



VESTAVIA HILLS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Vestavia Hills Historical Sites

Bissell House, 2406 Longleaf Street

Bissell House, now known as Longleaf Estate, was built in 1953. It has been a Decorator Showhouse twice in recent years.

Burdine-Edge House, 1960 Southwood Road

Built in 1947, the longest occupants of this house were Emily and James Edge – from 1957 to 1977.

Croft Acton Cemetery, 2601 Old Rocky Ridge Road

The Croft Acton Cemetery was established in 1833. The oldest tombstone marked grave is that of Jennie Acton in 1833. She was the daughter of Samuel Acton, the original owner of the property from 1795 to 1882. Mr. Acton's great grandson's wife, Maud L. Acton, deeded the property in 1977 and it is still being used as a cemetery.

D. L. Thacker House, 824 Chestnut Street

The D. L. Thacker house was built in 1954.

Goddard-Small House, 2113 Vestavia Drive

This house was built in 1926 and is one of the earliest Shades Mountain houses.

“Happy Dale,” 2070 Vestavia Park Court

The Pizitz House, known as “Happy Dale,” was built in 1931 by Louis Pizitz. He and his family owned and operated Pizitz Department Store at the corner of 2nd Avenue and 19th Street in Birmingham. Mr. Pizitz and his wife, Minnie, lived here until she passed away in 1937. Mr. Pizitz remarried in 1938 and he and his wife lived at “Happy Dale” until 1943. Mr. Pizitz died in 1959. The home is now the clubhouse for the Vestavia Park Apartments.

Jones-Duquette House, 1990 Shades Crest Road

The Jones-Duquette house was built in 1924 and was originally owned by Samuel Jones.

Lowe-Strickland House, 1829 Shades Crest Road

The home was built in 1925 by John Lowe. John's wife, Izora Strickland, sold the home in 1969. The Lowe-Strickland house was granted historical status in August 2016.

Miller Chapel, 2017 Columbiana Road

The oldest church in Vestavia Hills was Miller Chapel, now known as Shades Mountain Baptist Church. It was built approximately in 1926. The building was demolished in 2008 during the renovation of Shades Mountain Baptist Church. Although the building does not exist today, the spirit of Miller Chapel lives and Shades Mountain Baptist Church has grown to be one of the largest churches in Alabama.

Mitchell House, 1986 Shades Crest Road

W. E. Mitchell, one of the first presidents of Alabama Power Company, built this house in 1925 with sandstone quarried near Birmingham. This unique stone is no longer available in Alabama. The house burned in 1949 and was reconstructed in 1952. The exterior stone is exactly the same, only the interior was rebuilt.

Morris-Harris House, 429 Glenwood Road

Built in 1929, the house changed owners five times until it was purchased by H. L. Morris in 1953. In September of that year, Katie and Fred Harris purchased the home.

Mote-Woodard Home, 1929 Old Orchard Road

The Mote-Woodard home was built in 1929 and constructed of locally quarried Red Mountain sandstone and locally cut milled heart of pine. The stone work was done primarily by the Mote family members.

R. B. Strozier House, 720 Wickford Road

This house, built in 1929, was constructed of local sandstone. Mr. Strozier installed the roof himself using 80-year-old slate that has a unique discoloration caused by the pollution from Birmingham's steel industry. Electricity was added to the house in 1937.

R. W. Gwin House, 2212 Shades Crest Road

Helen M. Daniel built this house in 1938. Judge Robert Gwin and his wife, Harriett, occupied this home from 1950 to 1990. The original price was \$4,000.

Rockhurst, 2761 Smyer Circle

E. J. Smyer began construction on Rockhurst in 1919 and it was completed in 1921. It is believed to be the oldest house in what is now Vestavia Hills.

Rogers-Taylor House, 1837 Shades Crest Road

The original owner, Claude Rogers, built the house of wood and stone from the property in 1923. Mr. Rogers' grandson, Cleon Rogers, worked for the Jefferson County Board of Equalization and applied for the historical marker in 1994.

Rosenburg Home, 419 Glenwood Road

Built in 1928, this is the third house in Vestavia Hills to receive a historical marker. This home had a stable that provided horses for early residents to travel down Shades Mountain where rough roads made travel by automobile difficult.

Sibyl Temple, Montgomery Highway at Shades Crest Road

Sibyl Temple was saved from the once magnificent estate of George B. Ward who was mayor of Birmingham from 1905 to 1910. Sibyl Temple was designed after the temple at Tivoli, about 20 miles outside of Rome. Today the temple stands as the northern gateway to Vestavia Hills.

Smith-Hanna-Bonner Home, 1125 Forest View Lane

Marie Whelan Smith built this home in 1957. The next owner was a well-known historic figure, Major General Walter "Crack" J. Hanna, a veteran of World Wars I and II and the Korean War. Eloise Bonner owned the home for the greatest length of time – from 1987 to 2012.

Sorrell-Carson Home, 1793 Shades Crest Road

Dr. Sorrell, a radiologist, and his wife hosted many parties at this home built from 1929 to 1931. Mrs. Sorrell's sister, Lisa Sparrow, was the first Miss Alabama.

Thurlow-Speir House, 1980 Shades Crest Road

The Thurlow-Speir house was built in 1925 when the Crest of Shades Mountain was becoming a popular area for summer resort homes. It was designed and built as a long house, the width of one room, to keep the house cool in the summer by taking advantage of natural wind currents. In 1937, the house was faced with Oneonta sandstone.

Tolhelm House, 1640 Shades Crest Road

Built in 1940, the original owner was Mr. J. B. Tolhelm. This country farm-style of living became popular along Shades Mountain.

Wall-Rabun House, 1824 Old Creek Trail

Charles H. McCauley designed this house for G.R. Wells and construction was completed in 1957. The Wells never lived in the house and sold it to Mr. & Mrs. William G. Wall who lived there until 1979. Mr. and Mrs. Eugene Rabun purchased the house and resided there until 1996.

Historical information provided by the Jefferson County Historical Records and the Vestavia Hills Historical Society.

For more information or to join the Vestavia Hills Historical Society,
email us at vhHistoricalSociety@gmail.com or find us on Facebook at [@VHhistoricalsociety](https://www.facebook.com/VHhistoricalsociety).