

BOONE'S LICK HERITAGE QUARTERLY



J. Huston Tavern, ca 1834, in historic Arrow Rock, meeting place for the fall BHS banquet

The Battle of Glasgow — October 1864

Old Cabin Shrouded in Mystery

Boonslick Historical Society Fall Meeting Nov. 3 in Arrow Rock

VOL. 17 No. 3 — FALL 2018

BOONSLICK HISTORICAL SOCIETY PERIODICAL

Antiquity has Its Saving Graces

AFTER TOURING MUSEUMS in Iowa housing cultural artifacts and classic car collections, my close friend and fellow journalist Jim Steele came by the house to deliver an item found in an antique shop in, appropriately, *Boone County*, Iowa. The “gift” from Jim is a sturdy, metal-frame manual typewriter made by L. C. Smith & Corona Typewriters, Inc., a classic piece of writing equipment I had longed to find for many years.

The serial number shows that it was manufactured in 1937—three years older than I am and seemingly in better condition. It must weigh 20 pounds or more, as evidenced by lifting it from floor to table top.

It has 41 keys that will type out, in Courier-style face, the 26 letters of the Roman alphabet and the numbers 2 through 9 and 0 (“1” is made by using the lower-case L – “l”), as well as decimals and a host of symbols. There also are 10 other keys or bars to type upper-case letters, set tab spaces, back-space, and perform numerous other functions pre-dating modern computers. It came complete with a cloth ribbon, black ink on top, red on bottom, reeling in and out of two side spools.

It is a sturdy, dependable, functional writing instrument that does not require batteries or an electrical outlet ... or a computer science degree to comprehend how to use it.

For the first 20 years of my professional life as a journalist, I used manual typewriters. Work days found me furiously pounding away on mechanical keyboards while composing stories to meet newsroom deadlines, sometimes three a day—engaged in a reporter’s form of a percussion solo: the staccato clacking of typebars against cheap tan paper rolled into the typewriter’s platen, the solid clunk as I whacked the carriage return with my left hand, the hiccup of the shift key as I typed capital letters, and the rhythmic thump of the space bar used to separate words ... It was a mesmerizing, tactile experience, a blending of all of your senses to create words to build stories based on facts (not fake news) understandable by many different readers (sometimes down to the level of middle-school ability).

The 81-year-old Smith-Corona reminded me of the old Un-

derwood typewriter I was given by my father (also a journalist) when I was a young man. And it took me back to my first job as cub reporter in 1961 with the *Jacksonville Journal*, an afternoon daily and sister paper to the morning *Times Union* in that northern Florida city.

The large wood-floored newsroom was always abuzz with activity – reporters pounding on old (even then) Underwood, Royal, or Smith-Corona typewriters, often with their heads cocked to one side pinning a phone between ear and shoulder; Teletype machines clattering in the background; desk phones ringing; monitors for police and fire department radios issuing a constant crackling of coded messages; and several editors and reporters huddling around the city desk, the heartbeat of the operation. One would expect to see an excited reporter, dressed in

a rumpled suit and wearing a fedora with a Press tag stuck in its hatband, come running into the newsroom, shouting “Hold the presses!”—a stereotype more often than reality. But it was a scene out of the popular 1930s play and movie *Front Page*.

Those are enriching memories, enduring tutorials that now provide guidance and substance to my journalist-cum-historian life and my increasing respect for the lessons to be learned from past decades, past centuries. As we get older, “antiquity” perhaps brings wisdom and is a state of grace. Sometimes found in symbols of simplicity. . . .

Our feature (see page 4) notes that this October will be the 154th anniversary of the

Battle of Glasgow. It was a pitched battle primarily involving conventional military units, including Confederate Maj. Gen. Sterling Price during his disastrous final raid through Missouri. This article first appeared in *Boone’s Lick Heritage* in September 1995. Author Jim Denny grew up in Glasgow and has a long family history in that community.

The second feature (see page 9) by journalist Jim Steele concerns a historical cabin shrouded in mystery and a nearby cave, now a sanctuary for endangered bats, both located in the Rocheport Cave Conservation Area owned by the Missouri Department of Conservation. Because the bats are on the Federal Endangered Species Act list, the area is closed to the public.



—Don B. Cullimore

Boone's Lick Heritage Quarterly 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, including family histories, 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: 660-888-3429. Editorial guidelines may be obtained from the editor. Publication deadlines are February 1 for the March (Spring) issue; May 1 for the June (Summer) issue; August 1 for the September (Fall) issue; and November 1 for the (Winter) 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.

Membership dues are \$15-Individual, \$25-Family, \$50-Sponsor, \$250-Patron, \$500-Life. The dues year is January through December. Receive our publication, *Boone's Lick Heritage Quarterly*, 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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BOONE'S LICK HERITAGE QUARTERLY

Boonslick Historical Society Vol. 17, No. 3 • Fall 2018

Contents

Editor's Page – Antiquity

Page 2

The Battle of Glasgow

Page 4

By James M. Denny



A historian's perceptive insights into the Civil War Battle of Glasgow that took place 154 years ago in mid-October in that Missouri River Community as Confederate Maj. Gen. Sterling Price continued his disastrous campaign through the state.

Abandoned Cabin Shrouded in Mystery

Page 9

By James Steele



A historic cabin and a cave now serving as a sanctuary for endangered bat species are the basis for a mystery at the Rocheport Cave Conservation Area.

Ashby-Hodge Gallery Fall Exhibiton

Page 12

By Cathy Thogmorton



Classic Hall, which houses The Ashby-Hodge Gallery of American Art on the Central Methodist University campus, is featuring art of Missouri Heritage Sites and large-scale metal sculptures of classic American horses like "Geoff," left.

BHS Fall Meeting and News Briefs

Page 13

The J. Huston Tavern in historic Arrow Rock will be the location for the Fall BHS banquet. Historian Michael Dickey will be the featured speaker.

Cover photo of the J. Huston Tavern by Don Cullimore.

THE BATTLE OF GLASGOW

By James Denny

But for a rumor, Glasgow might have ridden out the Civil War in relative peace and quiet. The way it happened was that Maj. Gen. Sterling Price, "Pap," as he was affectionately known, was in Boonville, in the seventh inning stretch of his famous 1864 raid into the state. Earlier plans to capture St. Louis and install a Confederate government at Jefferson City had been



Maj. Gen. Sterling Price. Courtesy MO DNR

shelved following a disastrous failed charge against Fort Davidson, at Pilot Knob, in late September. With the raid now devoid of any real objective, Price's great army now lumbered westward while thousands of Yankees dogged his rear and thousands more massed in his front—all waiting for the right opportunity to pounce. By October 10, 1864, Price had reached the friendly confines of the Boonslick country, and was enjoying a brief respite before continuing on towards Lexington, Independence, and a fateful rendezvous with destiny (and about 20,000 Federals) at Westport. It was while staying over at Boonville that Pap heard the rumor. Supposedly, someone told him, there was a huge cache of rifles stored at Glasgow—some 5,000 of them. Pap's ears perked up at this. Fully a third of his 12,000 man army had entered the state with no weapons, and at Boonville 1,200 eager recruits had stepped forward to join his ranks. These newcomers were weaponless, as well. Orders were issued to Gen. John B. Clark, Jr., to march on Glasgow and seize its trove of rifles. Clark was a Howard Countian, the namesake of John B. Clark, a prominent lawyer, politician, military man, and Confederate Senator. The junior Clark had earned a reputation in his own right as a hard fighter and capable commander. His brigade had been badly cut up in the bloody charge against

Fort Davidson. Clark probably saw Glasgow as a comparative walkover. His intelligence reported no more than a thousand militia defending the place. At Fort Davidson there had been a moat and high earthen walls to scale, and fourteen booming cannon mowing his men down as they advanced across the plain. At Glasgow there would be no cannon with which to contend and little by way of fortifications. For the assignment he was to have his own brigade, about 1,200 strong, along with 500 men from Gen. Joe Shelby's brigade who would be under the command of Col. Sidney Jackman. Unlike the untested militia at Glasgow, these men were all battle hardened veterans of many campaigns.

To reach his objective, Clark would have to get his command across the Missouri River at Arrow Rock, and follow the Boonville Road to the southern limits of Glasgow. Clark's chief concern was with a boat moored at the Glasgow wharf which he described as a "tin-clad" pierced with openings for six guns. To deal with this potential threat Clark felt it would be desirable to send a force backed up with artillery up the west side of the Missouri River to a point opposite the town. This force could neutralize the boat and help keep the Yankees pinned down. Pap agreed with Clark and tapped his best officer, Gen. Joe Shelby, to support the main attack. Shelby replied that he would take two pieces of artillery and 125 men up the west bank and open fire on Glasgow precisely at daybreak on the morning of the 15th of October.

Glasgow was a prosperous Missouri River port that had been settled almost three decades earlier by transplanted Ken-

tuckians. The small, 150-man Federal garrison stationed there was only vaguely aware of the peril that was about to befall them. Pap's huge army was not the only rebel threat in the Boonslick country. For a couple of months, the whole region had been convulsed in a vicious Guerrilla warfare. When not ambushing and slaughtering Union patrols or attacking garrisons, the bushwhackers kept themselves busy cutting telegraph lines and disrupting the mail.



Gen. John B. Clark Jr. Courtesy Ingenthron, *Borderland Rebellion*

With communication to their headquarters cut off, Yankee garrisons in

the area had only a dim idea of what the enemy was up to. The ever-looming specter of guerrilla attack weighed heavily on the minds of the troops stationed at Glasgow. Three weeks earlier, a band of screaming guerrillas, led by "Bloody Bill" Anderson

James M. (Jim) Denny was a historian with the Missouri Department of Natural Resources for thirty-three years before retiring in November 2009. He received his education at the University of Missouri, where he earned B.A. and M.A. Degrees in American history. He is co-author, with James D. Harlan, of the *Atlas of Lewis and Clark in Missouri*, and co-author, with John Bradbury, of *The Civil War's First Blood: Missouri 1854 – 1861*. He has also published numerous articles on a variety of topics, including historic architecture, Missouri's Civil War, and the Lewis and Clark Expedition in Missouri. He and his wife Sue live in the Missouri River community of Lupus.

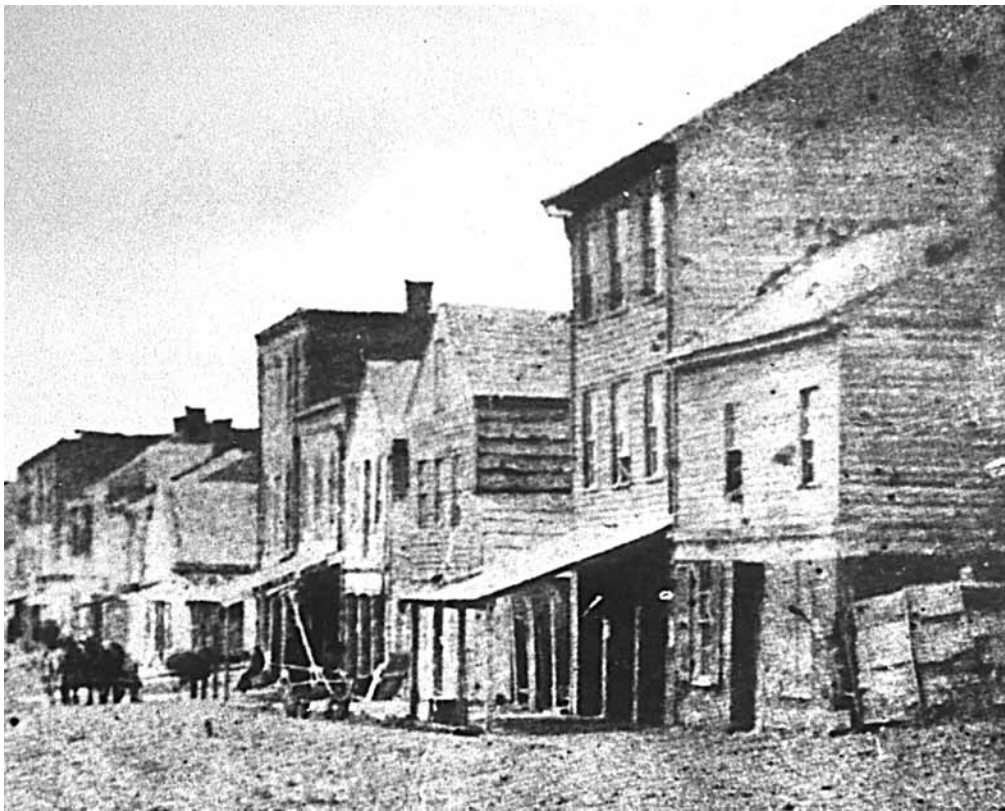


Photo of downtown Glasgow, circa 1864. Courtesy MO DNR

and George Todd, had thrown themselves against a blockhouse in Fayette. The following week, Anderson, Todd, and their guerrillas savagely annihilated three companies of Union troops at Centralia, in neighboring Boone County, killing 124 of the 147 troops involved. And now, on top of these disturbing and horrifying events, was added the report that Price and his entire army were at Boonville, just twenty miles away. A heavy sense of foreboding settled over the small garrison at Glasgow. It didn't help that the last orders received by the post commander, Capt. J. E. Mayo, were to hold the town at all costs.

Captain Mayo's worries were somewhat lifted by the arrival, on October 13, of two steamboats, the *West Wind* (this was the "tin clad" referred to by Clark) and the *Benton*. These boats, with their cargo and troops had been sent to Jefferson City as part of the wide-spread mobilization to defend the capital city against Price. The downstream journey had been plagued by frequent groundings, caused by low water, and by guerrillas lurking on the shore. Aboard these boats were six companies of the 43rd Missouri Volunteers, approximately 550 troops, commanded by Col. Chester Harding, Jr., and a load of quartermaster stores that included 1,000 cavalry uniforms sent downriver from Lexington for safe keeping. Price's army was at that moment bivouacked along a six-mile stretch of the river south of Boonville creating a deadly gauntlet for any Union steamboats daring enough to proceed downstream, so the *Benton* unloaded its cargo on the town wharf and headed back upriver while the *West Wind*, which was more prone to grounding, remained at Glasgow.

Colonel Harding was aware of the fact that Price had already bypassed Jefferson City and moved on to Boonville. The

heavily fortified capital city, bristling with cannon and determined defenders, looked like it was going to be Fort Davidson all over again, so Price had prudently decided to forget about attacking the capital. Harding obviously could not fulfill his original mission of reporting to Jefferson City, nor could he communicate with his superiors concerning what his next move should be. After listening to Captain Mayo's predicament, Harding concluded that the greatest need for his command was at Glasgow. He and his men would remain there and pitch in to prepare the town defenses for the conflict that seemed to be headed their way.

Harding and his officers were still not convinced that the main danger of attack would come from Price. They were laboring under the erroneous impression that the Confederates had no transports with which to move troops across the river. Instead, they suspected that an attack would more likely come from guerrillas or bands of deserters who would see in the

lightly defended town a prize ripe for plunder. Union preparations for defense proceeded from that assumption.

Some time earlier, the local Home Guard had dug out two small earthwork fortifications on top of a high hill above the town business district. More recently, Capt. Mayo had improved on these works by setting his men to work digging a connecting rifle pit between the two fortifications. This pit was further extended around the Herreford residence. Even without artillery, resolute defenders protected by this fortification could probably withstand an assault by even a large band of bushwhackers, but the result might be different if the attackers were a superior force of combat veterans with several pieces of cannon. This question was about to be put to the test for Gen. Clark and his men were already crossing the Missouri River and would soon be marching on Glasgow.

Shelby, true to his word, had arrived with his force on the river bank opposite Glasgow well before daybreak, on the morning of October 15, unlimbered his two artillery pieces, and, at the appointed time of 5:00 a.m., commenced to shell the town and the steamer, *West Wind*. The fire of his artillery and sharpshooters effectively kept federal troopers from reaching the *West Wind*, and the mound of supplies stacked on city wharf beside it, and prevented any free movement of soldiers across streets that ran at right angles to the river.

By this time Col. Harding knew that a large Confederate force was headed his way and he decided to prepare a fitting reception for them. His foremost goal was to delay the Confederates as long as possible by making a stand on the north bank of a

stream, known as Gregg's Creek, that flowed along the southern margins of the town. He ordered Capt. Mayo and one company of the 43rd. to take up position at the Boonville Road bridge; to Mayo's left he placed Capt. Samuel Steinmetz and his company of the local citizen militia; still further to the left, extending to the Fayette Road bridge, were three additional companies of the 43rd., commanded by Maj. B. K. Davis. On the east side of Glasgow, where the Huntsville plank road entered town, Harding posted two companies of the 43rd. North of Glasgow, above Bear Creek, two companies, commanded by Captain Hunter, were posted to contest any attempt by the Confederates to enter the town from above on the Keytesville Road.

The Confederate attack, meanwhile, was not going according to plan. Clark had encountered unexpected delays in getting his men across the river at Arrow Rock, and was well behind schedule by the time the march to Glasgow was taken up. His force was still three miles from Glasgow when the boom of Shelby's cannons reached his ears. When Clark's columns at last came in sight of Glasgow, Shelby's bombardment had been in progress for some two hours. As the troops moved up along the Boonville road, Gen. Clark deployed them opposite the town on the slope of a hill that ran down to Gregg's Creek. Astride the Boonville Road was the brigade of Sidney Jackman. On his right

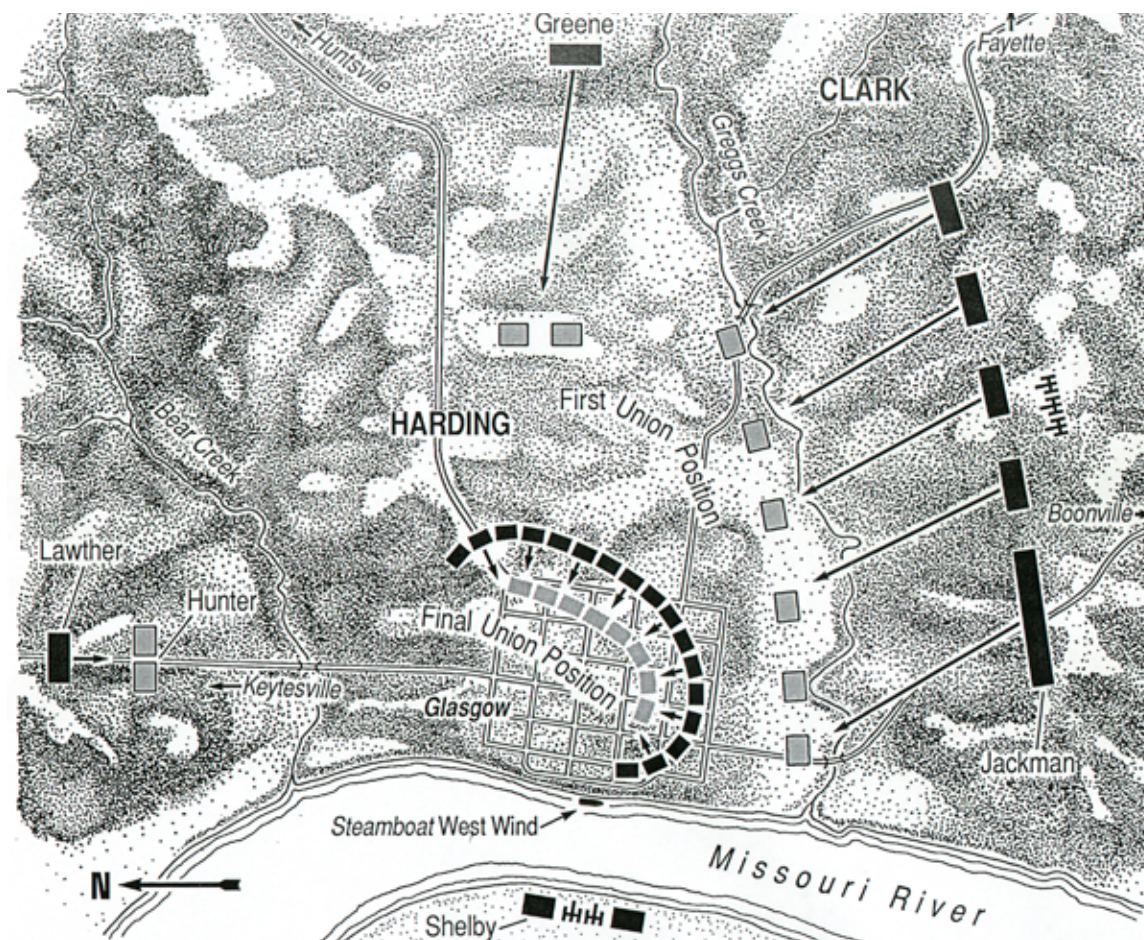
the five regiments of Clark were arrayed while the extreme right was occupied by Col. Richard Lawther's regiment. Clark's three cannons were positioned atop the ridge above his army.

Once the brigades of Jackman and Clark began their advance, the line of Federals along the creek, outnumbered at better than two to one, stood little chance of repulsing the attack. "The troops along the creek resisted the passage of [the enemy] manfully, but soon had to be ordered back, as the enemy's force was so great that he was enabled not only to pass around both flanks, but to pour through the long intervals which necessarily existed in the line," wrote Col. Harding in his report of the action. With the advancing Confederates attacking from the south and east the Union defenders yielded ground grudgingly as they fell back slowly towards their entrenchments on the hill, availing themselves of every fence, building, or tree that might offer cover. As they fell back the Confederates began to envelop them.

Lawther's regiment turned in the most lackluster performance of the battle. Lawther had been ordered to circle around to the north of Glasgow and attack along the Keytesville Road. But here his advance stalled in face of the fierce resistance of Hunter's two companies. Unable to move forward, Lawther's men remained bogged down in a firefight with Hunter for the rest of the fight, and lost a good opportunity to fall on Harding's rear

and relieve pressure on the remaining Confederate regiments who were discovering that the Yankee militia had a surprising amount of fight in them.

One of the Glasgow defenders, John Henry Frick, described the hard-fought retreat to the Union entrenchments: "The bullets were flying thick as hail. There was a house on the right. I ran thru the front gate and around behind the house. Several bullets struck the gate post as I ran thru. As I passed a window. . . every glass seemed to fall out." After two hours of determined resistance, the defenders were finally driven into their meager and crowded fortifications. The enemy, meanwhile, continued to inch forward. "I was at the west end of



Map by James Denny shows action at Battle of Glasgow. Courtesy MO DNR

the south [rifle] ditch and my right hand man, a home guard captain [Steinmetz], was killed," recalled Jesse Harrold. "On my left," he continued, "another was wounded and there was a Rebel in a two story building across the street south of where I was and he was breaking the window with his gun and I raised up to shoot him and he fired at me first. There was a two by eight inch plank set up on edge on the ridge of the bank of the ditch and his ball went in it. He dodged back and I shot through the side of the window and we shot four shots apiece. Three of his went in the bank and the fourth one cut my hat rim off."

Col. Harding now found his small command trapped in a most desperate situation. Rifle pits designed to hold perhaps 250 men were crammed to maximum capacity with desperate Federals who were forced out of adjoining houses by enemy artillery. On virtually all sides of them the town residences were filling up with Rebel snipers. Shelby's guns swept the streets making movement from one position to another extremely hazardous. By noon the Confederates had crept so close to the Union position that only the width of the town lots separated them. Fortifications designed to beat off mounted guerrillas had proven woefully inadequate against battle hardened veterans backed by artillery.

By now the situation of the defenders was hopeless. They were surrounded on three sides by a superior Confederate force and on the fourth by the river, their ammunition was running low, there was no hope of reinforcement, and the enemy, supported by five cannons, seemed to be preparing to launch a final assault. Col. Harding knew that the game was up; the best he could hope for now were generous terms of surrender from Gen. Clark. Clark was as eager as Harding to put an end to the battle. The Yankees had proven themselves game fighters, and had made the Confederates pay in blood for every inch of ground they gained. A final all-out assault would only delay the inevitable conclusion and needlessly swell the casualty lists on both sides.

By 1:30 p.m., the two sides managed to work out acceptable terms of surrender. The Confederates agreed to parole the men, allow the officers to retain their side arms, and to escort the prisoners to Union lines. The last provision was the most essential for unarmed Federals would face certain murder at the hands



This photograph, taken ca. 1870, looks northeast across the section of Glasgow in the line of attack by Gen. Clark's brigade. The brigade moved forward, fighting house to house, and from behind fences against federal forces that resisted ever inch of their advance. Every house in this photograph probably existed at the time of the battle (although virtually none of them exists today). The William F. Dunnica House, appearing prominently in the upper right section of the view, does exist in altered form at 410 5th St. As the front of the Dunnica house overlooked the federal entrenchments, which were about 225 yards due west, sharpshooters positioned themselves in the front window, firing and receiving fire. After the battle some 300 bullet holes in the house were counted. At least six Confederates were wounded in the house. The bank of Mr. Dunnica was robbed after the battle by William Quantrill. Courtesy MO DNR

of guerrillas. Harding reported 11 men killed and 32 wounded. Among this number were three citizens of Glasgow, including the commander of the citizen militia, Capt. Samuel Steinmetz, and his younger brother, Aaron. No final tally of Confederate casualties was made, but the toll was thought to be high.

The biographer of Shelby, John Newman Edwards, employed no kind words in describing the defense of Glasgow: "Luckily, indeed," said he, "that its defenses were commanded by an officer without experience, destitute of tenacity, and filled more with the wiles of a politician than the energies of a soldier." Edwards dismissed Harding as the sort of commander who was known more by his stripes than wounds. But the Battle of Glasgow had proven that none of Harding's stripes were coward's yellow. On his own initiative, he had chosen to remain with the Glasgow garrison during its hour of greatest peril and had directed a courageous stand against overwhelming odds. But whatever the final judgement on Harding's performance might have been, no one questioned the bravery of his men. The fight they put up surprised even the redoubtable Joe Shelby. John Henry Frick, now a prisoner, recalled: "Not long [after the surrender] we saw a Confederate officer with a plume on his hat, followed by his staff, coming up the street from the river. This proved to be Gen. Joe Shelby. I heard him ask, 'Are there any western troops among you fellows?' Several of us answered, 'We're all

western troops.' 'I knowed it! I knowed it! By ____! We always know when we are fighting our kind! Why I expected to take you fellows in within an hour, and here you've given me six hours of hard fighting!'"

One of the most controversial actions surrounding the Battle of Glasgow, at least in the minds of the town's citizens, was the burning of the city hall. As the city hall was used at the time to store the ordnance, commissary and quartermaster stores of the Missouri State Militia. To keep these stores out of the hands of the enemy, the city hall was set on fire. A strong wind was blowing which caused the fire to spread to adjoining buildings; some thirteen buildings, including stores, shops, a church and several dwellings were reduced to ashes. Captain Mayo burned an additional two houses that stood too near his trenches. It was charged by the locals that \$100,000 in personal property was destroyed in the effort to keep \$30,000 of government property from falling into rebel hands.

Even with the firing of the stores, there were still plenty of supplies left for the Confederates to impress. The quartermaster supplies brought down river on the *West Wind* and *Benton*, consisting of some 1,000 uniforms, bales of blankets, and other supplies, had been piled on the wharf and were eagerly taken up by Confederates desperate for precisely such goods. The weapons of the defenders, amounting to some 1,200 small-arms, were also confiscated along with 150 horses. It was not the rumored 5,000 stand of arms, but still a decent haul. The victors also sunk the battle scarred *West Wind*.

As to whether this capture was worth the effort is debatable. The time consumed in taking Glasgow caused still more delay in an army that was already moving westward at far too slow a pace for a mounted raid. The thousands of Federals in Price's front and rear were preparing a trap for him that would be sprung at Westport, only a week after Glasgow fell.

The capture of the federal garrison left the Unionist citizens of Glasgow without any protection against the guerrilla bands that were roving in the wake of Price's army. First to arrive was the notorious guerrilla chieftain, William C. Quantrill. He forced the town banker, William F. Dunnica, to hand over all the money in his safe, some \$21,000. Then came the most dreaded of all guerrillas, William "Bloody Bill" Anderson. He paid a night visit to the lavish mansion of Benjamin Lewis, a tobacco millionaire, unionist, and town benefactor who helped found Lewis Library and Lewis College. Anderson savagely beat and tortured Lewis, and then forced him to raise \$6,000 from his neighbors--the sum that Lewis had offered as a reward for the capture of Anderson dead or alive. Lewis' death a little over a year later was attributed to the injuries sustained at Anderson's hands.

A final ironic footnote to the Battle of Glasgow occurred at Mine Creek, Kansas on October 25. Following the Confederate defeat at Westport on October 23, Price's army began a precipitate retreat southward with the Federals in hot pursuit. They caught up with Price's battered army at Mine Creek and gave the Southerners another severe mauling. Confederate soldiers captured there who happened to be wearing the uniforms taken at Glasgow were executed on the spot. It was a final payback for all the times

that Bloody Bill and his guerrillas dressed themselves in the uniforms of their slain victims in order to deceive and then slaughter still more hapless Federals.

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Benjamin Lewis (1812-1866) portrait in Lewis Library, Glasgow. Courtesy MO DNR

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Cannonball commemorating The Battle of Glasgow and dedicated to the memory of Capt. Samuel Steinmetz, who was killed in the battle. The cannonball is on exhibit in Lewis Library, Glasgow. Courtesy MO DNR

Elements Claiming Old Cabin Shrouded in Mystery

By Jim Steele

Largely forgotten and out of sight, a deteriorating once-restored log cabin – formerly part of a local tourist attraction – sits within a restricted site owned by the Missouri Department of Conservation. The area is located down a steep ravine near Rocheport.

The cabin may have a story to tell, but the truth of that story could be hard to determine.

The structure is part of the 51-acre MDC tract which is now closed to the public and used solely to protect a bat colony in the nearby cave.

It's situated just outside Rocheport near the I-70 Rocheport exit. From the exit, the unmarked entrance to the property is entered via a gated gravel roadway, which is steep and poorly maintained, accessible only with a four-wheel-drive vehicle.

Cave Has Long History and Mythical Tales Abound

Nestled deep within the steep Missouri River bluffs, the site may have been home to Osage Indians who are thought to have sought shelter in and around the mouth of the cave. It's also suggested that the Lewis & Clark expedition may have visited there, but many historians doubt this.¹

Daniel Boone purportedly stopped-by with his sons when exploring the area in search of establishing a salt lick. (Subsequently, they passed up the spot and his sons opened a salt lick near Boonesboro in 1805, several miles up-river. Today it is the Boonslick State Historic Site.)²

In 1864, Quantrill's Raiders, Bloody Bill Anderson, or outlaws may have been sheltered in the cave, but this story is regarded primarily as a favorite tale of former promoters. "Sinking Creek Cave" is mentioned in Switzler's 1882 History of Boone County in reference to the upper entrance to the cave. The site also may have been a popular picnic spot in the early 1900s.

Jim Steele is a former editor and publisher of the Fayette Newspapers and broadcast journalist. He is the editor of the recently published bicentennial history of Howard County (1816-2016), *Howard County, MO: From Prairie Land to Promise Land – A Remembrance Across Two Centuries*. He holds a B.A. in history/political science from CMU and a B.J. from MU School of Journalism, and undertook graduate studies at MU in journalism, speech and educational administration.

In 1956, J. Harlen Bretz, a famous cave geologist, described Rocheport Cave in detail in his *Caves of Missouri*. Bretz surmised the cave's history in its relation to the Missouri River and Sinking Creek.

Clem Funk owned the cave in the 1950s and early 1960s, but was unfriendly to cavers from the University of Missouri in their first attempt to map the cave. After a heart attack in 1963, Funk sought to sell his property.

Was Tourist Attraction

Most Boonslick area residents of a certain age recall an iconic Boonville eatery known as Pete's Cafe. Of all the restaurants along old U.S. 40, Pete's was a legend. Founded by Pete Christus, the venerable establishment originally was located at 314 Main Street in downtown Boonville and did well as the result of clever advertising. Christus put in hundreds of signs along the

highway approaching the facility from both directions—many of which were placed at the end of Burma Shave signs. The technique worked and visitors flocked to the restaurant.

When Interstate 70 bypassed Boonville in 1960, Christus took a gamble and relocated his restaurant to an off-ramp setting at the nearby Rocheport exit. The new home was known for its huge dining room wall painting replicating Leonardo Da Vinci's 1498 painting *The Last Supper*.

Later, the establishment closed and the building which housed the Rocheport Pete's Cafe is now the retail center for the Les Bourgeois Vineyards. A number of

other tourist buildings at the off-ramp are deserted and decaying.

But long before the eatery closed, Christus had expansive plans to supplement his restaurant by building a major tourist attraction at the exit, including the cave and surrounding area.

Renamed Boone Cave

Historically it was known as the Rocheport Cave until it was renamed Boone Cave by Christus, who had purchased the property in 1963. The road to the cave was well marked and angled abruptly downward from the top of the river bluff to a level on the banks above the river. The formal dedication took place on June 7, 1965.



Missouri Conservation Department biologist John George inspects the mouth of the Rocheport Cave in 2011, which today is a bat sanctuary and off-limits to the general public. Courtesy Jim Steele

Christus got advice on show cave development from various sources and smoked out the bats to get rid of them. (The Rocheport Cave is now a protected habitat for the endangered bats.)

After paying a nominal fee, one could enter the cave to observe its natural beauty. However, unlike other showcase caves, this one had another entrance back up the hill. Christus's problem was that, when it rained, the cave was a natural collecting point for all the rubbish washed into the sink hole on top, which then entered the cave. It was (and is) known as a "wet" cave and even during the time of commercial use it was the home of a number of bats. Trails and footbridges were washed out several times by flood waters coming through the cave from Sinking Creek.

In 1975, Ernie Wright, a North Carolina businessman, purchased the property in the summer and hired Tony Wayne to restore the show cave operation.

In 1977, Dr. John D. Dorrell bought the property, and opened it again for public tours. He soon died and his wife continued to operate it.

Missouri Department of Conservation agents began keeping track of gray bats in the cave and there was subsequent discussion among state agencies and cavers about acquiring the cave to protect it and the bats. The gray bat count was 25,000.

The show cave ceased operation in 1980 and in September 1987 Dave Babel and Gary Evans bought the property as "Boone Cave, Inc." and proceeded to restore the trails and lights. The show cave operation ceased again in 1993.

Obtained by Conservation Department

On Jan 31, 1996, the conservation commission approved purchasing half of the 51-acre tract and accepting the other half as a gift of stock from Boone Cave, Inc.

In short, the cave and adjacent cabin(s) operated commercially on an intermittent basis from 1965 until 1993, but did not prove profitable.

The acreage, which runs down to the Katy Trail, was named Boone Cave Conservation Area from 1996 until 2001. The name officially was changed to Rocheport Cave Conservation Area in 2001.

An observation platform, pavilion and the log cabin remain on site from the days of commercial operation. Two attempts to install a bat gate in the cave mouth were unsuccessful because of the large amount of water and debris carried by Sinking Creek that goes through the cave. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers had funded the second gate with mitigation funds and the corps

remains a partner in area management.

There are two species of bats in residence, the Indiana (*Myotis sodalists*) bat and the gray bat (*Myotis grisescens*). Both are listed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as "Endangered" and are protected under the Federal Endangered Species Act. The cave habitat is known as a "hibernaculum."³ Currently the sole purpose of the area is to protect these bats from white nose syndrome which is killing the animals nationwide.

Officials note that because of the sensitivity of the bats, the site will not become an open area—the area is visited only rarely and mostly just to check on the bats a few times per year. The cabin is only partially intact. The roof collapsed several years ago and water has been flowing through it for over a decade now and the remaining structure is no longer recoverable.

Article in Newspaper Archives

About seven years ago, renewed interest in the history of the Rocheport Cave and cabin was sparked by well-known Fayette native Wallace Turnage of Phoenix, a retired banker and now an avid hobbyist in genealogical research, particularly as it involves early Howard County settlers. (He is a 1961 Fayette High School graduate and a 1965 Central Methodist University graduate and often returns here for the annual August Fayette All-School Reunion.)

Making contact with this writer at the time,

Turnage asked if we'd seek out an article that had appeared in the December 1, 1964, issue of the *Democrat-Leader*. Titled "Cave Owner Using Log Cabin in Tourist Venture at Cave," the story notes that a log cabin – said then to be more than 100 years old – had been moved from northeast of Fayette (near Burton) to near the Rocheport I-70 exit to be part of a commercial venture by Pete Christus of Boonville.

The 1964 account goes on to explain that the structure had been built by Nero Thompson, father of the late Milton Thompson and grandfather of Mrs. Lewis Collins of Fayette.

Earlier, during that fall of 1964, Bill Akeman – who lived about 10 miles northeast of Fayette – bought 50 acres of land from the Jennie Thompson Summers estate. On the site was a 1½ story log cabin which, many years after its original construction, had been weatherboarded. The article states that when the weatherboarding was removed, the old log structure "appeared to be in quite good shape."

Christus apparently got word of the find and arranged with Akeman to move the cabin, piece-by-piece, to the site of his tourist attraction outside the cave. The story adds that Christus expected to have the venture open by the following spring.



This is the only cabin on the Rocheport Cave grounds today. Courtesy Jim Steele

The house, as originally built, was described as well-constructed with two rooms downstairs and two upstairs, with a sort of breezeway (dog-run) separating the two sections of the structure. “Logs for the walls are notched and set in place, the ones at the top going the full length of the house and secured to the logs immediately below by pegs,” the article notes.

Is it the Nero Thompson Cabin?

As the tourist site developed, one or more other cabins apparently were reconstructed near the cave entrance, but only one remains today. Were the others moved or were they simply swallowed up by time, weather and the encroachment of nature? This then is the \$64-dollar question: Is the remaining cabin the Nero Thompson home originally from Howard County?

Wally Turnage has his doubts. In a letter written several years ago to MDC conservation official William R. Elliott of Jefferson City, Turnage tells of his own research and experience at



Interior view at left shows inside of the remaining cabin as it appeared in 2011. At that time, in spite of roof damage, the inside was in relatively good condition. However, the structure now is only partially standing, succumbing to the elements. Courtesy Jim Steele

the now-abandoned site. (Dr. Elliott, now retired, was the department’s chief cave biologist.)

Turnage stated in his letter: “In the late 1960s my grandmother told me that a cabin owned by my great, great, great grandfather had been moved from northeast of Fayette to Rocheport near the cave. In the 1970s, I went to the cave and saw it when it was part of a commercial development of Pete Christus, owner of Pete’s Cafe.

“Around August of 1990, I took my mother there in order for her to see the cabin and, while on the site, took some pictures.” He enclosed the photos in the letter to Elliott.

Turnage went on to reference the 1964 Democrat-Leader article and the cabin built by Nero Morgan Thompson: “Thompson was one of the first settlers of Howard County who was born October 5, 1794, and died November 23, 1866,” Turnage explains. “He married a daughter of Colden Williams, a veteran of the Revolutionary War, and between her siblings and the children of the marriage, a large number of people in Howard County are related. In fact a number of members in the local Daughters of the

American Revolution chapter came from this lineage.”

Elliott responded to Turnage’s letter, thanking him for sending the photos taken in 1990. His reply reports that (quote), “The remaining cabin is fairly large with a porch on the front and a second floor. My guess is it was modified from the larger cabin in your photos.”

Visiting the Site

In 2011, the Conservation Department was kind enough to provide this writer with access to the area. We were met by natural history biologist John George of the MDC’s Columbia office (George is now wildlife regional supervisor). From the parking lot located across I-70 near the winery retail store on Route BB, we climbed aboard George’s four-wheel-drive truck and proceeded down Roby Farm Road. Then, after unlocking a sliding gate, the vehicle and its passengers made its way down the deeply-rutted road to the site of the former tourist attraction.

The old cabin immediately came into view. The building was relatively well preserved (no longer true today) in spite of the hole in the roof. Being afternoon, no bats were present—but their sounds and smell were evident. The serene, almost eerie, setting deep within the shady ravine – with steep cliffs rising high toward the sky – made it hard to imagine that a visitor was standing in the heart of Missouri, only a short distance from a major interstate highway.

Obviously the hand of nature still is at work in this peaceful sylvan location—nestled where the changing ecology continues as a work in progress,

So, is this sole remaining log cabin near the cave the former home of Howard County pioneer Nero Thompson? Wally Turnage thinks probably not, but perhaps we’ll never know for sure.

What do you think?

END NOTES

¹. Jim Denny, now retired after a long career as a historian with the Missouri Department of Natural Resources, says the legend that Daniel Boone and the Quantrill gang visited the site and that Lewis and Clark stopped there “is false history.”

². Mike Dickey, administrator of the Arrow Rock and Boone’s Salt Lick Historic Sites, says this is incorrect: “Famed frontiersman Daniel Boone is often credited with discovering the salt lick as evidenced by a red granite monument the Daughters of the American Revolution placed at the site in 1913. However, Nathan Boone made it clear in an 1851 interview that he and his brother, Daniel Morgan Boone, not their father, were associated with the salt lick. Nathan found the lick late in 1804 while returning from a hunting trip out west.”

³. Bats favor larger “hibernacula” where large groups may roost together, including natural caves, mines, cellars, and other kinds of underground sites and man-made structures, like ice-houses. Within these hibernacula, the bats are still highly tuned to environmental factors. Little brown bats in northern latitudes hibernate for up to 8 months during the winter, and leave their roosts in the warm spring weather when insect prey is plentiful again. Bats gauge the outside temperature by being attuned to the airflow at the hibernacula entrance, which is driven by temperature differences between inside and outside the hibernacula, allowing bats to leave when the temperature begins to warm.

Ashby-Hodge Gallery Presents ‘The Light Fantastic,’ ‘Home on the Range’

By Cathy Thogmorton

The world of nature is a natural for artists. Whether they are painting plein air, from photographs, or from memory, many artists, regardless of their media, choose to interpret the outdoor world around us all.

Graham also painted a historic set of 12 paintings (known as the Missouri Heritage Series) from around the state, including the mural at the Capital in Jefferson City, the historic Churchill Church in Fulton, The antebellum house Ravenswood, and the schoolhouse and the mill at Watkins Mill, now a State Historic Site.



Above, Watkins Woolen Mill State Historic Site. Many of the buildings that Waltus Watkins spent half a century building – including this three-story woolen mill, depicted by Robert MacDonald Graham Jr. – give visitors a sense of life in the 1870s. The American Paint Horse, below, shows a horse in motion, and demonstrates artist Butch Murphy’s ongoing drive for abstraction coupled with realism. Courtesy Don Cullimore

Dr. Murphy did not begin his career as an artist. Murphy, like many focused young men went to medical school and became a doctor. After some years in the Intensive Care Unit, he decided the stress outweighed the rewards. He gave up his delicate medical tools and turned to art, adopting instead car tools and pieces of metal he finds around farms and on the roads. He shifted from medicine to creating lively, beautiful, healthy models of equine art. Each horse is different from the others in shape,

The same can be said of the work currently featured in Central Methodist University’s Ashby-Hodge Gallery of American Art, titled “The Light Fantastic” and “Home on the Range,” from the works of the late Robert MacDonald Graham Jr. and the surgeon-turned-artist Dr. Everett “Butch” Murphy.

Graham was known for his special touch with the light in his oil paintings, while Murphy is gaining renown for his ability to create horses with large personalities from pieces of farm equipment and other found materials. Together, they have created a gallery for patrons to explore and revel in, regardless of the pieces being examined.

The show runs through Thursday, November 15. The hours are Sundays and Tuesdays through Thursdays from 1:30 – 4:30 p.m. Groups can also set up private tours by contacting Registrar Dr. Joe Geist or Curator of the Gallery Denise Haskamp by calling 660-248-6324.

A native of New York City, Graham picked up a paint brush when he was 14 and at the age of 16 he began studying with Thomas Hart Benton at the Kansas City Art Institute, where he stayed until 1941. He died in 2000 at the age of 81.

In the 1980s, Graham created a set of 12 oil paintings reflecting the beautiful springs, mostly in southeast Missouri, including Big Springs, Blue Springs, Alley Springs, and Bennett Springs. He donated the entire set to the Ashby-Hodge Gallery in 1998.

personality, form, and focus.

In this fall show, Murphy shares seven of his metal horses with the Ashby-Hodge, each with its own purpose and focus on which the viewers can meditate. For instance, *Missing in the Wind* (2017) is comprised of a 55-gallon barrel, rebar, and drilling pipes. The mid-section of the horse is “missing in the wind,” encouraging the viewer to create his own story.



Historian Michael Dickey Guest Speaker at Boonslick BHS Fall Meeting *November 3 at Historic J. Huston Tavern in Arrow Rock*

Missouri historian Michael Dickey will be the featured speaker Nov. 3 at the Boonslick Historical Society (BHS) fall meeting at the historic J. Huston Tavern (1836) in Arrow Rock in Saline County.



The BHS fall meeting begins at 5:30 p.m. with a social hour, followed by the dinner at 6:30 p.m. and then the program. The general public is invited to attend the meeting. Cost of the dinner is \$20 per person. For meal reservations (due by Oct. 26), send a check to Boonslick Historical Society, P.O. Box 426, Boonville, MO 65233.

The title of Dickey's presentation is "The Marmaduke Family of Missouri: A Family Divided" The Marmadukes were one of

the most influential families of Missouri in the years leading to the Civil War. To understand their attitudes and roles in the war it is beneficial to examine their background.

The "Boonslick Country" of central Missouri in the early 19th century was the most fertile and populous area of the state. From 1821 to 1861, this region dominated Missouri's agricultural production, economy and its politics. The Marmadukes and their Sappington and Jackson relatives of Saline County near Arrow Rock, constituted a powerful family political dynasty. The patriarch of this family dynasty was Dr. John Sappington.

Dickey is administrator of the Arrow Rock, Sappington Cemetery and Boone's Lick State Historic Sites in Saline and Howard counties, a position he has held with the Missouri State Parks Division of the Department of Natural Resources since 1986. Arrow Rock has been designated a National Historic Landmark by the National Park Service. Dickey is responsible for eight historic structures dating from the early 19th century to early 20th century most notably the J. Huston Tavern (1834) and the George Caleb Bingham Home (1837). Dickey also researches and interprets cultural themes of the central Missouri region historically known as the "Boonslick Country." He holds a bachelor's degree in art history, from UCM.

Arrow Rock Tavern Is National Historic Landmark

Established in 1834, J. Huston Tavern is also known as Arrow Rock Tavern. The tavern is thought to be the oldest continuously operating restaurant west of the Mississippi River with more than 180 years of continuous service to the public. It is the centerpiece of Arrow Rock State Historic Site and is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

According to the Missouri Department of Natural Resources, Division of Stat Parks, the town of "Philadelphia" was founded on the Arrow Rock Bluff overlooking a ferry crossing on the Missouri River in 1829. The town's name was changed to Arrow Rock in 1833 to coincide with that familiar landmark.

Joseph Huston of Virginia had settled in the area in 1819 and was one of the town commissioners. In November of 1833, he purchased a tract of land in Arrow Rock and the following year began construction of a Federal-style, two and a half story brick house. Large numbers of travelers on the Santa Fe Trail and the Missouri River were passing through Arrow Rock at that time, and Huston may have added a log or frame addition to the house so he could offer overnight accommodations to travelers, and by 1840 he was widely known as a hotelkeeper.

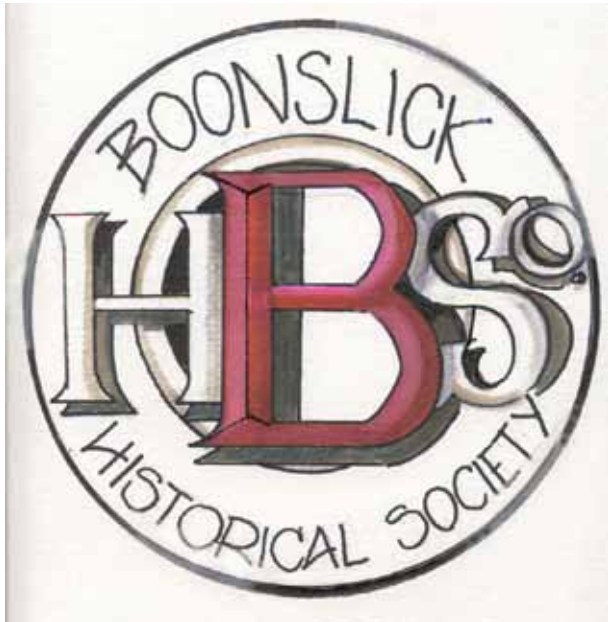
A brick addition to the structure was completed in 1840. The first floor served as a grocery or mercantile store, the second floor functioned as a ballroom and meeting hall. Frame additions housing dining space and additional bedrooms were constructed between 1850 and 1870 and a detached kitchen was incorporated

into the main structure. It began serving as a hotel, restaurant and tavern. Numerous changes in ownership and functions of the structure took place over the years. And in 1923, the D.A.R. persuaded the state legislature to purchase the Tavern for \$5,000, making it the first building in Missouri to be set aside for historic preservation purposes with public funds.

Today, the Tavern operates on Sundays for brunch between 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. in April, and has regular season hours from May into October for serving lunch or dinner from Tuesday through Saturday. For information about services and to make reservations, call 660-837-3200.



BHS Board Candidates to be Voted on Nov. 3



Five members of the Boonslick Historical Society will be candidates for the Board of Directors, with terms beginning on January 1, 2019. This includes two board members seeking re-election and three new board candidates.

Eligible for another two-year term are board VP Brett Rogers of Boonville and director Larry Harrington of Fayette. New board candidates are Cathy Thogmorton of Fayette, Jacque Schaller of New Franklin, and Sue Day of Pilot Grove. They would replace three board members who chose not to seek re-election: President Cindy Bowen of Armstrong, Secretary Denise Haskamp of Glasgow, and Becki Propst of Fayette.

Continuing on the board until 2020 are Carolyn Collings of Columbia, Sam Jewett of Boonville, Mike Dickey of Arrow Rock, Jim Steele and Don Cullimore, both of Fayette.

The election will take place at the fall BHS meeting and dinner November 3 at the J, Huston Tavern in Arrow Rock. President Bowen will conduct a brief business meeting at the start of the meeting, during which members will be asked to vote on board members. Nominations from the floor may be made.

Roslyn Heights DAR House Offering Holiday Season Events

What better way to spend the holiday season than dining in the elegance of an 1890s Victorian house in Boonville known as Roslyn Heights, followed by a guided tour of its 12 high-ceiling rooms, superbly furnished with period pieces.

Located at 821 Main Street, the house is owned by Missouri State Society Daughters of the American Revolution and serves as the organization's state headquarters.

As they do the first week of each December, DAR members invite the public to join them at Roslyn Heights for a delicious soup luncheon and a tour of the house, which is beautifully

decorated for the annual Christmas Open House. The luncheon and tour will be available from December 1 through 8, except on Sunday, between the hours of 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. The cost is \$5 for adults, \$3 for children.

Other holiday events scheduled this December at Roslyn Heights include: "A Johnson Family Christmas," offering daily tours of the house from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., on Sunday from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.; and a special event called "Lights of Love: Honoring Our Country's Heroes" on December 1, with a reception from 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. and tree-lighting ceremony at 5 p.m.

The December 1-8 luncheon cost \$5 for adults, \$3 for children. Daily tours of Roslyn Heights cost \$10 per person (no charge for DAR members). For more information or to make res-



ervations for the luncheon or a tour, contact Connie Lee by email at leec4061@gmail.com or phone 816-230-7191.

Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, Roslyn Heights was built in 1895 by Wilbur T. and Rhoda Stephens Johnson. Architecturally the house is described as "Queen Anne with Romanesque Revival affinities." Of primary importance are the Indiana limestone foundation, tower and buttresses and portecochere.

Romanesque Revival structures are noted for the semi-circular arched openings and massiveness in proportion and are built of masonry, brick, and stone. The Queen Anne style is distinguished mostly by its irregularity in plan, massing, color, texture, and materials (stone, brick, wood shingles, and wood trim). Towers, turrets, projecting bays and porches are other characteristics, along with elements of cut, carved, molding and turned ornamentation. Paneled and decorated chimneys are often dominant.

The Missouri DAR is one the principal organizations dedicated to commemorating the American Revolution and the history of the State of Missouri.



BHS Member Harold Kerr Receives State Genealogical Award

Harold Kerr II, a BHS member from New Franklin, was given the Award of Merit by the Missouri State Genealogical Society during its annual conference in Columbia on August 11.

Kerr is president of the Howard County Society, a chapter of MoSGA, a position he has held since 2004. He was nominated for the award by Howard County Genealogical Society member Patsy Miller, who serves as its secretary and treasure.

The award is given for “exemplary and outstanding performance of duties related to Missouri Genealogy and Family History. The presentation to Kerr was made by Jenna Mills, chair of the MoSGA Awards Committee. The certificate was signed by Mills and MoSGA President Timothy D. Dollens.

Kerr was recognized for his “many accomplishments during his tenure” as president of the Howard County Genealogical Society, including the quarterly newsletter he edits, his outreach to members and assistance with family genealogical research, and his genealogical classes held for the public at the Howard County office in the lower level of the Howard County Public Library.

“I want to thank Patsy for the nomination,” Kerr said. “While it is a ‘feather in my cap,’ I think it also is a good thing for the Howard County Genealogical Society.”

BLRA Annual Meeting Nov. 10 Featuring Storyteller Larry Brown

Well-known cultural geographer and storyteller Larry Brown will be the featured speaker at the Nov. 10 fall meeting of the Boone’s Lick Road Association at the Warren County Historical Society, 102 W. Walton St., Warrenton.

The public is invited to join BLRA members at 1 p.m. for Brown’s presentation titled “Widening the Corridor West: the Role of the Boone’s Lick Road.” A short business meeting will follow the presentation.

Brown is a retired assistant professor of human geography at the University of Missouri-Columbia. He earned a bachelor’s degree in sociology from the University of Nebraska, Lincoln; a master of divinity degree from Christian Theology Seminary, Indianapolis; a master’s degree in geography from the Univer-



sity of Missouri-Columbia; and a doctorate from the College of Education, University of Missouri-Columbia. In addition to teaching at MU, he taught at Stephens College and the Missouri School of Religion. He served as pastor of several congregations in Nebraska, Indiana and Missouri for 30 years before becoming a full-time professor.

Brown is a co-founder and current co-president of the Mid-Missouri Organization for Storytelling (MOST) centered in Columbia, MO, former board member of the National Storytelling Network (NSN), former chair of the Storytelling In Higher Education SIG of NSN, and a member of the National Organization of Biblical Storytellers.

www.boonslickhistoricalsociety.org

Boonslick Historical Society

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Westphalia, settled in 1835 by German immigrants, one of the Missouri Heritage Series paintings by Robert MacDonald Graham Jr. See Ashby-Hodge Gallery of American Art story page 12.