



Museum Musings

APRIL • MAY • JUNE 2017

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

Schools Celebrate The Closing of their Year

“Swamp school, near Weston, held their closing exercises Wednesday with a basket dinner and a program. Carol SeEVERS is the instructor. Her pupils for this year included John Berryman, Mildred Berryman, Kaye Ann Carney, Diane Davis, Bill Estes, LaVerne Faudere, Irna Kendrick, Carole Harris, Lonnie Kendrick, Shirley Kendrick, Robert Lautzenhiser, Elaine Lintner, Patty Meyer, Carlene Perkins, Louise Perkins, and Nancy Hope Wright.” (There was no date found for this article and the one following.)

“The students of the Pleasant Ridge school observed the closing of their school Wednesday with a picnic. Nadine Pumphrey is the instructor. Her pupils are Sandra Brown, Charles Carter, Martha Carter, Larry Cline, Charlene Couchman, Freddie Couchman, Larry Downing, Carolyn Golden, Bobby Kendall, Harry Kendall, Bobby Kincaid, Jimmy Kincaid, Preston Kincaid, David Layton, Judy Layton, Michael Layton, David Shanks, Margaret Shanks, Gorman West, and Myra West.”



Carl's Corner

by Board President Carl Felling

At the last Executive Committee meeting a questionnaire was approved to be printed in the Spring issue of *Museum Musings*.

The purpose of this questionnaire is to get feedback from our members concerning the Annual Dinner meeting. Those receiving a printed copy are asked to complete the one page survey and mail it to the Museum.

For those who receive the *Musings* through e-mail, please print out that page, fill it in and mail it back.

On another note many of you received a mailing from the Museum, Chamber, and West Platte Education Foundation offering a membership discount- a three-for-one fee. I encourage you to respond to this offer and join the other two organizations. Just as the Museum makes Weston a better place the other two organizations are also important for a vibrant Weston. Please respond and join.

As always, we appreciate any and all feedback. Thanks for your help.

Edison Victrola Will Be Restored

During a meeting held in mid-March, the Museum Board announced that the Edison Victrola, donated to the museum by Michael Bless, is to be restored and returned to the Museum.

Mr. Bless also donated a number of the very thick 78 rpm records that have been played for visitors occasionally. The Edison has its original diamond needle which should never dull.

Thanks to the Museum Board, for helping to preserve this antique.

The accompanying portion of a Plat map not only shows the location of Pleasant Ridge school, but also the locations of the Kitchen Cemetery, the Hawkins Cemetery as well as Laurel Hill and Graceland Cemeteries in Weston.

Records & Atlases Give Interesting Tidbits

During the years that the editor of this news-letter worked as an archivist for the State of Missouri, she found some interesting entries in records of Platte County.

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“Ed Reed tangled with a railroad train between Beverly and Stillings in 1917. The coroner’s remark was “. . . all parts of the body were strung out over ½ a mile.”

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C.J. Holland died at his farm 4½ miles East of Dearborn. The date of his death and the inquest were dated May 1, 1928. It was held on Holland’s farm. The coroner was notified by Lucian Davis. The Constable of the township was Fred Ketchman.

Jurors were J.A. Davis, Wm. Allen, Bob Jones, James Sherwood, J.C. Maget, and Thomas Thompson. John H. Brill was the Coroner.

Final verdict of Jury: “Suicide, a gunshot wound in the left side of the body. The gun (a 12 gauge Parker) being found by the body, one shell therein and it discharged. It is the opinion of the Jury that he (Holland) had set fire to the building before committing the act.”

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Sept. 3, 1922, died: Mrs. Florence Knepper. In a document from the coroner’s (Gip Moore.at the time) finding written on Sept 30, 1922, it was noted “. . .she came to her death from gunshot wounds inflicted by Harvey Stephens. No inquest necessary.”

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Looking at an old Platte County Atlas, one can learn a great deal about the county. This particular atlas shows that back in the year of 1877 the town of Farley had a Hotel and a train depot next to the railroad tracks of the Chicago Rock Island & Pacific.

The town also boasted the Platte County Fairgrounds, three streets running easterly. They were 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Streets. The cross streets were Tribble, Allir and Andy. They also had a post office and several other buildings as well as several homes

East Leavenworth had Mulberry, Chestnut and Broadway Streets that were named. From the atlas, it seems many other streets were named, but possibly never came into existence. The Kansas-St. Joe & Council Bluffs railroad ran nearby. Their post office was that of City Point and we could not find where that was located.

If you might care to see the 1877 Atlas and the one from 1907, there are copies of them on sale in the Platte City Museum. The Weston Historical Museum has several of the original atlases one can peruse, if interested.

Large Crowd Enjoys Alumni Fund Raiser

(This article has been tentatively identified as having appeared in 1936.)

From the first musical number on the orchestral program to the Goodnight song, by the ensemble by the large crowd which filled the Iris Theater last Friday evening.

The performance opened in Beno’s Tavern, with the chorus singing that old-time minstrel song “Tavern in the Town.” The introduction of the end was followed by a solo “On Revival Day” by Bill Crockett. A “take-off” on Fred Astire in Top Hat” was cleverly acted out by Weston’s prima donna, Miss Inez Love and the Girl’s chorus,. Buddy Riley rendered a cornet solor which was followed by a number of the gay ninties, sung by a quartet composed of Jane Winter, Donald Hardesty, Raymond Oeooer and Eddie Carter. Bill Lambert of Leavenworth was heartily received in his initial number of the program, “California Here I Come.” The Boys’ and Girls’ Choruses next presented a clever number with the cast dressing in pirate costumes.

George Hulll, master of ceremonies, brought rounds of applause in his number, “Wahoo.” Donald Hardesty and Forestyne Loyles gave a clever number; followed by Miss Marguerite Noland doing a tap dance. J.W. Scott and Miss Inez Love were presented in a cute number. Henry McCalley and R.I. Marr, blackfaces, added their bit of merriment to the entertainment.

One of the cleverest numbers was that one present3ed by Bill Lambert and Forestyne Loyles in “Side Walks of New York.” Raymond Pepper as Al Smith and donkey came in for their part of the episode. The program was interspersed with periods of jokes and a monolog which included many laugh-getting sentences and local gags.

The minstrel was sponsored by the Alumni Association with Mrs. W.W. Fluharty and sister, Miss Sue Bassler of Leavenworth and Mrs. A.A. Love as directors.

The personnel of the orchestra included Franklin Mann, A. Watson, Douglas Wilson, G.A. How, Bub Crockett, Buddy Riley and Mrs. Frances Crockett, pianist. The girls’ chorus was composed of Misses Garnet Howard, Irene Jones, Marguerite Noland, Margaret Stephens, Katheryn King and Lois McConnell; the boys’ chorus had Owen Taylor, Parke Pepper, Martin Turner, Elsworth Newton, Billie Love and Harold McAdow.

The gross proceeds for the evening were \$119.

History is not a burden on the memory but an illumination of the soul.
– Lord Acton

Weston, Area Towns Hit by Robberies

When one thinks of Weston and other small towns and villages in the area, one seldom thinks of robberies. However, starting in 1911 a number have been recorded. Among these robberies have been:

- 1911: The Farmers State Bank of Parkville was robbed of \$2,000 in silver and gold.
- 1916: In Weston burglars entered the Post Office, A.P. Doppler's store, Hillix Drugs, Fellows Grocery, A. Schindler Grocery and Baker Harness shop all in one night. There was no estimate on the amounts taken. It was a busy, busy night for the culprits.
- 1927: Niemann's General Store in Farley was entered and a number of bolts of yard goods taken. Did the robber need new clothes?
- 1929: Three stores in Dearborn were all burglarized on the same night. A.L. Scott Lumber Yard, Ferrel Store and Harrington Motor Co. were the stores hit that night. It was estimated that about \$200 was lost.
- 1933: Eight bandits staged a daring daylight holdup of the First National Bank in Leavenworth. Loss was approximately \$5,000. In Weston, Lamar and Miller store was robbed of \$80.
- 1934: The Bank of Weston was robbed. One of the culprits was shot and killed by Jesse Lindsey, Town Marshall. Another was captured shortly after the robbery.
- Love's Garage was broken into and money taken. The Exchange National and Exchange State Bank, both in Atchison, were robbed of \$21,000, which was quite a haul for those days.
- 1937: Morrison's Care was broken into and a slot machine was stolen, although the small amount of money in the "till" was untouched. Perhaps the robber wanted the slot machine for his den?
- 1955: Allie Russell's Store in Bean Lake had an attempted robbery but the culprit was killed in the process.
- 1958: Spinner's store was robbed for the second time since Christmas. Maybe the culprit was storing up for next Christmas.
- 1961: Farley Bank was hit by robbers in May and got away with \$25,000.00. They forced six of the bank personnel into a vault but they were

uninjured. The robbers were caught in _____ about thirty minutes later. No get away car?

Platte City had six stores robbed in one week. Busy little buggers, weren't they?

Dye's General Store, owned and run by Lester Harris, was robbed of \$225 in April. The guys disappeared into the mist.

- 1962: The Dearborn Bank lost \$4,500 to robbers in January.

In November the Bank of Dearborn was again robbed. This time \$15,000 was taken. The culprits were apprehended within minutes and the money was returned. Greedy, greedy.

- 1964: Platte City and Bean Lake, as well as Weston, were hit with multiple robberies in December. Schindler's Grocery was robbed of \$1,500 in cash and merchandise. Maybe they thought it was a cafeteria?

- 1965: Two teenagers robbed Mrs. Leffel of Weston at her home on Walnut Street. They used the ruse of exposed dangerous wires laying in her yard. While she was examining the wires with one, the other entered the house and robbed her.

- 1966: The J.A. Offutt Jewelry store was robbed of \$1,000,000 in expensive jewelry, watches and clocks.

The Dearborn Lumber Co. was robbed twice in a month. Later they were robbed for a third time. It was always on a Saturday. Guess the culprits had to work the rest of the week.

In December, the home of Mayor and Mrs. S.L. Ross was entered, burglarized and Mrs. Ross and her mother, Mrs. Cassity, were terrorized by the men. One culprit was caught at the scene, but the second culprit made a getaway.

Many other robberies and burglaries have occurred throughout the years, big and small. Most of the time the responsible parties have been caught and punished.

Be a Hero!

*Volunteer at Your Museum
Every Monday Morning*

Call 816-386-2977 for more information

Annual Dinner Meeting Assessment

At the November 15th Trustee meeting a topic of discussion was a brief review of the November 13th Annual Meeting. It was noted the meeting is held to elect officers and trustees and review activities of the past year. There was concern expressed pertaining to the cost of the ticket, the program/speaker selection process and the type of program that would be most enjoyed.

A committee was appointed to review the annual meeting and make recommendations to the Trustees for future annual meetings. The committee members are: Terry Chapin, Larry Lintner, Kim Kirby and Louis Smither. To facilitate the review process, the committee developed this questionnaire. Feedback will assist the Trustees determine the future of the annual meeting.

Please complete and mail to: Weston Historical Museum, Post Office Box 266, Weston, MO 64098.

1. Please check your preference for agenda of meeting:
 - Dinner, Election, Reports and Speaker
 - Dinner, Election and Speaker
 - Light Hors d'oeuvres, Election and Speaker
 - Light Hors d'oeuvres, Election, Reports and Speaker
 - No Speaker (also select one of the above)

2. What is your preference for start of event?
 - 5:30 pm
 - 6:00 pm
 - 6:30 pm
 - Early afternoon (1pm or 2pm)

3. Is a speaker important for the meeting?
 - Yes
 - No

4. Assuming a speaker is part of the event, what type of subject would you prefer?
 - General history topic
 - Humor
 - Weston history
 - Musical

5. If a speaker fee is required, what is the maximum amount the Museum should pay?
 - No amount should be paid
 - No more than \$250
 - No more than \$500

6. Is the \$30 per person cost reasonable and a good value for the dinner and program?
 - Yes
 - No

7. Further comments: _____

Did You Know . . .

. . . that Mrs. Wm. DeBerry (Florence Mundy) owned an exceptional plant? She owned a Christmas cactus that, in 1915, held 127 blooms. It had bloomed profusely each Christmas time for 30 years.

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. . . that Joyce Lee Croskey, daughter of Edith Dunlap and Wynan Croskey, was awarded a scholarship in 1953 to Missouri State College in Tarkio? There, due to many consecutive honors Joyce was chosen to Who's Who in American Colleges in 1956. A year later she was YWCA Director of Teen-agers in Mason City, Iowa. She also received a number of honors as a teacher. Joyce now lives in Illinois.

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. . . that the earliest bank in Weston is believed to have been on Washington Street? It was located in the now non-existent little building that later became the Girl Scout house in the mid-1960's. It was constructed of brick and had smooth stone at the corners.

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. . . that Charles Corbin was honored with a Certificate from the Red Cross for "Courageous Personal Action" in March 1966? Charles observed two youths, on an ice floe floating down the Missouri River, calling for help. He first tried throwing tires tied to ropes, but when he realized the youths were too afraid to grab on to them, he finally put a boat into the ice-filled river, at great personal risk, and managed to rescue the two.

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. . . that Army Capt. Archie L. Dowdell was awarded the Bronze Star Medal for heroism in combat in Nov. 1966? At the time Archie was serving in Vietnam and was serving as communications officer of the 25th Infantry Division. His mother, Mrs. George D. Allison of Weston, has not yet been notified "why" Capt. Dowdell received the medal. This is his second tour in Vietnam. Archie's first tour there was with a helicopter division.

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. . . that Weston once boasted a Cornet Band? The leader of the all-black band was Mack Bell. They played at many social events for both colored and white citizens.

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. . . that Weston once had a Mayor who believed in the efficacy of weeds? He was even written about—in a serious article not only in The Kansas City Star, but also in several newspapers in the east. Mayor Bernard Meeker was "famous" for that and for the fact that he often arrived at most Council meetings barefoot and wearing bib overalls.

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. . . that the Eureka Theatre was situated on west Thomas Street where Bob and Delores Baker have turned

the land into an area of flowers, trees and a fountain? The Theatre burned to the ground in December 1936, several months after the big fire that destroyed the tobacco warehouses on lower Main Street.

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. . . that Carlos Howard was the Night Watchman for Weston in the mid-1960's? He later moved up in the City's employment. He became the city's first Municipal Judge.

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. . . that Dee Dydell, though being shot twice in his early life, survived? Dee was considered something of a "hell raiser" as a young man. Changing his ways, Dee became a handy man in the community and was kept quite busy. He lived to the ripe old age of 68.

## 1940 Was a Year of Conflict and Greats

There were dark storm clouds hovering over most of Europe, America was coming out of the Depression, and Big Bands were taking over the airways in the beginning of 1940.

**Top Songs:** "I'll Never Smile Again" by an up and coming new kid on the block—Mr. Frank Sinatra. Judy Garland made the list with I'm Nobody's Baby. The crooner, Bing Crosby had two songs in the top register—"Only Forever" and "Sierra Sue." The Ink Spots gave us "Maybe" while Glenn Miller and his band made a hit with "Blueberry Hill." And again, the Ink Spots were on the charts with "We Three."

Harry James left Benny Goodman's Orchestra to form his own band and hires a then-unknown Frank Sinatra as lead singer.

**Top Headlines:** "Hitler's conquests in Europe are softening America's isolationist stand as World War II continues"

"Italy declares war on England and invades the Balkans" The 1940 Olympics were canceled due to the international ill will.

"President Roosevelt submits a budget of \$8.4 billion", nearly 20% of which went for defense measures.

**Consumer Prices:** were phenomenal compared with today. A house cost \$6,558. A car went for \$810. Milk cost 51 cents, bread was rung up at 8 cents. Whole gas was 15 cents per gallon and first-class stamps cost 3 cents. The average household income was \$1,231 per year.

**Sports,** being a large part of our entertainment also had news: Canadian Gerard Cote shatters all records to win the Boston Marathon.

Reds defeat Tigers in seven to take the World Series and the Chicago Bears beat the Washington Redskins 73-0 to become the NFL Champs.

Hockey also made headlines when the New York Rangers beat the Maple Leafs to capture the Stanley Cup.

## Bits and Pieces From Bertha's Morgue

We find this in a Weston Chronicle issue of August 12, 1969 Dr. H Graham Parker was killed in an auto accident on the Broadway Bridge. Dr. had been visiting a patient in a hospital in Kansas City.

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On January 6, 1965 the newspaper reported Charles A. Perry, Jr., a grandson of the original Charles Perry who, with a brother built the Perry Mills on Leavenworth Road in the 1840's, came for a visit to see the town and tour the Weston Historical Museum. He was accompanied by Miss Caroline S. Perry of Lebanon, Tenn.

Charles, Jr. has recently moved from Tennessee to Parkville, Mo. He is a salesman for the Dupont company, selling microfilm to doctors and clinics in the area.

Miss Caroline is very definite in a statement that Holladay did not build the mansion on the Platte City road that has been razed by Wm. Hull, Jr. She recounted her parents telling them about the building and the dry laid wall. "So far as I know, Holladay never even owned that mansion but he certainly did not build it, my father did."

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*The Weston Chronicle* in May of 1956 read, "Mrs. W.D. Houser happily showed off, to this reporter, a tree she had grown from a seed from her grandad's first Christmas tree following marriage to her grand-mother. The tree is 59 years old and thriving."

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In the April 2, 1925 issue of *The Weston Chronicle*: "The Platte County Medical Association met in Weston Wednesday of this week, all the doctors being present except Dr. Herndon of Dearborn, whose wife was too ill to be left.

Those enjoying the meeting/dinner were Dr. and Mrs. Hall, Camden Point; Dr. and Mrs. A.B. Shafer, Edgerton; Dr. Moore and Mrs. Kirkman, Dr. and Mrs. Hale, Dr. and Mrs. Durham of Dearborn; Dr. and Mrs. Wilson Murray, Dr. Redmoon and daughter, Mrs. George Ray of Dearborn; Dr. and Mrs. T.C. Clark, and Dr. and Mrs. R.P.C. Wilson of Platte City; Dr. and Mrs. L.C. Calvert and Dr. and Mrs. C.H. Chastain of Weston."

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An article dated March 10, 1933 reads: "The Interurban Railroad running from Kansas City to St. Joseph has been ordered by the Court to be discontinued, dismantled and sold for junk."

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We read in the news, dated April 12, 1963: "In July of this year, Elea Hardesty will officially retire from the West Platte Board of Education after serving 21 years. He has

been Treasurer of the Board since July of 1947.

Hardesty was first to be elected to the group in April of 1942. Members at that time were Geo. Z. Hull, Sr., president; J. W. Whitted vice-president; J. H. Brill, Secretary and members Jack Kyle, George Graham and Hardesty.

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An issue of the local newspaper, dated February 21, 1964 Tells us this: "Elbert Clay Elgin, 66 of Platte City, died Wednesday in the Wadsworth Veterans Hospital. He was a WWI veteran and served as Army quartermaster in WWII. He had served as a Platte County deputy 12 years and with the Dept. of Agriculture for 10 years,"

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Found in *The Weston Chronicle* dated July 15, 1966: "Doug Eskridge, son of Mr. and Mrs. R.G. Eskridge, came in on a "surprise" visit Friday. The Eskridges had been waiting for a call from their son when he landed in California, but Doug had another idea—he just picked up his little red car and started for Missouri and Weston.

Doug, serving with the Marine Corps in Vietnam this past year, will be stationed at Quantico as an instructor.

Officially speaking, it is now 1st Lt. Douglas Eskridge."

Life Is Busy; Take Time for "Ponderin' "

The author is unknown, but this a great one to think about: "Life should not be a journey to the grave with the intention of arriving safely in an attractive and well preserved body. . . but rather to skid in sideways, champagne in one hand, strawberries in the other, body thoroughly used up, totally worn out, and screaming WOO-HOO What a Ride!"

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An editor once said "the man who gets mad at what the newspapers say about him, should instead, thank the editor for what the papers know about him, but do not publish."

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What, exactly, is meant by the saying "Practice random kindness and senseless acts of beauty?"

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Why do they call them stands when you sit in them?

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Last, but not least, grab a camp chair or a blanket some night, when the moon is full, and find the lady in the moon. Yep she is there. And how about all of those fantastic constellations? Is there life out there?



"To err is human, to purr is feline."

- Robert Byrne

How Times Have Changed Since 1958



In May 1958, (left to right) Junior Helen Reed, Senior Dorothy Hiatt, Junior Mary Ruth Webb, and Senior Carolyn Bless took a breather from the dance floor.

We are not certain of the year that the annual Junior-Senior Prom stopped being held in the school gym. But in 1958 the annual dance took place there.

The theme chosen that year was “Holiday in Hawaii” and the gym was decorated with murals of sand, ocean and palm trees along the walls. Waiters and waitresses, mostly from the Junior class, were dressed in brightly

flowered shirts with shorts and hula skirts, respectively.

Mothers of the students, with “tropical” flowers in their hair and leis around their necks, prepared and served the “luau.”

There were no limousines, no eating elsewhere and the dancing and music was right there in the gym, following the meal.

Nice suits were worn by the boys and the girls’ formals were all colors and styles. Most attendees were adorned with boutonnieres and corsages.

It may also be noted that quite often the High School principal popped in to help the other adults who were chaperones for the evening. It was not unknown for the principal to take a turn around the floor with some of the girls, especially those who were without dates.

Following the close of the memorable evening, several parents hosted an after-midnight event. Snacks, visiting, photos were taken and a few games were enjoyed to close out the tradition.

Study history, study history. In history lies all the secrets of statecraft.

– Winston Churchill

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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WESTON HISTORICAL MUSEUM

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

*History repeats itself, but
in such cunning disguise
that we never detect the
resemblance until the
damage is done.*

– Sydney J. Harris



? Mystery Corner



This section of an old plat map (we not certain of the date) shows not only Weston, Bee Creek, Camden Point and New Market but another place by the name of Mason.

Did this actually exist or was it just a hope? Perhaps it is now named something else? If anyone can shed light on this mystery, please stop by the museum or give us a call at 386-2977.

You might notice the Platte County Railroad seems to stop at Weston. The railroad did not come to Weston until 1861. We were unaware the Platte County line even existed, much less terminating in Weston. Any information on this?

Again, we thank our friend and fellow history buff, Chuck McCardie of Farley, for another generous donation.