

Miller County Historical Society

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2 0 1 1 - A V E R Y G O O D Y E A R !

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The museum is closed for the winter and will reopen on May 19. Light refreshments will be served at that time.

Looking back at the 2011 museum season, we have concluded it was an excellent year. Our guest register was signed by 1375 people but we recognize that not everyone took the time to sign-in, particularly during museum sponsored events and group tours. There were six special events during the season, and attendance was above average on all occasions.

Though most of our visitors were from the central Missouri area, we had guests from all corners of the state as well as 21 other states. We even had two gentlemen from Cairo, Egypt—still trying to figure out how they found us. There was a couple from Mexico City who came with the Brumley/Schultz Family Reunion.

We have been privileged to host several clubs and organizations, two nursing home groups, several family reunions and stu-

dents from the Eldon school system.

It is always a pleasure to welcome old friends and greet newcomers to our museum. Comments entered on our guest register are complimentary and rewarding to those of us who have worked so hard to prepare the displays and support the activities that make our museum such a local treasure. Thank you all.

We'll be rearranging and refreshing some of the displays over the winter months and be here to welcome everyone back when we reopen on May 19, 2012.



Climax Springs Red Hatters

MUSEUM CLOSSES FOR THE SEASON

We closed the 2011 museum season with a car show and chili supper. Joe Jeffries group provided the music which is always entertaining. Elva Steen's quilt was won by Judy Patterson of Ulman. Other winners were: savings bond donated by Citizen's Bank of Eldon—Louise Martin of Eldon; savings bond donated by Central Bank of Tuscumbia—Connie Prather of Iberia; \$50 cash donated by Bank of St. Elizabeth won by Waldo Steen of Weatherford, TX.

The board met on November 15 and set the following events calendar for 2012:

- Board meeting March 20, 10:00. A nominating committee will be appointed at this time to select candidates for the April election of officers.
- Members' pot-luck and election of officers, April 22 at 1:00. Bring a covered dish.
- Museum opening—May 19, 10:00
- Ice Cream Social—July 14, 11:00
- Chili supper and museum closing—October 20, 11:00

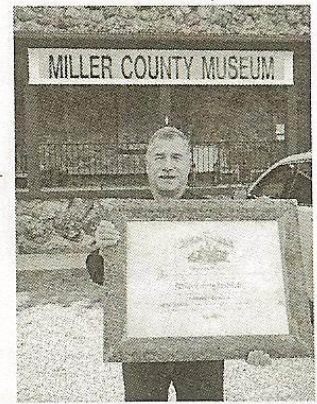
MILLER COUNTY INSTITUTE DIPLOMA COMES HOME

In 1868, under the leadership of William Lumpkin, the community of Spring Garden built a two-story house and opened a private school called Miller County Academy. H. M. Sutton and H. L. Moles took charge in 1879 and changed the name to the Miller County Institute. The building expanded in 1890 and continued operation under the direction of W. A. Lumpkin, J. Ivy Lumpkin and finally A. J. Hensley until June 1905. Since that date there was no private school and the building was turned over to the public school district. It was torn down in 1926.

Pupils came to the Miller County Institute not only from Miller County, but also from adjoining counties and many went out from there well equipped to fight life's battles. You can find a full story on our web site along with photos of several classes.

This past summer we were contacted by **Pauline and Ron Tom** of Mountain City,

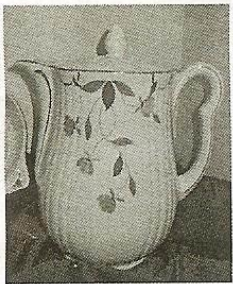
Texas. They wanted to know if we were interested in an unusual item they acquired at a local auction. It was a framed, 1904 diploma from the Miller County Institute, issued to **Mattie Edna Wilcoxson**. We said YES! and in the fall, the Toms flew from Austin, Texas, rented a car and found their way to our museum with their gift. This was an extraordinarily generous thing for them to do since they have no ties to Miller County but went to a great deal of trouble and expense to bring the diploma home. You can see it next summer, hanging above the stove in our school room. Thank you Pauline and Ron!



Ron Tom delivering Spring Garden 1904 diploma

We did a cursory search and were unable to Mattie or her family. There were some Wilcoxsons in the Mt. Nebo area of Morgan County. If you know more about Mattie, please share the information with us.

JEWEL TEA DISHES — A PART OF EVERY HOME



The Jewel Tea Company had its beginning in 1889 with one man, Frank Skiff, and his horse and wagon. There were many tea companies at that time and they all sold door-to-door, giving premium coupons with grocery purchases. Frank Skiff and his partner Frank Ross took turns driving the delivery wagon and soliciting new business, supplying everything from baking powder and other grocery items to cleaning supplies, linens, cookware and china.

Jewel Tea had an innovative twist to their marketing plan, delivering their premiums with the initial purchase, to be paid out with a later trade. An alliance was formed with the Hall China Company of East Liverpool, Ohio to supply high quality, every-day dishes, designed

especially for Jewel Tea customers and these soon became a common item in our homes in Miller County. Many lovely patterns of dinnerware and cookware were produced, but one that was especially popular in the 1930's and 1940's is Autumn Leaf.

These dishes were produced as late as the 1970's and have become highly collectible in recent years. **Freda Flaughter** amassed a huge collection over time and recently contacted our museum to see if we would have an interest in owning and displaying these dishes. We are delighted to be able to exhibit her wide and varied collection.

Doris Martin Wiggins worked her artistic magic and created a new display near the service kitchen in our lower level. Thank you Freeda!

DUES ARE DUE

For those of you who pay your dues annually, it's time again and it's still a bargain. The board has decided to hold our membership dues to the same rate as previous years, even though the price of everything else is going up and up. Please note the "individual" memberships are per person. If you wish to join as a couple, you will need to choose a "family membership". Life-

time memberships are per individual only. Membership entitles you to attend the pre-opening pot luck in April, receive this newsletter, vote and hold office should you so desire. Our present membership numbers 465—pretty impressive.

You will find a membership form on the back of this newsletter.

P R E S I D E N T ' S M E S S A G E

The end of the year is always a time for reflection and review. I'd like to summarize some of the Miller County Historical Society's 2011 milestones and achievements.

The creation of the MCHS Foundation, Inc. continues to be a highlight. We cleared all the legal hurdles required by the state and federal governments and received official notification from the IRS in August confirming our tax exempt status under section 501 (c)(3). The Foundation was established through the generous gift of Waldo S. and Alice Steen. Its primary purpose is to support the work of the Miller County Historical Society *in perpetuity*. Through planned giving, we can assure that resources will be available to fund the Society's present programs as well as those that may be needed in the future. All lifetime membership fees, memorial gifts and bequests made through wills and estate planning methods, as well as designated contributions will be placed in this Foundation. A separate Board of Directors will ensure prudent financial management of the funds with a goal of 5% of total assets distributed annually to the Miller County Historical Society. Our hope is that the Foundation will provide the Society a degree of financial security over the coming years regarding its annual budget as well as continuing the ongoing program of enhancing and improving the museum.

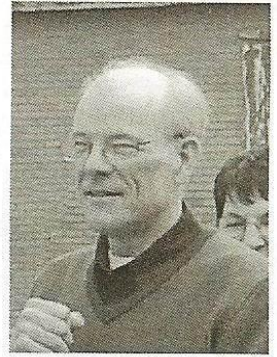
Our museum volunteer staff continues to grow in number as well as enthusiasm. Meeting every Monday throughout the year the staff, under the supervision of museum director **Nancy Thompson**, performs many helpful services including organization of files and records, improving and creating museum displays, and assisting the board members with maintenance work to keep our building and grounds from deteriorating. I have featured several of the volunteer staff in my Progress

Notes on our website, including **Harold and Joy Flaucher, Diane Berkbigler, Karen Smith, Catharine Ponder, Doris Wiggins and Jody Newman.**

Our website continues to attract readers increasingly every year. At the end of this year we will have had nearly 50,000 unique 'hits' to the site since its inauguration in April of 2007.

Every week we average about 200 to 250 unique 'hits' from Internet readers. Most are from the USA but a few readers each week are attracted to the site from various locations around the world. The website is quite complete regarding Miller County's history and is especially attractive due to the large number of high quality photographs taken years ago of early settlers, political leaders and other important figures who contributed to the establishment and growth of the county. If you haven't looked up the website you can find it at this URL: www.millercountymuseum.org. I write a weekly historical narrative titled 'Progress Notes' which are found on the President's Page. Our noted Miller County historian, Peggy Hake, provides more information than any other resource for the website through her 'Window to the Past' articles and many biographies.

We are very grateful to the Miller County community as well as former Miller Countians who now live far away for their support of the museum and the Historical Society. If you have not visited our museum you should make that a #1 priority next year, when, if past history is any indication, the museum will offer more new displays and historical resources than ever before.



Joe Pryor, our President and Good-Will Ambassador

M E R R Y C H R I S T M A S A N D H A P P Y N E W Y E A R
F R O M O U R H O U S E T O Y O U R H O U S E

The Miller County Historical Society Board members are, from left, Greg Pemberton, Museum Director Nancy Thompson, Treasurer Betty Kalenbach, Karen Smith, Jack Brumley, Connie Pralther, President Joe Pryor, Secretary Cathrine Ponder, MCHS Foundation Director Judy Pryor, Helen Schulte, Vice President Carl McDonald, Wanda Wright, Gary Carrender and Jim Clark.



DONOR RECOGNITION

We have received donations from the following people this past quarter:

Paul & Marge Howard

John & Kathy Fields

Cookie Thelen

John & Megan Pryor

Waldo & Alice Steen

Contributions were made to our newly created foundation by the following people:

Morgan Pope

Joe & Judy Pryor

Susie & Joe Pryor made a memorial contribution in the name of Betty Lou Messersmith Smith who recently passed away.

THANK YOU EVERYONE!

Annual memberships are renewable in January of each calendar year. You can show your support for our organization and museum by filling out the application below and sending it, along with your payment, to the address shown..

Miller County Historical Society
Membership Registration

Please fill in the form and mark your membership choice below

Name: _____

Address _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

Email Address: _____

- _____ Individual membership—\$10
 _____ Family membership—\$15
 _____ Individual lifetime membership—\$50
 _____ Institutional Sustaining Members—\$15 per organization

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Internet provided by:

Socket[®]

www.socket.net
1-800-SOCKET-3

Visit our web site:
<http://millercountymuseum.org>

*Thank you for your
Continued support*