

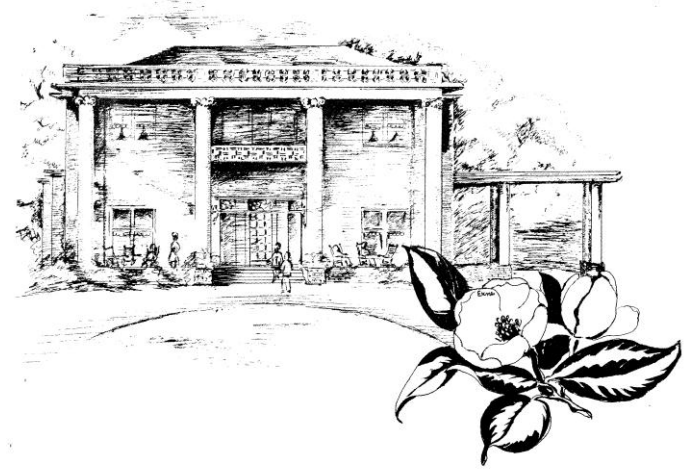
## Rules and Regulations for the Big House

Hazlehurst's Big House is under the direction of the Hazlehurst-Jeff Davis Board of Tourism. As such, the Board reserves the right to deny rental for any event that goes against the normal rules and regulations of the building. Other help information includes:

- General electricity and lighting from permanent fixtures, heating and air conditioning, and water for normal usage is provided in rental fees.
- No deposits or payments will be refunded unless a written notice of cancellation is given thirty days prior to the event.
- The Board of Tourism is not responsible for accidents and loss of personal property during events. Users are responsible for any damages incurred to the building or furniture during the event. Additionally, the user agrees not to deface the property in any manner during the rental period.
- The user has the right to inspect the premises with a member of the Board of Tourism prior to the signing of the rental contract.
- The deposit is paid when the property is reserved in order to assure the dates of usage. Rental payments are due and payable in full thirty days prior to the event. The deposit will be refunded once the building has been inspected for damages by the Board of Tourism.
- The hours of operation are generally from 8:00 a.m., until 1:00 a.m., the following morning. No one is to remain in the building past 1:00 a.m. Prior arrangements can be made to remove props and personal items the day following the event.
- Rental of the Big House does not include use of any offices located on the premises.
- It is the responsibility of the user to remove all trash at the end of the event. A trash receptacle is located on the premises for this purpose.
- If alcohol is to be served, the event must be by invitation-only and not open to the public.
- The Big House will not be rented to anyone under the age of eighteen years. Any event involving minors must be under adult supervision.
- No weapons or illegal drugs will be permitted on the premises under any circumstances.
- There is absolutely no smoking inside of the building.
- Regulation and safety codes forbid strenuous activity on the second floor of the Big House; as such, no dancing is allowed on the second floor.
- The kitchen can be used for warming and serving only; no cooking is allowed. All food must be prepared off-premises. Please do not remove any utensils, pots, pans or food storage items from the kitchen. **Kitchen floor must be swept and mopped.**
- All furniture must be returned to its original location. Folding chairs are to be neatly stacked on top of tables.
- Key to the building and any items rented **MUST** be returned to the Tourism office the next business day following the event or deposit **WILL NOT BE REFUNDED.** Also completed checklist must be returned.
- All refunds will be mailed within 10 business days after the key and the checklist have been returned.

(Revised October 2010)

## The Big House



25 East Coffee Street  
Hazlehurst, Georgia 31539

Hazlehurst-Jeff Davis Board of Tourism  
Telephone 1.912.375.4543

## Welcome to the Big House with its Rich History and Charm

The Big House, Hazlehurst's antebellum-style home that overlooks the town like a grand old dame, is a beautiful Edwardian mansion that was built in the earliest days of the 1900s. Legend holds that it was built for Minnie Sweat, the wealthy widow of a local lumber baron who had been tragically killed in a train accident. According to literature obtained from the Big House, "Miss Minnie" was the former Minnie Lott of Douglas. She remarried J.H. Moore soon after Mr. Sweat's death, and the two built the home under the direction of George Mahan Jr. and J.I. Broadwell, Memphis, Tennessee-based architects. When the house was completed, the Moores traveled to Europe to buy the furnishings. The home cost about \$50,000 to build, and its accompanying water tower was around \$12,000. Each chimney contained a full freight car of brick. The chandeliers in the foyer and parlor are part of the original fixtures, as are the vanities, bathtubs, and the foot tub in the master bath. The house was built over a basement and was located about 350 south of its present location.

The Moores lived in the home until 1923, when the home was sold to W.E. Pierce, who moved in with his first wife and daughter, Louise. Pierce married his second wife, Maureen, in 1932, and their son, Eddie, was born in the house. In 1937, Pierce sold the mansion to W. Grady Floyd. Floyd, with his wife, the former Grace Weatherly, and their two daughters, Catherine and Anne, moved in. The Floyds' only son, W. Grady Jr., was born in the home in 1939. About five years later, Henry and Marguerite Duncan Dearing bought the house. The Dearings used the east "parlor" for a floral shop and catered wedding receptions in the foyer, main dining room, and parlor. They added a brick wing of sleeping rooms on the east side of the home, and from those rooms operated a boarding house.

In the late 1960s, E.A. and Mary Hinely purchased the "Big House" for use as a hotel. They wanted to preserve the house but could not gain proper access to the acreage with the house and brick wing situated at the front of the property. As a result, they decided to move the entire structure. The movers, who estimated the weight as two hundred tons, used iron rails, rollers, trucks, and tractors to roll the house about 350 feet to its present location. The Village Inn Restaurant, known locally as the "Big House," opened in 1970. After the Hinelys passed away, the building and adjoining motel once again changed hands. Unfortunately, the grand home fell into disrepair from lack of use. But the town didn't want to see the mansion fade away. The citizens and community leaders of Hazlehurst and Jeff Davis County began a campaign known as "Save the Big House," spearheaded by the Board of Tourism and funded by grants and private donations. After months of restoration and renovation, the home was once again grand.

Today, Jeff Davis County maintains ownership of the building, while the Board of Tourism oversees the facility. Altamaha Technical College operates a culinary school within the Big House, but it still belongs to the community and residents who worked so diligently to save her.

## The Big House Rental Fees

### *Civic groups and clubs rental charges:*

- \$75 for up to four hours
- \$100 for a full day, not to exceed eight hours
- \$50 deposit

### *Private events rental charges – including weddings, wedding receptions, parties, proms, class reunions, and more:*

- \$400 for full day, not to exceed eight hours
- \$700 for weekend
- \$200 deposit

### *Banquet or tea room for groups of 25 or fewer, to include one room only between the hours of 9:00 a.m., until 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday:*

- \$100 for up to four hours
- \$50 deposit

### *Banquet or tea room for groups of 25 or fewer, to include one room only for after 5:00 p.m., or weekend:*

- \$150 for up to four hours
- \$100 deposit

### *Additional fees (must be paid in advance):*

- Tablecloth rentals are \$10 each for each day of rental