Pickens society aims to save old log house

Dacusville landmark is in storage now

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A two-story log house that has long stood in the Dacusville community and that officials say was at the heart of the Methodist church's foundation in the Upstate is on the road to recovery.

The Pickens County Historical Society is working to save the Burdine Lodge, the oldest structure in the eastern part of Pickens County, said Wayne Kelley, vice president of the historical society.

"This is living history," Kelley said. "This is where our forebears were, who built this area of South Carolina, built the homes that came to be and the great families that have been here since, and here is where one of their major denominations began."

He said the Burdine log house, which sat on Old Vinland School Road in the Dacusville area, has been deconstructed and is now in county storage.

"It had had roof damage, so there was some deterioration well under way," Kelley said.

The goal is to reconstruct the piece of history at the Hagood Mill site.

"We tagged every piece of it, photographed every element, had an engineer drawing done of it," Kelley said. "We want to restore the veranda to it, rebuild the chimney and the hearth and all that sort of thing, and make it as close to what it was in the early 1800s as possible."

Easley resident Nell Davis Patton said she donated the Burdine Lodge, which has been in her family for years, to the Pickens County Historical Society.

She said she would like to see the log house, where many of her family members lived, reconstructed and preserved at Hagood Mill.

"It's got a lot of Methodist history to it," Patton said. "Antioch Methodist Church, which is in Pickens County, grew out of it."

Kelley said the log house served many roles in the community, including as a trading post, home, school, church and meeting house.

He said it was Francis Asbury's base to set up the Methodist church in the Upstate.

"For the Methodists this has great historical significance," Kelley said.

Kelley said the log house's age is uncertain.

"So far, the earliest note I've seen of his (Asbury's) coming over the mountain to stay there was in 1799, but we know in fact the house was there long before that," he said.

Kelley said supporters need to raise money for the reconstruction and said he thinks it will cost about $85,000.

He said the Pickens County Cultural Commission is looking at the layout plan for the Hagood Mill site.

"Now for generations to come people are going to be visiting that place, and otherwise it would have been gone like so many of our other important historical places," Kelley said.