

Ralls County Historical

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RALLS COUNTY MISSOURI HISTORICAL SOCIETY
P.O. BOX 182
CENTER MISSOURI 63436

<http://www.rootsweb.com/~morchs/>

Ralls County Historical Museum and Library
120 East Main Street, Perry Missouri
Open Saturday 9:00-5:00 Sunday 11:00-4:00, Wednesday 10:00-5:00
Phone 573-565-2025

Dear Ralls County Members and Friends;

September Picnic and Meeting

The third annual Ralls County Historical Society Picnic will be held on Saturday, September 25 at the Perry City Park shelter at 11:00 a.m. The noon meal will feature nationally known "Blues Hog" BBQ meats and the deserts will again be provided by Margarethe Price. Members are asked to bring a covered dish. At 1:00 p.m. the regular September meeting will be held to discuss the many projects and results of the past year. After the meeting and from 11:00 a.m. to noon will be open. For those who are unable to attend our night meetings this will be a great time to attend and meet your fellow members. The Society library/museum in Perry will be closed all day so all members can attend.

July Meeting;

Dave Polc, Sally Polc and the Ilasco Area Historical Preservation Society did an outstanding job in presenting a history of Ilasco and showing the remaining buildings in this historic village.

Center Shortline Depot Restoration;

Maxine and Mike Moore has been working very hard on the restoration of the depot. Jeff Hibbs volunteered to power wash the inside and outside, thank Jeff. Randy McDonald of McDonald & Sons Enterprise donated paint for the depot and library, Thanks. We have had four community service people work on the depot and help at the library. Help is still needed on this project, please contact me or Maxine (565-8009).

November Meeting;

Our final meeting for 2004 will be November 15. Plans are being made for a special location and as soon as I can I will let you know about it.

Ralls County Courthouse Restoration;

Voters of Ralls County approved the ½ cents sale tax to be used for the \$2.2 million restoration of the 1858 Ralls County Courthouse in New London. It was approved by a 1692-1171 vote or by 59%. Plans should be completed by January 2005 and bids likely received in February.

Construction may begin as early as April of 2005, with an anticipated completion date of one year.

Museum Expansion;

A door between the first museum and our addition was completed and work has begun on filling our enlarged site. A site for veterans and soldiers of Ralls County is one of one of the added features we will have. Also the Ralls County school board approved us getting the old Perry High School trophies, pictures and other items displayed at the former Perry Grade school. We will also get the sundial and bell at the former school and have plans to place them in the Perry city park.

Fox and Sac Museum;

Details are being worked out for our society and Hannibal museum to base a touring Fox and Sac Indian tribe display. We are working on details now with representatives of the Missouri Humanities Counsel, Fox & Sac tribe and others, with a possible early 2005 target date

Book Store;

We will be signing the contract to open a book store at Mark Twain Dam Visitors Center in the spring on 2005.

Recipe Book;

A recipe book is being planned as a fund raiser for our museum and other projects. Please bring your recipes to the meeting, drop them at the museum or mail them to our Center MO address. PO 182, Center Mo 63436.

Missouri Civil War Heritage Foundation;

We are still working with this group to identify Civil War sites in Ralls County. The group is working with the Missouri Division of Tourism on a tour guide of Missouri Civil War sites. Both Ralls County and all of northeast Missouri has many of these unheralded sites One of the sites we are looking for is the home Col. John Ralls. We have been able to find the graves of Col. John Ralls at Olivet, now Center cemetery and Absalom Grimes Barkley in New London.

Books available from Ralls County Historical Society, P.O. Box 182, Center Missouri 63436;

"Ralls County" This 472-page history of Ralls County written by Golden Howard contains a detail history of the county and its people from the time of the first prehistoric people to 1980, when the book was completed. The book contains not only a detailed history of Ralls County, but also has many photos and more than 90 pages of detail contributed genealogies of Ralls county families. (\$50.00 +\$5.00 for postage)

"1908 and 1912 Perry Missouri Corn Carnivals" Detailed articles and 34 historic photos of these two important events in Perry History. The estimated daily attendants at these events were as big as 10,000 people. The pictures are of businesses, people and displays of both years of the events. There is a rare photo of Perry's "Short Line" depot and others of special trains operated to bring people for the 1908 Carnival. (\$10.00 + \$2.00 for postage).

"End of a Way of Life" by Dee West and Okle Rouse two men who lived in the Salt River Valley covered by the Mark Twain Lake. They write of the families, legends, towns, churches, schools, caves and cemeteries moved or covered by the filling of the lake. There are photos of many of the people, homes, schools and churches of the flooded valley. (\$15.00 shipped)

"Ralls County Missouri Settler and Settlements Volume #1, Lick Creek" This is collection of articles, speeches and letters published in Ralls County and other papers by early settlers in the

Lick Creek area of Ralls County in the 1820-1860 years. The town of Perry was later formed from these settlers in the 1860's. From 1904 to 1909 a Rev. Thomas Gallaher wrote 15 articles to the Perry MO "Enterprise" about the early families, schools, churches, events, hunting and much more about the life in the 1840s, 50s and 60s. The other articles tell of the early family stories, weather, Indians, wolves, Elk, travel and life on the very early frontier. There is a lot of genealogy information in this book and tells of many families who live here and moved to other areas. (\$15.00 + \$2.00 for Postage).

"The Mark Twain Book" by Goldena Howard, This book concentrates on Mark Twain in Hannibal, early local friends, his family and family tree. It goes into the origins and connections of characters in his books to local people and places. It also covers many trivial and little known facts on Mark Twain and is a very interesting read. (\$15.00 + \$2.00 for postage)

Ralls County Cemetery;

Ellis Cemetery #38; Township 55 north Range 6 west Section 13

Coons; Emily S., born August 27, 1839, died August 4, 1840, (daughter of John and Elizabeth [Wells] Coons)

Coons; Franklin, born August 10, 1844, died March 10, 1846 (son of John and Elizabeth [Wells] Coons)

Coons; W. C., born December 24, 1834, died October 29, 1856 (son of John and Elizabeth [Wells] Coons)

Ellis; Cynthia Ann (Wells), born January 1, 1800, died December 16, 1883 (wife of Walter, daughter of Ann [Cassidy] Well and sister of Elizabeth Wells Coons)

Ellis; Thomas, born June 11, 1839, died June 6, 1841 (son of Walter and Cynthia [Wells] Ellis)

Ellis; Walter, born May 29, 1790, died March 30, 1877

Ellis; Walter, born May 22, 1833, died 4, 1835

Wells; Ann (Cassidy) Wells, born 1772, died November 8, 1864 age 92 years (wife of Walter Wells, born in Dublin Ireland)

Perry Missouri "Enterprise" October 1902

Lightning struck the southeast corner of the belfry of the Christian church Sunday morning about 8 o'clock during the electrical storm. The lightning struck the top of the steeple and ran down on the inside of the steeple and set fire to the birds nest and lumber and it was only a few moments until the blaze was seen issuing from the steeple just above the bell. Almost the whole populace of the town were alarmed and ran excitedly through the down pour of rain to the doomed church.

People ran excitedly in every direction trying to devise some way to which to save the church, but the fire was so high up that all hopes were abandoned to quench the maddened and destructive blaze.

Strong arms and willing hands set to work to save the fixtures to the church, which was almost accomplished. Most all of the seats, organ, chairs, carpets, etc., were saved, but were more or less badly damaged. The greatest portion of the seats were taken out through the widows, as the people were afraid the bell would fall on them.

In about one hour the elegant church house was in ashes. The building and fixtures cost about \$6,000, with only \$2,000 insurance. It was insured in the North American Insurance Company. The adjuster J. R. Ely, of Monroe City, was here on Tuesday and viewed the remains and will recommend to the company that the whole amount, \$2,000 be allowed.

The congregation of the church are an offspring of the Lick Creek church and was organized March 1, 1891 which numbered 95 members a few weeks before the dedication of the church. The church was built during the spring and summer of 1891 and was dedicated on the first Sunday in September of 1891. Elder J. B. Clark was then the superintendent of the Sunday school. The church was used awhile before it was dedicated. The congregation now number about 215 members.

The church will be rebuilt. During the afternoon of Sunday the officers and members of the church meet and appointed the following committee to solicit: S. C. Gill, M. P. LaFrance, H. P. Moore, J. C. Moss, J. W. Neville and B. J. Coil. Several hundred dollars have already been subscribed. It is the intention to erect a brick structure with a basement.

Everyone, whether a member of this congregation or not should give as liberal as possible toward the erection of a new church.

Notes

The house of Ed P. Hanna's stood within about 15 feet of the church and after everything that could be removed from the church all attention was given to save the house carpets and quilts were drenched in water and laid on top of the roof and along the side of the house. Salt was also spread on top of the house. By the heroic work of the people the house was saved. Just to stop and think it was almost a miracle that the house was saved. After the fire it was a regular pond around the house, as hundreds of buckets of water were poured on the house. It was scouring hot on top of the house and men at work pouring water had to change places every few seconds. The house did not catch fire a single time. Luther Cheeley occupied Mr. Hanna's house and all of his household goods were carried out. His goods were badly damaged by being broken and y the rain. He had \$200 insurance and has put in a claim to the company for \$175. Mr. Hanna put his claim in at \$100 damage on the house, which was damaged considerable.

Next to E. P. Hanna's house was "Uncle Jimmie: Fry's house and a large amount of his household goods were carried out.

E. P. Hanna and Luther Cheeley had their property insured in the North British and Mercantile Co.

It is thought by many that if a long ladder could have been secured so the fire could have been easily put out, as it would only taken a few buckets of water.

The people of Perry when it comes to working at a fire are unequalled.

After the fire and people began to look on the bright side of affairs there were many laughable things recalled to mind.

It was a right pitiful sight to see the women members of the church who loved the building so well, crying over their loss.

The church building burned slow and it took about an hour for it to burn down. The wind was blowing from the southwest all the time, except a few minutes, it got around almost to the south. If the wind had been from the west no doubt the house of E. P. Hanna, Uncle Jimmie Fry, S. C. Gill and P. L. Brown would have burned down.

The bell was discovered after the fire to have a large hole in one side.

A protracted meeting was being held in the church and the services were held at the Presbyterian Church Sunday morning and night. Since Sunday the services have been held at the opera house.

A good Christian lady, a member of the destroyed church as she passed by the ruins, on her way to worship at another church was heard to remark "A few broads could not keep her from worshiping or serving the Lord."

It has been about a year since the photo gallery, Thomas Crump's shop and S. P. Bybee's house burnt.

William Adkisson, of near Worcester had two fat steers killed by lighting Sunday morning.

George Belk, who lives on F. E. Westfall's farm, had a horse killed Sunday morning by lighting, during the electric storm.

Ron Leake