



Museum Musings

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

Founding Member Margaret Wilson Passes

Margaret Theo Wilson, 100, passed away Wednesday, February 6, 2019. Margaret was born April 1, 1918 in Buffalo, NY to William and Theo Stegman (Muse) Strattan. As a child, she travelled throughout the country with her military family, and was a 1936 graduate of Junction City, Kansas High School. She graduated in 1940 from University of Kansas, and earned her Master's in 1949 from Teacher's College, Columbia University.



Margaret taught business classes at the Weston High School from 1947 until 1949, when she married Roger G. Wilson on August 29, 1949 in St. Joseph, MO. They worked together in insurance and banking.

Margaret was a proud resident of Weston and was a member of various clubs and organizations, most notably the Weston Historical Museum where she was

a founding member, and Weston Christian Church as a faithful member for over 70 years.

She loved studying and watching birds and was an avid KU Jayhawk fan. Margaret and Roger traveled extensively over the years on numerous ABA/MBA trips with their banker friends, and trips to China, Russia, Hong Kong.

After Roger's death Margaret was able to tag along with a group of "younger" lady friends, FOKU, on their travel adventures. She was preceded in death by her parents; brothers William A. and Everet L. Strattan; and husbands Abe Shafer III and Roger G. Wilson.

Survivors are sons Abe (Ann) Shafer IV, Donald (Roberta) Wilson, and Theodore (Connie) Wilson, all of Weston; grandchildren Abe "Quint" (Christy) Shafer V, Margaret E. "MaLiz" (Ryan) Denk, Gabriel W. (Kirsten) Richesson, Luke J. (Anita) Richesson, Amanda M. (Jackson) Groves, Lauren M. (Kevin) Martin, and Wesley D. Wilson, Jacob R. Wilson, and Nathan T. Wilson; great grandchildren Bette and Will Shafer, Asher, and Chloe Denk, Elle, Luther, and Sunny Richesson, Bristol and Rowyn Groves, and James and Benson Martin; cousins Charless (Marjorie) Fowlkes and Marilyn Nuss; niece Margaret E. Smith and nephew Robert (Connie) Strattan.

A memorial service was held February 16th at the Weston Christian Church. In lieu of flowers, the family requested memorial contributions to the Weston Historical Museum.

Partnership Benefits School and Museum



Julie Hoffman, right, and guest study a display at the Museum in a December gathering.

The Weston Historical Museum recently partnered with the West Platte Education Foundation for the second year to host a live auction entry benefitting the foundation. Julie Hoffman was the winning bidder at the foundation's 2018 fund raiser. She scheduled a pre-Christmas get together for members of the Holy Trinity Choir and friends.

For the second year, the museum board generously provided the museum building at no cost to support the WPEF. The evening was hosted by three museum board members- Pat Benner, also the WPEF Resource chair; Barb Fulk, Museum Director and WPEF Membership Co-chair; and Judy Juergens.

Pat Benner welcomed the group and gave a brief overview of the West Platte Education Foundation. The guests were interested to learn how the foundation contributes to the support of teachers and students by providing items that the school district can't because of legal constraints.

Guests requested a tour so Barb Fulk, as the museum director, pointed out that although the museum has thousands of items, there were a few they should note as they looked around during their party. Several of the guests were surprised at the outstanding exhibits and commented that they will recommend the museum as a destination when people visit Weston. It was a festive evening with great friends, good food and a little history.

BUFFALO BILL'S EARLY TIES TO WESTON

This article is reprinted with permission from the Platte County Historical Society newsletter of fall 2012.

By Ken Klamm



Any list of the most colorful figures of the old American West would be incomplete without "Buffalo Bill" Cody. This legendary showman, hunter, Western folk hero, and soldier has a Platte County connection that few outside the area are aware of.

According to the Historical Legends section of the Internet site, WestonMo.com, "William

'Buffalo Bill' Cody, who later became the most famous rider for the Pony Express, vacationed in Weston with his Uncle Elijah Cody, whose house is located at the corner of Main and Short, and is marked with a historical plaque. His Uncle Elijah had a successful business at the corner of Main and Market. When his father Isaac moved his family from Iowa to the Weston area he stayed with his uncle. Isaac was an abolitionist and after expressing his views he was stabbed on Main Street by a member of the Border Ruffians. If you check a few tombstones in Laurel Hill cemetery on Welt Street, you will find members of the Cody family buried there."

Editor's Note: The website, LegendsOfAmerica.com, in its section entitled Weston: The Town that Refused to Die has a different location for the stabbing: "After Cody's father, Isaac, was attacked and stabbed while giving an antislavery speech in Kansas, Bill came to live with his uncle, Elijah Cody, in his home at 600 Main Street (in Weston)." MM note: the address for the Cody House is actually 540 Main Street.

An article about Buffalo Bill that appears on the BlackHillsVisitor.com website notes that "William Frederick Cody was born on a farm northwest of Le Claire in Scott County, Iowa, on February 26, 1846, the fourth of eight children born to Isaac and Mary Ann (Leacock) Cody. In Bill Cody's autobiography he alludes to his father's wanderlust. It was a trait that young William would himself inherit." This article continues, "That longing took the Cody family on to Weston, Platte County, Missouri, in 1853 where Isaac's brother Elijah was a successful merchant at a trading post in Leavenworth County, Kansas."

In his autobiography, Bill notes that "the love of adventure was in father's blood." He continues, "In 1853 our farm and most of our goods and chattels were converted into money. And in 1854 we all set out for Kansas, which was soon to be opened for settlers as a Territory." Bill noted, "My uncle Elijah kept a general store at Weston, Missouri, just across the Kansas line. He was a large exporter of hemp as well as a trader. Also he was a slave-owner. Weston was our first objective. Father had determined to take up claim in Kansas

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Five Reasons to Visit Your Museum

With the opening of the museum just around the corner, and hopefully spring not far behind, give some thought to kicking off your spring and summer with a visit to your museum. And here are some reasons why....

Museums make you happy

Studies show that people are happier when they spend money on experiences rather than material purchases. Experiences, such as visiting a museum, can also become a meaningful part of one's identity and contribute to successful social relationships in a manner that material items cannot. So, consider foregoing an outing for items that you may not need; going to the museum will make you happier in the long run.

Museums make you smarter

There is no doubt that a primary role of museums is to engage and educate the community. Museum exhibits inspire interest in an area of study, item, time period, or an idea. Our hope is that we help to foster a deeper understanding and promote the enjoyment and sharing of authentic cultural and natural heritage.

Even the museum itself has an interesting history to inspire and educate visitors. It becomes nearly impossible to exit the museum without having gained any information or insight during your visit.

Museums educate

Museums are examples of informal learning environments, which means they are devoted primarily to informal education - a lifelong process whereby individuals acquire attitudes, values, skills and knowledge from daily experience and the educative influences and resources in his or her environment. A single



Wedding dresses and accessories made up a recent Museum display.

visit to a museum can expose visitors to in-depth information on a subject, and the nature of the museum environment is one in which you can spend as much or as little time as you like exploring exhibits.

The environment allows you to form your own unique experiences and take away information that interests you. A trip to the museum for students can get them excited about school subjects, expand their general world knowledge and give them subject-specific content and skills.

Museums are community centers

Museums are a lot more than collections of artifacts;

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A Parakeet in the Bluffs

by Terry Chapin

In the depths of winter when almost all of nature has shut down, it seems that birds remain a constant. Whether it be the sight of bright red from a male cardinal outside your window or nasally cackles and honks of the migrating geese, winter doesn't keep the birds at bay. With Weston's unique landscapes ranging from swamps to bluffs, we're lucky to see birds of all sorts - turkeys the size of small children, stunning bald eagles, tiny warblers that sound like summer. With all the fowl we see today, there's one bird that you wouldn't expect to have graced these midwestern skies - the Carolina Parakeet.

It's true. At one point, here in Weston, flocks of vivid and screeching parakeets lived in old growth forests along the river and swamps that run through our town.

The Carolina Parakeet was fondly described by early Missouri pioneers as "a beautiful bird [with colors of] green, yellow, red ... that reflected in the sun with the brilliance of a rainbow," (Schoolcraft, 1819). The gaudy colors of the bird must have been quite a site for early explorers of Weston and the Missouri territory who were carving their way through thick, wooded, and unknown areas.

However, like many of the wildlife that early explorers had put pen to paper, the Carolina Parakeet was already known to the Native Americans by other names. Most notable, the colorful bird was called Kelinkyby the Chicksaw tribe and, by the Seminoles, pot chee, puzzi la nee or "Head of Yellow".

It was mostly a green bird, with a head of yellow, and bright orange-red cheeks that drew attention to its hooked beak which was perfect for eating fruits and seeds of many trees and other plants, such as thistles and cockleburs. The seeds of cockleburs are notably poisonous and, naturalist John Audubon reported that cats would perish after eating a Carolina Parakeet, which suggests the birds were poisonous.

Other than its noteworthy colors, it was known for being a gregarious and screeching bird that gathered in large flocks making noises described as "rapid, harsh, and incessant" (Evans, 1819). Even Lewis and Clark made note of the parakeet and a placard dedicated to the bird can be seen in Weston Bend State Park.

The Carolina Parakeet was last seen in Platte County area sometime in the early 1850's. With the Platte Purchase of 1836, Platte County and surrounding areas quickly cleared forests for agriculture which destroyed the habitat of the Carolina Parakeet. In addition to the destruction of their habitats, the Carolina Parakeets were seen as pests to newly settled farmers because the birds were fond of the cultivated fruits, corn, and other grain crops. Hunting also played a role in the parakeet's extinction as their flocking nature led to wholesale slaughter for their vibrant feathers. The bird was rarely reported outside Florida after 1860 and was considered extinct by the 1920's. Historical accounts give conflicting information, making it difficult to determine to what extent, if at all, Carolina Parakeets migrated. Imagine a snowy Weston winter, looking over the bluffs and seeing a vibrant shock of green bouncing off sunshine. Although, by many accounts, you probably would hear them first.



Carl's Corner

by Board President Carl Felling

The Museum Board and Executive Committee continue to work on the "Master Facilities Plan". Over the past two years much has been accomplished, issues with the exterior of the building have been solved, and the brick sidewalk along Main Street has been updated along with plantings in this area.

Currently the Board and Executive Committee is reviewing the interior needs of the building. Several layout changes have been studied to enhance the use of the building. It is hoped that some of these ideas can be implemented in 2019.

The Annual Museum Meeting took place on November 11, 2018. Election of Board members for the terms expiring in 2018 was held. The Nominating Committee announced that Jean Harley and Edna Kirk were retiring from the Board due to moving from the area. The committee nominated Joyce Priddy and Tracy Smith to fill their positions, and this was approved. Both Jean and Edna have done an outstanding job for the Museum, and their volunteer work for the Museum is greatly appreciated. I am looking forward to working with Joyce and Tracy as they join the Board.

The program at the Annual Meeting was presented by Paul Schewennesen. He spoke about the early history of Fort de Cavagnial, located near Fort Leavenworth. This was an excellent presentation on this early fort and the first European settlers in the Weston vicinity.

One last note, volunteers are working on updating several display cases this winter while the Museum is closed. Their work makes a difference in keeping the Museum up to date and presenting new information about our history. We certainly appreciate their work.

BUFFALO BILL . . .

(Continued from Page 2)

and to begin a new life in this stirring country. Had he foreseen the dreadful consequences to himself and to his family of this decision we might have remained in Iowa, in which case perhaps I might have grown up an Iowa farmer, though that now seems impossible. Thirty days of a journey that was a constant delight to me brought us to Weston, where we left the freight-wagons and mother and my sisters in the care of my uncle." (From *An Autobiography of Buffalo Bill*, Cosmopolitan Book Company, 1920).

After arriving in Weston and leaving his mother and sisters with his uncle, Buffalo Bill soon left with his father on a journey into Kansas. In his autobiography, Buffalo Bill relates this first big adventure: "To my great joy father took me with him on his first trip into Kansas – where he was to pick out his claim and incidentally to trade with the Indians from our wagon. I shall never forget the thrill that ran through me when father, pointing to the block-house at Fort Leavenworth, said: 'Son, you now see a real military fort for the first time in your life'"

"Free-soil men and pro-slavery men were . . . ready to rush across the border the minute it was opened for settlement. Father was a free-soil man. His brother Elijah who, as I have said, was a slave-owner, was a believer in the extension of slavery into the new territory"

Bill Cody next relates an incident in which he ran into a long lost cousin, also a nephew of Elijah Cody of Weston, Missouri, during this early-life adventure into Kansas Territory: "While some of the men prepared the skins, others built a fire and began to get a meal. I watched them cook the dried venison,



and was filled with wonder at their method of making bread, which was to wrap the dough about a stick and hold it over the coals till it was ready to eat. You can imagine my rapture when one of them – a pleasant-faced youth – looked up, and catching sight of me, invited me

to share the meal

"Boys are always hungry, but I was especially hungry for such a meal as that. After it was over I hurried to camp and told my father all that had passed. At his request I brought the young trapper who had been so kind to me over to our camp, and there he had a long talk with father, telling him of his adventures by land and sea in all parts of the world"

"He said that he looked forward with great interest to his arrival in Weston, as he expected to meet an uncle, Elijah Cody. He had seen none of his people for many years. 'If Elijah Cody is your uncle, I am too,' said my father. 'You must be the long-lost Horace Billings.'"

Helen Cody Wetmore (Buffalo Bill's sister) wrote in the book *Last of the Great Scouts, 'Buffalo Bill,'* "My uncle's home



Weston 1856. The Cody Hemphouse, owned by Elijah Cody, Bill's uncle, was located at the corner of Main and Market Streets.

was in Weston, Platte County, Missouri, at that time the largest city of the west. As father desired to get settled again as soon as possible, he left us at Weston, and crossed the Missouri River on a prospecting tour, accompanied by Will and a guide." (Duluth Press Pub. Co., 1899).

In his book *Buffalo Bill Cody: The Man behind the Legend*, Robert A. Carter (2000, John Wiley & Sons) wrote his version of these early events, "Isaac Cody was not long satisfied with the life of a farm manager. Upon learning that the Territory of Kansas was soon to be opened for settlement, he wrote to his brother Elijah, who was then living in Weston, Missouri, across the river from Leavenworth, Kansas, and asked for information. Elijah told him to come and stay with him. Isaac had also been assured by members of Congress, to whom he had written that the act opening Kansas and Nebraska to settlement would be passed in the winter session. Once again Isaac resigned his job with Brackenridge and prepared to migrate. On about the first of April 1854, the Cody family was on the move.

"They were well equipped for the journey, with a large four-horse wagon, filled mostly with clothing, another wagon filled with goods to trade with the Indians, and a big family carriage, drawn, according to Helen Cody, by 'a span of fine horses in silver-mounted harness.' Will rode alongside the carriage, acting, as his sister put it, 'as an armed escort.' He himself described his role as 'second in command.' The Codys did not camp out along the way, but went from county seat to county seat, usually staying in makeshift hotels or in private houses. The trip took them a month, for they stopped frequently and once took part in a horse race. In Missouri, young Will had his first encounter with a Negro, a slave who addressed the boy as 'Massa'"

"Elijah Cody's home was in Weston, Platte County, Missouri, at the time a sizable community, where he ran a general store. Elijah welcomed his brother's family and put them up in a house on his farm two miles from town. Elijah suggested that he and his brother and their wives look over the prospects in the Kansas



Territory. They took Will along with them. After crossing the Missouri River by ferry, they stopped at Fort Leavenworth"

Buffalo Bill joined the Pony Express as a rider while still quite young. The BlackhillsVisitor.com website mentions that "Cody, now all of sixteen years old, returned home and briefly joined a local Kansas militia engaged in the enterprise of crippling the Confederacy in Missouri by stealing horses – a cause he justified in his mind for all of the terror and grief the pro-slavery Missourians had dealt on his family. Bill went to Leavenworth, where he first met William Hickok. Wild Bill was leaving to take the position of wagon master on a government supply train and asked Cody to join on – a decision he made with little hesitation. In the fall of 1861, Cody began carrying military dispatches, and in buying horses for the government. The next spring he joined an expedition as a scout proceeding to the Kiowa and Comanche country. He became one of the "Red Legged Scouts," of the noted Kansas Rangers."

The old site of the Weston store owned by Elijah Cody, Buffalo Bill's uncle, is the subject of some speculation. The following is copied from the Internet blog spot of the Cactus Creek Rustic Western Vintage Shop in Weston:

"Cactus Creek moved into our current location – 400 Main Street, Weston MO – in October of 2009. The building was originally built in 1910 by the Doppler Family and has always been referred to as the 'Doppler Building'. Since then it has been everything from a shoe store – to a Western Auto – to a hardware store – to a barber shop/bar (barber shop in front, bar in the back).



We have done some work to research the history of the building and its foot print on Main St., so I was so excited today when the local museum brought us a copy of this photo [see 1865 photo of downtown Weston that accompanies this article].

"We believe that the foot print of our building, which is located at the intersection of Main & Market Streets, was the site of the first 'store' ever built in Weston MO. Our little town is celebrating its 175th anniversary this year so that was likely in the 1850's or so, that's my guess anyway. The photo above [see 1865 picture of Downtown Weston] is of that original store which was called Cody Hemphouse. Weston was a tobacco and hemp town that survived by supplying goods to people heading west on the Missouri River The most significant thing to me about the Cody Hemphouse was that it was built by Buffalo Bill Cody's uncle. We have read that Buffalo Bill used to spend summers with his uncle and work in his store. THAT means that Buffalo Bill Cody might have actually been a store clerk on our little corner way back when . . . how cool is that? . . . The Cody Hemphouse eventually burnt down and that is when the Dopplers built our building. They operated a mercantile on the main level and lived in the apartment on the second level. More about that later"

Although Buffalo Bill and most of his immediate family members eventually left Weston, according to the Weston, MO website: Laurel Hill Cemetery: "Laurel Hill cemetery sets high on the Welt Street hill overlooking the town. Listed on the



The home owned by Elijah Cody, Buffalo Bill's uncle.

National Register of Historic Places, the pre-Civil War cemetery is not endowed. First known as the City Cemetery, the name was changed to Laurel Hill in 1902. Early settlers buried here are four generations of Daniel Boone descendants, David and Phena Calvert Holladay, and Buffalo Bill's aunt Louisa Cody."

Paxton's *Annals* notes on page 407b: "Elijah Cody, long a merchant of Weston, dies at Colorado." On page 294a of his Addendum to the *Annals*, Paxton includes a newspaper article that identifies Col. W.F. Cody, or "Buffalo Bill," who at one time rode stations on the Pony Express. The nickname that identifies this Western legend today had been coined and was well-known by the early 1900.

Reasons to Visit . . .

(Continued from Page 2)

they allow you to meet with neighbors, discuss thoughts and opinions, and become an active part of the community.

Museums provide a great excuse to spend time with friends and family in a positive way. Personal connections can be made with museums and also with family members during visits.

Time spent at the museum often translates to time spent with loved ones as fathers and mothers transform into tour guides, and the environment provides a shared learning experience. Take your spouse, a friend, your child or your parent to the museum!

Museums need your support in order to keep educating and inspiring people

Many museums are nonprofit entities with missions to educate and inspire audiences – and that means that they need the support of visitors, members, and donors in order to keep on fulfilling those missions. If you like a cultural organization and you want to keep it around for decades to come (so that you may bring your great-grandchildren), make a donation or fill out that membership card with pride! In many ways, supporting your museum through visitation or, even better – through membership or philanthropic support – is a way of strengthening communities and giving back so that the museum can continue to provide its service to the community.

Your museum is close to you

The Weston Historical Museum is located at 601 Main Street in Weston, MO. After our re-opening in mid-March we will welcome visitors Tuesday through Saturday from 1:00-4:00 and on Sundays from 1:00-4:30.

Let It Snow, Let It Snow, Let It Snow . . .

By Ruth Mary Clemens

Well we have had our selves a bit of weather this winter. More snow than it seems we have had in a few years. Old-timers are always talking about how much snow there was back in the day—sort of like those stories of walking a mile to school in the deep snow—up hill both ways!

But if you lived in Weston all those stories are true! From our house on Summer Street, we walked downhill to Washington, uphill to the school and then reversed the process walking home. The bus would drive right past us which didn't seem at all fair. After all I am sure they had room on that bus for a few more kids, especially just going about four long blocks. But rules were rules and the buses didn't stop. So, on we trudged, even on days when the buses couldn't always make it into town!

By my standards it wasn't so long ago but in years the 50's and 60's are back there a ways. I mean the 1950's and 60's thank you. I remember one particular year we had been out of school for Christmas break (that's what you called it in those days, not winter break) and we were scheduled to return to school the next day. Snow started coming down gently the morning before and it fell, and it fell and it fell, sometimes a little faster than others, but it sure did accumulate. If memory serves me correctly, we had from 12 to 14 inches, with drifts piling much higher than that. It was a perfect snow and it closed the schools. It also closed Weston because in those days they didn't plow the streets as nicely as they do now.

Several things kicked in at the same time when a sizeable snow fell. The City would block off Spring Street Hill from the old Baptist Church (now the Weston Historical Museum) to the corner of Spring and Washington, right next to the Christian Church. I guess the City felt that sledding between two churches should be safe! And all the children in town, who simply could not make it to school, would congregate on that hill and sled until called in by parents. Among those residing on that portion of Spring Street were Bob and Annebelle Hull Jones, at the corner of Blackhawk and Spring; Forestyne Loyles and her mother Tootie in the Price Warner Home; and the Wilkerson family near the entrance of what is now City Park. I don't recall who lived in the old Methodist Parsonage at that time but none of those folks, not a one, ever complained about all the noise and nonsense that would go on outside their homes. Consequently, you never heard of the kids causing any trouble to any land owners. On some occasions, an old barrel was placed at the corner with a roaring fire to warm your hands.

With the kids satisfied for the duration, the City turned

to their next issue, the 18-wheelers needed to move the burley tobacco out of town. Their main route was up Main Street and out Walnut. They could go over to Washington and out but two things were the same on both streets—hills. So the city plowed as best they could with the equipment they had—a plow blade on a City Truck, spread some salt and sand and then the fun would begin.

At the base of Main Street, the trucks would gear up, or down as the case might have been. They would clear off the windows, check that the load was secure and then, with a mighty roar, they would start up the hill.

And they would get as far as the entrance to Missouri District Warehouse, or the upper warehouse as we called it. Tires spun, smoke and snow rose and the truck was stuck. So, they would back



down and start again. Each time they inched a little further. Past the trailer court and Tolle's Gas Station; on past *The Chronicle*.

Now, if no car was coming across Main at Market, they had a good run for the next two blocks; and there was generally a lookout at that corner to keep local traffic out of the way. After all, the tobacco market was our main source of revenue and everyone wanted them to be successful.

Now the big truck raced towards the hill and you guessed it—they were stuck just past the Methodist Church. Back to Main and Market, off again and this time up to Charley and Mary Lee Quinley's house; back down and then with a roar they flew around the corner by the Bill Humphrey house and if they didn't slide too badly, they were on their way out of town.

Naturally no one ever blamed them for knocking the street sign by Doc Hiatt's house over. It was placed for several years on the south side of the street. Smarter minds prevailed at a later date and the sign post was placed on the north side of the street.

After that first truck made it out, the rest would soon follow and our excitement for the day was complete.

Not to be forgotten, there were two other hills in Weston. One going up to the Catholic Church; the second up west Spring Street. The Catholic Church members had a fool-proof method of getting up their hill. The first person in line would drive their car up as far as it would go, spinning and smoking as they went. They would then back down to Market Street and sit until the next car would hurtle past them, using their tracks and with luck gain a few more inches. This scene was repeated until finally a car would make it around the corner and then in to the church parking lot. On particularly snowy days the priest would send the altar boys out to the lot to see how many cars were still at the

bottom of the hill and how far they had gotten in their fail-proof project. Then he would offer a prayer for their success and say, "We'll wait awhile."

The other hill happened to be the abode of several gentlemen who did not believe in walking in the snow, did not believe in staying home when there was a lot of snow (had to check how every one was getting around) and who would not, I repeat NOT, accept failure. B.J. Bless, Brook Miller, Mickey Ohlhausen, and Jack Shenkner, were the residents who would turn that curb at Washington and Spring and proceed to burn their way up the hill. And I do mean burn. They sat in their cars, motors gunned and inch by inch they climbed the hill.

Mr. Shenkner and Mr. Miller needed to only go the first block and Mr. Bless and Mr. Ohlhausen had to make it to the second block. I don't know of a time they didn't make it but I do know that if it was a bad winter, by spring they were buying new tires.

There was such a thing as chains for tires in those days and many a man either put the "knuckle busters" on himself or made it to the service stations which also performed the service. They clanked and rattled and often broke a link or two which meant they would be slamming against the under part of the tire well but they did help. Most of the time these gentlemen did not care to put them on as they "will just have to come back off." There were, however, men who put chains on with the first snowfall and left them on until spring break, or until they broke completely.

This particular snow kept the City kids out of school for



almost another week. By that time the parents were ready to teach classes themselves. The city would eventually obtain better snow removal equipment, and if there was a lot of the white stuff on Main Street they would open the manhole covers and shove it down the sewer system. They would plow, salt and sand all the streets.

Safety issues stopped the City from closing off Spring Street; and the old men have all passed on. You know what else we did when those large storms hit? We slowed down, we took a breather and had an excuse to take life a little slower. Kids got outside, neighbors watched out for each other, the town made sure the daily things that had to be done got done, but life was simple for a while. I miss that, even if I did have to walk a mile to school in the snow, uphill both ways.

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

2019 MEMBERSHIP DUES

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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

Valentine Cards from the Victorian Era

Valentines have been around for quite awhile and most people know the origin of the holiday. In the modern world it is one of the busiest days at floral shops, restaurants and jewelry stores. However, for the most part, the day of a shy suitor showing up at the front door with flowers and candy has pretty much gone by the wayside. One hold-over is the giving of beautiful, flowery greeting cards.

It is not unusual to find saved Valentine cards among family keepsakes. While the modern Valentine cards are beautiful, one wonders if they will hold up to the artwork, embossing and coloring that is found in old Valentine postcards. These are a few examples of the artwork, unfortunately without the rich colors, on postcards sent



to Bertha Iseman Bless.

One card her sister, Sister Mary Francis, sent from Joplin, Mo. in 1909 had a tiny pocket, which unfolded to a letter. It was quite unique even in those times.

So check out your family's attic and closets and if you're lucky, you will find a treasure trove of splendid art, lost memories and even a surprise or two.