

# Museum Musings

JANUARY • FEBRUARY • MARCH 2018

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

## Carolyn Larsen, Musings's Editor, Dies

Long-time Curator and *Museum Musings* editor, Carolyn Ann Larsen, passed away peacefully amongst family and friends on February 6, 2018 at her home in Weston.



Carolyn retired last year as Curator, having held the position since 2002. Shortly after she began her tenure, Carolyn revised the *Musings*, transforming it from a one page document to an 8-page issue, full of historical features, interesting tidbits and old photographs. One popular addition was "The Mystery Corner", which helped identify people, places and events previously unknown.

Assisted by Marsha West, she finished a 25-year project of her parents': tracing the histories of each business district building in downtown Weston. One highlight for the project was when elementary students "recreated" the town buildings, with attached history, for a special presentation at the Museum.

Using her knowledge as a Missouri State Archivist, Carolyn, along with then President Diza Eskridge, began a new preservation phase which included using proper storage materials for everything from photos to wedding dresses. In later years, she and Director Ann Saugstad began photographing and cataloging all donated items.

Carolyn was also instrumental in starting a fundraiser, Trivia Nights, which ran for several years.

She was born in Leavenworth, Ks., April 23, 1940 to Charles A. and Ruth Crow Bless, the first girl born in the family for 50 years. Carolyn was a 1958 graduate of West Platte High, and a 1963 graduate of

(Continued on Page 5)

## Carl's Corner

The Museum had a successful 2017, and we are looking forward to the new year. During our winter "downtime" volunteers are preparing new displays for 2018. The Museum will also be showing off several new items donated in the past few months.

Not only are there new items in the Museum but there is a new display by the Museum at the Weston Library. This display features information about Ben Holladay's accomplishments and his rise to fame and fortune.

Work will continue on the exterior of the building. It is hoped that new gutters will be installed, damaged windows replaced, and the front entrance porch roof repaired.

Concerning the interior of the building, the planning process will start on designing an additional work station on the main floor. We will also consider and develop plans for making entire first floor wheelchair accessible.

Before closing, I would like to thank all who attended and helped with the Annual Museum Dinner held Nov. 12th last year. The format was changed following suggestions made from last year's survey pertaining to the meeting making the evening livelier with more opportunities to socialize.

We also had a chance to welcome new board members Ann Raab, Cathy Murdock, and Boyd Hiatt and give special thanks to Carolyn Larsen, Ann Saugstad and Marsha West who were resigning from the board. The program was presented by Harrison Shipman on the 161 year history of the Holladay Distillery.

The Museum will be open in the spring, and I look forward to seeing you in the Museum in 2018.

# Weird and Interesting Facts of History

It is an interesting fact that George Washington offered an award for the best design for a certain type of shoe during the Revolutionary War.

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In 1948 the United States created the Marshall Plan to help rebuild war torn Europe. Eventually 18 nations received \$13 billion in food, machinery and other goods. The U.S. is the only country, who after winning a war, gave such help to allies and opponents equally.

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Charles de Gaulle was sentenced to death in 1940 by a military court for treason. He frequently spoke out against Petain's leadership abilities and often ignored him. Escaping the verdict, de Gaulle formed a shadow government later known as the Free French Forces.

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Kurt Chen-Een Lee became the first U.S. Marine Corps Chinese-American officer. Lee was barely old enough (17) to enlist during WWII, serving from 1944-1945. He stayed in the Corps and served in the Korean War. Among many heroic deeds Chen Lee fought in the Battle of Inchon. He would often, during his many battles, shout to the enemy in Mandarin Chinese sending confusion and panic in the enemy troops. Lee was wounded four times but remained on the battlefield giving instructions and orders to his men. He received a number of awards for his conduct in battle. Among those were The Navy Cross, Silver Star, Legion of Merit and two Purple hearts.

## Looking for Something Interesting to Do?

The Museum will be opening for a new season in mid-March. Since January, new displays have been prepared and others have been refreshed.

As history is always occurring, chores will start afresh. Cataloguing, filing, labeling and research will continue as usual. Volunteers are always appreciated on "Work Day Mondays."

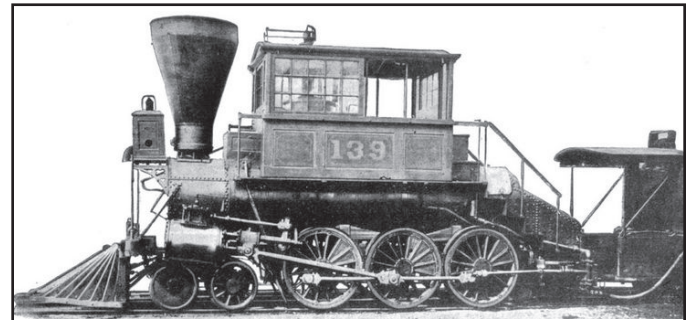
Substitute hostesses are also welcomed.

If you can help in any way, please let us know by calling 386-2977 for more information or to volunteer a couple of hours of your time.

# Weston & Atchison RR Chartered in March 1859

*(Railroads have been a joy and a fascination for this editor since about the age of 10. It is, in due part, to the trains that her interest in writing began. This article was found in the local newspaper on March 22, 1913.)*

Fifty-four years ago this month the Weston & Atchison Railroad was chartered under the statutes of Missouri and John Doniphan was named president.



*A steam engine from the early days of railroading.*

The City of Weston took \$50,000 of stock and issued bonds which were afterwards declared void. April 27, 1859, ground was broken with a great ceremony.

On July 15, the Weston & Atchison and the Atchison and St. Joseph were consolidated with the Platte County railroad. In January 1860, the road was in operation to Atchison and in December 1861, it was finished to Iatan and connected with Weston and Leavenworth by steamboat. On April 4, 1862, the road was finished to Weston and in 1863, the name was changed to Platte Country Railroad.

In 1867 it took the name of Missouri Valley Railroad and three years later it was named Kansas City, St. Joseph and Council Bluffs RR.

## 2018 Museum Officers

|                      |                                                  |
|----------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| President .....      | Carl Felling                                     |
| Vice-President ..... | Clay Bauske                                      |
| Secretary .....      | Francie Stoner                                   |
| Treasurer .....      | Ted Wilson                                       |
| Director .....       | Barb Fulk                                        |
| Hostesses .....      | Sigi Rowland<br>Susan Grinlinton<br>Terry Chapin |

# Where Are They Now?

*(The editor thought it might be interesting to the readers to learn a bit about some of the graduates of Weston/West Platte, through the years. She has been 'aided and abetted' in the research by Museum volunteer, Terry Chapin.)*

Graduating with the West Platte High School class of 1960, Robert Clemens went on to work for a few years at Hallmark cards in Kansas City. After a few years there, he left for a job with General Motors. Moving up "through the ranks", Bob eventually moved up to Management, going on to work for 53 years for the company by the time of his retirement.

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June Grisham Kisker graduated in 1954. She went on to get her business degree and later went to work for TWA. June worked her way up the ranks into management. She became the person in charge of the flight attendants, retiring after 34 years in the business.

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Jean Gresham Robertson, June's twin sister, also graduated in 1954. Jean went on to attend college in Maryville planning to be a teacher, however after 2 years she married and became a stay-at-home mother. Jean is now one of the friendly faces at Sharp's Market.

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Larry Clemens graduated from West Platte in 1959. For a year following graduation, he worked raising tobacco. Deciding to go into a different field, Larry started work with Hallmark Cards. He worked there two years, leaving to work for TWA. Due to the problems between management and the union, Larry decided to move on. He began working for the city of Weston in 1971 and held the position of City Engineer, retiring some 32 years later.

Currently, Larry is a bus driver at West Platte, and serves as a line judge for the girl's volleyball teams.

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A 1989 graduate of West Platte, Kent Hamby, went on to eventually working for Cerner Corporation. As a tech troubleshooter for the company, Kent finds himself traveling to such places as Saudi Arabia, Thailand, India and other spots around the globe. Kent has been at this job for over 12 years.

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Valedictorian when he graduated from Weston High School in 1899, Shortridge Hardesty went on to become an architect. He worked for a prestigious firm in New York City. During his time he helped build or design many bridges, chief among them was

the Golden Gate Bridge.

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Rosemary Plummer, a 1954 graduate of Weston High School, eventually became a concert pianist, performing nationwide. Rosemary's final recital was at Madison Square Garden, in New York City.

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A man of many talents, Bob Kincaid graduated from Weston High School in 1955. While in school, he excelled in all sports. Track was a sport he continued to enjoy throughout his lifetime. Bob worked for the Army Corps of Engineers for over 40 years before retiring in 1998 as Branch Chief of the CAD Division. Once retired Bobby rekindled his passion for running by competing in many U.S. track and field events throughout the United States. He became a nationally ranked Masters division 5K and 10K Runner and participated in the National Senior Olympics.

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Heather Amstutz graduated in 1985 from West Platte. She joined the Army, eventually attaining the rank of Major. Following her military career, Heather became a volunteer in Africa with refugees and others needing help. While working as a humanitarian, she met her future husband. Heather and her husband continue to live in Africa to help refugees throughout the continent.

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Following graduation in 1970, Michael Bless moved to Madison, Wisconsin, where he obtained a master's degree in Chinese studies from UW-Madison. During his studies, Michael spent a year in China as an exchange student. Upon graduation, Michael went on to work in New York City for the China Institute of America and continued leading tour groups throughout Asia.

Over the years, he became quite interested in the art of ceramics, learning from several masters in America as well as China.

Michael returned to Weston following the death of his parents, and in 2014 opened a shop called The Mad Potter. His partner in the shop is his nephew, Patrick Larsen, who graduated Magna Cum Laude from Missouri Western University with a Fine Arts degree, with emphasis on ceramics. Patrick is a 1984 graduate of West Platte.

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*"The first step to wisdom is silence; the second is listening."*

## Dream of Spa Never Realized by Early Doctor

The following article appeared in "The Kansas City Times" on August 13, 1966. It was written by John Edward Hicks.

Kansas City's newest municipal park project, just south of the Mid-continent International airport and adjacent to Tiffany Springs in Platte County, likely will carry the name of a physician prominent here for more than a half century ago.

The proposed 1,100-acre playground presently is being called Tiffany Springs park, partly because of its proximity to Tiffany Springs, perhaps mostly because it has a pleasant sound, and hardly at all because there was any studied effort to honor Dr. Flavel B. Tiffany, who 60 years ago had a principal roll in a bootless attempt at development of the health resort which it once was hoped would rival Excelsior Springs. Few remember him and not many recall, even, that Tiffany Springs, now with only a few residences, one of those a store made over as living quarters, was ever a health resort at all.

### *Wrote About the Springs*

Indians probably knew of the four springs there, but the first recorded notice taken by white men was when Paxton, sage chronicler of events in Platte County, wrote in his "Annals of Platte" under date of July 15, 1881:

"The artesian springs are said to possess medical waters."

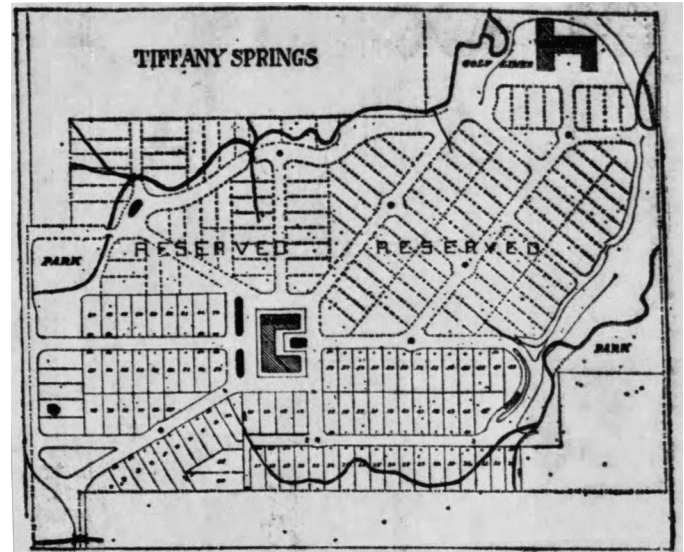
Again, Paxton notes, on April 13, 1887, that Mortimer C. Park, having sold his farm on Todd's Creek, had bought a quarter in section 2, township 31, range 34, and was building a hotel "and advertises Artesian Springs (early name for Tiffany Springs) as a summer resort and its waters as conducive to health."

Park succeeded in getting a postoffice located at the springs and himself appointed as postmaster. The mail was carried from Parkville, the nearest railroad town, and the postoffice continued to function until coming of rural free delivery rendered it obsolete.

### *Becoming a Resort*

In 1888 Paxton noted "a grand picnic at Artesian Springs" and the fact that "Mortimer C. Park is making valuable improvements at Artesian Springs and is attracting visitors and boarders." Park sold out February 1, 1892, and retired to Platte City.

Two other names creep rather curiously into the records at this point. The Missouri geological survey for



The ambitious plans for Tiffany Springs were indicated by this plat of the proposed town that appeared in the 1907 Platte County atlas. In the center is the hotel, and the shaded rectangle at the lower right is a bathhouse. At upper right is sanitarium adjoined by golf links.

1892, in giving an analysis of the waters and description of the place, called it Crystal Springs, "formerly Siloam Springs." One of the older residents in the area remembers those names in connection with the site of Tiffany Springs. He is R. B. Engleman, 91, of Ferrelview, one of a group of associates of his uncle, R. C. Engleman, who bought the property around the turn of the century. After a few years it was sold to Dr. Tiffany, who renamed it Tiffany Springs.

"Visitors from Kansas City," continued Mr. Engleman, "unless they had their own rigs, came by train to Parkville and arranged for transportation to the springs. One day James A. Reed, mayor of Kansas City, came to make a good-roads speech at the springs. The train brought him as far as Parkville, but his conveyance failed to meet him. He hitchhiked a ride on a farmer's wagon and was met at the springs by Francis M. Wilson, then a state senator from Platte City. There was a huge barbecue and a grand time was had by all.

"Tiffany Springs was noted for picnics and political gatherings. Between times, the men of the area discussed politics in the blacksmith shop of Joe Collins."

### *Builder of Interurban*

In conversations with the old timers of the Tiffany Springs area there recurs the name of Willard F. Winner, Kansas City promoter of another era. But only the

haziest of recollections remain that he was in some way connected with the town. It is likely he was trying to promote an electrified interurban line between Kansas City and the springs. Dr. Tiffany, though himself an entrepreneur of sorts, was wary of Winner, whose splendid dreams outsoared by decades the cautious thinking of men who could have financed his projects.

Eventually, when others built the Kansas City, Clay County and St. Joseph interurban, it missed the springs by several miles. It did have a Tiffany Spring station, but from that point the visitor was on his own. Lack of transportation probably was a factor in the town's retardation.

Despite grand plans, Tiffany Springs never grew beyond a handful of houses, a store and a blacksmith shop. The atlas of Platte County for 1907 shows a plat of the proposed town, covering several square miles of area, with a large hotel in the center: bath house, ball grounds, tennis courts, golf links, three parks, and a sanitarium. None of these magnificent projects ever got beyond the paper stage.

"The third floor of the old hotel built by Park never was finished," says Earl Snyder, who bought the place a score of years ago from the doctor's widow, the second Mrs. Tiffany, Mrs. Zoe Tiffany, then living in California. Snyder razed the old edifice, using part of the material in a new home on a nearby site.

#### *Began His Practice*

Dr. Tiffany first came to Kansas City in 1878 and rented the office at 120 West Ninth street which served also as a residence until his marriage the following year. He had just spent two years in London, Paris, Berlin and Vienna, studying diseases of the eye, ear, nose and throat. A graduate of the university of Michigan, he had practiced briefly in that state. He became professor of ophthalmology at the old University Medical college here.

He prospered greatly and by the mid '90s was living in a mansion near 25th and Troost avenue, then a neighborhood of wealthy families. He had built for his own use a clinic at 805 McGee street.

There once day came a carrier for The Star pleading the case of a 75-year-old man going blind for lack of medical care. The boy offered to throw The Star one year free if the doctor would look after the old man. The bargain appealed in Dr. Tiffany, and both he and the newsboy lived up to it.

#### *Built a 'Norman' Castle*

The doctor was an inveterate traveler, making over-

## Carolyn Larsen . . .

*(Continued from Page 1)*

St. Mary's College in Omaha, Nebraska. Following her former husband's retirement from the Army in 1977, they returned to Weston and she took over from her parents as editor and publisher of *The Weston Chronicle*. She also became civically active, as a volunteer EMT for HELP, Inc. ambulance service, as a Scout mother, church lay minister, substitute teacher and secretary of the Laurel Hill Cemetery Association.

Carolyn served four terms on the Weston City Council and found time to author several books. In the past year she joined the "Persisterhood" movement, making phone calls daily on important issues. As a four-time cancer survivor, she counseled many women struggling with the disease.

Surviving are sons, Patrick Larsen of Weston, Christopher Larsen of Alexandria, VA, Andrew Larsen of Kansas City and Thomas Larsen of Dearborn; daughters: Amy Crump of Homewood, IL, Mary Caroline Peters of Fort Walton Beach, FL, and Jessica Larsen of Weston; brothers, Bernard Bless of Parkville, John Bless of Plattsburg and Michael Bless of Weston; sisters, Ruth Mary Clemens of Weston, Kay Federspiel of Runaway Bay, TX, Barbara Bless of Weston and Rebecca Gladstone of Platte City; and sister-in-law, Toni Sturgill of Oak Grove, MO. She also leaves 16 grandchildren, many nieces and nephews, and a host of friends. She was preceded in death by one brother, C.A. Bless, his wife Anneliese and their son Peter John.

In remembrance, her family appreciates donations to the Museum.

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seas trip almost every year and visiting many strange parts of the world. Shortly after the turn of the century he built at 100 Garfield avenue an edifice which he fondly believed to be a Norman castle, but the Normans would have been the first to deny it.

He once said, "I have realized every ambition, the first having been to rival a Winnebago Indian boy in shooting a bow and arrow."

Honored by medical associations through the land; traveling the world over and bringing home art treasures from every corner; living in a mansion built to his own taste; it would seem he had achieved every ambition – except one, the grand dream that was never realized, the magnificent health resort of Tiffany Springs.

# Negro Orphans Profit By Tobacco Sales

(The following article, and advertisement, were published in "The Weston Chronicle", issue dated March 15, 1946.)

"Just because a boy or girl is an orphan is no reason for keeping him on a permanent charity list."

That's the opinion of Father M.E. Guilfoyle, "patron saint" to 60 boys and 50 girls of the Negro race. They are pupils of the Guardian Angel Home and Holy Epiphany school in Leavenworth. Most of them are orphans.

Among other things, the boys learn how to grow things. Father Matt, as he is called by the students, believes that Leavenworth county will grow saleable tobacco, as evidenced by his sale of 2,100 pounds on Tuesday at the Missouri District house. It averaged 35c per pound and Father Matt's grin was a wide one when he visited The Chronicle office to tell about that. The amount of \$735.04 will be a great boon to the orphanage

Father Matt has been at Guardian Angel Home ten years and expects to remain there for many years to come.

## Bits and Pieces From Bertha's Morgue

On December 5, 1919 this article gave us this: "Income tax rules are now set. All single persons and married persons, living together, who have an income of \$1,000 each will be subject to income tax; for the married couple one deduction of \$2,000 was made; an exemption of \$200 dollars is allowed for each child under the age of 18."

In an edition of *The Weston Chronicle*, dated November 10, 1967, we find: A strike called by Local 814 of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Work-



**THE  
POINT  
IS**

**That When You Sell At  
MISSOURI DISTRICT  
You Sell at Your Very  
Own Cooperative To-  
bacco Sales Floor.**

**Nothing Could Be Simpler Than  
YOUR OWN BUSINESS MAKES  
YOU THE MOST MONEY.**

	Lbs.	Ave.	Amount
Fred W. Peterson, Holt, Mo.....	2,632	\$ 39.52	\$ 1,040.08
C. F. Tucker, Rushville, Mo.....	2,744	37.43	1,027.00
Penelope Sloan, John Mann, Platte City.....	5,160	45.42	2,343.58
Otis Cecil, East Leavenworth, E. G. Anderson, Weston.....	1,424	40.16	578.32
V. B. Schmille, Wathena, Kans.....	1,814	34.79	631.04
Guardian Angel Home, Leavenworth, Kans.....	2,100	35.00	735.04
J. D. Goodpasture, Weston.....	1,568	34.31	537.96
Ben Craven, Weston.....	2,250	35.97	809.36
B. H. Smither, W. T. Smither, New Market.....	4,472	35.97	1,608.76
Frank Spratt, Taylor Dunlap, Weston.....	5,958	36.23	2,158.74
Lee Page, Weston.....	1,860	38.04	707.48

**We are Cooperating in every effort to hold a post-season sales for those who cannot possibly get their tobacco on next week's sales.**

**We Advise Making Fvery Effort To Get Your Tobacco On The Floor Next Week.**

## Missouri District Warehousing Corp.

Phone 205 Weston, Missouri

CLOSING SALE DATE, THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 21

ers against Missouri Public Service began a week ago and the members plan to sit down with MoPub officials to discuss the problems today."

In December 1967 the workers returned to work after an appeal by Gov. Warren Hearnes. A storm on the 1st of the month had placed the

services in a state of emergency.

In *The Weston Chronicle* August 1951 was the following: "C.L. Cray brought a stagecoach to the distillery grounds to celebrate the reopening of the business after a 4-year closedown."

# Did You Know . . .

. . . that steers were used in place of horses for travel, since the horses had either been offered or confiscated during the Civil War? This was the case all over the country.

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. . . that the T.B. Association of Platte County used their mobile unit to X-ray over 500 residents of Weston in January of 1957? In October 1959 the Assn. reported they had given the patch for Tuberculosis to approximately 4000 children in Platte County with only 70 showing positive for the disease.

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. . . that in late 1964 the Buffalo Bill Scout District, comprising all of Platte County, was consolidated with other area districts and the **North Star District** came into existence? In a naming contest, years earlier, "Buffalo Bill" was suggested by Robert Kottman, who was then a scout and later became Scoutmaster for Weston Troop 249.

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. . . that Donald Frey was the only member of Troop 249 to win the Eagle Scout Award in 1966?

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. . . that Holy Trinity Catholic Church held a

bazaar each year? There were foods, games, raffles, etcetera?

In 1900 the special raffle was "Miss Mabel." The doll was imported from Europe and had a genuine kid leather body and fine porcelain face and hands. The doll was won by the late Mayor and part owner of the Weston Brewery, August Walruff.

The doll was then given to the late Mrs. B.J. Bless, who was raised by the Walruff family. In 1950 the doll was given to granddaughter Carolyn for Christmas. The doll is now 117 years old.

*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)

# 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

## 2018 MEMBERSHIP DUES

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_  
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Membership includes an electronic version of the Museum's quarterly newsletter *Museum Musings*. To receive it, please indicate your e-mail address on the line above.

Check here if you prefer to receive *Museum Musing* by regular mail.

No. of Memberships	Category	Dues	TOTAL
	<b>Individual</b>	\$15	\$
	<b>Family</b>	\$30	\$
	<b>Patron</b>	\$100	\$
	<b>Benefactor</b>	\$250	\$
	<b>Life Membership</b> <small>(one time fee)</small>	\$500	\$
	<b>Additional Donation*</b>	\$	\$
<b>TOTAL ENCLOSED</b>		\$	

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

**CONTRIBUTIONS ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE**



## WESTON HISTORICAL MUSEUM

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



*“Human history becomes  
more and more a race between  
education and catastrophe.”*

*H.G. Wells*

# ? Mystery Corner

We know the school behind the students is the El Dorado country school. However, can anyone identify the six female students?

It would also be helpful to know exactly where the school was located, as we have received several conflicting opinions on its location.

When did the school close? Does any part of the building still stand?

If you can help us out with any or all of the information, give us a call at 816-386-2977; stop by the Museum after March 15th; or email us at [westonhistoricalmuseum.com](http://westonhistoricalmuseum.com).

Thank you for the help.

