

some neglect until it was purchased by Mr. and Mrs. Slocum. Extensive alterations were made, the rear wing of the house was eliminated and the porches that surrounded the house were removed. The structure was improved for residential occupancy.

Mr. Slocum, a long-time volunteer fireman and mayor of Fanwood, annually invited the fire company to hold its annual family picnic on the Russell Road section of the property.

When the Slocums found it necessary to move, they sold the property to the Borough of Fanwood in 1974. The hope was that the house could be used for the much needed new Borough Hall. But after several years of debate and study it was felt the old house was unsuitable for a new Borough Hall. In 1978 the building was raised to make way for the present Borough Hall. The only vestige of the old Homestead Hotel that remains today is the original circular driveway off Martine Avenue, which provides access to the municipal complex.

Also located on the Homestead property were several out buildings that served important purposes for the farm and hotel, the Chicken Coup, Smoke House and Carriage House.

The Chicken Coup stood on Watson Road, at the present site of the Rescue Squad building. It was a long low building that was white-washed to match the surrounding buildings. It also served as a shelter for sheep and cows that were kept on the property until the early 1960s. This allowed Mr. Slocum to keep the last farm tax assessed property in the Borough of Fanwood.

The Smoke House was located immediately to the rear of the main house and was about the size of a one-car garage. It served as the hotel kitchen for years and later was used to store maintenance equipment for the property. It was the only building on the site made from brick which was a good insulator for storing food.

The barn, or "Carriage House" as it is known today, is the only original building left on the Homestead site. It faces Watson Road opposite the old fire house. It has undergone many alterations over the years but still maintains its unique architectural character. On the second floor are several old passenger sleds from the late 1890s. These were probably used to transport the guests of the hotel to and from the railroad station during the winter months.

During the early 1980s, after suffering many years of neglect, it was slated for demolition. It was saved by fate and has been restored by a small group of volunteers using the funding provided by a community development block grant. Today it is used as a local theater and cultural center.



*The Homestead was purchased from the Boucher estate in 1931 and was extensively remodeled for residential living by Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Slocum who eventually sold the property to the Borough in 1974.*