

# *Historical*

Volume 4- Issue 4

May 2005

## **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;**

The Ralls County Historical Society will hold its May meeting at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd Schreakengast's at 42300 County Highway D south of Perry on Monday, May 16. They have a collection of antique stationary engines that they will have on display and give a presentation on following the meeting. The meeting will begin at 7:00 p.m., but people will be welcomed to arrive at 6:00 p.m.. County Highway D is about 4 1/2 miles south of the "Junction Restaurant" off State Highway 19/154 or about 2 1/2 miles north of the Audrain County line. After turning west on Highway D it will be about 1 1/2 mile on the right. From Perry take County Highway B south about 4 1/2 miles until it intersects with County Highway D and then turn left and the site will be about 1 mile on the left. The public is welcomed and encouraged to attend.

**March Meeting;** The March meeting at New London Courthouse was very well attended. The presentation of the history of the church and people of Greenlawn by Marsha Knudsen was outstanding and well prepared. More on her and the Greenlawn project later

**Donations;** I want to give a very special thanks to the former Center MO Chamber of Commerce and Ralls Against Waste (RAW) for their great donations to the Society. We will use the money for good use like both these groups did.

Displays in the Center and New London City Halls;

Two posters with a display of photos of each town have been donated to Center and New London and are on display at both City Halls. This is to allow some of the items at the museum to be shared with these towns. Please stop by and see them.

**Dues for 2005;** Payments mailed should be sent to Ralls County Historical Society Inc., P. O. Box 182, Center MO 63436. Single membership \$10.00 and family 15.00

**Courthouse;** All of the offices in the courthouse have been moved to the former Cerf Brother Bag plant about one block east of the courthouse. The contract for the construction was awarded to Canon Construction, Troy Missouri. The work on the Courthouse should begin by the first of June and have to be completed in one year.

**Museum/Library;** The items being donated, lent and copied at the museum continue to grow almost daily. We have moved and relocated items so we can use all of four rooms for displaying and research.

**Old Perry Bank; Now** that the weather allows us to work on the unheated building we will start preparing it for the summer events in the Perry Park.

**Center Shortline Depot;** Work continued on the depot and the City of Center is helping us with getting the electricity hooked up. We also receive a nice donation from the former Center Chamber of Commerce to go toward the restoration of the depot. Painters, carpenters and other workers are needed for this project, please contact Maxine Moore or me for work days.

**2005 Calendar of Meetings**

July 18;

September 19 Society Picnic

November 21

**Books by Members and Friends of Ralls County History**

Two members have published books that we still have available. One is Anita L. Gatson Allee's "Two Together" which is a historic novel based on a family from Madisonville in Ralls County during the Civil War. We also have her four other books; "Yankee Spy," "Child of the Heart," "Closed, Do Not Enter, Who's The Boss" all available for \$10.00 each and \$2.00 postage. Robert "Bob" Palmer from Center has published a large book "20<sup>th</sup> Century Missouri Farming & Cattle Ranching" available for \$23.00 + \$5.00 postage. It has information and history of his families and the Center area.

We also available are a few "Descendants of Jacques Reverd of France and Daniel Lake of North Carolina" by member Jack Lake Revare for \$35.00 +5.00 postage.

Two books by Mrs. Josephine Shannon Ferguson who was raised near Perry are also available. "The Orphan, the Life I lived" for \$14.95 and My Life for \$22.95 both \$2.00 postage. The last book is about her husband Eugene Ferguson's life and contains names of families from the Perry area.

My book "The Leake Genealogy" is still available for \$30.00 plus \$5.00 postage.

Save postage and stop in and get your book at your Museum/Library. While you are there, you can visit and do research.

**Local Events;**

May 13 and 14; Workdays at the Greenlawn Church

June 25 Northeast Genealogical Society Meeting June 25 in Shelbina

**Area Historical and Genealogy Groups;**

A group of the area Historical Societies is trying to work together work with each other in promoting and helping each other on projects. I met with a new group in Vandalia which is forming a Vandalia Historical Society and is publishing a history of Vandalia and area. I also attended a meeting of the Marion County Historical Society last month and they have a number of projects you can find more about them by checking out their website at <http://www.hannibal.net/historicgroups/>. Monroe County Historical will have their all new book The Monroe County Historical Society is sponsoring, compiling and publishing *Monroe County... Then and Now* in commemoration of the county's upcoming 175th Anniversary in 2006. For more information contact Nancy Stone, phone 660-327-5302, email [NaNa715@aol.com](mailto:NaNa715@aol.com), or Mary McCollum, phone 660-327-4714, email [mcclm@mcmsys.com](mailto:mcclm@mcmsys.com). I will have pamphlets at the meeting. If you are a member or know of a group who may be interested in such a group have them or yourself contact me.

**Perry Area Centennial (1866-1966) Book and Pins;**

It's hard to believe but it has been 39 years this year that Perry had its centennial. We received several of the books published for the event and are making them available for

\$5.00 each. We also have three different pins and a few bowties used during the centennial. The pins are 50 cents and the ties are \$5.00 each. I will have all of them available at the meeting and if you want something mail contact me about postage.

**Fox and Sac Museum;** We are still awaiting word from them on when and if the display will be available.

**Recipe Book;** Has been sent to the publisher and we are awaiting word from them on when the books will be available.

**Presidents View;** As we have grown at the fast rate we have in the past pass few years we need more income and volunteers to continue that growth or even maintain it. Our income is based on memberships, donations and sales. Memberships have grown at a great rate, but can only generate so much money. A membership rate increase would slow our growth and be a hardship on the elderly and people on fixed income who are a big part of our members. There are two kinds of donations, money and items which use in the museum/library. Money donations come as volunteer donations and from people using the museum for touring and research. The volunteer income has been very good lately, but can also go the other way at anything. The museum donations are limited by traffic and this can only be increased by with providing a great product and a site to do=2 0better research which costs more money. Many of the books we have available are books we have published and have paid for, so all the money from their sales is profit. Most of the other books are on consignment and also generate a good income for us. I guess I'm trying to explain why this newsletter seems like an ad for a book store. We are very financially sound and there are no dark clouds in the horizon, but I want to keep us sound and be able to provide Ralls County and the area with a great Historical Society.

**Ralls County Cemetery:** None this letter because of space limits will make it up to you next time

#### **Volunteers Needed to Paint Greenlawn Chapel**

Friends of the Greenlawn Chapel are asking for community volunteers to help paint the Chapel on Friday, May 13 (10-3) Saturday, May 14; (9-4) and Sunday, May 15 (9-1).

The Chapel is located 3 miles north of Perry on Route J. If you have questions, call Marsha Knudsen 573-881-6275 or me

#### **Bit of Ralls County History;< /B>**

##### **SHORT LINE NEWS II; By Rev. Conrad Cheatham**

**When the surveyors laid out the route for the Short Line they were confronted with crossing a number creeks and rivers which required a number of bridges and trestles. The topography of Frankford and the town creek required the construction of a 500 foot long trestle. This trestle was supposed was supposed to be temporary until it and the other trestles could be filled in. Unfortunately, the continued impoverished nature of the Short Line delayed such a move. The Railroad and Warehouse Commissioners sent an inspector over the Short Line in 1879. The inspector noted that improvements needed to be made for safety purposes. He recommended that the 5 bents in the channel should be put on masonry pilings or the whole area of the trestle should be filled in to a depth of 5 feet. This was not done.**

**In October 9, 1884 the Frankford Chronicle announced that the Short Line was proposing to fill in the long trestle and a 20 foot arch would be built to accommodate**

the road and the town branch. The next week the paper reported that Short Line officials had met with officials of Frankford to make arrangements for filling in the trestle and moving the eastern entrance into town by way of Jasper Street. By December farmers were complaining about the railroad's plans. They wanted 2 openings — one for travel and one for the stream. They argued that one passageway would be dangerous in winter. The same issue noted that a steam shovel was a Dum Dum's Cut removing dirt for the fill in town.

It was noted in the January 23, 1885 paper that Chief Engineer, E.H. Mott, had announced to the Chronicle that the company had abandoned plans to fill in the trestle. Instead the ends would be filled with dirt and an iron span, 30 feet long, would bridge the gap. This was a cheaper plan. The railroad was in receivership.

The Company changed directions. In the April 9, 1886 issue of The Chronicle it was reported that the Short Line's dirt train was dumping 60 carloads of dirt a day into the big trestle at Frankford. (In 1886 the Short Line owned no hoppers and 35 flatcars) The October 15, 1886 paper reported that the work of erecting the stone archway had started. This arch was expected to cost \$10,000. According to the Company this would be a 50-foot archway with a 24-foot span and 25.5 feet from the roadway to the crown of the arch. Both the roadway and the waterway were to be paved. The roadway would be a little higher than the waterway. In late October the town council considered seeking an injunction against the Company's work. However, the work was completed which eliminated a safety problem. As this work was going on the papers reported that the railroad was filling in some other trestles including the long one over Big Penno Creek, south of Frankford.

Built in the mid-1880s the Frankford Arch still stands. If you are traveling on U.S. 61 turn off at the main Frankford exit and head into town. At the first stop sign turn left and head into town. As you cross the railroad grade a grain elevator will be on your left.

Going downhill look for Jasper Street. (There is no street sign on the left.) Turn left and Jasper will take you to the Arch. The road no longer goes under the Arch so it is best to park and walk down to the Arch. Parking on Jasper is limited. Go one block to King and park behind the Wagon Wheel Restaurant and walk around the pony pen. It is best viewed in the afternoon. Go back to Low Street and head downtown. There is a small park and a set of stairs leading up to the railroad grade. A Missouri Pacific caboose has been installed on a few feet of track. The abandoned grade can be walked a short distance in both directions. A couple of miles south of Frankford is the 3-arch bridge over Little Penno Creek. The bridge now carries a county road. Some good photographs can be made. Be aware — there is a neighbor who is suspicious of visitors stopping to admire this unusual bridge. (The filled trestle over Big Penno still stands, but is on private property and very difficult to reach. The bridge is gone.)

A question was raised recently about the number of tracks at Perry. An old county atlas (1904) at the Courthouse in New London shows 3 tracks at the depot. There is one long track which runs on the north side of the depot and goes to the back of the property. On the south side of the depot there is long track which seems to have been the mainline. This track runs beside the bay window of the depot (on a Sanborn Insurance Map). Off of this track is another double-ended siding which

rejoins the mainline on the west side of the depot. Coming off of this siding is a very short siding which runs close to Depot Street. The atlas shows that the Short Line had 9.19 acres of land on the west side of Perry. A 1926 Sanborn Insurance Map shows that Sinclair Oil Company and Standard Oil Company had tanks located on the north side of the north siding.

None of the maps sources available show the right of way and tracks around the coal mines. Nor is the turn table at Perry shown.

For those going into Frankford there is a new building being constructed on the grade to the right as Low Street crosses the grade. This is a fertilizer dealer. The bank behind the new building and an older metal business has been cleared of brush and trash by the contractor and the next door property owner. This has revealed an old stone wall on the bank and other large stones. Also uncovered were some concrete pillars. According to a local historian these were foundation pillars for a structure to load grain into railroad cars.

The 1909 Sanborn map does not show this structure, but J.B. Jones had several grain warehouses and an elevator in the vicinity of the depot. That is the latest map I have of Frankford. Since the railroad continued on until 1944 various other structures could have been added.

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