

# *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;**

**Sorry!** As you can see I'm late in getting this newsletter prepared and sent. I'll make a New Years resolution not to let this happen again. This is a resolution I may be able to do not like the ones I make every year about losing weight and getting in shape. (Ha-Ha).

## **Short Line Meeting;**

People interested in preserving the history of the St. Louis & Hannibal Railroad which was also known as the ""Short Line"" is invited to attend a meeting at the Wagon Wheel restaurant in Frankford on Saturday, February 4 at 11:00 a.m.. Bill Watts who is the last known employee of the railroad is planning to attend. The purpose of the meeting will be to discuss ways of preserving and recording the history of the railroad for future generations. For more information call 573-248-6147 or e-mail me

**2006 Memberships Are Due;** The 2006 society membership dues are now due. Memberships are \$10.00 for single and \$15.00 for family. Please include the number of members for family memberships. Send payment to Ralls County MO Historical Society, PO Box 182, Center MO 63436 or pay in person.

**January Meeting;** The Ralls County Historical Society will hold its January meeting at the Center Christian Church basement on January 16. The doors will open at 6:00 pm and the meeting will begin at 7:00 pm, the public is welcome to attend. Greg Wolk, director of the Missouri Civil War Foundation will be present to explain his group and their goal in interpreting and publicizing Missouri's a unique role in the American Civil War. We would like any area individuals or groups interested to attend. More information on the Missouri Civil War Foundation can be found on their website [www.mocivilwar.org](http://www.mocivilwar.org) Mr. Wolk's presentation will follow a short meeting, but because of this being the society's annual meeting there will another meeting that will follow his presentation if needed.

**November Meeting;** The Societies November meeting at the Garth Mansion was the best attended meeting in years. Fifty or more members and non-member were on hand and enjoyed the tour of the National Historic Landmark and the hospitality of our host's John and Julie Rolsen.

**Center "Short Line" Depot;** As the weather allows we continue to work on the depot and have a number of major projects to complete. John Rogers has added some ties and rails in the front of the depot. We have found a number of old "Short Line" cars and one caboose and hope to have one or

the other on display this year. Bill Watts, the last employee of the "Short Line" is donating more items for display in the depot.

**Ralls County Courthouse;** The courthouse seems to be on schedule and on budget. I will have information more in the next newsletter about the progress and reopening date. I plan to attend the contactors monthly updates with the Ralls County Commissioner and will pass that information on to you.

**2006CALENDAR:**

**Ralls County Missouri Historical Society: Regular meetings.**

**March 20, 2006;** At Perry MO City Hall with David A. James of Columbia speaking on the historic Hotels of Missouri. (See below)

**May 15, 2006;** New London Ralls County's restored courthouse?

**July 17, 2006;**

**September 18, 2006;** Annual Picnic

**November 20, 2006;**

**David A. James;** David is writing a book "Historic Hotels of Missouri", which will feature the 19<sup>th</sup> century taverns and hotels of more than 85 Missouri counties, including Ralls and all of northeast Missouri. There were a number of these hotels, inns and taverns in and around Ralls County. If you have any knowledge of such sites please try to attend the March meeting or get the information to us by mail, e-mail or in person so we can get our areas information in the book. His talk includes some of our area sites and other interesting sites he has found in his research. I had the pleasure to hear his program a few months ago and it was very informative and interesting.

**Cemetery Clean ups and surveys;** Anthony Elam has digitally photographed and alphabetized all the burials at the large Lick Creek Cemetery south of Perry. This was MAJOR PROJECT, THANKS ANTHONY.

The weather and like of volunteers has limited this project so far this year, but plans are being made to work on this projection on the last weekend in February (24-25-26) and first weekend in March (3-4-5). Please let us know if you can help on those dates or any other time this year. I will try and work any time, weekends or middle of the week that the weather will allow, so if you are available please contact us.

**Fox and Sauk;** Schedule for spring opening

**Fund Raising;** A committee now is now being formed, if you would like to serve on it please contact me.

**Spalding Springs Hotel;** We now have available a beautiful coffee mug with a colored print of a painting of the Old Spalding Hotel circa 1892. The painting is by Dr. Joe Robert Smith of Columbia, who is the husband of Mildred Spalding, who is the great granddaughter of Robert Marion Spalding who built and owned the hotel at Spalding Springs in Ralls County. The mug is a fund raiser for the society, but its main propose is create interest in historic Spalding, which history dates back the 1790s. If who have any information short or long, you can e-mail it to [spaldingsprings@yahoo.com](mailto:spaldingsprings@yahoo.com) or contact the society. The e-mails and other information will be printed and placed a book for people interested in Spalding's history at the museum. Please include information on schools, churches, families, early homes and stories. The mugs are \$10.00 each or two for \$18.00 plus shipping and handling. These are truly collector pieces.

If you would like to do something to create interest an area, place or person in Ralls Counties long history, please contact us at the society. Anne Bueter Papke and other members of Robert Marion

Spalding have been the force behind this project. There are many historic Ralls County sites and people who we can do a like project on.

**Historical Society Pamphlets;** For those who could not attend the November meeting to see our new pamphlets, they are now available. They will be placed in area libraries, museums, tourist sites and information centers. Thanks for Speedee Printing for an excellent job of printing. They also did a great job on our business cards

### **Ralls County Cemetery:**

**Coontz Family Cemetery; Clay twp., 55-6-3** (information enclosed in () are added information or differing information from Rev. Gammon's records. Rev Gammon recorded many of the old cemeteries of Ralls County and the surround area in the 1930 &40's)

- Asher; (Charles M., died January 14, 1877, age 81 years, 6 months, 9days)
- Coontz; Barbara, died April 12, 1884, age 78 years, 3 months, 19 days. "Ralls County Records; born Jefferson Co Virginia, single, died @ Center twp."
- Coontz; Charles, born 26, 1891, died February 7, 1891, infant son of C. L. & Endora.
- Coontz; Columbus, died January 25, 1858, age 2 years, 4 months, 26 days.
- Coontz; Conrad R., died august 26, 1877, age 67 years, 6 months
- Coontz; Edward, born October 15, 1824, died February 26, 1893, age 68 years, 4 months, 11 days.
- Coontz; Ellen, born November 11, 1827?, died December 30, 1900
- Coontz; Eugene, born 1852, die 1929
- Coontz; Isaac, born January 6, 1827, died November 25, 1897, age 70 years, 10 months, 19 days
- Coontz; (James W., died June 6, 1851, age 3years, 4 months, 4 days)
- Coontz; Jacob, died February 3, 1887, age 78 years, 1 month, 25 days (71 years, 1 month, 25, days)
- Coontz; Jacob W., born 1861, died 1927
- Coontz; John, died 25, 1878 (May 25, 1878) age 68 years, 2 months, 6 days.
- Coontz; John, died April 25, 1861, age 78 years, 2 months, 22 days
- Coontz; Mary J., born February 18, 1827, died October 6, 1902, wife of Jacob
- Griffin;Lillian V., November 11, 1888, died June 24, 1940
- Smith; James Edward, son of L. B. & E. F., born 2, 1873, died??? 1875, (son of J. B. & E. F.)

**President View;** I want to thank all of the members and friends of the society who made 2005 such a successful year. This year, just beginning, should be even better, with all of the great projects we have planned and will be completed in 2006. Our membership continues to grow and hopefully this year we will have this year's goal of 150+ members for the first time. The meetings we have planned this year should continue the increasing attendants of the few months. We will continue to have our meetings at points of local historic interest and there are a number of great speakers and programs planned this year that should be of interest to both members and the general public. There are a number of past meeting sites that we have been ask to revisit. If you have a former meeting site that you would like to revisit because you enjoyed it or missed the first time let me know and we will schedule it.

## **Bit of Ralls County History;**

**Perry "Enterprise" Thursday June 8, 1916**

### **New London Business Block Was Afire At Two O'clock**

Fire which broke out in the grocery store of C. F. Rowland at New London at midnight destroyed the Ralls County Times office, the grocery store of A. G. Kennedy, the moving picture show of Woods & Weaver, the Park Hotel and Dick Edding's barber shop.

The loss will amount to between \$35,000 and \$40,000. The fire was discovered by Miss Mary Pritchett, daughter of Sheriff Pritchett and she notified her father, who fired his revolver and aroused the town. The citizens worked heroically and kept the fire confined to the one block.

Mrs. Wood owned three of the buildings destroyed, she carried some insurance. A. G. Kennedy carried \$2,600 insurance, the picture show was insured for \$600. No insurance on hotel. Fisher & Harris carried \$4,000---Thursday morning Hannibal Journal

**Perry Enterprise February 8, 1923**

### **3 New London Stores burn**

#### **Hannibal Fire Department Called, Loss Estimated Near \$10,000.**

New London, MO, Feb, 2 - A fire, which for a time, threatened an entire block on Main Street in New London's business section last night destroyed three buildings, resulting in a loss estimated at nearly \$10,000.

The flames became so menacing that a call was made on the Hannibal department and Chief T. B. Parks and a force of fire fighters rushed here with an engine and aided in checking the spread of the conflagration. The big engine was fed from a large cistern of the Christian Church which was pumped dry while the flames were being extinguished.

The fire was discovered in the grocery store of Owen Briscoe at about 7:15 o'clock. The first flames were near the center of the building and no one seems to know just how the fire originated. It has been suggested that some person must have dropped a cigarette on the floor shortly before the store closed at 6 o'clock.

The grocery is what is known as the Steve Newlon building and O. D. Helms and family lived on the second floor. The fire quickly spread to the barber shop of Mr. Helms next door and the offices of Dr. S. Ragan above. Both these buildings were destroyed and a one-story structure occupied by G. E. Yager's hardware store north of the grocery was wrecked when the brick wall of the Briscoe store fell on it. Mr. Yager had removed much of his stock while the adjoining building was burning but all that remained inside was destroyed when the wall gave way.

The building occupied by the barber shop was owned by Mrs. J. R. S. McCune, of Bowling Green; the grocery by J. L. Smith and the hardware store by Mrs. Mollie Fell. The amount of insurance was not ascertainable today but the loss was partially covered.

The Hannibal department made the run in a half hour and did excellent work after arriving. Attaching its hose to the cistern at the Christian Church, the big engine was put into action, and the firemen worked for an hour. Local people congratulated Chief Parks on the department's work.

Ron Leake