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## HP Historic Home Hits The Market

by Julie Kemp Pick (<http://dailynorthshore.com/author/julie-kemp-pick/>) • October 14, 2015

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HIGHLAND PARK – Prospective home owners will have the opportunity to purchase one of Highland Park’s oldest landmarks, built in 1871 at 326 Central Avenue.

Jean Butz James donated the home to the Highland Park Historical Society in 1969.

“For the first 30 years, the house was decorated as an 18<sup>th</sup> century Victorian home for parties and fundraisers,” said Rob Rotering, president of the Highland Park Historical Society. “Then it had rotating exhibits and events. People would only see it once, so it never had enough traffic.”

In February, the museum archives were moved over to the Highland Park Library. “Engaging the community and bringing archives to the city where they can be used seven days a week at the library will reach more people and help with the education process,” said Rotering.

Rotering explained that the proceeds from the sale of the house will go toward building an endowment fund for third graders, the archivist’s salary, and preservation and programming at the Stupey Cabin.

“The Stupey Cabin is the oldest symbol in Highland Park that helps teach children about pioneer living. Every third grade class has a trip to the Stupey cabin, city hall for a mock trial, and the library,” said Rotering.

The Historical Society has landmarked the house in Highland Park, and it’s also listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

“If the house is officially a Highland Park landmark it is protected from demolition,” said Lisa DiChiera, director of advocacy Landmarks Illinois. “Tax assessment freeze is a great incentive for a buyer of a landmark historic home when they need to make renovations to that property.”

The costs for maintaining the house have been “variable.” Rotering estimates the Historical Society has been spending between \$10,000 and \$15,000 annually on heating, cooling, and roof repairs.

“A new owner can really invest and make it suitable for the next 150 years,” said Rotering. “We don’t have the funds to do it justice.”

The historic home sits on a two-thirds acre lot near the lake, and is priced at \$850,000.

Though the 3,650 square foot home “needs modernization and maintenance, it has incredible 15-foot ceilings, tall windows, and the original staircase from 1871,” said Eve Tarm, realtor.

Tarm added, “It’s not just a house, it is something so much more. It’s tied to the history of Highland Park, and the early days at the time of the Great Chicago Fire.”

More behind the scenes coverage of the historical home at 326 Central Avenue, and information about the October 18 open house to follow in separate article.



Photo courtesy of Eve Tarm/Coldwell Banker

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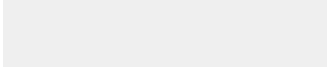
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*By Jane bell*

Great article on Geoffrey Atkins in April 2015. Geoffrey is not only a champion but a kind, generous and charming Englishman and a good friend to me and my parents. Cheers.  
Jane Fair (Australia)

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