

Museum Musings

JULY • AUGUST • SEPTEMBER 2016

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

A Few Changes

Museum Musings is undergoing a few design updates, including a new masthead and type face.

You may have also noticed we are including current events from time to time. These are all part of our “new” history and we feel it is as important as the old.

We hope you enjoy the changes. If you have any comments, concerns or suggestions for articles or design, feel free to drop us a line or give us a call.

Museum Musings is one of the benefits of membership in the Weston Historical Society. If you know of anyone who might enjoy learning more about Weston and the surrounding areas, please let them know of us.

Community of Artists Grows

In our last issue of the newsletter we named individuals who served the Weston community as firefighters, police, nurses and ambulance personnel.

A few ago, we wrote about the many authors to be found here in Weston.

This issue we wanted to list our creative artists. While most work in one particular field, several create in multiple medias. Included are

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Major Renovations, Additions Add to West Platte School System



PHOTO COURTESY OF JE DUNN CONSTRUCTION

The outline and grounds of West Platte R-II School have been changing almost daily as work continues on its large-scale construction project.

West Platte R-2 High School is in the midst of a massive 4-phase construction project.

Started during the past school year, Phase 1 consisted of a new football field, 8-lane track and bleacher seating. It was built on the site of the original old football field behind Central Elementary.

The tracks were used this spring by the athletes and August 19th will mark the premier of football play for the season.

The field has been dedicated to the memory of Joe Collison, a long-time booster of West Platte Sports and a graduate of Weston High School. He also served on the Museum's Board of Trustees for several years.

The Rudy Eskridge Stadium is dedicated to the former West Platte Superintendent.

PHASE 2

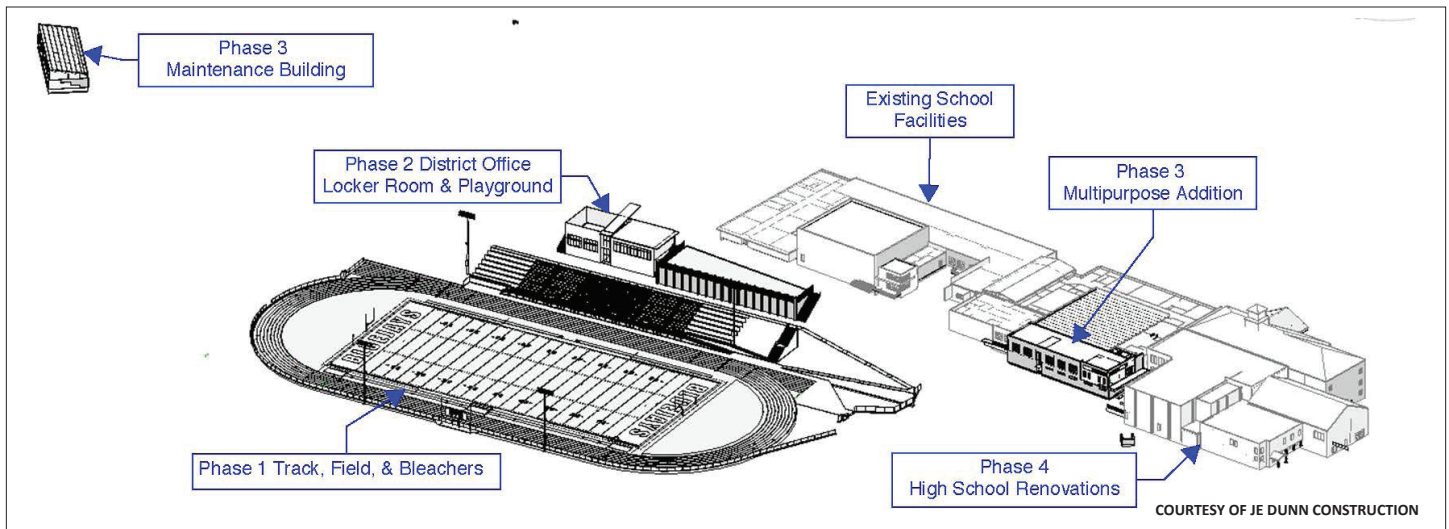
All of Phase 2 is expected to be completed by September 1st. Already the concession stand and press box are done, with a new central office, school and community room, playground, additional parking and an access road to Benner Park soon to follow.

PHASE 3

Also nearing completion are the multiple purpose room, relocated high school cafeteria, weight room and an additional classroom. The new cafeteria will come with a view of high school gym. It will double as a concession stand during basketball games.

The new maintenance building will feature solar panels and allow all needed equipment and supplies to be

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West Platte School . . .

(Continued from Page 1)

stored in one location instead of throughout the schools.

PHASE 4

Work on new science lab facilities, additional biology labs and the expansion of the band room have all begun. A Life Skills Center is also on the agenda. It is hoped all of this phase will be completed by the end of September if not sooner.

For those of our members living out of the area, you are invited to check out West Platte's website to keep at-tuned to happenings at the school.

Community Artists . . .

(Continued from Page 1)

sculptors, weavers, even a bagpipe builder. They all add to the asthetic living in Weston.

Ceramics and Pottery:

Michael Bless Jennifer Kasten
Patrick Larsen

Fabric and Weaving:

Jean Hartley Sharon Reeber

Instruments:

Kirk Lynch, bagpipes and string instruments

Woodworking and Carving:

Gary Hobbs Cliff Wiesser
Patrick Larsen Jerry Goodpaster
R.G. Allen

Jewelry:

Jennye Rose Dalice (Knox) Buckler
Rick Stout

Graphic Arts:

Mary Jo Heidrick Kelly Dunkel

Painting, Illustration and Drawing:

Sue Phillips Susan Grinlinton
Sharon Reeber Mary Jo Heidrick
Tara Larsen Nan Taylor
Marie Mason Don Browning
Robbie Wilson Elmer Lindsey
Jill Loveless Sandy McCrea
Susan Kerr Leslie Mason
Jackie Ahlfstrom

Paper Making:

Nancy Honerkamp

Photographers:

Connie Jurgens Susan Grinlinton
Carra Buckler Gerhig Fry
Sarah French Don Browning
Pat Jesaitis Nancy Honerkamp
Jessica Larsen Kirsten Cline
Larry Hamby

Sculpture:

Bill Sowell Patrick Larsen

Anyone who knows of other artists is asked to contact the museum, (816) 386-2977. We would also appreciate any additions to our prior lists. Thank you.

The Nostalgia Store

at the Weston Historical Museum

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

Once Again Readers Come Through for Us

Thanks to Kenneth Harpst and a few others, we have learned a bit about the house featured in the Mystery Corner in the last newsletter.

The actual address is 307 Washington and the date of the building of the home is unknown. The person who had it built is also unknown.



William A. and Mary Steele bought the house on the courthouse steps April 3, 1930 for \$1,500. This included Lots 391, 392, 398 and 399 of the City of Weston. William was employed with the Weston Ice Plant and he lost an arm while working there.

Mrs. Margaret Snyder and her daughter, Michael Lynch lived there in the 1950's. Mrs. Snyder was the sister of 6th District Representative William R. Hull, Jr. Michael had been born shortly after her father died, quite young, of a heart attack. She and her mother later moved to D.C. and Mrs. Lynch (at the time) was hostess and housekeeper for her brother. She also worked in his office.

A West Platte Coach, L.D. Young and his family rented it for a while from the family. Upon their marriage, Betty and George A. (Sonny) Hull, Jr. lived in the house and though retaining ownership, they moved to a larger home on Thomas Street to accommodate their growing family.

George and Laverne Rittman and family lived there in the late 1960's. In the mid-1970s Jim and Cathy Beavers Bosch rented the home.

Sometime in the ensuing years the house came under the ownership of L.R. and Sue Vaughn. Today (2016) the home is up for sale.

We wish to thank all those who helped out on gathering the information about the lovely old home.

We Need Help Locating These Addresses

As we have reported last year, a few of our volunteers completed work begun in the 1980's by Charles Bless to identify and follow back the history of each business in downtown Weston.

Now they have turned their efforts to a much more daunting task. Carolyn Larsen and Marsha West are attempting to do a time line on as many homes in town as possible. So they are seeking your help.

In doing research on many of the homes they have often found that no actual street address is mentioned in articles. That makes it difficult to know where any particular home is located.

Here are eight we need help with:

1) In 1915 A.S. Plummer and family moved here. In 1922, we find the home has been sold by Plummer to James Hornbeck and family. This home is located somewhere on Washington St.

2) This frame house on Washington St. was the home of Miss Pence and Miss Robbins. They sold the home to R.O. Shenkner for the amazing sum of \$500 in November 1918. Where is/was it located?

3) Does anyone remember where the Winzer home on Washington was located?

4) In March of 1917 Herbert Harris and family moved to the Ben Lee home after it was vacated by A.D. Burns. Where? We only know this was located on Washington.

5) In 1933, L.C. Stamper and wife moved from the S.B. Lee home (is this one and the same as Ben Lee?) to rooms in the Mrs. W.W. Kyle house on Washington. Any idea on either of these two homes?

6) The front room of the Adams property on Washington has been rented. Does anyone know where this is/was located?

7) E.J. Thorn, who was once the Mayor of Weston, built a home on north Washington in 1910. Any ideas?

8) In 1927 we found the following: "B.B. Fellows and family moved to the home of the late Jacob Benner on Washington St." Can anyone enlighten us?

Any and all information you can give us would be gratefully accepted.

Additionally, if you have purchased a home and know any of its history, we'd be pleased to add your history to our files!

Thanks for your assistance.

*We do not inherit the earth from our
ancestors, we borrow it from our children.
Native American Proverb*

2016 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

Bits and Pieces From Bertha's Morgue

Found in the issue of *The Weston Chronicle* dated Sept. 30, 1942: "According to information just received from the Office of Price Administration, the Sugar Rationing Regulations do not provide for additional sugar to be used by consumers for home baking of bread. It is necessary for consumers to use the sugar obtained from their regular one-half pound per week ration for such purposes as baking of bread, etc."

In that same issue we read: "Gas masks came into use in warfare for the first time when the Germans used poison and mustard gas in WWI. They are much improved today. The Chemical Warfare Branch of the War Department issues these gas masks to every man in service. We are taking no chances. You can buy two of the gas masks with the purchase of an \$18.75 War Bond. We need thousands of them. Don't fail to give at least ten percent of your income every pay day for War Bonds. Buy them at your bank or post office.—the U.S. Treasury Department."

The local newspaper of May 31, 1929 gives us this item: "The Rock Island wrecking crew is taking up the railroad ties from Edgerton to Dearborn. They are still working on removing the ties in the seven miles between Wallace and Dearborn."

The Dec. 23, 1960 issue of the *Weston Chronicle* reads: "W.R. Hull, Jr. and W.R. Hull, III, left Wednesday for Washington D.C. by plane. They will join members of the Hudson family for Christmas. Major and Mrs. Floyd Hudson and daughter of California will be among the guests in D.C. Major Hudson is leaving soon for overseas duty."

The *Weston Chronicle* dated May 26, 1900 reported "Several years ago, Sheriff John Dillingham's first wife promised their five sons that if they would not use tobacco or strong drink until they were twenty-one years of age, she would give each the sum of \$100.00 as a gift on his twenty-first birthday. Wednesday, William Dillingham reached his majority and as he had faithfully kept the promise, his father, Sheriff Dillingham, presented him with five \$20.00 gold pieces."

An issue of *The Weston Chronicle* dated April 15, 1938 read: "Dr. Abe Shafer, forty-nine years old, died at his home in Edgerton last Thursday, following an illness of ten weeks. Dr. Shafer was serving his second term as

Judge of the Eastern District in Platte County, and was county road commissioner. . . Judge Shafer operated a drug store and a first-class theater in his home town, as well as enjoying as a hobby a green house."

An article in the local newspaper on July 14, 1967 told us this: "Fireman Apprentice Gary A. Asphaugh, son of Mr. and Mrs. George Asphaugh of Rushville, helped land Marines and equipment in South Vietnam, 17 miles south of Da Nang. He is a crewman aboard the amphibious dock transport ship USS Ogden."

Issue dated February 17, 1967 reads: "SSG Lawrence Beauchamp is serving with the 101st Airborne Div. in Vietnam. He left for his overseas duty in January. He had a visit, over the Christmas holidays with his father, Lawrence Beauchamp of the Beverly community."

Larry is a graduate of West Platte High School and entered the service following his graduation in 1955."

News of another area soldier was found in the local newspaper dated June 13, 1967: "Army Private First Class Johnny D. Belmont, son of Mr. and Mrs. John H. Belmont of Parkville, was assigned to the 70th Engineer Battalion near An Khe, Vietnam."

Fund Set Up for Victrola Repair

Two years ago, the Museum was gifted with an old Edison Victrola, along with the thick records that were played on it with a diamond needle.

Though the workings of the Victrola are still in a fairly good shape and workable, there is a need for restoration work on the housing.

An estimate given to us by a local wood worker is \$800. At this particular time, the museum does not have the funds in the budget to have this work done. We are currently busy with repairs and upgrades on the building, security and storage difficulties, it has been impossible to earmark funds to pay for the restoration of the Victrola.

So we are reaching out to our member for help. Anyone caring to help with this project can do so by check or cash. Thank you.

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.

More or Less Forgotten, These Women Made a Difference



Mrs. Elnora Gabbert Park married Guy B. Park Nov. 16, 1909. A lawyer, he later became a judge of the Platte County Court and eventually Governor of the State of Missouri. A daughter, Henrietta was born Dec. 12, 1911.

Elnora and Guy were charter members of Platte County Historical Society. She was a patron and member of the Little Theater Players in Platte City, receiving several awards for her work and contributions. In 1941 she directed a comedy play, "The Cross Roads Store". It was presented for the benefit of the Platte City Baptist Church.

Mrs. Park wrote a book about the First Ladies of Missouri during her husband's term of office.

Gov. and Mrs. Park's daughter, Henrietta, was the first daughter to be married in the Governor's mansion.

Mrs. Lucille Douglass, Parkville, spearheaded a movement to save and preserve the Banneker School building. It was the first school for black children in Parkville starting in 1850 until in the early 1900's. The one-room brick building stood on 8th Street.

Thanks to Mrs. Douglass, the project is finished and stands as part of the history of Parkville



COURTESY KANSAS CITY STAR

Mrs. John Brill, whose husband was an early-day funeral director in Weston. Mrs. Brill attended mortuary classes, becoming one of the few women, in the State of Missouri, at that time, to be a licensed funeral director.

Mr. and Mrs. Brill started the business in a home on Washington Street.

The former funeral home is now the home of Ms. Nancy Honerkamp, a former policewoman with the Weston PD.

Miss Ida Steele, a great-great granddaughter of Daniel Boone. Born to Mary Ellen Culver and Christopher C. Steele, Ida spent her life in Weston but like her relative, Alberta DeSilva, she found a way to travel quite a bit.

In 1893 she entered the world of what had been a man's domain. She became the head buyer for Shenkner & Robbins Mercantile. Bringing a woman's viewpoint to her job, Ida proved to be an asset to her company. She traveled all over the country, including Chicago something of the mecca of style and clothing in that era, purchasing the lat-

est in the styles of the time.

In 1920 "Miss Ida" retired from her employment with Shenkner & Robbins after nearly 30 years in her career.

Alberta Price DeSilva was the great-great-great granddaughter of Daniel Boone and the granddaughter of James and Russella Warner of Weston. Alberta's biggest wish was to leave the small town of Weston behind her and live in a bigger city.



She traveled around to such places as Kansas City and Chicago to name a few. She then moved to DC. There she met and married a diplomat from Nicaragua. She traveled extensively South America and other countries. Following the death of her husband, Alberta became the first female ever to become the U.S. Consul to her adopted country, Nicaragua.

Did You Know . . .

. . . that a "rope walk" went past the old "calaboose" that stood behind the Methodist church? The walk extended over to just behind the Black school house. It was called "rope walk" because rope was made in that areaway and was used for the walk.

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. . . that from the Emma Schell property on Washington street to the Boy Scout Cabin was a large grocery store and meat shop at one time?

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. . . that Dr. Benjamin F. Bonifant lived where Ben Layton used to live and that his office was located where Mary Hamilton (an African-American) once lived. That office was found on Market Street and was the last part of The Weston Chronicle building.

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. . . that a Jewish Cemetery was near the late Lee Lindsey's place? It was known as the Thunderberg cemetery and was located near the conjunction of 5th Street and Hiway 45.

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. . . that in October 1942 all iron arm rests and other unnecessary iron ornaments (30 in all) in Weston were ordered to be removed for the Scrap Iron war drive? Thus the wooden benches—more like church pews—came into being in the Weston Depot.

Guest Column

To Me, Books Will Never Be Obsolete

by Ruth Mary Clemens

The other day I took down a book from the shelves above my desk to look for a particular quote I knew would be in there. The book is tattered, the spine's cover is gone and the front and back pages are coming loose. And that is why I took a few minutes to look at its condition and see if I can save it. Then I glanced at the cover page: "To Ruth Mary on her graduation from high school, Al and Jane Hasemeier, May 20th, 1963".

May 20th, 1963! This book is now 53 years old and I still turn to it to read words of comfort, inspiration, humor, what have you. The book is a book of poems and quotes and is a good three inches thick. I love it. But then I love books. Those old fashioned things that when they are new have a wonderful fragrance about them. Who doesn't remember when we were in school back in the 1950's, getting the new reader and matching workbook? You opened it almost reverently, patting down the pages so they would lie flat. Taking in the scent of a new book was to me as wonderful as the smell of a new automobile is to most men. I loved it.

And this leads me to libraries and the Weston library in particular. I remember well the little one room library located in the Weston Hotel. It was presided over by Miss Marie Ohlhausen and she ran it with a firm hand. The books were lined up on shelves all around the room. The books for the younger set were close to the floor and arranged by subject, so with no problem I could walk into the library, walk to the shelf on the right side as you entered, and approach the middle section, third shelf up and there they were. The "Little Miss" series. Books which were set in the founding days of our country and each state of the original thirteen colonies was represented. I would return the two books I had taken out, and check out the next two colonies. But soon I ran out of states.

Then it was on the Thomas C. Hinkle books, all about horses and thank heaven he was a prolific author. I could read the entire summer on the wonderfully brave horses and their young owners. Fascinating! In those days we had summer reading programs and filling up a card was no problem for me, because I loved to read. I read until the sun came up, I read in bed, I read outside, I read anywhere and anytime I could.

In Mrs. Etta Marie Brill's fifth grade class I even stuck books inside the school books and read those. At the end of the year I got cheeky enough to ask her: "Mrs. Brill, I know



you know that I was reading books when I was supposed to be studying history. Why did you let me get away with that?" She looked at me for a moment, smiled and said, "because as long as you could answer the questions and pass the tests, I knew that you were learning what was expected of you." And how did I do that? Because I always read history books as if they were a novel and that I could soak in.

Reading takes you to times and places that you could never physically travel. It educates you, entertains and with any luck can make you laugh until your sides hurt. And it can make you cry. "Flowers for Algernon", actually had me sobbing at the point where Charlie starts going downhill, and drops an apostrophe. This was an effect you can't get in a movie. You had to be reading along and SEE that the apostrophe wasn't there! A powerful moment in reading.

But I digress. The thing was that Miss Marie knew all of the children and all of the parents. She knew who could check out more than the two book limit and be trusted to get them back by week's end. And she knew, without a shadow of a doubt what you should and should not read. I will never forget the Saturday I entered the dark room, cooled by virtue of the brick walls, marched to the furthest shelf down and from the shelf just slightly above my head and selected a book. I walked quietly to her old wooden desk and placed my selection on the top, pushing it towards her slowly. She looked at the book, then at me over her rim-less spectacles and said: "Young lady this is not a book your parents would appreciate me allowing you to read. Put it back and go a shelf lower to find something."

The affront; the gall; the nerve! Every bone in my 12 year old body wanted to scream, but she looked at me, and I looked at her, and the book, it's title long since forgotten, was placed back on the shelf, and I selected another book, not without a few sneering glances in her direction, which did not phase her in the least. Censorship at its best.

As I grew older, the Library did as well. A county-wide

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Families Looking for Genealogy Assistance

Here in the museum we frequently get requests for help finding an ancestor or entire family. Though we do our best to help the individual with information, there are times when we can find nothing or at best very, very little.

We decided to publish names of people who are searching and need help. Please, if you have any information, give it either to the museum or to the email address provided with the individual's request.

I am looking for the John ESKINS family. He was born in Germany in 1824 and died on the 22th of July 1889 in Weston, MO. (Note: he is indeed buried in Laurel Hill, however, that is all we know.) He was the husband of Gertrud Eskins nee Gehrling. His children were William, Mathias, John and Wilhelmina Berntsen nee Eskins. If you can help the email address is hgmelshof1958@kpnmail.nl.

Fannie WIGGLESWORTH was married to a free slave, Vincent Wigglesworth. They eventually settled in Claremont County, Ohio, living there 1842-1846. The family came to Platte County (for an unknown reason).

After a short stay Vincent had to return to Ohio, expecting Fannie and the children to join him shortly. However, two men (Moore and Middleton) kidnapped Fannie and the children (Mary Ann, Eliza, Josiah and a female girl of several weeks of age). The men claimed that Fannie and her children, now in Missouri, were slaves and they would sell them to the highest bidders.

Vincent sent a lawyer, Robert Fee, from Ohio to fight the men. The men took the little family to Kentucky and then returned to Platte County. When the lawyer tried to help Fannie, et. al. he was arrested on trumped up charges. Fee was released and told to leave Platte County and the state of Missouri. Moore and Middleton attempted to tar and feather Fee, but he escaped from them.

What happened to Fannie? Anyone having any information the email address is cabl80bless@yahoo.com.

Books . . .

bookmobile, started by Al Hasemeier, became of part of the Mid-Continent Public Library System. The Weston Library moved from the hotel to sharing quarters with the Weston Museum, then to the old Beno's store at the corner of Main and Thomas Streets and finally to their present building on the highway.

There are those who say that the Kindle and other e-readers will take the place of books. But does a Kindle smell as good? I think not.

Under Construction



Employees of JE Dunn Construction work on the roof of the new concession stand and press box at West Platte School in May. The playground in the foreground will be expanded and new parking areas will take the place of the old administration office nearby.

Letters from Home

(The following letter was one of several sent to us by Sally Roberts, of New Orleans, and is between E.R. Miller in Weston and Amelia Bird Parker in St. Louis. We will publish, for our readers, the other letter in a later issue of the newsletter.)

To Minny Bird, St. Louis, MO, November 14th 1855.
My hurry must be an excuse for all errors.

Dear Minnie

I received a letter from you a few days ago and one day before yesterday both of which remain unanswered as I have been quite busy as Mr. J.S. Mitchell has been quite sick for about eight or ten days with Typhoid Fever and I have had sole charge of the business and have to keep the Books and that I don't have much time except at night and then I don't feel in a humor for writing and then another thing I have been going out pretty often lately and night before last I had the exquisite pleasure of escorting some ladies that were out Serenading (Mollie in particular was out) night before last. Monday evening Mrs. Gillespie sent me word that if I would call round that the girls would give me some music and so I called round and took Mr. Gilbert with me and we spent quite a pleasant time chatting and laughing and music and singing by the ladies until about 11 O'clock when we started out Serenading I taking charge of Miss Mollie Gillespie and Sam Gilbert took Miss "Jinnie" Stratton (from Lexington also).



WESTON HISTORICAL MUSEUM

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



*History, despite its
wrenching pain, cannot be
unlived, but if faced with
courage, need not be lived
again.*

Maya Angelou

? **mystery corner**



This interesting, but unidentified, photograph was given to us by John Jackson of Platte City. He and his wife, Louise Harpst Jackson, have long been active in the Platte County Historical Society and supporters of the Weston Historical Society. John is not certain that these are relatives of his, but they may be. However, he is hoping someone might be able to identify the couple and clear up his questions.

If you recognize this couple, please let us know by calling the Museum at 816-386-2977 or dropping us an e-mail at westonhistoricalmuseum@yahoo.com.

Thanks.