Visanska-Starks House

Inscription. **(Front text)**
This house, built after 1900, was originally a two-story frame residence with a projecting bay and wraparound porch; a fire in 1989 destroyed the second story. Barrett Visanska (1849-1932), a jeweler, bought the house in 1913. Visanska, a native of Poland, was a leader in Columbia’s Jewish community and a founder of the Tree of Life Congregation. In 1938 Dr. John J. Starks, president of Benedict College, bought the house.

**(Reverse text)**
Dr. John Jacob Starks (1876-1944), the first black president of Benedict College, lived here from 1938 until his death. Starks was president of Seneca Institute 1899-1912; Morris College 1912-1930; and Benedict College 1930-1944. After World War II this house served as the nurses’ home for Good Samaritan-Waverly Hospital, created by merger in 1939. It was later a private residence once more.

**Erected** 2007 by Richland County Conservation Commission. (Marker Number **40-134**.)

**Location.** 34° 0.633′ N, 81° 1.105′ W. Marker is in Columbia, South Carolina, in Richland County. Marker is on Hampton Street, on the right when traveling east. Click for map. Located between Pine and Oak Streets. Marker is at or near this postal address: 2214 Hampton Street, Columbia SC 29204, United States of America.

**Other nearby markers.** At least 8 other markers are within walking distance of this marker.
- **Matthew J. Perry House** (about 500 feet away, in a direct line);
- **The Lighthouse & Informer / John H. McCray** (approx. 0.2 miles away);
- **Heidt- Russell House / Edwin Russell** (approx. 0.2 miles away);
- **James M. Hinton House** (approx. 0.3 miles away);
- **Harden Street** (approx. 0.4 miles away);
- **Gregg Street** (approx. 0.5 miles away);
- **"Chesnut Cottage"** (approx. 0.5 miles away);
- **Wilson Boyhood House** (approx. 0.5 miles away). Click for a list of all markers in Columbia.

**Additional comments.**
1. **Books of note**
Books about the Visanskas:

The Tree of Life: Fifty Years of Congregational Life at the Tree of Life Synagogue (Columbia: SC: Tree of Life Congregation) Helen Kohn Hennig 1946.


Books about the Starks:


Lo These Many Years: An Autobiographical Sketch. J.J. Starks. The State, co. 1941.


Credits. This page originally submitted on September 16, 2010, by C.F. Bruce of Columbia, South Carolina. This page has been viewed 58 times since then. Photos: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. submitted on September 17, 2010, by Mike Stroud of Bluffton, South Carolina. • Mike Stroud was the editor who published this page.

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