**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE AND COMMEND DONALDS GRANGE NO. 497 FOR ITS CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE COMMUNITY OF DONALDS AND ABBEVILLE COUNTY, AND TO COMMEMORATE THE OCCASION OF THE STATE GRANGE ANNUAL MEETING IN DONALDS, AS WELL AS THE TRANSFER OF THE DONALDS GRANGE BUILDING AND REAL PROPERTY TO THE TOWN OF DONALDS AT THAT MEETING, ON SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 2009.

Whereas, Donalds Grange No. 497 is significant for both its architecture and its contributions to the social development of the community and Abbeville County. Constructed in 1935 by local Works Progress Administration (WPA) labor on land donated by W. Maxie Agnew, the building served originally as the town hall, the local grange, and the public library; and

Whereas, in its capacity as a home for the local grange, it hosted a membership of entire farm families, with women in equal partnership with men in their promotion of agricultural interests. Also included were those who were not just farmers but also businessmen, as well as those in professions with relevant agricultural concerns; and

Whereas, ever since its construction, the fieldstone grange building has been the meeting hall for the Donalds Grange, but in 1942 it also became headquarters for the Abbeville County Circulating Library, including its popular bookmobile, all sponsored until 1959 by Donalds Grange; and

Whereas, the architectural significance of the property stems from its local design and its construction by WPA labor. As is typical of the vernacular style used in WPA buildings, the fieldstone construction and locally produced lumber give evidence of the participation of local labor in this important example of Depression Era public buildings. Using two‑horse wagons, people hauled fieldstones from their farms. Uninitiated in masonry construction, the WPA labor force initially attempted to lay the fieldstones, only to return the following morning to find them lying awry where they had fallen during the night; and

Whereas, a Donalds contractor who had built his home of like material was then called in to teach the inexperienced their craft. Local landowners also contributed the pine poles that frame the cathedral‑type ceiling of the building, the oak hand‑hewn sill that supports the main floor, and the heart pine flooring; and

Whereas, in recognition of its historic and cultural importance, Donalds Grange No. 497, Patrons of Husbandry, was entered into the National Register of Historic Places on January 9, 1995, and in 2002 was designated as a Discovery Site by the South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism; and

Whereas, today, Donalds Grange No. 497 still welcomes citizens involved in, or interested in, agriculture, and, according to one report, is “among the seventeen oldest granges in the State constantly active since their organization.” On February 28, 2009, the Donalds Grange will add another historic event to its chronicles when it hosts the State Grange annual meeting and transfers the Donalds Grange building and real property to the Town of Donalds, thus ensuring preservation of the town’s grange heritage for future generations; and

Whereas, the House of Representatives takes great pleasure in honoring the Donalds Grange for its long history of community service, the fine preservation of its historic building, and the promotion of the agricultural industry, one so vital to the State of South Carolina. The members wish the grange much success in many more years of fruitful labors. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives, by this resolution, recognize and commend Donalds Grange No. 497 for its contributions to the community of Donalds and Abbeville County, and commemorate the occasion of the State Grange annual meeting in Donalds, as well as the transfer of the Donalds Grange building and real property to the Town of Donalds at that meeting, on Saturday, February 28, 2009.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to

Donalds Grange No. 497.

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