

MUSEUM MUSINGS

WESTON HISTORICAL MUSEUM

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

APRIL ~ MAY ~ JUNE 2015

Weston Public School Celebrates 125 Years

In the early years, several private schools were used to educate Weston's children. Some were sponsored and run by the local churches, others just by interested people. Then 125 years ago this year, the Weston Public School came into being.

Upon that discovery, museum volunteer Jerry Adams took on the project of organizing all of Weston/West Platte files to use in one of our new displays. There is a great deal about the original alumni association which was a busy, viable group. There are lots and lots of photographs, school memorabilia, yearbooks, articles and other items of interest for those visiting the museum.

Some surprising facts also came up, such as:

~ Did you know that Weston High School was the first in the state of Missouri to have a band?

~ Are you aware that a graduate of Weston High School was a Nobel Peace Prize nominee in 1973?

~ Another West Platte graduate is now a busy TV producer and writer?

~ Do you know the name and rank of the military member who is Weston's most decorated serviceman, as well as a graduate of Weston High School?

~ Another graduate was a concert pianist and just a few years ago performed at Carnegie Hall in New York City? Who is she?

~ Though not officially a graduate, due to the fact that he entered the Marines a few months short of graduation, this individual went into police work after his discharge. He worked as an officer in Kansas City and later became Weston's first Police Chief. Who was he?

~ Who was the fireman who died while

(Continued on Page 4)



Weston High School's first graduating class was in 1891. No photograph of that year exists to our knowledge. Above is the graduating class of 1899, but we have no identifications.

West Platte All-School Reunion Is May 16th

The All School Reunion is fast approaching! Each of the initial two reunions were well attended and plenty of friendships and memories flowed.

If you intend to come for the meal, please get your information in ASAP so we can have an accurate count for food to have prepared. The cost to eat is \$25. If you simply want to come to socialize and not eat, there is a \$10 cover charge payable at the door.

Volunteers are being sought for set up on Friday and clean-up as well.

For more information, go to the West Platte All-School Reunion Facebook page.

Gremlins Do it Again! Those Blasted Pests!

Ever realize as soon as you send something through the shredder, or hit “send” on a e-mail that you made a BIG mistake? Well last quarter’s *Museum Musing* seemed stuffed with those moments for our newsletter lady. After pushing that send button to the printers, those pesky things popped up on several pages. With apologies and a pledge to do a better proofread, here are some corrections and clarifications.

– Virginia Hall passed away on October 13th, not November 12th last fall.

– The Corresponding Secretary position has been eliminated. Francie Stoner is the only secretary for the Board of Trustees.

– Jeanne Braneff is not a hostess at the Museum, but she IS a really great volunteer. Terry Chapin is our new hostess on Wednesday after-noons. She is also a very capable computer person who does a lot of data entry for us.

– Gremlins did NOT touch page 5, but the newsletter editor took the chance to use the picture of the second High School Weston had. It was from the late 1800’s and just shows how far we’ve come.

– We thank all those who called to tell us that on page six it was not Abe Shafer III who attended the Boy Scout Jamboree at Valley Forge. It was in fact Abe Shafer IV.

– For clarification, page 7 has an article about an old lawn swing. The picture provided is not the lawn swing in the article, but at least gives you an idea of what it looked like, although the swing in the picture is much smaller than the Brooks’ swing. We have no photo of the one that is talked about. Wish we did.

– Finally, some of you may have noticed the small box on the address page with a quote from Eleanor Roosevelt. You might have and also noticed that the picture was not that of the former First Lady. It was a photo of Angela da Silva dressed for her presentation last fall’s Museum dinner. The gremlins really worked hard getting this snafu in the newsletter!

Hopefully this edition is pest free!

Looking for Something to Do?

Volunteers are always welcome on “Work Day Mondays,” when we sort, file and label items. Substitute hostesses are also welcomed throughout the season. If interested call 386-2977.

Museum’s Reputation Brings Request for Help

In recent weeks the museum has been requested to help several other similar institutions. The request was not for financial help, although both could use it, but rather for suggestions to help start or rejuvenate their own groups.

The first was the Smithville Historical Society. Due to lack of funds and several other issues, they have lost the building in which they housed their museum. They have also lost volunteers and seemingly they have lost the interest of others in their endeavors to save history for the next generations.

They were looking for ideas about fund raising and how to get interest stirred up for them. We were happy to give them what information and hints that we could.

The second request came from a well-known individual from this area — Steve Goodlet, who taught science at West Platte for 30 years. Steve lives in Dearborn and he is working with a group of individuals who are interested in starting a museum of their own. The emphasis of this museum would be on the railroad.

In the early 1900’s Dearborn was something of a hub for three or four railroads that went through the town. Steve’s committee and a committee from your museum are meeting several times to give them what knowledge we have on starting up a museum.

We are happy to know that people consider us a well-run entity and that we have some expertise in the business. We are happy to help if at all possible.

New Volunteers Add To Activity in Museum

In recent months the museum has had a couple of extra volunteers join the regular Mon-day group to help with displays, filing and such.

Among the latest volunteers is Charlotte Moreland. We appreciate her helpfulness, ideas and interest.

Men, we can use some volunteers from your gender if you are at all interested. Don’t let the ladies outshine you and talents you can bring to the museum.

Just show up on a Monday morning about 9:30 and we will not only welcome you to the group, but put you right to work.

Brewery Oil Painting Back in Museum

The primitive oil painting of the old Weston Brewer has been beautifully restored and has now been returned to the Museum and presently can be seen on the first floor in conspicuous display.

Faded, dirty, cracked and lines showing that it had been folded many times, the painting, done by John Wuest about 1887, was restored by Ms. Peggy Van Witt of the Van Witt studio in Overland Park, Ks.

Ms. Van Witt personally returned the painting to Museum President Carl Felling when he had scheduled her as a Rotary program on April 10th. Mrs. Ann Saugstad, retired Museum Director with her husband, Dennis, and Ms. Carolyn Larsen, retired Museum Curator were guests of Felling during the meal and presentation. The two retirees had worked diligently the last several years before leaving the museum to get this painting restored. Thanks to the Weston Rotary Club, Friends of the Museum, and Mr. Douglas Bogart, funds were finally gathered for the work to be done. Mr. Bogart gave his substantial check in honor of Mr. and Mrs. Roy and Frances Hoy Hornbuckle, who for many years were active in the Platte County Historical Museum.

While giving her presentation, Ms. Van Witt was able to show before and after photos of many of the art works she had already done this year. She also showed a before photo of the Brewery painting.

The painting had been given to August F. Walruff who with his son, John Walruff, were owners and managers of the brewery at that time. Mr. Walruff was an uncle to Mrs. B.J. Bless who donated the painting to the museum in 1960.

In the painting some of the identifiable persons are Wm. ("Boss") Rumpel, grandfather to George Rumpel; William's two daughters, Mary (Mrs. George Sebus) and Pauline who married George Robbins. They are seated in the phaeton; drivers of other vehicles are Tom and Garrett Riley and John Stultz. At the entrance or top of the picture is "Sprinkler," a mounted barrel from the rear of which were two fan-shaped sprinklers operated from the



driver's front seat. It was used to "wet down" the dusty Main Street and a few other blocks joining it during the dry season of the summer. Main street merchants paid a weekly fee for this service. In the picture, mounted on the driver's seat of this invention was "Sweet Charley," a Swedish immigrant.

The stairs and little platform (Center front) led to a "Public Bath" for sportsmen and close friends of the managers. They would line up each Sunday morning with towel in hand to use the huge tin bathtub, where boiling hot water was always available.

The Weston Historical Museum wishes to thank those who donated funds to have the restoration done on this very old and interesting oil painting of the Weston Brewery. It is hoped that it will be enjoyed by many in the coming years.

The Nostalgia Store

at the Weston Historical Museum

Check us out through our website:
www.westonhistoricalmuseum.org

Weston School . . .

(Continued from Page 1)

fighting a fire in Weston? He was a graduate of the Mary Bethune School and went on to High School in Kansas City. Due to segregation he was unable to attend High School here in Weston.

~ Because she did not graduate from Weston High School although she did attend school here, it was before the first formal graduation, I will give you the name of this distinguished school member. Miss Alberta Price attended and finished school in Weston. She was a descendant of Daniel Boone. Alberta went on to a ladies' college and was married later to a man named de Silva, who was in diplomatic circles in South America. Alberta went on to be the FIRST woman consul in the world upon his death.

~ He joined the U.S. Army six months before his 18th birthday. He went on to make the military his career, serving with the 5th Special Forces Group (airborne and the Green Berets).

A graduate of 1954, he went on to college while still in the military, earning a degree in political science. Due to his work with the Special Forces, he learned to speak Russian, German, French and Vietnamese fluently. During his twenty years in service he served two tours of duty in Vietnam, two in Europe, one in Korea and he also served in Ethiopia where he received honors from Emperor Haile Selassie.

Among his other awards, he earned the Bronze Star with Valor and three Oak Leaf Clusters, the Purple Heart, Army Commendation Medal, the Joint Services Commendation Medal and the Republic of Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Palm Leaf.

He died in 1978 from complications caused by Agent Orange.

If you are interested in the answers to these questions and other school information, drop by the museum and see the display Jerry has organized, with the help of another volunteer, Susan Grinlinton.

Susan has been busy working on the one-room school houses, assembling a number of pictures to make a large collage which will also be on display.

If you can't make it into the Museum, check out the answers on our website: www.westonhistoricalmuseum.org.

Bits and Pieces From Bertha's Morgue

A brief notice in *The Weston Chronicle* dated in June 1904 read "Aaron Busey, one of the oldest negroes of Platte County, died Friday and was buried in the city cemetery Sunday afternoon. He was supposed to be about eighty-six years old."

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Later that year, in November of 1904 this item appeared: "Joseph Edgar Sexton, son of Asher and Mary Sexton, died Sunday, Nov. 27, 1904, at the home three miles north of Platte City.

At the out start of the War Between the States, he enlisted in the Confederate army. He rose from private to captain and wore the marks of battle. He was wounded in action twice and at the Battle of Lexington, Sexton was the one to bear the into the city the flag which was made by the hands of loyal (Confederate) Platte County women."

~~~~~

Dated Jan. 1915 we read this item: "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."

~~~~~

An issue of the local newspaper dated June 23, 1944 reads, "The neighbors on Blackhawk and Spring streets, between Main and Blackhawk have a series of wiener roasts every season to which all the folks, old and young, go eagerly. This year the mosquitoes have made the gatherings too unhappy so that the first of the season was held only this week. The Loyles yard is the meeting place and Tuesday night's affair was no exception to the 'good times were had by all.'"

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In the Nov. 11, 1957 issue of the *Weston Chronicle* we found this, "The Fish fry sponsored by the O.E.S. chapter of Weston held Saturday evening was quite a success.

Over 85 pounds of fish were fried and served with a delicious salad, hot coffee and pie.

Mark Burns and Al Hasemeier were the cooks."

Emergency Services Are Honored in May



Weston's first fire department shows off their new equipment during a parade down Main Street in May 1897.

May is a busy month for the Emergency and Medical Services. Starting off things is the National Firefighters Day on May 4th; National Police Week is May 11th thru the 15th; National Nurses Day has been set for the 16th of May; and National EMS Week is May 17th through the 23rd of the month.

The Weston Volunteer Fire Department was started in early 1896 with George H. Sebus as chief and Bob Light, assistant chief. Today's Fire Department is housed on Highway 45 and is equipped with the latest of firefighting tools.

Though the city had many town marshals and night watchmen from back in the late 1800's, it was not until 1971 that a Weston Police Department was formed, with Harlan Carter as the city's first Police Chief.

Weston has enjoyed the help and care of nurses since the mid-1800's and a long list would ensue if there were space. Some have been school nurses here in Weston, some have been members of visiting nurses, others have worked at the many hospitals in the MO-KS area.

H.E.L.P. Ambulance started service at midnight on April 21st 1974 after much work on the part of many and the cooperation of the citizens of Weston.

Manned by many volunteers, unpaid, EMT's, First Aiders and nurses, it was in service 24 hours

a day, 7 days a week with little exception. Though the original HELP ambulance is gone, Weston is still served by an efficient and busy ambulance and her workers.

Beginning in December 2013, the museum has periodically put a display of items and information in a display case at the local branch of Mid-Continent Library. It remains on display for about two months.

A number of photos of people from Weston and almost a dozen old photos of towns in the area are displayed. After an individual has done their best to identify the photos, answers can be found in the red folder off to one side.

We have been gratified by the interest shown not only by patrons of the library but also of the library staff.

If you are interested in more about the history, photos of events, and personnel from any of these Emergency and Medical units, check out this interactive display at the Weston branch of Mid-Continent Library.

***The great pleasure in life is doing
what people say you cannot do.***

~ Walter Bagehot

Weston Historical Museum Members

April 2015

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 Earl and Dot Benner
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 Pat Stampfel
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 Peggy Truders
 James W. Van Amburg
 Brian West
 Lee Wilhite

BUSINESS

Avalon
 Platte County Citizen
 Reese Nichols Weston Bend
 Renditions
 Snow Creek
 The Vineyards Restaurant

Did You Know...

...that there was once a Salad Dressing factory in Rushville? It was called Norma's Salad Dressing and was opened and managed by Mr. and Mrs. John Rayfield in 1959.

~~~~~

...that in 1923 the agent at the Weston depot requested contributions of rockers? Mr. J.A. Wilson wanted the rockers for the waiting room in the depot. Mr. Wilson came to Weston in 1917 and in 1930 moved permanently to St. Joseph.

~~~~~

...the agent for the CB & Q railroad company in Weston who retired in 1967? That would be Mr. Gorman Allen. He was on duty in the 1940's when the news came in over the telegraph that his son, Gorman, Jr. had died in the war.

~~~~~

...that Weston has had a number of great organists graduate from here? Among them were Peter Gray who while attending the Organists Guild of America's convention in 1968 met two ladies from Weston who are noted organists—Mildred Anderson Roby and Bessie Anderson Wood who were classmate of Peter's in 1947.

Another organist, Roger Hardesty accompanied a noted organist of New York to the National Convention of the American Guild of Organists in 1962. Roger, a 1958 graduate of West Platte, traveled worldwide giving performances. He also repaired many large pipe organs and even built a few.

~~~~~

...that the then Weston Chamber of Commerce planned a trip for members of the community for a sports event? In June of 1955 approximately 120 Westonites traveled to Kansas City to see the K.C. Athletics play. The A's eventually were moved from Kansas City to California.

2015 Museum Officers

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

2015 2015 2015 2015 2015 2015 2015 2015 2015 2015 2015 2015 2015 2015 2015 2015

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.

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

CONTRIBUTIONS ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE

Number of Memberships	Category	Dues	TOTAL:
	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.*

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WESTON HISTORICAL MUSEUM

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64098



*"If you don't know history,
then you don't know anything.
You are a leaf that doesn't
know it is part of a tree."*

Michael Crichton

? **Mystery Corner**

No one has stepped forward with an identification of any of the five children featured in the last "Mystery Corner." So, we have stumped folks for the last two newsletters (we're stumped too, as we do not have any identifications on the last two photos.)

This photo of a young man was taken here in Weston and we believe we have his identity; however, it would be nice if someone could step forward and tell us for certain who he might be.

Give us a call at 816-386-2977 or drop by and give us your information on the photo. You might even want to take the time to look around the museum a bit.

