

## **Walker Area Community Foundation announces purchase of William B. Bankhead home to become Heritage Center.**



The Walker Area Community Foundation said today that it had completed the purchase of the home built by Speaker William Brockman Bankhead in the 1920's. The purchase includes the entire block on which the house is located in the North Highlands section of Jasper.

In commenting on the purchase, John T. Oliver, Jr., President of Walker Area Community Foundation said "It has long been our belief that our town needed a proper place to display and recognize our rich heritage, as well as a place to host cultural events. This colonial revival home - when restored to its original dignity will provide just such a venue. It will house the offices of the community foundation and provide space for exhibits, art shows, book signings, small receptions, recitals and similar events."

"We want to thank the City of Jasper, the Mayor, the City Council and the Planning Commission for their cooperation which made this acquisition possible. Over time, we will make this home and grounds a facility in which we can all take pride."

The Walker Area Community Foundation has created a Heritage Council composed of local citizens to advise and assist in the development of the Heritage Center. The Council is chaired by Pat Morrison and the members are as follows: John Oliver, Pat Nelson, Abby Drummond, Joe Deavours, Linda Lewis, Carol Savage, Mab Crew, Winfred Sandlin, and Paul Kennedy.

About the house:

It was built around 1925 by William B. Bankhead. His daughter Tallulah Bankhead was married in the parlor of the home in 1937. After the death of this wife, Florence Bankhead, the home was occupied by the Clarence Gardner family for many years. Gerald Ivey acquired the property from the Gardner family and has

now conveyed it to the Walker Area Community Foundation.

The Foundation has secured the original architectural drawings done by a Bem Price. These drawings will serve as good guidance for the restoration efforts.