

MUSEUM MUSINGS

WESTON HISTORICAL MUSEUM

P.O. BOX 266 ~ 601 MAIN STREET ~ WESTON, MISSOURI 64098 ~ 816-386-2977

JANUARY ~ FEBRUARY ~ MARCH 2015

One-Woman Show Act Highlights Meeting

Angela Da Silva, a cultural preservationist and adjunct professor of Black History at Lindenwood University presented a one-woman act called "Lila: Life of a Missouri Slave" telling of the life of a slave, Lila, from childhood through her adulthood and on through her eventual escape by way of the underground railroad.



The program was given at the annual dinner meeting of the Weston Historical Museum in early November and was enjoyed by over eighty members and guests at Eventful. The meal was catered by The Avalon.

During a short business meeting three new Trustees were elected to the Museum Board. The new members are Kim Kirby, Larry Lintner and Abe Shafer. Officers were also elected and are Carl Felling, President; Clay Bauske, Vice President; Francie Stoner, Secretary; and Ted Wilson, Treasurer.

In a report given by Mrs. Sigi Rowland, the information was given that the museum enjoyed over 2500 visitors during the past year. Visitors came from as far away as Kazakhstan and New Zealand. There were visitors from 44 states and 18 countries.

Museum Reopens March 16th

The Weston Historical Museum will reopen on March 16th for visitors. The volunteers have been busy changing and re-arranging many of the cases and displays; continuing the work of photographing each item in the museum and entering it into the database; and working on the usual projects that are an on-going effort within the museum year round.

Time for Renewal of Museum Memberships

Again with the reminders! But, it is time to think of renewing your membership to the Weston Historical Museum for the calendar year of January to December 2015. Your membership brings you the newsletter four times each year, keeping you up with all that is going on in and with the museum. It also helps keep the doors open to the many visitors we get each year from around the world.

This year, as you renew, is there a relative or friend you think would enjoy becoming a member? Perhaps you could recommend it to that individual(s) or give a membership as a gift. Help us increase our membership.

Due to expenses of printing and mailing of the newsletter, this will be the last one you will receive if you do not renew your membership by March 31, 2015.

Curator Retiring



Museum Curator Carolyn A. Larsen, is retiring for the second time in her life, effective March 15th.

In 2002, Carolyn retired from her work as an archivist for the State of Missouri. That followed stints as an Army spouse, a librarian, substitute teacher, EMT instructor and editor of the *The Weston Chronicle*.

Carolyn has enjoyed working with the staff and volunteers as well as the various projects in the museum, but has decided it is time to leave the museum and get back to writing.

As she said, "It has been a fantastic ride, but now it is time to find younger blood to take over."

Museum Members Involved in Projects

The Laurel Hill Cemetery project continues with photos being taken of each headstone and information written down. Often, the number of the lot and the type of stone is also noted. Heading this work is Mrs. Ann Saugstad, former director and present volunteer at the museum.

Ten informational signs have been finished and erected within the Laurel Hill cemetery, on either side of the road going through the cemetery. The artistic work has been done by Mary Jo Heidrick and the historical information was provided by research done by Carolyn A. Larsen, Museum Curator.

The former Police Department building on Thomas Street has been painted with an interesting mural. One of the museum's talented volunteers, Susan Grinlinton, along with Nan Taylor, former Art teacher at West Platte and Mary Jo Heidrick are to be thanked for their work on this

Though they say there is more work to do on it in the spring, visitors and residents alike have been enjoying it. It depicts a jail break with a man on a horse, a dog, town Marshal, one man coming out the window and possibly more to come. Keep an eye out for the addition to it in the Spring.

All three projects are great additions to our knowledge of Weston's history.

1969 Nursing Degree Received from Uni. of MO

(from June 1969 issue of "The Weston Chronicle")

The University of Missouri at Columbia awarded 992 degrees to graduates at the close of the fall semester. The School of Nursing awarded 25 of those degrees and among the recipients was Miss Linda Lee Ross, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Shirley Lee Ross of Weston, who received a Bachelor of Science Degree.

The graduates qualified for degrees by recommendation of the faculty and were approved by the Board of Curators on April 19th. All are eligible to obtain their diplomas immediately, or they may wait until the formal commencement exercises on the 3rd of June. They are all recognized as member of the 1969 June graduating class.

Former Board Member and Avid Supporter Passes

Long-time Executive Board Member, Virginia Hall, died November 13, 2014 following a long illness. It is said that the death of one diminishes us all and that is the way many felt upon hearing the news.

Virginia had been with the museum since its inception in 1960, helping out in many capacities, the last of which was as the "keeper" of the Memorial and Honorarium book housed within the museum. Always a strong supporter of the museum and its workings, Virginia was quick to give credit and thanks to those who worked to make the museum an interesting and educational institution.

Her outspokenness and caustic wit were both a plus and a minus often times, but her enthusiasm of all things concerning the museum was unwavering. She often gave suggestions as to what might be done to help with a particular problem or a possible display. She also loaned items from her own home to add to a display or two. Blessed with a good memory, she was often called upon for information about Weston and its citizens for such things as the museum newsletter or family file information.

A special person with a warm and generous heart, Virginia will be missed.



TOP PHOTO COURTESY OF THE WESTON CHRONICLE



Virginia Hall was a charter member of the Weston Historical Society and was actively involved until last year. At the first Heritage Festival and Homes Tour in October 1960, she served as a hostess at the Museum.

Donations Continue from Area Families

The museum has been pleased and honored to receive a number of new items into the museum's collections.

The daughters of Mrs. Virginia Hall brought a number of items, including photos, a rug woven by Miss Marie Ohlhausen, tobacco pipe, sheet music from when she sang in a trio with Mrs. Lad Hull and Mrs. Marion Gaskill, and many other interesting items.

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We have also received two lovely quilts, one a bowtie pattern. They were made by Mrs. Ola Anno, mother of three daughters and a son; among them was Mrs. Rachel Meeker. Mrs. Anno died at the age of 103 in Weston where she had lived most of her life. The quilts are colorful, in good shape and are believed to have been made sometime during the late 1920's or 1930's.

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Bill Cecil, a former graduate of West Platte, who now resides in Plattsburg, MO, has donated a number of items to the museum in the past month or so. Chief among them was a genealogy of the Tomlin family; an original printing of Paxton's Annals; and a copy of military orders concerning Ft. Leavenworth and Colonel Leavenworth in 1827.

This is not the first time that Bill has donated great items to the museum and we appreciate him thinking of us.

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Kermit Horseman, another graduate of West Platte, has donated a military unit newspaper from during WW II that has a picture of his uncle, Wallace Bell. Kermit also donated an old Weston Chronicle with an article about his grandmother, Mrs. A.J. Brooks who was celebrating her 92nd birthday at the time.

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Zim Hull, a member of the board of the museum, donated some family items including his grandmother's (Helen Rumpel Hull) diploma from Weston High School. There were a number of other papers and graduation certificates belonging to his grandfather, George Z. Hull, Sr. (often known as "Pickle") and other family members.

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Carl Felling, the museum's President, was another donator of items which included several school pictures, a couple of photos of the opening

of the museum and a number of old yearbooks from W.H.S. all dated in the 1920's. He says he found them in the basement at home, going through some of his father's things. His father, Dr. R.J. Felling was one of the founders of the museum.

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Museum volunteers have been busily cataloging a number of items from the estate of Mrs. Doris (D.C.) Lamar. She taught in Weston schools for many years. She was also a member of the Swamp Extension Club and among the items found are a program or two from that group. There are also many individual photos of students from Swamp College School that were taken in the 1930's. All of them are identified and more than one name is familiar to many of us. These photos and information come to us from Mrs. Lamar's daughter, Eva Mae Lamar Schallert of Adrian, MO.

We thank the donors of all these interesting items not only for thinking of us but also for their generosity and their help in preserving Weston's history.

Farley Births Noted In Local Newspaper

Through many years *The Weston Chronicle* had a column from the Farley community and often noted the births of children born to Farley families or connected to citizens of the town. In November of 1957 it noted:

"Mr. and Mrs. Charles McCardie announce the birth of their son, Stephen Michael on Tuesday, Nov. 5th.

Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Stratemeyer are the parents of a son, David Allen, born Nov. 6th.

Mr. and Mrs. Bane Tatman announce the birth of Alice Marie on Nov. 7th."

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The issue of the newspaper dated August 8, 1962 brought us these announcements:

"Mr. and Mrs. Carl Oberdiek announce the birth of a son Tuesday, July 24 at Cushing hospital. He has been named Randall Dean.

A son was born on Thursday, July 26 to Mr. and Mrs. Charles McCardie at the Smithville hospital. He will answer to the name of Rocky Joe.

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Stewart of Parkville are the parents of a son born on July 26 at Conley Maternity hospital in Kansas City. He has been named Randall Wayne and is the great grandson of Mr. and Mrs. Glen Bruner."

# Bits and Pieces From Bertha's Morgue

*The Weston Chronicle* brought us this on May 11, 1912: "A cyclone struck the M.S. Cecil tobacco barn in Beverly last Tuesday, demolishing it totally. The home nearby was damaged extensively."

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In April of 1937, we found this in the local newsletter, "Hard work was taught us in Germany from childhood and it never hurt us," said Wm. Ode as he was about to celebrate his 86th birthday.

For ordinary farm work, he received \$15.00 a year and board and "keep." Later he drove a large coach and handled fine horses and earned \$53.00 per year.

Fleeing the military oppression of the Prussian training he came to America and en route he met a man who intended to come to Platte County, who offered to lend young Ode the necessary \$15.00 to complete the journey. "When he told me I could repay it with one month's work, I could scarcely believe my ears,

Mr. Ode laughed. "The whole world looked rosy to me that day."

(Editor's Note: No wonder immigrants used to think the streets of America were paved with gold! When one goes from \$53.00 per year to a possible \$180.00 per year, one could hardly blame them for such a thought!)

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An article, in June of 1963, brought us this, "Mrs. Mary Katherine Mingee, a mother of ten children, ages from 13 months to 23 years, and a grandmother of two, received her diploma from Junior College, in Boise, Idaho recently. Mrs. Tucker, who majored in Science, attended Weston schools, and is the daughter of Mrs. Mary Mingee of Kansas City and a sister of Mrs. Clark Taulbee, Weston."

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In January of 1915 we read in the local newspaper, "Fifteen years ago this month, Weston had its own first telephone installation. Thirty phones, served by one girl and one boy, comprised the exchange at that time. The number has grown until 374 phones in town and nineteen party lines around the county furnish employment for five girls and three men. Enough wire is used in the Weston exchange to run a two-line system from Weston to Chicago."

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In an issue of the newspaper dated 1930, we

read: "Mrs. A.S. Doppler received word Monday night that her brother-in-law, Charles B. Collison, was shot and killed by a bandit in his home at Dodge City, Ks., Sunday night.

Mr. Collison is survived by his wife, who was formerly Miss Ethel Krusor, a sister of Mrs. Doppler's and a resident of Weston in earlier days; also two children, Betty ten-years-old and Joseph, who is five years old."

## Editor's Note

(The following was written by B.J. Bless, Sr., editor of *The Weston Chronicle*, in April 1894.)

"An editor died and slowly wended his way to where he supposed a warm reception awaited him. The devil saw him and said: "For many years thou hast borne the blame for the many errors the printers made in the paper. The paper has gone, alas for \$1 and the \$1 has often failed to come in. The printers have deviled thee on Saturday night for wages when thou hast not one cent to thy name. Men have taken the paper without paying for it, and cursed thee for not getting out a better one. Thou hast been called a dead beat by passenger conductors when thou hast shown thy annual pass to their envious gaze. All this thou hast borne in silence. Thou canst not come in here." And he fired him. "Heaven is his home; and besides if we let him come in here, he would be continually dunning delinquent subscribers, for hell is full of them, and thus he wouldst create disorder in my kingdom."

| <b>2015 Museum Officers</b>   |                                                    |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| President .....               | Carl Felling                                       |
| Vice-President .....          | Clay Bauske                                        |
| Secretary .....               | Francie Stoner                                     |
| Corresponding Secretary ..... | Patricia Benner                                    |
| Treasurer .....               | Ted Wilson                                         |
| Director .....                | Barb Fulk                                          |
| Curator .....                 | Carolyn A. Larsen                                  |
| Hostesses .....               | Sigi Rowland<br>Susan Grinlinton<br>Jeanne Braneff |

# Fire Leaves Weston High School in Ruins

*How many of you remember the sound of the fire siren one evening shortly after school had begun for the year, September 1953? Many a kid said "Hope that's the school burning!" Although they really didn't mean it, they were shocked to learn that what they hoped for had become fact. In this article dated September 4, 1953 we learn about the fire and the damage.*

*This postcard of the school is courtesy of Chuck McCardie, who dated the postcard as 1908. The school remained much the same into the 1950's.*



West Platte R-2 high school building and one of the three elementary schools in the district suffered a crushing blow Wednesday night when the auditorium was virtually destroyed in a fire of unknown origin, the fire started on the stage and when observed about 8:45 p.m., had gained considerable headway before the fire department arrived. The dense smoke and acrid fumes prevented firemen from entering the building. The Fort Leavenworth Fire Department was called out but the fire had done great damage before they arrived. However, three of their men were overcome by the fumes. The loss, covered by insurance, was estimated at \$100,000.

The Home Ec. Department, next to the auditorium was not materially damaged, but the band uniforms which were hanging on the stage were destroyed. However, the band room itself was not touched. The Band Mother's Group estimates the loss of the 36 uniforms to run well over \$900.

Gaining headway, the flames went through the ceiling of the auditorium and overhead to the front of the building, causing terrific heat damage to the second floor class rooms, as well as smoke and water damage. The whole building was blackened with smoke and will have to be done over. Only time will tell what the water, inches deep, has done to the floors.

The school was built through a P.W.A. grant in 1936, and was opened to the pupils in the fall of 1937, while the structure was not considered absolutely fireproof; in building it every precaution against fire danger was taken. Fortunately, three or four years ago the insurance program was revamped on the present day cost, thus the building and contents are pretty well covered.

Every effort will be made by the Board and Supt. Platz to move as rapidly as possible to repair the main structure not damaged and the repair to most of the rooms is hoped to be just a matter of redecoration.

Col. Perry Warden of the Fort Leavenworth Fire Department, who accompanied his crew to Weston said Weston should be highly commended and congratulated on such a group of fire fighters. He did not understand how they coped with the situation as well as they did with the equipment they had and he believed they had done a splendid job.

The Board of Education expressed themselves as being most grateful to the citizens who remained after the fire was out and swept out the building, covered by at least two inches of water in the gymnasium and hall floors. This timely act, on their part, saved the floors from more damage than otherwise feared.

Some of the women of the town volunteered to wash off the desks in the Elementary department and will start in the morning.

An all-night vigil was kept at the school following the fire. Shortly after 1:00 a.m. the temperature upstairs was 105 degrees.

There will be no further school this week.

## Looking for Something to Do?

Volunteers are always welcome on "Work Day Mondays," when we sort, file and label items. During the winter we also clean, refresh and change displays for the new season.

Substitute hostesses are also welcomed throughout the season. If interested call 386-2977.

# Did You Know...

... that Todd's Creek and the Todd cemetery were named for Joseph Todd? He was an early pioneer who came to the site that would later be Weston in 1817. He settled in the Hackberry district.

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... that John Vandrell, who was born in Mississippi, came to Weston in 1865? He had fought on the southern side during the Civil War. He acquired over 200 acres of land and gave most of it to his children. He died in 1912.

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... that Abe Shafer III attended the Boy Scout Jamboree at Valley Forge in 1957? While there Abe received the honor of placing a wreath on the tomb of the Unknown Soldier. He earned the rank of Eagle Scout in 1958 and in 1961 enrolled at Missouri University in Columbia.

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... that Miss Grace May Smither and Mrs. George Pharis had the same birth date? The two ladies died within days of each other in April 1962.

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... that Jerry Mosier, a newspaperman who published here in Weston for a few years, was well-

known for his photography work? He exhibited three photos, accepted by AP and UPI news services, at a bank in Nevada, Mo., for the benefit of the Bushwhackers Museum in June of 1965.

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... that Vivian Beck was named Betty Crocker Homemaker of Tomorrow in 1964? Vivian and her twin brother, Vernon, attended West Platte High School. Vivian had the highest score on the written exam for the Homemaker's award in the entire country. On graduation she received a 4-year scholarship to Beloit College in Wisconsin, and was among 256 graduates from that college in 1968.

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... that on a 1940 Road Map of Missouri, Weston had a population of 1,028 while Platte City had a population of only 587? Iatan, Farley and East Atchison did not appear on the map. The reason for their non-inclusion is not known. Rushville had a population of 288, New Market 107, Woodruff 50, Edgerton 427, Dearborn 549 and Beverly 46.

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... that Elva Mae Blakley, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Orville Blakley, received her nurse's cap in March of 1954 at St. Luke's Hospital in Kansas City? She was one of 63 other women being honored at the impressive Capping ceremony at the hospital.

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WESTON HISTORICAL MUSEUM

A Non-Profit Corporation for the Preservation of Historic Information.

601 Main Street • P.O. Box 266 • Weston, MO 64098 • 816-386-2977

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Membership includes an electronic version of the Museum's quarterly newsletter *Museum Musings*. To receive it, please indicate your email address on the line above.

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| Number of Memberships | Category | Dues | TOTAL: |
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| | Individual | \$15.00 | \$ |
| | Family | \$30.00 | \$ |
| | Patron | \$100.00 | \$ |
| | Benefactor | \$250.00 | |
| | Life Membership (one time fee) | \$500.00 | \$ |
| | Additional Donation* | \$ | \$ |
| | TOTAL ENCLOSED | | \$ |

**To make an additional donation to support programs, exhibits, preservation initiatives and other activities, please indicate the amount here.*

Lawn Swing Holds Many Memories

This picture of an old, old lawn swing will perhaps bring back pleasant memories to many a "youngster" in Weston.

This swing was made by William Rumpel, the great-grandfather of local businessman Zim Hull, for the grandfather of Kermit Horseman, a Weston resident. Kermit's grandfather was A.J. Brooks who lived on the corner of Summer and Thomas streets, in the white-washed stone and frame house now belonging to Chuck and Bill Sebus. The swing sat in the side yard of the home.

Many of Weston's children, through four or five generations, had the pleasure of sitting in the swing and being served homemade cookies and lemonade by Mrs. Brooks on warm summer days. She also made mouth-watering popcorn balls, especially for Halloween. Every afternoon, if children were using the lawn swing Mrs. Brooks would pop out with the never-ending cookies and suggest "this will keep you going until suppertime."

On the lawn swing one could pretend they were on a ship riding the waves, driving a horse-drawn coach, or flying high above the clouds. If one was trying to escape from the other children or pesky siblings, or sometimes trying to stay out of sight of parents, here was a wonderful refuge.



Although still in Weston, the swing now belongs to Kermit's son, Herb Horseman of Independence. Truly a "landmark" that holds many memories for those of us who enjoyed the use of it.

In History, Sometimes It Clicks and Sometimes Not

Several months ago the museum was donated a copy of the Civil War diary of Jacob Haas. It was a union soldier's account of the war. Haas was with the 9th Regiment of Wisconsin. In his diary he mentions being in Weston and described what he saw here at that time.

Knowing Weston once had a family with the last name of Haas, the curator and others began to research to find if this Haas was kin to "our" Haases. However, the connection was not found. It just did not click with anything we learned.

Now, a document from the estate of Duke Simpson, in Independence, dated March 1854, has been given to the museum curator. This document was an accounting of the sale of Simpson's slaves. The paper has the name of the slave, the purchaser and the amount paid. We have Joel D. Lipscomb buying

Henry, Dink and Evan for the total of \$2,805.00. Does anyone know if Joel Lipscomb is kin to the Lipscomb family who lived here in Weston in the 1960's? And, was Duke Simpson kin to our Dr. Simpson who was shot over an affair with another man's wife? Do we hear any "clicks?"

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at the Weston Historical Museum

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WESTON HISTORICAL MUSEUM

P.O. Box 266 • 601 Main Street • Weston, MO
64098



“Yesterday is history, tomorrow is a mystery and today is a gift; that’s why they call it the present.”

Eleanor Roosevelt

? **Mystery Corner**

This picture of five children, two boys and three girls, was found in a box of negatives and slides at the Museum. We need your help in identifying any or all of them, if possible. We are not certain of the year but think it might be late 1920s or early 1930s.

Thus far we have had no one who has been able to identify the photos of the two women in our last *Musings*. The photographs were donated by the Marr family.

If anyone recognizes any of the photos, please call the Museum at 816-386-2977.

