

BOONE'S LICK HERITAGE



Federal WPA Poster Promoting the Arts During the Great Depression

History Through the Looking Glass

Life in the Boonslick 75 Years Ago

Marking Milestones:

*Fayette Rotary Club, Boonslick Historical Society,
and Missouri Conservation Commission*

VOL. 11 No. 3 — WINTER 2012-13

BOONSLICK HISTORICAL SOCIETY PERIODICAL

Through the Looking Glass . . .

The late historian and author Barbara Tuckman was a gifted storyteller who had the ability to take richly-layered but archaic and confusing periods of history and turn them into lessons that relate to modern times – the 20th century. A classic example would be *A Distant Mirror: The Calamitous 14th Century*, a narrative history by Tuckman published by Alfred A. Knopf in 1978. It won a National Book Award in 1980. The book's main title conveyed Tuckman's contention that the death and suffering of the 14th century reflect that of the 20th century, especially the horrors of World War I. The long-popular quotation, "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it" by philosopher George Santayana (1863 – 1952), is brought to mind.

In this issue of *Boone's Lick Heritage*, we are not traveling back so far – only three quarters of a century to 1937; but like Tuckman's 14th century subject, it was a time marked by the Great Depression, a time of social and economic turmoil, and of the tension-building days pre-saging another world war. There are lessons from then that are relevant to the current decade, especially in the world of large-scale finance and its serious impact on the economy of the United States and no doubt other western nations. Despite the ominous backdrop of the late 1930s, life in the heart of the Boonslick (Howard and Cooper counties) and the rest of the state was in many ways continuing day to day in fairly normal fashion. It was a time of some key beginnings: of the organization that was to become the Boonslick Historical Society, the Fayette Rotary Club, and the Missouri Conservation Commission/Department of Conservation.

We set these positive occurrences within the historical environment of 1937 with a lead article (page 4) by retired Fayette newspaper publisher/editor Jim Steele titled "Life In the Boonslick 75 Years Ago." As sidebars

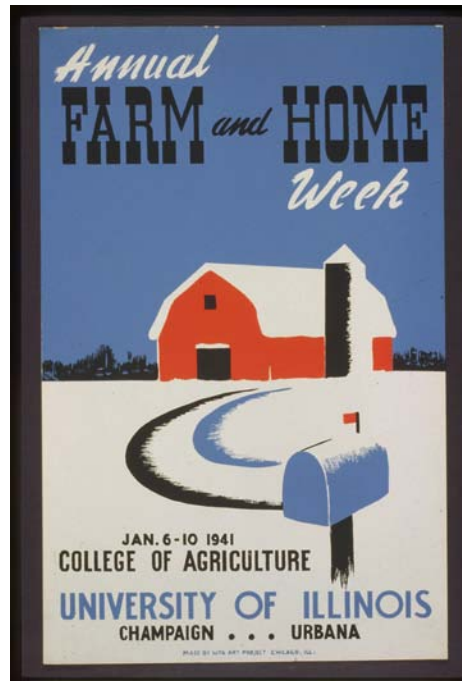
to the lead story, we include more in-depth reporting on these civic (page 8), conservation (page 10), and historical (page 13) organizations that today are part of the rich cultural fabric of the Show Me-State.

Research into the origins of the Boonslick Historical Society proved to be a journey of discovery and surprise for the editor. The Society's official papers and artifacts are housed in Smiley Memorial Library on the campus of Central Methodist University.

This was done by direction of Society officers in 1944 when the Historical Society of Howard and Cooper Counties was legally incorporated as the Boonslick Historical Society, a recognition by the organization's leaders that the history of the Boonslick Region has a presence far beyond the borders of our two central Missouri counties. Further research was undertaken by personal visit or Internet connection to the newspaper archives of the State Historical Society of Missouri in Columbia, the Missouri State Archives in Jefferson City, and the Missouri History Museum (formerly the Missouri Historical Society) in St. Louis.

We learned that it was the socially and professionally prominent citizens of the two counties who initially

saw the need for such an historical organization and undertook the first steps that led to its founding in 1937. Large boxes of Boonslick Historical Society archives still await further exploration at Smiley Library and will undoubtedly be the source of future articles in the quarterly about the Society and its important cultural presence in Howard and Cooper counties. So, like *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and its sequel, *Through the Looking Glass*, we will again be peering in future days into the magic mirror of history on our wall to learn more about the abounding history of the Boonslick Historical Society.



Depression-era WPA poster

— Don B. Cullimore

Boone's Lick Heritage

is published four times a year by the Boonslick Historical Society, P.O. Box 426, Boonville, MO 65233.

We encourage our members and others interested in history to contribute articles or other information of historical interest pertaining to the region. Please address all contributions and correspondence related to the periodical to the editor, Don B. Cullimore, 1 Lawrence Dr., Fayette, MO 65248, or email to: don.cullimore40@gmail.com, phone: 660-248-1732. Publication deadline are February 1 for the March issue; May 1 for the June issue; August 1 for the September issue; and November 1 for the December issue.

The Boonslick Historical Society was founded in 1937 and meets several times a year to enjoy programs about historical topics pertinent to the Boonslick area. Members of the Society have worked together over the years to publish historical books and brochures and to mark historic sites. They supported the founding of Boone's Lick State Historic Site, marked the sites of Cooper's Fort and Hanna Cole's Fort and have restored a George Caleb Bingham painting on loan to The Ashby-Hodge Gallery of American Art at Central Methodist University, Fayette, Mo.

Membership dues are \$10 (individual or family) and the dues year is January through December. Receive our quarterly publication, *Boone's Lick Heritage*, and attend annual Society events highlighting the region's history. To become a member, send a check made out to the Boonslick Historical Society, P.O. Box 426, Boonville, MO 65233.

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Fayette Fire Department circa 1930s

Photo courtesy Jim Steele

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The Iconic Pete's Cafe, Boonville circa 1930s

Photo courtesy Jim Steele

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Cover image and page 2: Works Progress Administration (WPA) posters created during the Great Depression, Library of Congress Collection.

Life in the Boonslick 75 Years Ago

Birth of the Boonslick Historical Society, Fayette Rotary Club and Missouri's Conservation Commission

Story by Jim Steele — Photos courtesy of Jim Steele — Fayette Newspapers

With apologies to Charles Dickens, the year 1937 might have been the best and worst of times. Life during the Great Depression had improved somewhat since the bleak period of 1932-33 and the awful heat-wave of 1936 had to some extent abated. But the Dust Bowl still was in full bore and economic conditions, which seemed on the mend a year or two earlier, had taken another turn for the worse. In November 1936 there had been a significant election and earlier that year the historic Olympics had taken place in Berlin, which of course also made history (not to Hitler's liking). Locally, 1936 also saw the opening of the new WPA (Works Progress Administration) swimming pool in Fayette and the beginning of rural electrification in Howard County.

As the new year of 1937 dawned, Boonslick residents largely went about business as usual. But several significant developments were on the horizon, including formation of the Boonslick Historical Society and the organization of the Fayette Rotary Club (see related articles). On the state level, officials in Jefferson City were getting ready to launch the Missouri Conservation Commission/Department of Conservation which ultimately would grow to be a conservation-agency model for other states in the nation.

But first a look beyond the borders of Missouri. In 1937, Franklin Delano Roosevelt (FDR) is inaugurated for a second term shortly after the new year dawns, the first time a U.S. President has taken office in January instead of March. Several persons from Fayette attend the event in Washington, including Lewis M. Means who was Missouri's new adjunct general. But 1937 was not going to turn out to be Roosevelt's best year. Over-confident because of his huge re-election majority (where Alf Landon carried only Maine and Vermont), FDR attempted to "pack" the Supreme Court, a measure which died a flaming death in Congress.

War clouds begin to gather overseas. The



Franklin Delano Roosevelt



Ominous clouds of dust about to engulf a Midwest community in 1937.

Japanese bomb Shanghai in China and late in the year sink the USS Gunboat *Panay*(1) in Chinese waters. Congress expands the Neutrality Act making it illegal to sell arms to warring nations. In May, Germany's pride, the airship *Hindenburg*, explodes in flames over Lakehurst, New Jersey, and Amelia Earhart is lost in the remote Pacific in an attempted round-the-world flight. On a happier note, 200,000 pedestrians cross San Francisco's Golden-Gate bridge on its opening day.

Two of the saddest notes of 1937 include terrible flooding on the Ohio River, especially around Louisville, Kentucky, and Evansville, Indiana. Several Fayette families receive refugees. Also, a tragedy at New London School in Texas occurs on March 18, 1937, when a natural gas leak



The Charlie Armstead Band was a popular Missouri music group that performed in the Boonslick region in the 1930s and 1940s.

causes an explosion that kills more than 295 students and teachers, making it the worst catastrophe to take place in a U.S. school building. Approximately 600 students and 40 teachers were in the building at the time; only about 130 escaped without serious injury.

In other developments, the DuPont Company patents Nylon; also the binary calculator is invented, and the Lincoln Tunnel opens in New York City. The United States bars Americans from serving in the Spanish Civil War and Margaret Mitchell wins the Pulitzer Prize for her book, *Gone With the Wind*. One of the year's best-known movies is Disney's *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, the first feature-length animated film made in America. The year also marks the debut of Bugs Bunny cartoons.

Popular music from 1937 includes "Donkey Serenade", "Johnny One Note", "In the Still of the Night", "Gypsy in My Soul", and "Muskrat Ramble". Large radio consoles are all the rage and many are seen advertised in the pages of the *Democrat-Leader* and *Fayette Advertiser*. Ditto for new, modern appliances such as stoves, washers, and refrigerators.

In sports, the New York Yankees win the World Series, Joe Louis is the world heavyweight boxing champion, the NFL champions are the Washington Redskins, Wilbur Shaw is the Indianapolis 500 winner, and War Admiral is the winner of the Kentucky Derby.

In transportation, the DC-3—which more than any other airplane makes commercial aviation a reality—is in its second year of use. Those who can afford to do so may fly coast-to-coast, but in reality few Americans had ever flown.

Some other facts from 1937: The average income is

about \$1,800 (a little over \$29,000 in today's dollars). Other prices from 75 years ago: New car (Chevy, Ford, etc.) \$760, new house \$4,100, loaf of bread 9 cents, gallon of gas 10 cents, and a gallon of milk 50 cents.

Also in 1937: Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men* is published; the Hormel Company introduces SPAM; US Route 66 finally is fully paved from Chicago to Los Angeles; and the Hoover Dam is completed. Bette Cooper of New Jersey is 1937's Miss America and life expectancy in the United States is 59.7 years. In the U.S. Senate, Missouri is represented by Harry Truman and Champ Clark and our new governor is Lloyd Stark (of Stark Apple fame) who had a number of Fayette ties.

And from the pages of the *Democrat-Leader* and *Fayette Advertiser* were these developments:

As the year opened, editor Wirt Mitchell notes that fully 50 persons in Howard County alone were killed in car accidents in 1936, and he opines that we can do better in '37. Indeed, the front page of nearly every issue includes word of persons who have died — many in grizzly car, industrial, and farm accidents. (We may pine for the good old days, but in reality life was much harder in 1937.)

At Central College, many familiar names are already well-known faculty members and administrators — including President Robert Ruff, Dean E. P. Puckett(2), coach Clarence Clingenpeel and faculty members Edwin Jenner, Elmer Gift, Fulton Moore (the first Fayette Rotary secretary), William Denny Baskett, N. Louise Wright, Opel Hayes, K. K. Anderson, Luther T. Spayde, Merrill Gaddis, and Frederick Culmer, among others.

A number of newspaper articles tell of preparations for running of REA (Rural Electrification Administration) lines into the countryside following establishment of Howard Electric in 1936; area farmers are encouraged to sign-up. By early 1937, fully 204 households have done so. Not long afterward, a \$130,000 federal loan is approved.

Fayette newspaper ads early in '37 include Charles Lee



Popular Coca-Cola advertisement from 1937

Clothier with a 25 percent off sale; reduced long-distance rates for Southwestern Bell; and a question from Scott's Laundry asking, "Do you really save in doing your own?" Not everyone loved Ma Bell; local residents and city leaders call on the company to provide a second toll-free line to connect Glasgow, Fayette, and Armstrong. A bad winter storm early in the year disrupts utilities around Howard County and there is a 2.5-inch rain on January 12. Nonetheless, Ricketts Shoe Store on the north side of the Fayette Courthouse Square soon afterward advertises 25 percent off on new spring footwear.

As January gives way to February, more than 500 folks in Fayette turn out for FDR's annual birthday ball at the Fayette Armory which raises funds for polio research. Central College kids cram for final exams. Also, the White American Legion Post is honored for its membership drive and Howard County residents go "over the top" in responding to a Red Cross drive to relieve suffering from Ohio River flooding. Fayette native W. F. McMurry (son of the late Methodist bishop and Central president) is among three key leaders directing Louisville flood relief.

Skillman's Grocery suffers a fire that destroys part of the building, and Central's Symphony Orchestra, under direction of Professor Harold Mealy, plays to an estimated 8,000 persons during tour of Southwest Missouri. Not to be outdone, Central's band under K. K. Anderson plays in the rotunda of the Capitol in Jefferson City for Gov. Lloyd Stark's inauguration. Also at Central, Eagle debaters win the top trophy in state competition, Martha Jane Deatherage of Fayette is named college popularity queen, and the Central Madrigal singers perform over KSD Radio in St. Louis. Not long afterward, articles note that Central's choir

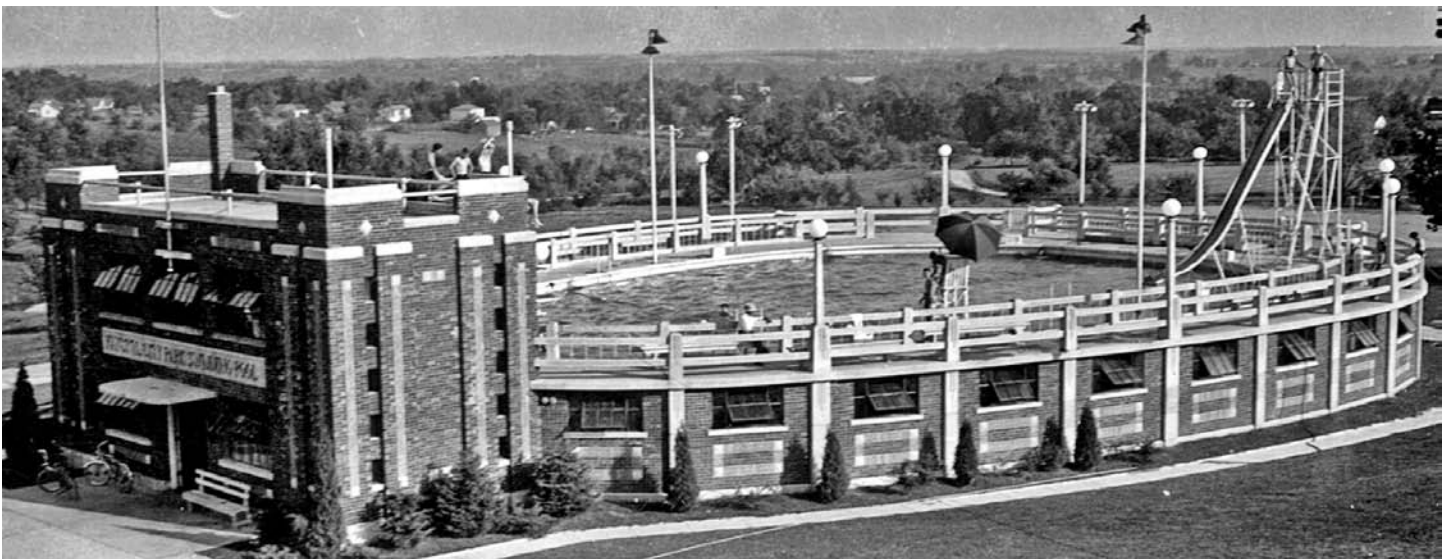
under direction of Luther T. Spayde has achieved statewide recognition.

News accounts tell of efforts to construct a lighted soft-ball field in the city park, and ultimately this is successful. In the rural area, residents attend the "Clover and Prosperity Dinner" and the "Handy Helpers Health and Sanitation Club" is established at Guthrie School. About 75 persons attend annual meeting of the Fayette co-op where L. W. Jacobs Jr. is elected treasurer. At the Dickinson Theater, Clark Gable stars in *San Francisco*. And as spring nears, scenic drives in the city park open and the swimming pool gets a huge water slide adjacent to the high-dive (neither now would be OSHA approved). At city hall, the city jail is moved from second floor- to basement-level, making prisoner transfer easier.

On a less happy note, Greyhound Bus Lines petitions to end service to Fayette and Glasgow(3), and smallpox epidemic rages in Higbee.

Two significant developments during April include a huge April Fools walkout at Central College's Howard-Payne Hall; freshman girls then "invade" the Dickinson Theater (and are evicted) and afterward call McMurry Hall boys for dates. They have "privileges" revoked by college authorities. Also that month, Fayette Mayor E. Z. Liggett throws a switch to place in operation a new \$48,000 diesel generator at the power & light plant. (Probably none too soon, as the J. Leon Rosse Drug Store announces plans for air conditioning; this after Alsop & Turner had become the first Fayette store to have it in 1936.) Nonetheless, the city's electrical distribution system is criticized for noisy transformers which interfere with radio reception.

In other springtime developments, Central's President



An early shot of the WPA-constructed Fayette City Swimming Pool, dedicated July 4, 1936. Its first full year of operation was in 1937. It is still in use today.

Robert Ruff speaks at Fayette High School's graduation, with 37 diplomas conferred; six local boys depart for service in CCC camp; Dr. William Bloom gets a new Packard (after wrecking his older car); Fayette Savings & Loan observes 50th anniversary; Myer School District is discontinued; and Fayette aggies take honors at state contest. As warmer weather nears, Clatworthy's advertises new Nelly Dons(4).

The new Rotary Club's charter banquet on March 23 gets only moderate play in the newspaper, but the editor notes that the club "will fill a need in Fayette."

A horrible accident killing two local motorists happens on "Viaduct Hill" where a bridge crosses the MKT tracks at the point where Highway 40 emerges from the bottomland, and concern for the dangerous situation there prompts highway department to make improvements. It's also reported that the highway to Glasgow is in bad shape, and that the relatively new blacktop on Highway 240 en route to Columbia is already showing signs of "wash-boarding" and is dangerous.

Captain B. I. Lawrence, commander of Company M here and a well-known citizen, is promoted to major and takes over command of the National Guard's 3rd Battalion which covers much of North Missouri, succeeding Lewis Means who now is state's new adjunct general.

A visitor in the home of Mr. and Mrs. R. L. Walker is young Billy Holman of Callao(5).

As Central prepares for graduation, Abe Silverman of Sedalia is elected student body president and the college newspaper(6) is honored in a state contest. And a full-page newspaper ad for Central College notes that "Tomorrow's Salvation is the Church College." Locally, Dr. William Bloom is elected vice president of the Missouri Medical Association; citizens express hope for the erection of new state penitentiary in Fayette (it doesn't happen); extra sodding is put in at the city park, and the mayor calls for a city-wide clean-up drive. Also, "Sunburn Balm" is in demand as swimming pool opens.

Methodist Bishop John Moore speaks at the Central commencement and the college's alumni gather for Alumni Weekend. Florence Puckett is named "most interesting girl" and Tom Baskett "most interesting boy."

Summer in Howard County: Three new 4-H clubs are organized and Fayette's Baptist youth attend camp at Bell's Lake. Also, one Martha Rogers returns from Girl Scout camp near Kaiser, Missouri. Fayette golfers retain cup in intercity play, with Boonville 2nd. More than 100 attend a soil conservation event, and the Fayette summer theater group presents *That's My Wife*. A newspaper article notes that, with recent rain, corn prospects look good.

Also: Clatworthy's ladies-ready-to-wear store adver-



This WPA crew, circa 1937, works to pave a Fayette street, probably Watts Avenue.

tises huge sale, including bras for 15 cents. The Glasgow Milling Company nearly is destroyed in a big windstorm, and with no political correctness in those days, the newspaper reports that five are arrested after "Wild Weekend in Local Harlem."

C. C. Dimmitt Mercantile observes its 50th anniversary; a barrel-stave factory opens at the fairgrounds employing 60 men; a full-page ad welcomes freshmen arriving at Central; the college to now offer a course in geology; many culverts are washed-out in 8-inch rain, and water carnival in park is a popular event.

Martha Minor is named "Miss Fayette" in contest at Dickinson Theater; Central's President Ruff sees "growing demand" for college education; Paul's Sandwich Shop is remodeled and later loses \$192 during a 3 a.m. robbery; a young man in a brown suit rifles the desk of President Ruff in Brannock Hall; Charles Lee clothier observes 15 years in business; a WPA (Works Progress Administration) report notes that \$394,000 has been spent in Howard County (mostly on roads); and the city purchases 19 acres for a park in the so-called New Addition, now known as Page-Liberty Park.

In October, Fayette city leaders seek funds from the WPA for new water main, and Fayette High School is commended by the state department of education for achieving "first class" rating.

Crime incidents are fairly common. For example, the home of Sam Ayres is ransacked by escapees from the Boonville Training School. Also, "open warfare" takes place between Central students and Missouri Valley students in Marshall as Eagles defeat the home team during Valley's homecoming—Coach Clingenpeel defuses incident. Men's topcoats at Tully Chenoweth's are on sale for

\$10.75, and plans proceed for Central's big Homecoming parade at Thanksgiving, but unfortunately William Jewell routes the Eagles 20 to 2 during that event. In Higbee, a polio epidemic brings a notice prohibiting public gatherings.

As Christmas nears, residents gather for the popular Winter Carnival on the square and, just as today, are encouraged to "Shop Fayette." Schnell Floral Company wins award for best Christmas window and Poole & Creber advertises tomatoes at four cans for 25 cents. Later, an overflow crowd hears citywide Christmas cantata at the First Christian Church.

And finally as 1937 draws to a close, Fayette newspaper editor Wirt Mitchell calls for a law against spitting tobacco on the floor of the courthouse, city hall or post office.

Jim Steele was owner-publisher of the Fayette newspapers from 2000 to 2011 and continues to be active in community affairs. He currently is chairman of the Fayette Historic Preservation Commission and serves as an adjunct journalism instructor at Central Methodist University.

NOTES

1. The USS *Panay* incident was a Japanese attack on the American gunboat *Panay* while she was anchored in the Yangtze River outside Nanking (now known as Nanjing), China, on December 12, 1937. Japan and the United States were not at war at the time. The Japanese claimed that they did not see the American flags painted on the deck of the gunboat, apologized, and paid an indemnity. Nevertheless, the attack and the subsequent Allison incident in Nanking caused U.S. opinion to turn against the Japanese. Fon Huffman, the last survivor of the incident, died in 2008. The 2009 film *John Rabe* portrays a fictionalized version of the incident.

2. Central College's (CMU) Dean E. E. Puckett, Professors William Denny Basket and Merrill E. Gaddis and coach Clarence A. Clingenpeel were to become early members of the Boonslick Historical Society, as did numerous other Central Methodist faculty members as the years passed.

3. Greyhound apparently was seeking to end service between Fayette and Glasgow, while at the same time seeking to start service between Fayette and some larger communities such as Boonville.

4. Nelly Don was a clothing manufacturer and distributor through the 1950s. It was named after its founder, Ellen Quinlan Donnelly Reed. The company was headquartered in Kansas City, Missouri, and had additional factories in the state. During World War II it made uniforms for women in the military and factories, and underwear for men in the military.

5. A well-known Fayette resident, William S. (Bill) Holman died December 9, 2012, at his home in Fayette at the age of 89. He was born in Callao, Missouri, May 15, 1923. Holman was a retired U.S. Atomic Energy Commission nuclear engineer who in 1969 headed development of seismometer heaters which made possible NASA's Apollo 11 mission to the moon. He was among those in Mission Control during the historic moon landing. He retired from the AEC in 1978. Holman was also a Lt. Colonel (USAF-Ret.). He served with the U.S. Army Air Forces during World War II where he flew bombing missions as a radio countermeasures officer.

After the war he completed college studies and in 1949 joined the (then) new U.S. Air Force and later was chosen as one of 14 officers for the first Air Force Thermonuclear Weapons Assembly Team. He also worked in military intelligence. He later joined the Department of Energy after retiring from the Air Force. Among various honors, Holman received a group achievement award for his part in developing the first satellite to escape the solar system. He also was part of a team that pioneered development of the artificial heart that led to the invention of the Jarvik Heart. He was a 1947 graduate of Central College (CMU).

6. The Central Methodist *Collegian* is one of the oldest continually published college newspapers west of the Mississippi River.

The Fayette Rotary Club is Organized

Fayette Rotarians observed a significant milestone as the local club began its fourth quarter-century of service to the community in 2012.

A charter from Rotary International was received on February 18, 1937—this after several months of ground-work had been laid by local business and professional leaders.

The group actually may have had its beginnings with a Kiwanis Club which had been active in the early 1930s and then folded. Several of those former Kiwanis members were believed to have been instrumental in organizing the newly formed Rotary organization in Fayette.

Rotary International is now more than 100 years old. Paul Harris and a handful of others founded it in Chicago back in 1905. Today it's the oldest of the nation's traditional service clubs — with Kiwanis, Lions, Optimist and

others coming along in later years. Thus, the parent organization already was 32 years old when Rotary came to Fayette.

While the charter here was granted on February 18, the big day to kick off the new club really came on March 23, 1937, when more than 200 Rotarians and their wives (it was all men in those days) and some friends gathered for a gala evening banquet in the Methodist Parish House basement on the Central College campus.

L. E. Ziegler of the Boonville Club, which had sponsored the Fayette organization, opened the festivities that night and introduced the Rotary District Governor, Lester Wikoff of Wentworth Military Academy in Lexington.

After his remarks, Wikoff presented the new charter to the Fayette club's first president, Anson B. Barber, who was then the city's superintendent of schools. Barber pledged

that Fayette Rotarians would serve the community and live up to the ideals embodied in the motto, "Service Above Self."

Central College music professor Frank Banyard led the group in singing of "America" which, to this day, opens each Wednesday noon meeting in the CMU Student and Community Center.

The 1937 banquet also included music by a Central College string quartet and a reading of poetry.

About a dozen other Missouri clubs sent visitors to the gala. Represented, in addition to Rotarians from Boonville and Lexington, were clubs from Columbia, Kansas City, Moberly, Jefferson City, Fulton, Slater, Sedalia, Brookfield, Rolla, and Chillicothe, among others.

Later the group adjourned to the Fayette Armory in the old Opera House, now the site of a defunct sports bar at Main and Morrison. The armory, which some older Fayette residents remember, included a huge room on the building's second floor, plus a third floor balcony. Rotarians and guests danced that night to the music of Charlie Armstead and his orchestra.

The club's charter members were a cross-section of the community's business and professional leadership, including well-known names such as druggist Marvin Turner, ladies ready-to-wear shop owner Urless Clatworthy, men's clothier Charles H. Lee, Central Dean E. P. Puckett, and shoe store owner Robert Ricketts. Other charter members included dentist W. E. Ackerson, physician W. A. Bloom, undertaker Ralph Carr, editor and publisher Wirt Mitchell, Mac Mitchell, Fulton Moore, Walker Pierce, Nat Tracy, Howard Bruner, and Robert M. Fox.

Surprisingly, prominent banker L. W. Jacobs Jr. was not a charter member, but joined shortly afterward. He was president in 1940-41. Other early-day presidents included James Weathers, Thomas S. Denny, Dan Miller, Irvin Schnell and Cordell Tindall.

Currently, the club's most senior former member is Ray Kimmel who served as president in 1953-54.

No charter members are alive today. The last charter member to pass away was Jim Weathers who died around 14 years ago.

Fully 75 persons have served as club president over the years, and only one was elected twice but that name immediately escapes the author. Of that number, about 20 are still active in the club today and several others live in the

community and elsewhere, but are no longer members.

Nat Tracy and Fulton Moore were early secretary-treasurers. Fulton Moore served five years in the post — the beginning of several long periods of service which included Jim Sutton, 11 years; George Kline, 16 years; Jim Steele, three years; and then Robert H. Bray who served for a whopping 25 years until retiring in 1998. At that time the office was divided.

The club's only member to become a Rotary district governor was the late Ralph L. Woodward Sr. who served in that office in 1973-74. He was then Central Methodist College's (CMU) recently retired president.

Locally, women members were added to the rolls after the parent body gave the green light in the late-1980s. Fayette's first woman president was Julee Shermann of CMU in 1993. Seven other women have served since then.

For many years of the club's existence, members would

sing at each meeting, including such "memorable" tunes as "Roll, Rotary, Roll" and "R-O-T-A-R-Y - That spells Rotary." Those days are now but a distant memory, and to that many respond, "Thank God." One former song leader — who shall remain nameless — was known for wearing a rather obvious toupee, described by one club wit as a K-Mart blue-light special. It seemed the toupee got lower and lower on his forehead as he directed each week. Club members, with varying degrees of expertise, were called on to accompany the singing at the piano.

One of these was John Hert who

told this author that he did not relish the task and wanted it over as soon as possible. "I wasn't very good, but I played fast," he states. Now the singing is confined to the opening rendition of "America" which tends to proceed reasonably on tune as long as the Rev. Jamie Page is on hand to get the group started in the right key.

For many years, the club met each week at Mrs. Clifford's Tea Room which was located in the Sam Major home that now houses the Main Street organization. Later, Mrs. Clifford's was at Main and East Davis, the current location of Inovatia Laboratories. One present member, Martha Holman, waited tables in the venerable Mrs. Clifford's establishment and on occasion she served the Rotary Club.

Later meeting locations included the Gas Light Inn (sometimes known as the Grease Light); it was housed in the now-vacant Vito's site on the west side of the square.



Also, Cornbread's, (now the location of Breadeaux Pizza) and at times the Methodist Parish House.

In more recent years, the club—with a current membership of nearly 50 active members—has met every week on the CMU campus, first in the Holt Hall East-West Room (later renamed Missouri Room) and now on the fourth floor of the Student and Community Center.

Over the years weekly speakers have addressed a wide range of topics and, on occasion, groups have presented musical and dramatic presentations. Many speakers have been outstanding; others have perhaps told more than the assembled Rotarians wanted to know about a given topic.

In many cases, Rotary talks have been the catalyst for projects and ideas for community improvements. Central Methodist presidents, Fayette mayors, county commissioners and others have brought updates on the state of the college, the city, the county, the school system, or whatever — in addition to the annual visit by the Rotary District Governor.

Since 1937 club members likewise have taken part in, or contributed to, countless service projects. A number of members and friends have become Paul Harris Fel-

lows which has enhanced the work of the international organization. In recent years, the Fayette Rotary has been recognized by the district and RI for its work. Members also have expanded the club's youth exchange program and other avenues of outreach.

The Rotary budget each year supports a wide assortment of community projects and scholarships. Other monies from dues and contributions add to the work worldwide of the International Organization, including the significant Polo-Plus program which has nearly eradicated the disease worldwide.

So as the year 2012 ended, members were taking a deep breath to begin their fourth quarter-century of "Service Above Self." And while local Rotarians may reflect on humorous moments—such as off-key singing and occasional less-than-memorable speakers—the Rotary experience in Fayette has been, by and large, a great ride which has brought with it good works, leadership, inspiration, service, knowledge and fellowship to the community. Thus it is hoped that the Rotary flame in Howard County will continue to burn brightly for another 75 years to come.

— Jim Steele

A New Day in Wildlife and Resource Management: Mo. Conservation Commission Established in 1937

by Brett Dufur — Missouri Department of Conservation

This Missouri Conservation Commission/Missouri Department of Conservation marked its 75th anniversary in 2012 as a constitutionally independent state conservation agency. As such, it has served over the decades as a national model for the establishment of other state conservation/wildlife agencies largely free of the entangling partisan politics of state legislatures, and one that manages the state's wildlife and natural resources on the basis of sound scientific knowledge and research. The below article was written by Department of Conservation writer Brett Dufur as part of a series on the 75th anniversary and published throughout the year in the Missouri Conservationist. It is reprinted (with graphics) with permission of the Department of Conservation. — The Editor

A single cannon blast sliced through the silence of a quiet morning on a Missouri River bend on July 4, 1804. The crew of the Lewis & Clark Expedition was celebrating the first official observance of Independence Day in the newly acquired Louisiana Purchase territory. The site today is known as Little Bean Marsh Conservation Area, located 30 miles north of Kansas City.

Among the entries in William Clark's journal that day were observations of extensive prairies, rivers, a great number of goslings, and a clear lake containing vast quantities of fish and geese. He didn't write about the oppressive July heat and humidity, the "mosquitos" or the hardships

endured. Instead, Clark wrote about the abundance and variety of wildlife, which was stunning even to this veteran explorer.

"The Plains of this country are covered with a Green Grass, well calculated for the sweetest and most norushing hay, interspersed with... trees, Spreading ther lofty branches over Pools Springs or Brooks of fine water... Shrubs covered with the most delicious froot is to be seen in every direction, and nature appears to have exerted herself to bu-tify the Senery by the variety of flours raiseing Delicately and highly... above the Grass, which Strikes & profumes the Sensation, and amuses the mind, throws it into Conjec-



turing the cause of So magnificent a Senery... in a Country thus Situated far removed from the Sivilised world to be enjoyed by nothing but the Buffalo Elk Deer & Bear in which it abounds.”

His awe of the natural beauty he saw here is a powerful testament to the connection people have always felt for this land. Yet it would take only a generation of early settlers to forge an entirely different Missouri than what Clark had described.

From Wildlife Depletion to Conservation Action

By the 1860s, the insatiable demand for fur, feathers and meat had virtually emptied the forests. Relentless commercial hunting was rampant and unchecked. By the late 1800s, the largest lumber mill in the world came to the Ozarks to feed the booming railroad industry’s thirst for railroad ties and a growing nation’s need for wood products. In 1912 alone, 15 million hand-hewn railroad ties were sold in Missouri. It was also an age when a third of the Ozarks were burned each year in an effort to bring up the grasses for livestock. Missouri’s forests were soon depleted.

By the 1930s, the country was in the grips of the Great Depression. Our national trust of soil, water and wildlife were becoming similarly bankrupt. The existing Missouri Department of Game was largely a

token gesture that had been weakened by powerful interests and left underfunded. Many Missourians had a deep seated feeling that things could be better—that even though Missouri’s natural resources had been squandered through overuse, proper government regulation could help restore wildlife in Missouri. This ultimately set the stage for Missouri’s citizen-led effort to restore Missouri’s fish, forest and wildlife resources 75 years ago.

Missouri’s Citizen-led Efforts Take Root

On Sept. 10, 1935, nearly 100 sportsmen met at the Tiger Hotel in Columbia to discuss what could be done. They formed the Restoration and Conservation Federation of Missouri and devised a solution that was as simple as it was revolutionary. Columbia newspaper publisher E. Sydney Stephens, who became one of the leaders of the movement and later one of MDC’s first commissioners, summed things up, “If you get a law passed, what have you got?” he asked. “The next legislature could repeal or amend it, and the politicians take over. By the same token, if you attempt to get a constitutional amendment through the legislature, you won’t recognize it when it comes out. But if you write the basic authority exactly as you want it, put it on the ballot through the initiative and let the people vote it into the constitution—then you’ve got something permanent.”

So they drafted Amendment 4, aimed at creating an apolitical conservation agency. Sportsmen fanned out across the state and gathered signatures to put the proposal on the ballot. On Nov. 3, 1936, voters approved the measure by a margin of 71 to 29 percent—one of the largest margins by which any amendment to the state constitution had ever passed. The sportsmen’s vision had prevailed.

On July 1, 1937, the constitutional amendment creating the Missouri Conservation Commission took effect, creating an apolitical, science-based conservation agency with exclusive authority over forests, fish and wildlife. Over the next 75 years, the “Missouri plan” allowed the Show-Me State to build what is acknowledged as one of the nation’s top conservation programs. Today that Commission is more commonly referred to as the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC).

“Everything was new,” recalls MDC’s first chief of wildlife research, Bill Crawford, who retired after providing leadership in that role for 34 years. “It was an opportunistic time when we could find problems and really start to work on them.”

Since that historic night at the Tiger Hotel, a series of unprecedented conservation and wildlife restoration efforts have been accomplished. “Not in their wildest imaginations could those early sportsmen have imagined what has

been achieved,” says Dave Murphy, executive director of the Conservation Federation of Missouri. “On the same landscape, at the same time that our human population has doubled, we’ve seen the restoration of wild turkey, deer, geese, river otters, raccoons and black bass, and every kind of game species that you can imagine.”

Missouri’s Unique Citizen Led Conservation Legacy

Missouri conservation is unique—unique in its history, unique in the way it derives its authority and funding from citizens, and unique in the passion and commitment of Missourians to perpetuate this legacy. The Show-Me State’s conservation efforts have a broad management base giving consideration to forests, fish and all species of wildlife.

The Conservation Commission serves Missourians by ensuring citizens have healthy forests, fish and wildlife throughout the state. To achieve conservation successes the Commission and Department staff strive to promote cooperation between the Department, landowners and the public through scientific information and mutual understanding. Conservation successes such as stable deer and turkey populations indicate this partnership and approach has worked in Missouri.

The Department’s director is hired by an unpaid, citizen Conservation Commission, rather than being appointed by the governor. This provision provides the Department with a great amount of stability and permanence that benefit citizens and Missouri’s fish, forest and wildlife resources.

Over the past 75 years, the Conservation Department has had only eight directors. The current director of the Department is Robert L. Ziehmer. His predecessors include

I. T. Bode, 1937–1957; William Towell, 1957–1966; Carl Noren, 1967–1979; Larry Gale, 1979–1988; Jerry Presley, 1988–1997; Jerry Conley, 1997–2002; and John Hoskins, 2002–2009.

The Commission is made up of four commissioners, with no more than two from the same political party. The governor appoints commissioners for six-year unpaid terms. The Commission serves as the Department’s policy maker, approves Wildlife Code regulations, and oversees strategic planning, budget development and major expenditures.

The first members of the Commission were E. Sydney Stephens, A. P. Greensfelder, Wilbur C. Buford and John F. Case. Current Commissioners include Don R. Johnson of Festus; James T. Blair, IV of St. Louis; Don C. Bedell of Sikeston; and Becky L. Plattner of Grand Pass.



E. Sydney Stephens of Columbia helped lead the citizen effort to create a constitutionally independent conservation commission and state conservation department that was accepted by Missouri citizens through statewide vote in 1936. The commission began operation in 1937. Photo courtesy of MDC.

Join the Boonslick Historical Society

Read about historical places, people and events of the Boonslick Region and become part of the organization that works to preserve the Region’s heritage.

The Boonslick Historical Society was founded in 1937 and meets several times a year to enjoy programs about historical topics pertinent to the Boonslick area. Members of the Society have worked together over the years to publish historical books and brochures and to mark historic sites. They supported the founding of Boone’s Lick State Historic Site, marked the sites of Cooper’s Fort and Hannah Cole’s Fort and have restored a George Caleb Bingham painting on loan to The Ashby-Hodge Gallery of American Art at Central Methodist University, Fayette, Mo.

Membership dues are \$10 (individual or family) and the dues year is January through December. Receive our quarterly publication, *Boone’s Lick Heritage*, and attend annual Society events highlighting the region’s history. To become a member, send a check made out to the Boonslick Historical Society, P.O. Box 426, Boonville, MO 65233. www.boonslickhistoricalsociety.org

Magazine Seeking Contribution of Articles and BHS Membership Information

We encourage our members and others interested in history to contribute articles or other information of historical interest pertaining to the region. Please address all contributions and correspondence related to the periodical to the editor, Don B. Cullimore, 1 Lawrence Dr., Fayette, MO 65248, or email to: don.cullimore40@gmail.com, phone: 660-248-1732. Publication deadlines are February 1 for the March issue; May 1 for the June issue; August 1 for the September issue; and November 1 for the December issue.

Boone’s Lick Heritage is published four times a year by the Boonslick Historical Association, P.O. Box 426, Boonville, MO 65233.

Birth of the Boonslick Historical Society

In the Beginning: The First Ten Years

by Don B. Cullimore

BOONVILLE, Mo. – Judging from period newspaper reports, the birth of the organization that was to become known as the Boonslick Historical Society appears to have been a spontaneous event. A short article on the day of the Society's historically acknowledged deliverance appeared a few hours earlier on the Society page of the *Boonville Daily News* announcing that "reservations for the Cooper County Historical Society banquet this evening at 7 o'clock have been coming in 'very well,' it was reported this morning."

Dr. Eugene M. Violette(1), who was noted in the news article as "writing a history of Missouri," was to be the chief speaker. Also being presented at the meeting was "a photographic exhibit, the property of Alexander Piaget of St. Louis," to be shown in the banquet room. "The exhibit will depict a number of historic dwellings throughout state, several of which are located in Cooper and Howard counties."

There was no mention of a two-county or "Boonslick" historical society being discussed, but the embryo was in place.

It was the 18th day of November, 1937. The front page of the Boonville newspaper noted that city residents had been greeted early that morning by the first snowfall of the season—"three inches of wet snow"—and that it was still falling later that day. The temperature, which had fallen to 18 degrees that morning, later rose to 32. Front-page stories noted that hearings would be held in Boonville in January on requests by Southwestern Greyhound and the Sedalia-Marshall state bus lines to start passenger service between Boonville and Fayette ... that 250 guests showed up the previous day to honor Mr. and Mrs. Chris Smith on their 50th wedding anniversary in their Bunceton home ... that the deadline for obtaining a driver's license had been set by the state at November 23, and persons "caught driving November 24" without a permit would face a "fine of \$15.65" ... that FDR's hopes of passing some of his proposed legislation, including a wage-hour bill, were "dimmed by filibuster" in the Congress ... and the ominous clouds of an impending world war were noted in an Associated Press wire story headlined in bold-face caps: "JAPANESE SEEK TO CRACK LINE NEAR SHANGHAI".

That evening, approximately 60 to 75 (newspaper and

attendees' estimates varied) Boonville, Cooper and Howard County residents "interested in the preservation of historical data, sites and buildings" assembled in the Hotel Frederick banquet room "for the first banquet of the Cooper County Historical Society." Early during the meeting someone in the room rose to make a motion that "the territory be enlarged to include Howard County. The motion was met with approval of those attending and the new organization was effected." (2)

A review of Boonville Historical Society archives



maintained at Smiley Memorial library on the campus of Central Methodist University(3) reveals the founding of the Society was not a serendipitous event, but was prompted by earlier recognition among members of the still-nascent Cooper County Historical Society that Howard County was tethered to Cooper as the Boonslick Region's first organized historical society by the umbilical cord of shared history.

The "birth" story was recounted several years later by the Society's then president, Central College Professor Merrill E. Gaddis, who wrote in a formal program printed for the Tenth Anniversary of the Boonslick Historical Society, held February 26, 1947, at the Hotel Frederick: "The [Boonslick Historical] Society had its inception when a handful of Boonville citizens, much interested in historical lore, met somewhat informally and decided to have a 'Cooper County Historical Society,'" (4) He further noted in the program that "The promotional stage had been advanced far until it was recalled that the early history of Cooper County was inextricable interwoven with that of Howard across the river. 'Why not back up back up and start over again?' thought the organizers."

"Accordingly," Gaddis wrote, "a dinner-meeting was arranged at the Hotel Frederick in Boonville on November 18, 1937, with 'approximately seventy-five members and guests present. Among them were representatives from among the old families of Howard as well as Cooper. Judge Roy D. Williams chairmanned the meeting. Here the 'His-

torical Society of Howard and Cooper Counties' was born, with Mr. L. A. Kingsbury as its president and Charles van Ravenswaay as secretary-treasurer. Mr. John Tolson(5) has the honor of having offered the motion which led to unanimous approval of such an organizational step. At a later meeting, January 18, 1938, Col. J. B. Barnes was chosen vice-president."

During the first three years, the Society's meetings were held bi-monthly, Gaddis noted in the program, and added, "But wartime conditions, and perhaps the feeling that six acceptable speakers and the related entertainment could hardly be provided each year on the Society's limited funds brought a decision to make the meetings quarterly." Annual dues were initially set at 50 cents. In the first 14 months of the Society's history, membership grew to 450 and later rose to as many as 600 by 1947. "State Historical Society officials," Gaddis noted in the Tenth Anniversary Program, "in comparing the Boonslick group with most other county or regional societies, have often commented on the remarkable loyalty of our people to their organization and its objects."

The name Historical Society of Howard and Cooper Counties marked the first seven years of its existence. In March of 1944, the Society filed papers in Cooper County Circuit Court for a pro forma decree of incorporation under the name Boonslick Historical Society, discarding the original tag ending – "of Howard and Cooper Counties." It was recognition by Society members that the Boonslick Region had historical importance and presence far beyond the boundaries of Howard and Cooper Counties. The legal document's articles of association also noted the purpose of the Society: "This association is formed for the purpose of promoting literature, history, science and intellectual culture and the establishment of museums, libraries and the erection of public monuments." At the time of the formal incorporation, Judge Roy D. Williams was president, Janet Moore was secretary, and Mrs. C. Albert Smith was treasurer. Fifty-six Society members, "In Testimony," signed the incorporation document.

In addition to the Society's officers, a number of prominent citizens of Howard and Cooper Counties were among the signers: Col. Arthur M. Hitch of Kemper Military School; C. Albert Smith; W. Francis English of the University of Missouri; E. P. Puckett, dean of students at Central College; Professor William D. Basket of Central College;

Col. John B. Barnes of Kemper Military School; Harry S. DeVore, president of Central College; E. J. Melton, founder of the *Boonville Republican* which merged in 1935 with the *Boonville Daily News*, which he served as editor, and the author of a history of Cooper County; and numerous others who constituted the well-placed professional and societal ranks of Howard and Cooper counties.

In his Tenth Anniversary Program comments, Merrill



E. J. Melton of Boonville was involved in the formation of the Cooper County Historical Society in 1937. He is standing near the Hotel Fredrick where the Historical Society of Howard and Cooper Counties was founded November 18, 1937. The latter organization was incorporated in 1944 as the Booneslick Historical Society.

Photo courtesy State Historical Society of Missouri

Gaddis noted that from the beginning the Society had also had an impressive list of guest speakers at its yearly meetings: "In the total list one finds college professors, active and retired, representing ten or more fields but all contributing to a knowledge of local history; also school administrators, high and low; prominent women from old families in the region and from several professions; librarians, directors of museums and historical societies, columnists and other journalists, a budget director, several local historians; and last but not least, an array of lawyers, all the way from county seat practitioners to state senators."

The Society's 1937 founding story was also to be remembered at a Boonslick Historical Society Banquet 44 years later by its first elected president, Lilburn Kingsbury, then 97. Four years previously, he had been lauded by *Fayette Advertiser* Editor John Hert as "Mr. History himself, the man of Howard-Cooper area who probably knows more about its history off the top of his head than many others

do after considerable researching.” Kingsbury had been invited to be the key speaker at the 1981 annual meeting of the Society by its then president, Jasper Meals of Fayette. Kingsbury, known for a wry sense of humor, began his presentation by noting that it had been 20 years since he had been invited to talk to “our Society”(6).... “Perhaps,” he added, “it was because a lot of people may have shared the thoughts of a gentleman who lives within ten miles of me who was recently visited by a friend of mine. To my friend he boasted that he was the oldest man in Howard County, a ripe 84. My friend told him that he was mistaken for he knew a man who was 13 years older, which brought on the following conversation:

“Who is he?”

“Near Franklin – Lilburn Kingsbury.”

“Ain’t he dead?”

Kingsbury then went on to recount the organization of the Cooper County Historical Society that occurred sometime before mid-November of 1937. “I do not have the date of that meeting (no minutes were kept of that action),” he told the group, adding, “But they soon decided that Cooper County had no early history that did not also relate to Howard County’s ... [that] it might be a good plan to involve historians of both counties in a joint society. Invitations were issued for a banquet meeting at the Frederick Hotel on November 18, 1937, and about 60 people attended it. At the time, Charles van Ravenswaay, a young man, 26 then, frequently in our home pumping my father dry of historical facts, invited me to this meeting, but I had no interest in history and declined. But he was so persistent I consented to go to hush him up. I went but had no interest in anything but the food. I was bored by the discussion of the organization, which I wouldn’t even join. I was half asleep. I thought maybe a little cold coffee still in the cup might help keep me awake.

“In the time it took for me to raise the cup to my lips, drink its contents and set the cup down, I was shocked awake by hearing myself nominated for President and elected by acclamation.

“I was shocked beyond disavowing the honor. I was too paralyzed [at the] time to except the honor. I could have shot Roy Williams if I had had a gun. But after a few years, I became a worshiper at his shrine.”

In the closing paragraphs of his written comments in the Tenth Anniversary Program, Merrill Gaddis noted again the Society’s mission: “The Society is vitally interested in the identification, marking and preservation of historic sites, and in the acquisition of old records and other valuable papers. Scattered through the minutes of the Society are to be found listings of materials thus secured, ranging

all the way from Indian relics, private journals and town records, to the even more important papers of eminent statesmen and significant leaders long since passed away.”

The Society has now completed 75 years of existence as a continuous body, as a significant historical-cultural presence in Howard and Cooper counties, from which a majority of its current membership is drawn. But the Name Boonslick Historical Society recognizes a cultural region beyond such limited borders, and membership today also includes residents of Boone, Cole, Green, Moniteau, Randolph, and Saline counties. Thus the Society embraces in its interests, its recognition of important historical events and sites, and in its membership a much larger sphere than that of two central Missouri counties. Time and limitations of editorial space preclude a full recounting here of the Society’s involvements and personalities in the years between its Tenth Anniversary in 1947 and its 75th, which occurred November 18, 2012, but future issues of *Boone’s Lick Heritage Quarterly* will continue its remarkable story.

NOTES:

1. Dr. Eugene M. Violette (1875-1940) was a professor of English History at Louisiana State University in 1937 and his topic the night of November 18, 1937, was “Missouri History and the Purpose of an Historical Society.” A native of Pittsfield, Missouri, he earned his BA in History at Central College (CMU) in Fayette in 1898, his MA in History at University of Chicago in 1899, and later undertook graduate-level studies at Harvard University. He became one of Missouri’s premiere state historians and authored a public school textbook, *A History of Missouri*, in 1918 that was widely used for many years. Another book, *History of Missouri*, was in production by Prentice-Hall but, according to EMV’s diary, chapters were still being written, submitted and revised at the time of his death in 1940; there is no indication it was ever completed and published.

2. From the November 19, 1937, *Boonville Daily News*, front page.

3. In 1945, the Society designated the Central College Library in Fayette “as the custodian of the official records and other literary materials of the organization.”

4. Elected as officers of the newly established Cooper County Historical Society shortly before November 18, 1937: Roy D. Williams, president; Arthur M. Hitch, vice president; Charles van Ravenswaay, secretary-treasurer; and E. J. Melton, archivist. The Cooper County Historical Society still exists and is located in Pilot Grove.

5. In 1937, John D. Tolson was a resident of Howard County and reportedly had a farm near Fayette. He attended Central College in Fayette (CMU) where he would have been a member of the Class of 1902. Tolson transferred to the University of Missouri-Columbia, where he played football, according to John Hert of Fayette, who was sole owner and editor of the *Fayette Advertiser* and *Democrat-Leader* from 1964 to 1984. Hert also stated that Tolson had worked for the state highway department at one time. Central Methodist University alumni records (1966 year book and alumni registration card) show that Tolson died in 1952.

6. Typed speech with penciled notes by Lilburn Kingsbury in BHS archives at Smiley Library, Central Methodist University.

Boonslick Historical Society Founding Members and Officers

Six well-known residents of Howard and Cooper counties were the principal players in the founding of the Cooper County Historical Society and shortly afterward the Historical Society of Howard and Cooper Counties in 1937. The latter organization officially became the Boonslick Historical Society in 1944 after papers of incorporation were filed in Cooper County Circuit Court (see main story, page 13). Profiles of these five men are listed in alphabetical order.

John B. Barnes (1876–1956): A native of Pensboro, West Virginia, Barnes, at the age of 17, became a school teacher instructing illiterate mountain children in West Virginia. Two years later he enlisted in the U.S. Army. He served in a Cavalry regiment on the Texas border during the Garcia Revolution in northern Mexico. Three years later he served in Manila in the Philippines during the Spanish-American War. After this service, he was mustered out of the Army, but six months later, in 1900, he re-enlisted. He passed a rigorous academic examination and earned a commission as a second lieutenant. He later saw service in the Philippines again (1902), served in several western United States military posts – Fort Douglas and Fort Leavenworth (1905 – 1907), and in New York at Fort Ontario (1907 – 1908). In 1908 and 1909 he served in Cuba and in the Panama Canal Zone. In 1917, he went to France, remaining there until the end of World War I. After retiring from the Army as a full colonel in 1922, he became a professor of military science and tactics at Kemper Military School in Boonville. He also became active in Boonville area community and civic organizations, serving as Boonville Rotary Club president, as a member of the Chamber of Commerce, and as county chairman of the American Red Cross. He also helped organize the Cooper County Crippled Children's Society and served as its president. He served as vice president of the Historical Society of Howard and Cooper Counties from 1938 through 1940 and as president of the newly incorporated Boonslick Historical Society in 1945. He died October 23, 1956.

Arthur M. Hitch (1875 – 1956): A native of Cuba, Missouri, Hitch attended the Missouri School of Mines and Metallurgy in Rolla, Missouri, then earned an AB from the University of Missouri in 1897. Hitch arrived at Kemper Military School in 1899 as an instructor of Latin, English,



German, and Elocution. By 1907, he had been promoted to principal. He married Bertha Johnston, daughter of School Superintendent Col. Thomas A. Johnston, in 1908. In 1927, Colonel Johnston retired after 48 years as superintendent and selected Colonel Hitch, his son-in-law, to lead the school. Hitch, who had been with Kemper in faculty and staff positions since 1899, guided the school through the severe financial crisis of the Great Depres-

sion, when enrollment plummeted, and into World War II, during which the school operated year-round and had a student enrollment of over 500. During Colonel Hitch's tenure as superintendent, the new stadium and football fields were constructed in 1937, the Academic Hall was built in 1939, and the Science Hall was added in 1941. Hitch was active in community and civic organizations. He was a Rotarian, a member of the Chamber of Commerce, and a member of various Masonic bodies, including Shrine. He served as vice president of the Cooper County Historical Society in 1937. Colonel Hitch retired in 1948 and died eight years later, in February 1956.

Lilburn A. Kingsbury (1884–1983): A native of Howard County, Kingsbury lived his entire life on the family farm near New Franklin, Missouri, until his death on July 1, 1983. He was a third-generation descendant of Jere Kingsbury, who immigrated to the Boonslick area of the Missouri Territory in 1816. Kingsbury attended Central College (CMU) in Fayette, Missouri, for two years before leaving in 1905 to become a cashier for the New Franklin Bank. He left the bank to devote more time to his insur-

ance business, begun in 1908, and to assist his father with the family's apple orchards. He held memberships in the New Franklin Methodist Church, the State Historical Society of Missouri, the Boonslick Historical Society, the Missouri State Writers Guild, the Howard Lodge of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons, the Order of Eastern Star, and the National Button Society. He was a founding member and the first



president of the Cooper-Howard County Historical Society, which later became the Boonslick Historical Society. Kingsbury was a recognized authority on the history of the Boonslick area of Missouri. From the 1960s until his death, he wrote several weekly newspaper columns pertaining to local history. During the same period, he was a frequent guest speaker before historical, educational, and fraternal groups. One of Kingsbury's most notable achievements was the recording of the tombstone inscriptions in 1937 and 1938 for every known, marked grave in over 200 Howard County cemeteries. In 1977 at the age of 93, Kingsbury was honored by the Boonslick Historical Society and his many friends who established an endowed scholarship in his name at Central Methodist College (CMU). His nephew, the late Dr. Warren Taylor Kingsbury, collected the numerous writings (autobiographical excerpts) of Lilburn Kingsbury and published them in 1988 as *Hobby Horse Rider*, a book full of tales about the Boonslick Country. Kingsbury served as president of the Historical Society of Howard and Cooper Counties from 1937 through 1940, as Historian in 1941, and as vice president in 1942.

Elston J. Melton (1891–1981): A native of Jefferson City, Missouri, Elston J. Melton attended high school in California, Missouri, and then attended the Chicago Art Institute. After completing studies at the Art Institute, he entered newspaper work, first at California, Missouri, then in Miami, Oklahoma, and Clayton, Missouri. He served in the U.S. Navy in the North Atlantic and Europe during World War II. Following the war, he worked as a printer, reporter, editor, partner, or owner and publisher at Missouri



newspapers in Pilot Grove, Sedalia, Boonville and Caruthersville. He sold the *Caruthersville Republican* in 1925 after being appointed deputy state oil inspector for Southwestern Missouri by Gov. Sam A. Baker. In the spring of 1929, he launched the *Boonville Daily Republican* as a weekly paper and a year later turned it into a daily. A year later, he merged the *Republican* with the *Boonville Daily News*, sold his stock in the merged publications but continued as editor of the *Daily News* for several years. Melton

also did special writing for the *Cape Girardeau Southeast Missourian* and wrote a syndicated column "Pen Pointers". In 1937 he authored and edited *Melton's History of Cooper County, Missouri*, "an account from earlier times to the present, written in narrative style for general use." It was illustrated with photographs, paintings, pen and pencil sketches by the author and by many contributors. Long out

of print and considered a rare book, it was published by E. W. Stephens Publishing Company, Columbia, Missouri. Melton passed away December 3, 1981. He is buried in Sunset Hills Cemetery in Boonville.

Charles van Ravenswaay (1911–1990): A native of Boonville, Missouri, Charles van Ravenswaay attended public schools and then Kemper Military Academy in Boonville before entering Washington University in St. Louis to pursue his undergraduate and graduate studies in the liberal arts. He received his BA in 1933 and MA the following year. In 1933 van Ravenswaay joined with St. Louis photographer Auguste Piaget (and after Auguste's death in 1937, with his brother Paul Piaget) to make a photographic survey of early Missouri buildings. This collaboration continued into the 1970s and eventually totaled more than 8,000 research notes and photographs of buildings, regional art, cemetery markers, and household items. This collection of photographs was donated to the Historic American Buildings Survey (H.A.B.S.) / Library of Congress in 1984.

Following graduation van Ravenswaay moved back to Boonville to become the business manager of his father's medical and surgical clinic from 1934 to 1949. From 1938 to 1941 he also acted as



State Supervisor of the U.S. Work Projects Administration's Federal Writers Project and co-authored *Missouri: A Guide to the Show Me State*. In 1942 van Ravenswaay entered the U.S. Navy and served four years in the North Atlantic and the South Pacific, achieving the rank of Lieutenant Commander. After his release from the service van Ravenswaay was offered the post of Director of the Missouri Historical Society in St. Louis, where he remained until January 1962, when he accepted the post of President of Old Sturbridge Village, Sturbridge, Massachusetts, a position he held until 1966. In that year he was named Director of the Henry Francis DuPont Winterthur Museum and Gardens, in Wilmington, Delaware, where he remained until his retirement in 1976. After retiring, van Ravenswaay published three books: *The Arts and Architecture of German Settlements in Missouri: A Survey of a Vanishing Culture* (University of Missouri Press, 1977); *A Nineteenth Century Garden* (Main Street Press/Universe Books, 1977); and *Drawn from Nature: The Botanical Art of Joseph Prestele and His Sons* (Smithsonian Institution Press, 1984). Ravenswaay served as secretary-treasurer of the Cooper County Historical So-

ciety in 1937, secretary of the Historical Society of Howard and Cooper Counties from 1937 through 1939, historian of the Society in 1940 and 1942 and president in 1941. He died March 20, 1990.

Roy D. Williams (1881–1972): A native of Boonville, attended Kemper Military School in Boonville and the University of Missouri in Columbia. While at the latter he was a member of Sigma Nu, Delta Theta Phi, and Theta Nu Epsilon. Although Williams did not attend law school, he learned law in the office of his father. Williams was admitted to the Missouri Bar in 1906 and engaged in private practice in Boonville. Williams was appointed to many important positions. He was chairman of the state's first Tax Commission, commissioner on the Kansas



City Court of Appeals, special assistant to the attorney general of the United States, assistant to the district attorney of

the Western District of Missouri, hearing officer for conscientious objectors, and board member of the Confederate Home in Higginsville. Williams served on the Boonville school board, was an honorary trustee of Kemper Military School, and was appointed an honorary colonel on the staffs of three Missouri governors--Smith, Blair, and Dalton. He was a member of the Missouri Academy of Squires, president of the State Historical Society of Missouri, and one of the organizers of the Boonslick Historical Society. He was past master of the Masons of Cooper Lodge and Ararat Shrine and a member of the Kiwanis Club. Williams served as president of the Cooper County Historical Society in 1937 and president of the Historical Society of Howard and Cooper Counties in 1943. He died in 1972 in Boonville.

Sources for these brief bio-sketches were files of the State Historical Society of Missouri (Western Historical Manuscript Collection), Missouri History Museum, newspaper archives of the Fayette Advertiser and Democrat-Leader. Photos of Barnes, Hitch, Melton, Williams courtesy SHSMO; Ravenswaay Courtesy MHM; Kingsbury courtesy Jim Steele. – The Editor

Battle of Marshall 150th Anniversary Commemoration

A series of lectures is being presented between now and the 2013 sesquicentennial of the Battle of Marshall that occurred October 13, 1863.

This program is organized by the Marshall Cultural Council and is sponsored by the Missouri Humanities Council and the State Historical Society of Missouri as part of the Show Me Missouri speaker's bureau.

The year-long commemoration will feature events every second Saturday until the battle re-enactment Sept. 13-15, 2013. Second Saturday events will include music, photography, storytelling, presentations and lectures and will cover the history of the battle, period clothing, weaponry, food, games, dance, photography. Events include:

* Saturday, Feb. 9: 1 p.m. at Windmill Gallery, 467 S. Odell Avenue, Marshall, a lecture, "Pennytown and the Lives of African Americans in Saline County," will be presented by historian Virginia Huston; at 2 p.m., "Temp Murray: A Post-Slavery Success Story," a lecture by historian Marvin Wilhite; and 3 p.m., storytelling by Gladys Claire Cogswell. There is no charge.

* Saturday, March 9: 1 p.m. at Windmill Gallery — Dawn to Dusk Period Fashion Show, Connie Grisier and Connie Cunningham.

* Saturday, April 13: 1 p.m. at Windmill Gallery — Lecture by Arrow Rock Historic Site Administrator Michael Dickey and music and lecture by Missouri fiddle

music expert and Prof. Emeritus Howard Marshall.

* Saturday, May 11: 10 a.m. at Windmill Gallery — Children's fair: Period games and activities for kids. Storyteller Joyce Slater.

The commemoration will culminate in Sept. 13-15 with two battle recreations, a parade from the Marshall square to Indian Foothills Park, camp tours, lectures, sutlers, music, a dance, storytellers, period crafts and cannon firings. The battle re-enactment has been granted a "maximum effort" status by the Missouri Civil War Re-enactors' Association. The 2nd Missouri Infantry is the sponsoring MCWRA unit.

On the anniversary of the battle, Oct. 13, 2013, local veterans organizations will host a ceremony to honor the sacrifices and suffering of soldiers and civilians who endured the battle and the strife of the war years. The goal of the project is to bring to life the experiences of people in Marshall and Saline County during the war.

Organizers are also seeking business and community support in the form of sponsorships, donations, in-kind contributions and volunteers. They hope to raise \$5,000 by July 1, 2013. Other partners in the project include Marshall Parks and Recreation, the City of Marshall, Marshall Chamber of Commerce, Saline County Historical Society, Saline County.

For more information, contact Eric Crump at ewcrump@gmail.com.

Book Notes

Missouri Armories: The Guard's Home in Architecture and History by Robert P. Wiegiers (Kirkville, MO: Truman State University Press, 2012). 192 pp. Table of Contents. Illustrations. Maps. Foot Notes. Bibliography. Index. \$34.95, paper.

Wiegiers, a professor of history at Central Methodist University since 1989, has written an all-encompassing history of military-related architecture in Missouri, including many historic structures in the Boonslick Region. Wiegiers notes that the Armory buildings in most Missouri towns are “the unheralded local face of the Missouri National Guard.” Serving as a home to a part-time militia within communities around the state, the armories provide “hallowed spaces” to Guard members and serve the public in emergencies. Professor Wiegiers presents a thorough look at the architectural and historical development of these buildings throughout the state. Divided into six categories based on architectural style, the book includes 185 photos with historical data as part of a comprehensive inventory of Missouri’s armories.

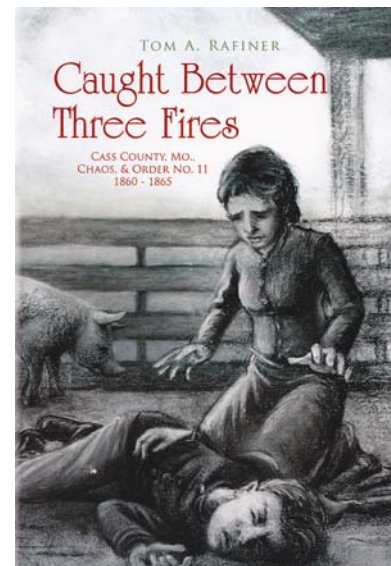
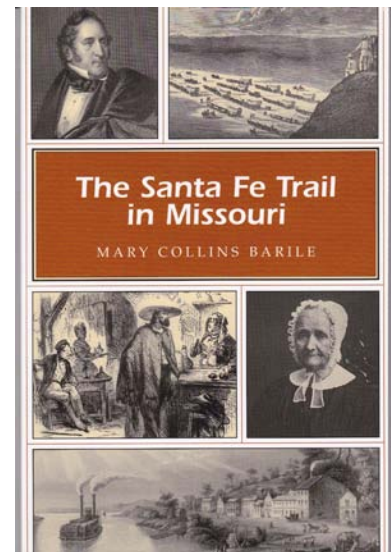
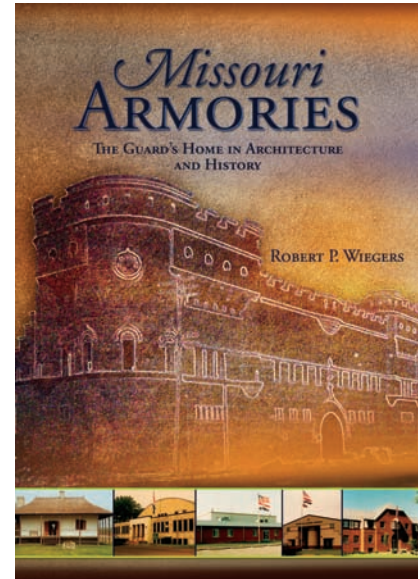
“Robert Wiegiers has done an outstanding job of showing the historical development of the Missouri National Guard and its important role and that of its varied armories within the life of local communities as well as its contributions on the larger stage.” – William E. Parrish, Professor Emeritus, Mississippi State University.

The Santa Fe Trail in Missouri by Mary Collins Barile (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 2010). 140 pp. Table of Contents. Illustrations. Maps. Appendix. Suggested Readings. Index. \$16.95, paper.

The book highlights the origin of the development of the Santa Fe Trail, telling how nearly a dozen Missouri towns claimed it: originally Franklin, Missouri, from which the first wagon trains set out in 1821, then others as the trailhead moved west. Barile describes what travelers could expect to find in frontier Missouri, where cooks could choose from a variety of meats, including hogs fed on forest acorns, and game such as deer, squirrel, bear, and possum. She also reminds the readers of the risks of western travel, during which injury or illness could be fatal; getting to a doctor might take hours or even days. The book also includes portraits of early Franklin, which was surprisingly well supplied with manufactured (“boughten”) goods, and Boonslick, then the near edge of the Far West. Readers will also encounter some of the most famous people associated with the Santa Fe Trail, such as William Becknell, Mike Fink, and Hannah Cole, with quotations that bring them and their era to life.

Caught Between Three Fires: Cass County, Mo., Chaos, & Order No. 11, 1860 – 1865 by Tom A. Rafiner (Bloomington, IN: Xlibris Corporation, 2010). 685pp. Table of Contents. Illustrations. Maps. Footnotes. Appendix. Glossary. Bibliography. Index. \$34.99 hardcover.

For 11 years, astride the Missouri-Kansas border, Cass County endured the vortex of our nation’s most violent conflict. Citizens struggled between three raging fires: Secessionism, Unionism, and an undying Border War. Cass County’s uncivil war, intimate, cruel, and total, suffered no man, woman or child to escape loss or injury—their individual stories weave history’s fabric. Violent circumstances forged leaders who shaped Missouri’s political and military history. *Caught Between Three Fires*, for the first time, reconstructs a lost history, erased by total destruction, Order No. 11, and time’s purposeful neglect. Author Tom Rafiner, a Jackson County, Missouri, native, has Cass County family ties stretching back 160 years. Rafiner’s ancestors lived outside Harrisonville through the Border War and well into the Civil War. During a presentation to the Fayette Area Heritage Association last fall, Rafiner noted that many of the families that fled Cass County during the Border War came to stay with friends and relatives in the central Missouri Boonslick Region.



Boonslick Historical Society

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Arthur F. Davis home, circa 1880-84. Of late Victorian vintage, this French Second Empire mansion preserves its original appearance. The mansard roof rivals that of the governor's mansion in Jefferson City. This house is one of 14 historic structures included in the recently updated "Walking Tour of Historic Fayette" brochure created by the Fayette Area Heritage Association. It's available at the Fayette newspaper office. *Photo by Jim Steele*