



# Museum Musings

JANUARY • FEBRUARY • MARCH 2017

WESTON HISTORICAL MUSEUM, 601 MAIN STREET, HISTORIC WESTON, MISSOURI 816-386-2977

## Carl's Corner

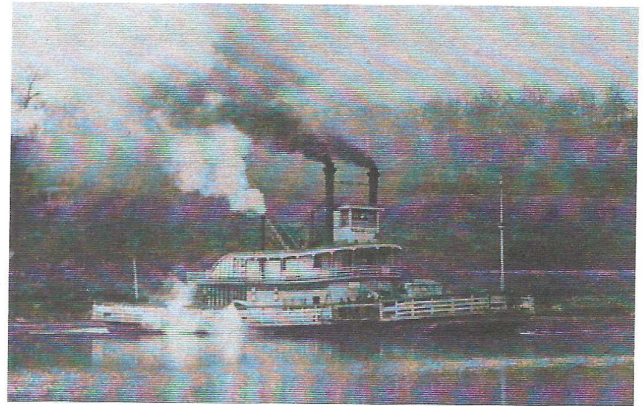
by Board President Carl Felling

The Museum is making progress on implementing items in the Master Facilities Plan. One part of that plan is to improve the sidewalk along Main Street. The Museum applied for a grant from Rotary 6040 and the Weston Rotary Club in the Spring of 2016. The grant application was specifically for enhancing the brick sidewalk along Main Street. This work is needed because the current sidewalk doesn't allow for proper drainage, causing water leakage into the basement of the museum. In addition, the side-walk has been damaged causing bricks to sink, making a dangerous walking surface.

The Rotary organizations awarded us a grant of \$4000 for this work and we will contribute \$1000 towards the project.

A proposal from Norman Landcraft Landscaping was accepted for upgrading the brick sidewalk and landscaping along the sidewalk. Work will begin in early spring, and the bricks will be reused and installed on new subsurface

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## The Passing of a Industry

*This article and accompanying photos about the end of steamboats as transportation, were shared with us through the generosity of Chuck McCardie of Farley. Chuck is interested in all things pertaining to the History of Platte County and has frequently donated articles and photographs to the museum.*

A last glimpse is had, about this time, of an institution that was soon to pass into the limbo of outmoded transportation. Consideration was given to the suggested purchase by the city of the ferry boat, "Willie Cade." The original charter for this ferry had been granted by the territorial legislature in 1855; it was later amended and renewed. The "Willie Cade" had plied between Leavenworth and the Missouri side for many years, charging toll for persons, wagons and teams, and earning a fair profit for its owner, Capt. Al Cade. Although ferry receipts in 1887/1888 had been satisfactory, the captain wanted to retire and was eager to dispose of his boat and privileges. But apparently the board took no action, for the ultimate fate of the "Willie Cade" is not disclosed in the minutes.

There also came before the board the subject of a pontoon bridge, proposed by Vinton Stillings as a practical plan for linking the east and west banks of the Missouri river. Stillings had applied for a franchise in 1885, but had met with opposition. Those in control of the railroad bridge did not want a rival

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## Victrola In Need of Repairs and Funds

The very old Edison Victrola which was donated to the museum several years ago, is a delightful working musical invention that many of our visitors, young and old, have heard and enjoyed.

Unfortunately, the outside of the Victrola is falling apart and an estimate of getting it all fixed and looking great is \$800.

If anyone is interested in this project to save the Victrola, please let us know. Any donation is appreciated. Checks or money orders may be sent to us at P.O. Box 266, Weston, MO 64098. Please notate the donation is for the Victrola.

Thank you.

## Museum In Need of Assistance

The Weston Historical Museum is on a search. With retirements, relocations and health issues depleting our ranks, we are looking for people who can help out one morning a week.

Volunteers would help to set up new displays and cases. They would also be filing documents and cataloging donated items. No special skills are required, but any are welcome.

Without the help of volunteers a great many things will cannot be completed. We believe if you are not moving forward, you are going backwards and with all the progress we have made in the past few years (such as compiling the histories of all the downtown businesses and buildings, photographs and information on all of the gravestones in Laurel Hill, and the beginnings of a database on all homes in Weston) we do not care to see that happen.

If interested, drop in on any Monday after 9 a.m. or give us a call. You can also contact the Director Barb Fulk or the Museum President Carl Felling.

## Quantrill's Band Enters Platte Country

The following is a dispatch written to Major-General Rosecrans from St. Joseph, on June 1, 1864:

"The band of guerrillas that encountered our militia this morning near the south line of Buchanan County also made a raid into New Market, Platte County, for plunder. They stole horses, guns, and money, and left in the direction of Platte City.



William Clark Quantrill

I have militia after them from Platte City, Weston and St. Joseph, nearly 300 in all. They are said to be a portion of the original Quantrill band and are doubtless a part of the grand combination of villains of which we have heretofore been advised. H.T. is here tonight. He has done well so far and will immediately take the trail after this band of brigands."

(signed) Clinton B. Fisk,  
Brigadier-General

(Legend has it that Weston was "visited" not only by Quantrill, but also Bloody Bill Andersen, Jesse James, Captain Silas Gordon and Col. Jennison.)

## Carl's Corner . . .

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providing stronger support. It is anticipated that following this work the sidewalk will be smoother and safer.

Volunteers from the Weston Rotary Club and the Museum will work with Norman Landcraft to remove the bricks from the area. Some areas will have new concrete curbing between the current plantings and the bricks. The project should be completed in late spring of 2017.

The Weston Historical Museum appreciates the support of Rotary in making this project possible. All funds for operating the Museum come from donations and memberships. Without these the Museum will not be able to complete the Masters Facilities Plan which is essential for preserving the condition of the Museum structure.

In the future, other areas of the plan will be addressed such as tuck pointing the bricks, upgrading the gutter system and upgrading various electrical items.

## 2017 Museum Officers

President .....	Carl Felling
Vice-President .....	Clay Bauske
Secretary .....	Francie Stoner
Treasurer .....	Ted Wilson
Director .....	Barb Fulk

## The Nostalgia Store

at the Weston Historical Museum

New & Used Books

• Cookbooks • Paper Dolls •  
Souvenir Publications • Prints

Check us out through our website:  
[www.westonhistoricalmuseum.org](http://www.westonhistoricalmuseum.org)

# Why Is Preservation Important?

By Dr. Ann M. Raab

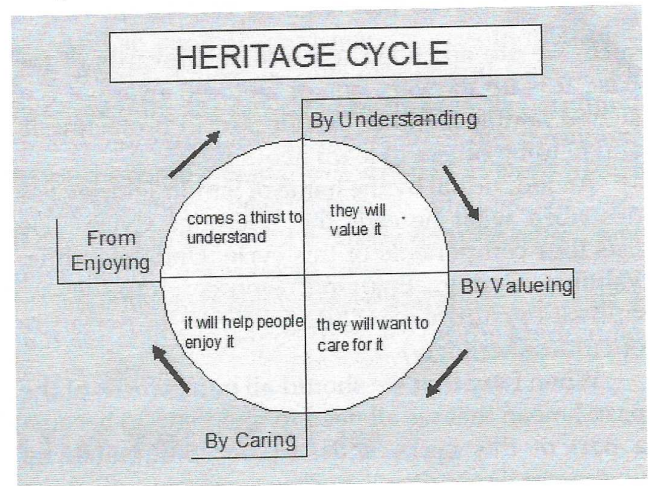
*"A concerted effort to preserve our heritage is a vital link to our cultural, educational, aesthetic, inspirational, and economic legacies - all of the things that quite literally make us who we are." ~ Steve Berry (Author and Historic Preservation Advocate)*

I think that it is an easy thing for people to say, "Preservation is Important." We acknowledge that it is something we must do, but when asked why it's important, it can be difficult to come up with specifics. "Well, it just is, that's why!" And while I certainly can agree that it is, I think that there are some very important reasons why we spend so much time and energy on the work of preservation.

One of the easiest reasons to articulate is the economic impact of historic preservation. The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation website provides state-by-state reports on the impact, including a report for Missouri. Per the report on this website, it is estimated that preservation boosts the State of Missouri's economy by about \$1 billion annually (yes, that's billion with a "b!"). You can find Missouri's report using this link: <http://dnr.mo.gov/pubs/pub1230.pdf>.

One key way this boosts the economy is through the preservation of historic properties. The re-use of existing historic buildings is not only inherently environmentally friendly (what could be more "green" than re-using a structure that already exists?), but it provides an opportunity for new and established businesses to be in properties that already have a connection to the community. Historic Preservation tax credits, as well as a variety of grant programs at the state and national level, help to achieve these goals. It's money well spent, I would say.

The Main Street Program is another important component of preservation, that specifically targets the revitalization of downtown business districts. Weston has done an amazing job of this, and the economic benefits are clear. We have led the way in creating an Historic Downtown, that is known state-wide (and even nationally) as one of the best places in Missouri to go. And, while our store offerings have continued to change and adapt over time to new consumer wants and needs, the one thing that has stayed the same is the historic character of our Main Street. The look and feel of downtown Weston is something that keeps people coming back to visit,



and which draws people to live here and set up businesses here.

Our emphasis on preservation is a critical component in keeping this spirit alive, regardless of what kind of shop or business is in our historic downtown district.

A third important component of the economic impact is Heritage Tourism. Once again, Weston has seen the impact of this first hand. People from all around the state, the country, and even the world, come to Weston because they want to be able to experience first-hand the look and feel of Weston's wonderful history come to life. Because of our emphasis on preservation, we have created a vibrant destination, that is a wonderful respite for tourists, but also a viable community where people can live and work, attend great schools, feel safe, and know their neighbors. Without our tireless work to preserve our heritage, our present community would not be what it is today, and our future would certainly be in question.

But there is also a more intangible benefit to historic preservation. It is more difficult to describe, but we certainly feel its lack when it is no longer present. By having an active historic preservation program, as a community we can feel more connected to one another, to understand where we came from, to appreciate the things around us, and to establish common bonds of understanding. Our cultural heritage can be found in historic buildings, important landscapes, archaeological remains, art, local craft traditions, books, music, photographs, objects, oral histories, and many other things. It is made up of many things and many people, and as

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## Preservation . . .

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such, we are all called upon to be stewards of the past. It is up to every one of us to be aware of our shared heritage, and to do our part in protecting it, and helping others to learn about it.

An individual by the name of Simon Thurley has described what he calls the "Heritage Cycle." He lists four components of this cycle: Understanding, Valuing, Caring, Enjoying; (source: <http://www.cultivatingculture.com/2013/04/05/the-importance-of-culturalheritage/>)

When I say that we should all be stewards of the past, I mean that we all need to find ways to become a part of this cycle, and help to continue it. By understanding cultural heritage, people will learn to value it. We can all participate in understanding heritage, by learning more about it ourselves, and by helping to teach it to others. This can be done formally, in a classroom or in a museum setting, or it can be done informally in our own homes, just to name a few examples. Once individuals value their heritage, they will want to care for it.

Again, this is something that we can all do. You can volunteer your time to work for the Museum to catalog, display, and curate items that are an important part of our heritage. You can take care to not dig up and disturb archaeological remains without professional guidance.

You can maintain historic properties in a way that is in keeping with their history and their significance. By caring about our shared heritage, this then helps people to enjoy it. Again, this is seen every day in our festivals and businesses, which are enjoyed by so many people who come just for these experiences. But it's also something that those who live here can enjoy every day, too. It is part of what makes Weston such a wonderful place to live. Finally, this enjoyment encourages people to learn more and to gain a deeper understanding, which then starts the cycle all over again.

Weston is a wonderful place. But these places are not created by accident. It requires constant attention, and the perpetuation of our very own Heritage Cycle. To do that, we must make sure to keep preservation at the forefront, and we must make sure that we are always doing our part to understand, value, care, and enjoy. Make sure you become stewards of the past, and that you share this love of our heritage with family, friends, neighbors, and visitors.

## Bits and Pieces From Bertha's Morgue

In the November 21, 1941 *Weston Chronicle*: "Miss Rose Kemmerer came up from Kansas City Wednesday to spend the weekend. With her sister, Miss Edith, she accompanied Mrs. B. J. Bless, Jr., to Lawrence, Kansas, today, where they will visit with friends. The Kemmerer family moved to Weston from Lawrence in 1887."

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In September of 1954 the local newspaper reported that "Seth Herndon, member of a prominent family of Platte County, became the owner of the Elley homestead built near Bee Creek. The home was situated near the site of the Battle of Bee Creek during the Civil War."

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According to an August 19, 1966 article, Jack Noland, son of Lee and Mrs. Rachel Noland, has completed his Basic training at Fort Leonard Wood. He is having a two week leave with his mother and brother. Richard. After August 26<sup>th</sup>, he will be stationed at Ft Polk, Louisiana.

Jack is a 1965 graduate of West Platte High School.

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Reported by the local weekly paper in July, 1962, "John F. Kenney was one of Weston's early blacksmiths. During the Civil War it was not unusual for him to shoe 100 horses per day. He was a Mason in the Weston Lodge and was several times elected Mayor of Weston. The first time was April 3, 1882. The versatile man was also a member of Weston's Brass Band."

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It was noted in the local newspaper in November of 1969 "Kent Jackson, son of Mr. and Mrs. Roy Jackson, is the first student of West Platte to be honored by the National Honor Society in new program of honoring "Student of the Month." He has been recommended by the school faculty and approved by the Honor Society members."

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In June 1910, we read: "John Newhouse, once owner and manager of Newhouse's Hardware in Weston, purchased the Weston Mortuary from W.D. Houser in May of 1909. In September of that same year, Newhouse closed the funeral home and moved to St. Joseph. He took all the accoutrements of the mortuary with him."

## Jacob Fulcher, Pioneer, Dies at 89 Years

*Ruth Marr recently shared a nearly 100 year obituary that her daughter, Liz, discovered while doing genealogy research. Though the man, Jacob Fulcher, is not kin to the Marr family, Liz thought it might be of interest to our readers.*

*(Obituary of Jacob Clark Fulcher from an unknown publication, but possibly came from The Platte City Landmark. Any mistakes come from the actual article.)*

"Jacob Fulcher was born in Washington county, Virginia, December 10, 1833 and died at the home of his daughter, Mrs. J.O. Johnson, in Platte City October 19, 1922.

In early life he moved to Tennessee and from there to Kentucky, and in 1849, come to Platte county, Missouri and for many years made his home near Farley, Missouri.

He was one of the remaining pioneers who pass through two of our country's wars.

In 1852, he was married to Mary Carson and to them was born twelve children, eight of whom, with their mother having passed away.

The remaining children are B.W. Fulcher of Lansing, Kansas, Mrs. J.O. Johnson and A.P. Fulcher of Platte City and R.L. Fulcher of Kansas City.

Funeral services were conducted at the home of A.P. Fulcher, October 20, by Rev. J.E. Wade and burial was in the Green burying ground near Farley.

For 75 years or more Mr. Fulcher had been a resident of Platte county, coming here by boat on the Missouri River and landing at Weston. The trip was fraught with little comfort, for enroute all the family suffered an attack of malaria fever that was so common among new-comers in those days. His home for many years was on the bluff near Farley, and thus opposite Leavenworth. He saw that city grow from a mere wilderness to a metropolis. He made three trips west across the great plains of early days, two when the Indians met and could be traded with and one when the Red Men were on the war path. Needless to say These trips were filled with many exciting and trying incidents. He was a corporal during the years of 1863 and 1864 under Captain Simpson, in what was known as the Paw Paw Militia. Here too, his life was crowded with strenuous and dangerous episodes, in all of which he showed the bravery of the rugged and ready pioneer, in making a safe home for his decendants. Twice the invading Red Legs of Kansas hung him up

to a tree in an effort to conquer him, but fortunately he was rescued before his death came, though some of his neighbors fared not so well.

And so another good man, always industrious, and always honest, always kindly and forbearion, has joined the unnumbered dead. He was permitted to live more than the allotted span of life, permitted to see the coming of many new and marvelous things — the telephone, telegraph, auto, airships, wireless, etc. — and in the joy of a happy reunion held a few days before he was taken away.

May his dust rest in peace and his life ever be a rich heritage and happy memory for the kindred he leaves behind."

## Did You Know . . .

. . . that in 1870 there were at least fifteen reported deaths by Scarlatina in Weston? All of the victims were under four years old. One family lost three little ones in the month of February. Scarlatina was a term used for little ones who actually had Scarlet Fever.

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. . . that one could purchase a marble headstone in the late 1890's and early 1900's for a lot less than today? An engraved tombstone cost as little as \$7.65 in those days.

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. . . that Mrs. Bertha Bless was dubbed Woman of the Century at her death in 1977? She was co-editor of The Weston Chronicle with her husband B.J. Bless, Jr. and due to her many civic accomplishments as well as state and federal activities. She was also known, to many, as the Steamroller.

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. . . that the Weston Historical Museum held its first Homes Tour in October of 1960? It was estimated that between four to five thousand people came to Weston for this event. For many years the Homes Tour was held annually

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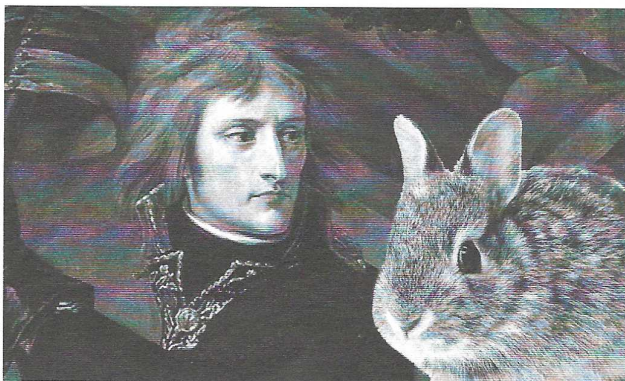
. . . that in the big flood of 1951 Weston was completely shut off from human contact for a few days? Surrounded by water on all sides, as well as the destruction of roads, Westonites could neither come nor go out, except for boats, while others were likewise prevented from accessing Weston. Several times helicopters came in with supplies for the local grocery stores.

With the water supply compromised citizens with wells and cisterns shared with friends and neighbors boiling the water first, of course.

## Weird, But Fun History Fact

Were you aware that Napoleon Bonaparte once was personally attacked and brought to the ground by a most unlikely foe?

While Bonaparte was running amuck in Europe, one day he was invited to stay at an estate of a friend. Part of the plans for his visit was a promised hunt. On the day they decided to commence the hunt, the host had his groundskeepers release a large number of rabbits, brought from a nearby farm.



However the silly rabbits were not cooperating. When released, instead of scattering, they remained together, much like a herd, staring at Bonaparte and the others gathered for the hunt. Baffled, Napoleon and his host decided that if they took a shot at the rabbits, they would scatter and then the real hunt could commence. As a guest, Napoleon was given the honor of the first shot. As he raised his gun and pointed, the rabbits attacked en masse. Biting, scratching, tearing and clinging to his clothes, the 'herd' of rabbits managed to pull Napoleon to the ground. The groundskeepers and the host rescued Napoleon from further damage to his person or dignity.

The reason for the strange behavior and attack upon this famous man of history is unknown. Some thought the host had loosed tame rabbits, which saw the emperor as nothing more than a head of lettuce.

However, this writer speculates that it may have been that the 'herd' of rabbits thought the short guy was one of them and took an instant dislike to him. However she leans more to the idea that the rabbits had witnessed the slaughter of family members and hairy friends. Thus they refused to "go quietly into this dark night" without a fight. This editor further suggests, that should you see a herd of mad rabbits, RUN!

## Hatton Buckler Shot, Killed By Weston Night Watchman

*(This obituary came from the files of "The Weston Chronicle", dated April 29, 1927.)*

Hatton Buckler was born in Flemingsburg, Ky. On Dec. 18, 1881; he was married in 1906 to Miss Della Ham of Kentucky and the next year with his young wife and baby boy came to Missouri, settling near Weston. Hatton died Saturday night at the hands of Donald Weigman, night watchman when Weigman shot him in enforcement of the law.

Mr. Buckler's wife died four years ago when, in learning to drive a car, she drove over the embankment near the Buckler farm, the old Huvendahl place. This place he had acquired by dint of hard work and strict economy on the part of both he and his wife. He had ambition for his little family of two boys, but the tragic death of his wife seemed to shatter his dreams and break his hold on ambition. He began to imbibe the demon of liquor frequently and did little around his farm. It is that attitude that most likely resulted in his death and in its cause one can find reason to pity and forgive Hat Buckler any offense against society.

The funeral was held Monday afternoon from the Methodist church, Rev. O. Blackburn officiating. Interment was in Pleasant Ridge cemetery. Pallbearers were: Wesley Ohlhausen, Wesley Benner, Ed Brill, John Webb, Clarence Scot and Warner Steele.

He is survived by his two sons in whom he had great pride and joy, Melvin of William Jewell College and Clifford, a W.H.S. Junior; four brothers and three sisters to mourn his death.

The coroner's jury in session Sunday afternoon on the case of Donald Weigman shooting Hat Buckler Saturday night in the Royal Smoke House, was held over to Monday evening.

Weigman was exonerated by the jury, as the jurors believed the explanation of Weigman and bystanders. The jurors were B.B. Fellows, D.H. Morrison, G.W. Crockett, S.J. Baker, N.A. Pepper and J.O. Black.

# Be a Hero!

Volunteer at Your Museum

# The Passing of An Industry . . .

(Continued from Page 1)

bridge leading into the heart of the city. Owners of a ferry operating between the Missouri side and a point one and a half miles below Leavenworth also fought the project. The War Department objected on the ground that the Missouri was a navigable stream and that the proposed bridge would interfere with river traffic.

However, upon examination of the model, which showed that provision had been made for opening the bridge when necessary, a charter was granted. Inasmuch as the old Kansas and Missouri bridge, built in 1871, had never been of much benefit to Leavenworth because of its location three miles above the city, the board responded with interest to Stillings' plan, and sent a committee to Nebraska City to investigate a pontoon bridge in operation there. Another committee investigated the feasibility of the plan for Leavenworth.

Both committees reported favorably and resolutions were passed asking for bids on construction. Despite the support of the committees, opposition developed, and in the end the bridge was financed entirely by Stillings. The Kansas City Star, April 5, 1925, thus describes the official opening:

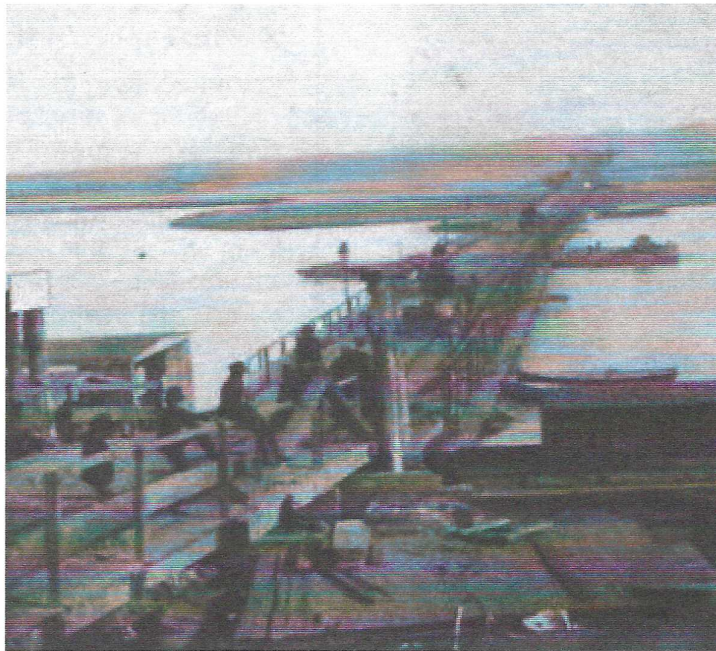
"On an August morning in 1889 a pair of quivering horses with distended and snorting nostrils squatted on their haunches at the foot of Cherokee street, in Leavenworth. Behind the horses was hitched a fire engine of the type used in that day, black smoke pouring from its stack. Stretching away across the yellow tide of the Missouri river floated a slim ribbon of pine boards. The driver on the seat of the fire engine coaxed the horses and slapped his reins. Patrick Burns, chief of the Leavenworth fire department, talked to the horses and patted their

shaking flanks. Suddenly the horses leaped forward and went galloping across the flimsy-looking structure. A great shout went up from the thousands of spectators massed on the water front as the fire engine rocked its way across. At the Missouri end

of tile bridge the driver wheeled his team and trotted them proudly back. The first pontoon bridge to span the lower reaches of the Missouri was declared officially opened."

It is recorded that Mayor D. R. Anthony had not favored the bridge and that on the morning of the opening he sent the police wagon to the scene to take celebrants, returning from the Missouri side, to the station. The bridge did a thriving business until 1893. A village sprang up at the eastern end and flourished as long as Platte county was

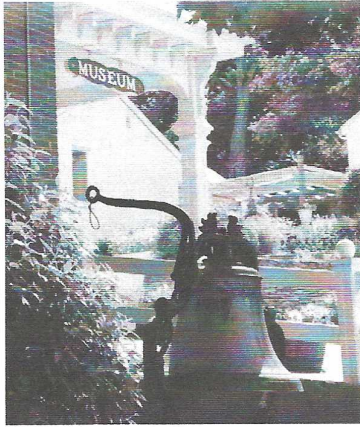
"wet" territory. The story of the pontoon bridge has in it something of the passing of an era, the flavor of the old West giving way to the new.



*The pontoon bridge was the first to span the Missouri River. This view, taken in 1891 by photographer A.A. Arlaud, looks east towards Platte County, Missouri.*

## *An Irish Blessing:*

*May the road rise up to meet you.  
May the wind be always at your back,  
May the sun shine warm upon your face,  
and rains fall soft upon your fields.  
And, until we meet again, may  
God hold you in the palm of his hand.*



## WESTON HISTORICAL MUSEUM

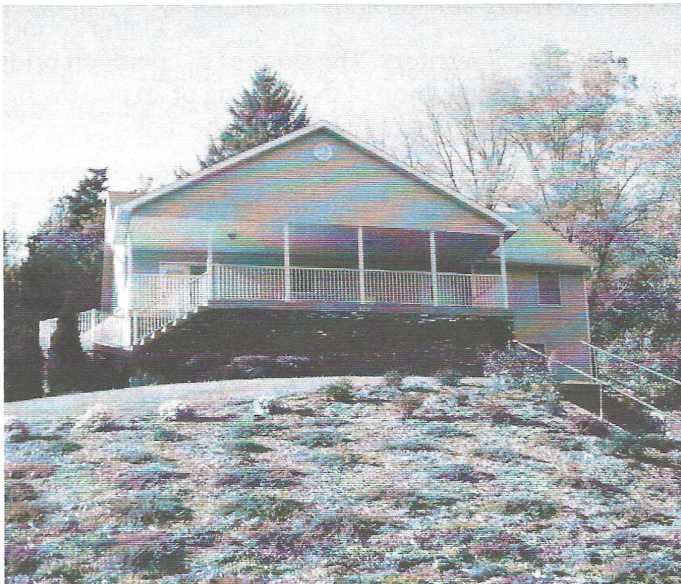
P.O. Box 266 • 601 Main Street  
Weston, MO 64098

*History can be  
well written only in  
a free country.*

*Voltaire*



# ? **mystery corner**



Many of our readers might recognize this home as the Weston Christian Assembly Church parsonage in the 500 block of Washington Street.

While we know it was built in 1993, more details relating to the purchase of the property, the razing of the former parsonage next to the church, when the addition to the church was built and any photos of the construction/destruction would help us.

Former occupants of the old parsonage and current and past residents of the new parsonage would also be appreciated.

Please drop us a note or call.  
Thanks.