware
Alexander Hotel
Architecture, Alexander Hotel
Articles
Articles – *Sweet Onion County Magazine*
Board of Directors
By-laws
Chamber of Commerce
Correspondence
Correspondence with Landowners
Electric Bills
Financial Resources & Reference Material
Georgia Natural Gas
Gifts
Grant – Application
Heating & Air
Historic Resources Survey
Insurance Policy
Invoices & Receipts
Meeting Notes

Membership List
Mission Statement
National Register of Historic Places
Newsletters
Pest Control
Plat, Floor Plans & Property Maps
Rent
Restoration Work
Rules
Stationery
Tattnall Bank #1
Tattnall Bank #2
Tattnall Bank #3
Tattnall County Historic Preservation, Inc.
Tax Exemption IRS
Volunteer Award
Warranty Deed
Water Bills, City of Reidsville
White, Mary Helen Stanfield

Box 2: Photos

Most of the photos in these folders are from the period of the 1980s, when restoration work and fundraising was proceeding for the Hotel.