

Missouri Times

STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF MISSOURI / *Winter 2026*



Inside



7



10



19

- 1 From Frankenstein to Distinguished Missouri Historian
- 2 Transitions and Tributes Highlight Annual Meeting as New Leadership Takes the Helm
- 4 Meet Joel Rhodes: SHSMO's New Executive Director
- 6 The Not-So-O.K. Origins of "O.K."
- 7 Uncovering a "Lost" Journal from the 1819-1820 Yellowstone Expedition on the Missouri River
- 8 Missouri Celebrates the 250th Anniversary of American Independence
- 9 Missouri History Day Contest Season Builds on U.S. Semi-quincentennial
- 10 How the Ste. Geneviève Militia Defended St. Louis in the American Revolution
- 12 Sculpting Missouri Stories: Three New Additions to SHSMO's Art Collection
- 13 Preserving and Sharing Tom Engelhardt's Editorial Legacy
- 14 Saturday Nights at Mooneyham Junction Where the Music Played On
- 16 Join the Journey: Missouri Marks Route 66's Centennial with Exhibits, Events, and Online Experiences
- 18 Papers of *Star Trek* Fandom Organizer Beamed Aboard the St. Louis Research Center
- 19 Jones-Lemon Papers Detail a Century of Agriculture, Education, and Civic Leadership in Northwest Missouri
- 20 Volunteer Spotlight: Barb Shettlesworth

Missouri Times is published by the State Historical Society of Missouri. Please join or renew your annual membership to receive this seasonal magazine in the mail.

EDITOR
Beth Pike

MANAGING EDITOR
John Brenner

GRAPHIC DESIGN
Kristie Lee

CONTRIBUTORS
Bill Eddleman
Haley Frizzle-Green
Doug Genens
Danielle Griego
Laura Jolley
Lily Kleinhenz
Maggie Mayhan
A.J. Medlock
Joel Rhodes
Aubrey Rowden
Stacia Schaefer
Kathleen Seale
Molly Sloan
Joan Stack

CONTACT
contact@shsmo.org
(573) 882-7083
SHSMO.ORG

COVER PHOTO



Portrait of sculptor Vinnie Ream working on a bust of Abraham Lincoln, oil on canvas by George Caleb Bingham. Painted in 1876, the centennial of the United States. Part of the SHSMO Art Collection.

Popular on Social Media

Followers loved exploring our recently digitized maps, like the 1974 general highway map we featured from Butler County, Missouri.

Join us for the conversation on Facebook & Instagram!



From Frankenstein to Distinguished Missouri Historian

BY BETH PIKE

Gary Kremer, who recently retired as SHSMO's executive director, sat down with Senator Roy Blunt for a conversation about the Missouri that he grew up in and how the state has changed and impacted his life. Their conversation was part of the My Missouri Lecture Series following the 2025 annual meeting. As a former Missouri Secretary of State, Sen. Blunt fondly recalled his occasional travels with Kremer, who served under him as the state archivist in the mid-1980s.

"There was nowhere you could go where Gary didn't have a story to tell," said Blunt, who began with a question to Kremer about his hometown of Frankenstein in Osage County, a little-known town with a well-known name.

"The most generally accepted story is that the community had started in a valley along a creek and they wanted to move to the high ground. A man name Franken owned the land where they wanted to establish the church and school. It was very hilly and rocky, so they called it Franken's *stein* or Franken's stone."

Kremer's own story began with his German Catholic upbringing in this farming community. His paternal ancestors came to Osage County from Germany in the late 1840s. His mother's father arrived from Germany in 1906. His parents settled on a farm near Frankenstein after his father returned from World War II. Ben Kremer fought in tough battles in New Guinea but never shared these stories with his son or others. Kremer said his father, who had worked for the railroad, became a tenant farmer so he wouldn't be away from his family.

After experiencing flooding from the Missouri River, the Kremer family moved to Frankenstein to live on higher ground where they continued to grow their own food and raise meat. "My mom's goal was to can one hundred quarts of everything. We ate chicken every day. I still like fried chicken; It's one of my favorite meals," said Kremer.

The desire to have indoor plumbing may have attracted 13-year-old Kremer to attend St. Thomas Seminary in Hannibal. "I never had a shower until I went to the seminary. We didn't have indoor running water," said Kremer, who was also thinking of possibly going to college even though his parents never attended high school. "We didn't



Gary Kremer, SHSMO executive director emeritus, tells a story about his youth while in conversation with Senator Roy Blunt (seated right), Nov. 22, 2025.



Kremer with his pet pig, Petunia, 1958.

know anyone who had an education except the priest and the nuns. They were role models for us in that regard," said Kremer.

Admitting that he enjoyed playing sports far more than being in the classroom, Kremer was moved by President John F. Kennedy's inaugural address in 1961 and set his sights to become a social worker. He attended nearby Lincoln University, but the impact of the Vietnam War and the Civil Rights movement took him on a new path to read history to understand the world. Under the tutelage of Dr. Lorenzo Greene at Lincoln University, Kremer studied the history of marginalized people. He went on to earn a PhD in history from American University and came back to Missouri, where he would teach history, become the state archivist, and eventually serve as the executive director of the State Historical Society of Missouri for 21 years.

Kremer was recruited to stay and teach in Washington, DC, after receiving his doctorate, but he was pulled back to the place he has always called home. "I loved DC. It is a great city. But my family was in Missouri. My roots were in Missouri. I'm a Missourian. I couldn't live anywhere else," said Kremer.

Transitions and Tributes Highlight Annual Meeting as New Leadership Takes the Helm

Members of the State Historical Society of Missouri ushered in a new era in leadership at the Society's annual meeting on November 22, 2025, welcoming Robert Clayton III as president of the Board of Trustees and Joel Rhodes as executive director. The trustees elected Clayton for a three-year term; he succeeds Senator Roy Blunt, who will continue to serve as a trustee. They also recognized Senator Blunt with the Distinguished Service Award, the highest award bestowed by the State Historical Society. He has served as a trustee since 2005.

Clayton is a judge on the Missouri Court of Appeals for the Eastern District and a resident of Hannibal. He was previously chairman of the Missouri Public Service Commission and a partner at Clayton and Curl, LLC. Elected as a state legislator in 1994, Clayton served for eight years in the Missouri House of Representatives. He sponsored the house companion bill to legislation that created the Missouri Historic Preservation Tax Credit, which encourages investment in historic buildings. Clayton has served as a trustee of the Society since 2013.

The board also elected Anne McGregor of Branson as vice president. McGregor is a third-generation owner of Herschend Family Entertainment, which includes Silver Dollar City, Dollywood, Stone Mountain Park, and the Harlem Globetrotters among its properties. McGregor serves as chair of the Herschend Family's philanthropic investment arm, the Neighbor Company, and is active in her community of Branson and southwest Missouri, serving on various boards. Columbia resident Edward W. Scavone was reelected as treasurer of the Society. Scavone is president and CEO of Central Bank of Boone County in Columbia. He is an active citizen in mid-Missouri, serving on the



Members of the SHSMO Board of Trustees stand for a group photo before the annual meeting, Nov. 22, 2025. Photos by L.G. Patterson.

boards of Woodhaven and Heart of Missouri United Way. Scavone has been a trustee of the Society since 2014.

Also at the State Historical Society's annual meeting, longtime executive director Gary Kremer retired from his position leading the Society through much growth and expansion, including the construction of its new building headquarters in Columbia. Kremer will continue to serve the Society as executive director emeritus and senior fellow, Center for Missouri Studies. Joel Rhodes has joined the State Historical Society as the seventh executive director since its founding in 1898. He earned his PhD and MA degrees from the University of Missouri-Kansas City. Rhodes is also professor emeritus at Southeast Missouri State University, where he taught history and public history for twenty-four years and served as associate dean.

In other business at the annual meeting, four newcomers were elected to the Board of Trustees, including Robert "Bob" Brinkmann of Defiance, who is the chief



Senator Roy Blunt receives SHSMO's Distinguished Service Award from board president Robert Clayton III and Joel Rhodes, executive director.



Benjamin Moore accepts the Mary C. Neth Prize from Gary Kremer for his article in the *Missouri Historical Review*. Patricia Cleary won the Missouri History Book Award and Brooks Blevins received the James W. Goodrich and Lynn Wolf Gentzler *Missouri Historical Review* Award.



Attendees gather in the lobby at the SHSMO annual meeting.



SHSMO President Robert Clayton III addresses members at the annual meeting.

executive officer and founder of Brinkmann Constructors, headquartered in St. Louis and operating in 40 states. Also joining the board is Sarah Graff of Moberly. She is the director of special projects for U.S. Congressman Sam Graves and is active in civic organizations including the Omar Bradley Memorial, Library, and Museum. Zora Mulligan of West Plains is joining both the board and its executive committee. Mulligan is the chancellor of Missouri State University–West Plains and previously served as executive vice president for Missouri State University and commissioner of Higher Education for the State of Missouri. Jarod Roll of Columbia was elected as a new trustee. He is professor of Missouri history in the Kinder Institute on Constitutional Democracy and a faculty member of the Department of History at the University of Missouri.

Meet Joel Rhodes

SHSMO's New Executive Director

Briefly tell us about your early years and where you grew up.

I grew up in Pittsburg, Kansas, in the extreme southeastern corner of that state, just across the line from Joplin, Missouri. The oldest of four – with a brother and two sisters – I've turned out to be a fairly stereotypical first-born: ambitious, overachieving, and so forth. And I am also the product of an idyllic Gen X childhood. We're those kids born between 1965 and 1980 who were raised on limited parental supervision and Saturday morning cartoon television. We roamed the undeveloped vacant lots, ponds, and woods just beyond suburbia's edge, returning home every night when the streetlights came on. That small-town, self-reliant, and do-it-yourself approach still serves me well.

Who were your early mentors?

My dad Jim Rhodes. Shakespeare said it best (of course), "more is thy due than more than all can pay." Even after all these years I'm still sheepish when people call me Dr. Rhodes. You see, Dr. Rhodes was *my dad*. He taught a simple lesson which characterized his approach to life, "Do good, have fun," which is the mantra for the whole Rhodes family. The other is Larry Garman, the Pittsburg Purple Dragons legendary football coach and member of the Missouri Sports Hall of Fame. Like all Gen X boys in my hometown, I dreamed of playing under the Friday night lights for Coach Garman and when my turn finally came, I was fortunate enough to help deliver his first state championship.



SHSMO executive director Joel Rhodes addresses members of the State Historical Society at the Annual Meeting, Nov. 22, 2025.

What first sparked your interest in learning about the past?

My earliest years unfolded amidst the sound and fury of the Vietnam era, which captured my imagination and never let go. So, with the sixties as the backdrop, my grandpa and great-grandpa – Edwin and Louis Holley – captivated me with their storytelling. Such tales of the Ozarks, coal mining, railroading, and soldiering are absolutely the first steps in dedicating my life to understanding our past. If you had ever met those two characters you would immediately say, "oh, that's where he gets it from."

Tell us about your academic journey and important turning points.

During my senior year of high school, I took a history class at Pittsburg State University. What a great litmus test to see if I really had what it took to seriously study history. Well, Virginia Laas taught that class, forty-one years ago. She introduced me to the concept of "social history," or how historical forces impact the lives of

ordinary people. The second turning point is a grad school encounter with Janet Bruce-Campbell, the director of the Johnson County Museums in suburban Kansas City. The field of public history was virtually unknown to me, but she offered me a job in historic preservation and curation. I accepted, curating Cold War-era and Kansas City-themed exhibits and conducting tours of the restored 1950s All-Electric House.

You met your wife, Jeanie, while living in Cape Girardeau, and you raised three children together. Can you share with us a bit about your family and what you enjoy doing when you're not at the office?

Jeanie and I met on Halloween, so that time of year remains special. Our son, Alex, the oldest, is a journeyman electrician in St. Louis. Olivia is an attorney in Kansas City. And Ella just graduated from Southeast Missouri State and is taking up the family business as a public historian and preservationist. Jeanie and I call ourselves "adventure buddies"

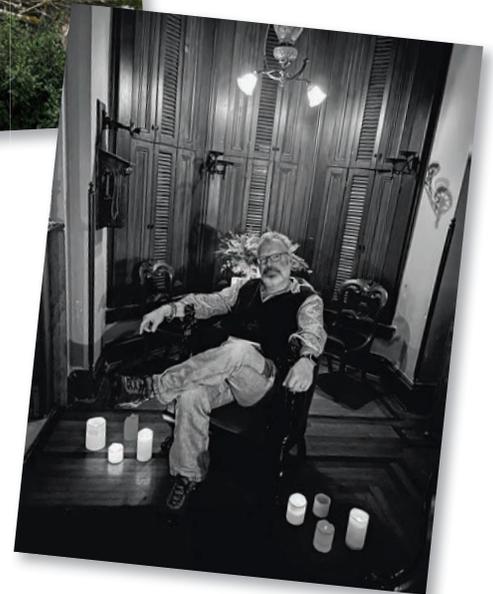


The Rhodes family celebrates Ella's graduation at Southeast Missouri State University, Cape Girardeau, December 2025. Left to right: Joel, Jeanie, Ella, Olivia, and Alex.



Left: Joel and Jeanie Rhodes hike in Canmore, Alberta, Canada, 2024.

Below: Joel Rhodes prepares for a "ghost storytelling" tour at The Glenn House in Cape Girardeau, 2022. Joel served on the board of directors for the 1883 Victorian home that was restored as a historic museum.



because of our shared passion for travel. She remains the only person I've ever known that's been bitten by a wild monkey on the banks of the Amazon River in Ecuador. Returning to our ancestral homes in Ireland and Scotland are next on the list! As cyclists, access to the Katy Trail is perhaps our favorite thing about moving to Columbia!

For two decades, you taught history and served as an associate dean at SEMO, and you were an active member of the Cape Girardeau community. What was your favorite part about teaching?

Helping people come to their love of history honestly. Teaching history in the classroom is meaningful, and I did it for thirty-five years. But public historians are better positioned to help people find where the distinctive threads of their individual lives are woven into the textured and rich tapestry of our shared heritage. Along these seams, there's an "a-ha" moment of curiosity and wonder where history truly comes alive. Seeing people experience that never gets old.

Is there a particular scholarly project that you're most proud of?

I had a tremendously hard time learning to read as kid, so authoring seven books still makes me grin. The biography of Louis Houck is my favorite, and honestly, probably my best work. The inherent intimacy between historian and subject makes it a powerful experience. *Growing Up in a Land Called Honalee: the Sixties in the Lives of American Children* is my most ambitious project to date and certainly the most fun to write. The title comes from Peter, Paul, and Mary's "Puff the Magic Dragon" song, so I needed permission from Peter Yarrow. After several gracious phone conversations, the folksinger eventually autographed a copy for me, signing it "Love, Puff's Daddy, Peter Yarrow."

What are your goals as SHSMO's new executive director?

The real trick to being a historian is to know enough to speak intelligently on just about any subject. But

far more importantly, know where to look up the details. We're the place to look up those details. So, for history enthusiasts at every level of training and experience, the State Historical Society of Missouri should ultimately be your destination. My sensibilities are informed by all those years teaching and grounded in local historical societies, genealogy groups, roundtables, exhibition halls, and historic house museums. Those are the places I gravitate toward. The State Historical Society is the flagship of Missouri history, and we'll build on our role as a resource for meeting real classroom and public history needs.

The Not-So-O.K. Origins of “O.K.”

BY LAURA JOLLEY

ETYMOLOGY is the study of the origin of words, and how our understanding of words changes as new evidence emerges. Allen Walker Read, etymologist and professor of English at Columbia University, is credited with the discovery of some of the first uses of the word “O.K.,” and his personal and professional papers can be found at the State Historical Society of Missouri. Early in Read’s career, he taught English at the University of Missouri and worked with well-known Missouri place-name scholar Robert Ramsay. He left MU in 1928 to become a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford before moving to New York.

Read began his work on the origins of O.K. in 1941. He scoured mid-nineteenth-century New York newspapers for examples of use of the word. Read discovered that in the year 1840, when President Martin Van Buren was running for reelection, a political group was established to help with the cause and named themselves the Democratic O. K. Club. He presented this new information in an article for the *Saturday Review of Literature* in 1941. According to Read, it was common practice for political clubs to keep the meaning of their names a secret, but it turned out that O. K. stood for Old Kinderhook, New York, Van Buren’s birthplace. O.K. became a rallying cry for radical Democrats who chanted, “Down with the Whigs, boys, O. K.”

American English scholar H. L. Mencken wrote to congratulate Read on May 7, 1941. He said, “It seems to me to be plain that you solve the O. K. problem definitely and finally. Why anyone never thought of Old Kinderhook before I simply can’t

imagine.” Albert Matthews, an expert on Americanisms at the time, wrote, “Hurrah! A thousand congratulations on your paper, received this morning. I won’t deny that a twinge or two of envy has entered my soul, for had I been a New Yorker instead of a Bostonian the glory of unearthing the origin of O. K. would have been mine, not yours.”

Getting his findings into the *Dictionary of American English* (DAE), however, was not as easy as Read had hoped. At issue was the DAE’s unwillingness to abandon earlier evidence of O.K.’s history. Read and the editor of the DAE, Woodford Agee Heflin, spent years attacking one another over Heflin’s refusal to change or replace the *Dictionary’s* etymology with Read’s evidence. Heflin even called Read a fascist over the debate but later apologized. Read wrote to Matthews in 1941, lamenting the situation. He said, “I had hoped that the DAE entry on O.K. would be definitive, and I did my best to make it: but since they seemed bent on making a mess of it, I could see only one course open to me in the interests of scholarship— withdrawing permission to use the newly discovered material.”

Read discovered new evidence for the origins of O.K. in 1962. After combing through newspapers again, he found use of the word in the *Boston Morning Post* on March 23, 1839. He argued that the 1830s were a time of word play, and abbreviations were used extensively when local papers were edited. The word “O.K.” was an abbreviation of “Oll Korrekt” used by editor Charles Gordon Greene. Read explained, “While O.K. had a certain currency from the spring of 1839,



Allen Walker Read, 1934.

deriving from ‘oll correct,’ in a fad for misspelled initials, it took a fresh, independent start in the spring of 1840, deriving from a slogan adopted by a Tammany political club, ‘Old Kinderhook.’”

Read and Heflin continued to write to each other regarding their opinions. Heflin authored a paper in 1962 titled “OK and Its Incorrect Etymology,” which Read reviewed and for which he offered some corrections. Heflin wrote to Read in 1962 to say, “As you know, I have had an interest in the history of O.K. for a long time. My primary concern, as before, is to search out the evidence and to interpret it correctly. I know you second me in this. I wish I were now in New York to follow up. Together we might hope to run down the true story.” Read may have responded with “O.K.”

Laura Jolley is the assistant director, manuscripts, at the State Historical Society of Missouri.

Uncovering a “Lost” Journal from the 1819–1820 Yellowstone Expedition on the Missouri River

BY JOHN BRENNER

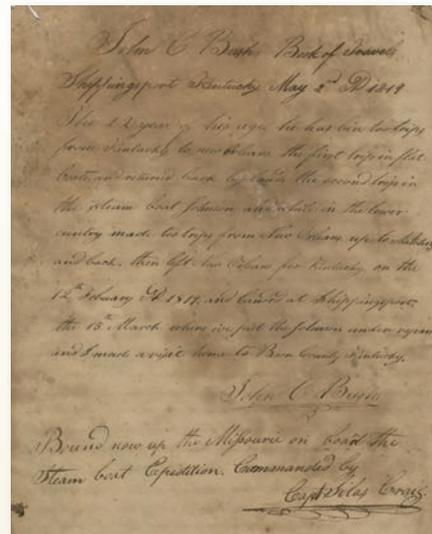
Always looking for something more to publish, the editors of the *Missouri Historical Review* are lucky to have the State Historical Society’s archives to explore. Last summer we discovered, hiding in plain sight, the journal of John C. Bush, a member of a military expedition in 1819–1820 that introduced steamboats on the Missouri River and marked the largest effort the United States had yet made to control the western lands of the Louisiana Purchase. Though historians and the *Review* itself have studied several other firsthand accounts of the expedition, Bush’s journal, donated to the Society in 1991 by one of his descendants, had escaped attention. So we decided to publish excerpts from it, beginning this past October, and concluding in the current January issue.

The expedition took shape in the years after the War of 1812 ended, as high officials in Washington clamored for the nation to use a time of relative peace to launch an excursion into the lands bought from France more than a decade earlier. Venturing up the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers, it became known as the Yellowstone Expedition, as its most ambitious goal was to establish a fort and trading

post on the Missouri at the mouth of the Yellowstone River, more than two thousand miles upriver from St. Louis.

Bush, a twenty-two-year-old Kentuckian, landed a spot on one of the six steamboats put in use on the Missouri River. Steamboats, still in their infancy, proved an unfortunate choice. Confronted with the daunting prospect of ascending a wild river full of submerged trees, shifting sandbars, and swift and treacherous currents, Bush’s boat, the *Expedition* made it only as far as Cow Island, about where Leavenworth, Kansas, is today. The crew switched to keel-boats for the rest of the voyage to the winter camp at Council Bluff near what is now Omaha, Nebraska.

As a civilian and a boat crewman, Bush offers a perspective on the expedition and its travails that differs from other surviving accounts. Most inhabitants of the Missouri River’s pioneer settlements, including an eighty-four-year-old Daniel Boone, were thrilled by the novelty of the steamboats passing by, but one father and son offered armed resistance instead. There were no US settlements beyond Fort Osage, and the men had to rely mostly on what they could hunt or forage. Through it all,



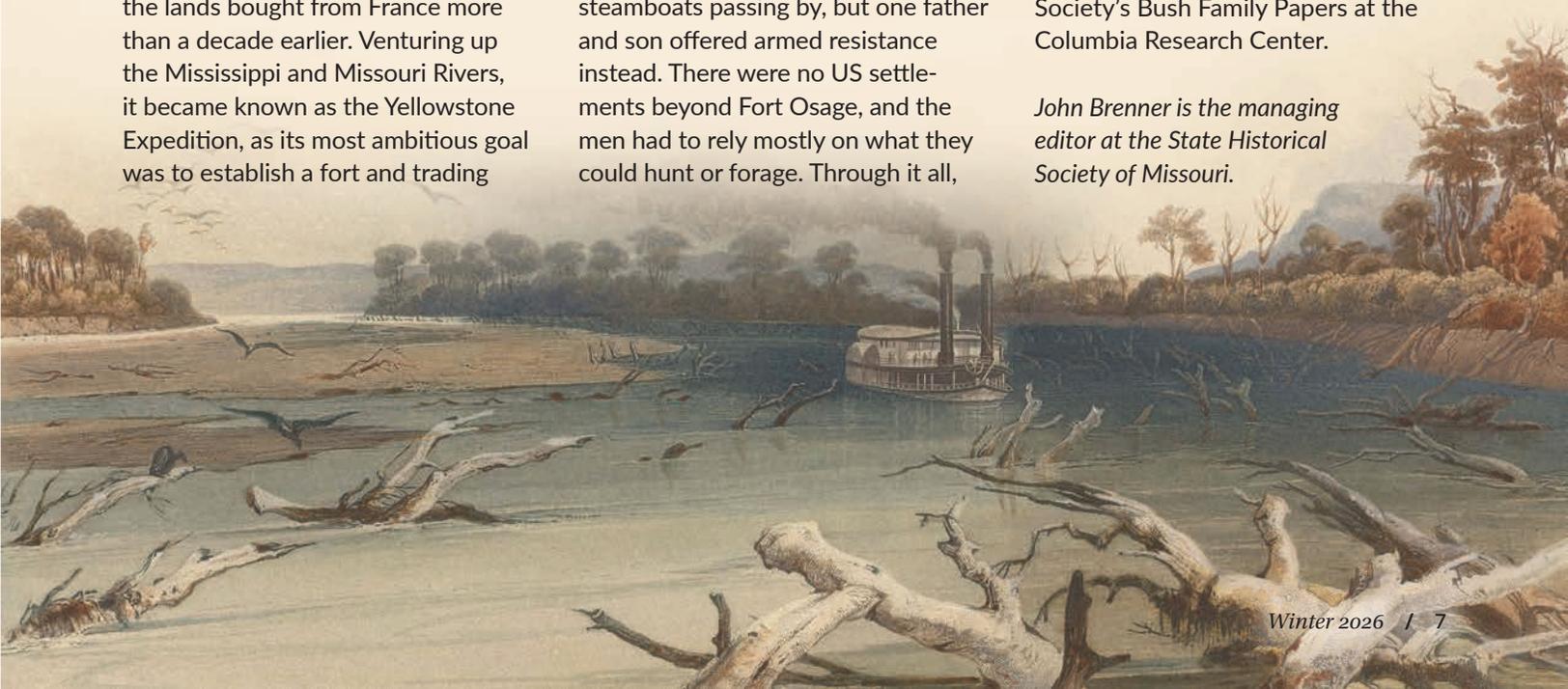
A page from the journal of John C. Bush at the start of his journey with the Missouri Expedition, 1819.

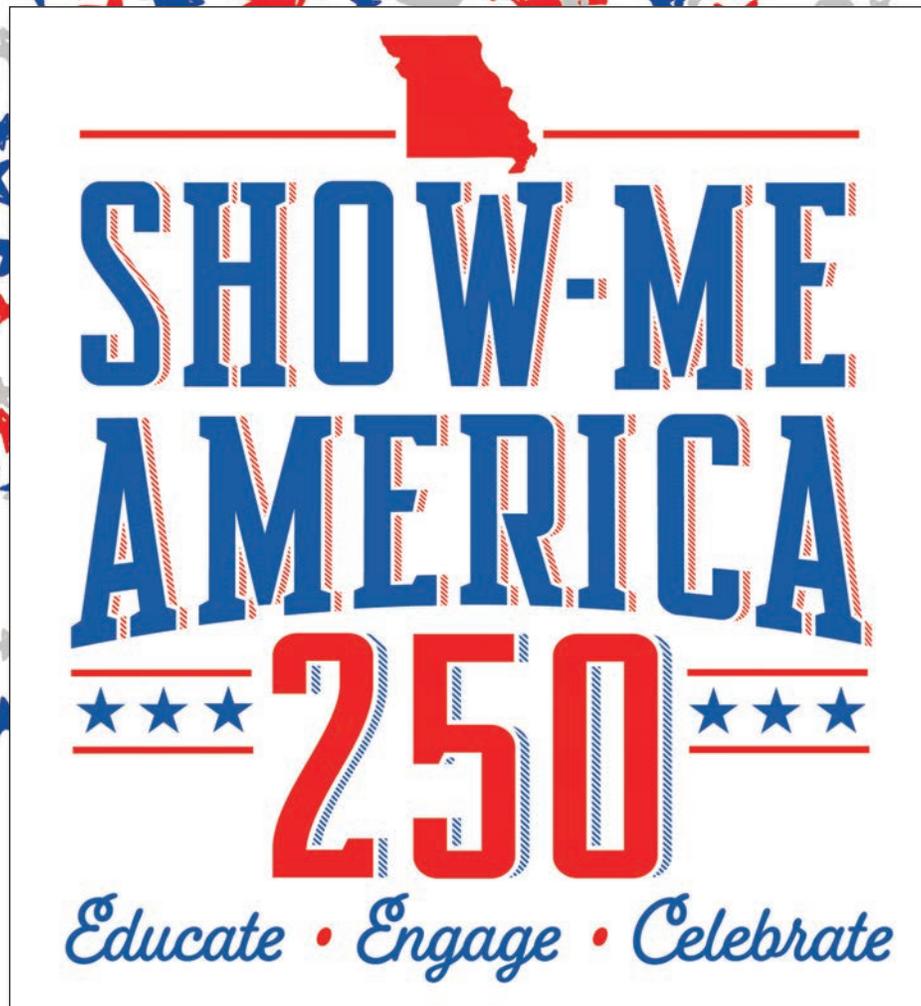
Background photo: Snags (Sunken Trees) on the Missouri, Karl Bodmer print from *Travels in the Interior of North America*, 1841, SHSMO Art Collection.

the boats made tedious, backbreaking progress, sometimes stopping for the night in sight of where they had started in the morning.

The expedition on the Missouri fell short of reaching the Yellowstone, never getting past Council Bluff. Yet Bush’s account reveals how remarkable it appeared to Missourians living along the river in 1819 and 1820. The handwritten journal and a typescript of the original document are part of the State Historical Society’s Bush Family Papers at the Columbia Research Center.

John Brenner is the managing editor at the State Historical Society of Missouri.





Missouri Celebrates the 250th Anniversary of American Independence

SHSMO is offering a variety of book talks, music, publications, and presentations, both online and in person, as the nation celebrates the semiquincentennial of the U.S. Declaration of Independence in 2026. A new season of the *My Missouri* podcast, hosted by Sean Rost, SHSMO assistant director, research, focuses on Missouri's history in the years leading up to the American Revolution and then through statehood in 1821. The first episode, to

be released at the end of January, will feature Greg Olson, author of *Indigenous Missourians*.

Cape Girardeau Research Center coordinator Bill Eddleman is writing a monthly column in the *Southeast Missourian* on the Revolutionary War veterans who settled in the Cape Girardeau area. Also, Eddleman's recent episode of SHSMO's Basic Genealogy series, "Documenting Your Revolutionary War Ancestor," is available on the Society's website.

SHSMO is partnering with the Kinder Institute on Constitutional Democracy at the University of Missouri for a series of monthly lectures through May that reflect on America's 250th from a global perspective. These events are free and open to the public.

SHSMO-sponsored programs will be updated throughout the year on our website. To learn more about what's happening around the state, visit showme250.mo.gov.

Missouri History Day Contest Season Builds on U.S. Semiquincentennial

BY DANIELLE GRIEGO

Each year, anticipation and excitement for Missouri History Day intensifies as students show their work at regional contests. After months spent researching sources in museums, archives, and libraries, gathering oral histories, and building projects inspired by the 2026 annual theme *Revolution, Reaction, and Reform in History*, young historians are ready to share their research with fellow students and judges. They present their findings as websites, documentaries, performances, exhibits, or papers. During the contest season, students showcase their research, verbal, and critical-thinking skills.

This contest year is particularly special because it coincides with the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. Celebrations of

this event are set to take place across Missouri. To commemorate the milestone for the Missouri History Day program, contest organizers will give away pocket-sized booklets containing the U.S. Constitution and the Declaration of Independence to students at regionals. The America 250 Commission graciously provided funding to purchase the booklets for each of the eight Missouri regions: Maryville, Kansas City, central Missouri, Joplin, St. Louis, Kirksville, Springfield, and Cape Girardeau.

The top three students in their respective categories at each of the regional contests will advance to the state contest, administered by the State Historical Society of Missouri, where they will compete for various special prizes and a chance to move to the national level of the competi-

tion. The state contest will be held at the University of Missouri–Columbia on April 25, 2026. Volunteer judges are needed to offer constructive feedback on student projects as well as to determine which ones will advance to the national contest. First- and second-place winners in each category at the state contest will serve as Missouri’s delegates on the national stage at College Park, Maryland, in June. At the national contest, students will compete with nearly 3,000 participants from across the country and the globe.

To learn more about the program and how to sign up as a judge, please visit nhdmo.org.

Danielle Griego is the educational program coordinator at the State Historical Society of Missouri.

National History Day State Contest
at the University of Missouri-Columbia

JUDGES NEEDED

April 25, 2026

LEARN MORE AT
NHDMO.ORG/JUDGES
or email nhdmo@shsmo.org

MISSOURI
HISTORY DAY

How the Ste. Geneviève Militia Defended St. Louis in the American Revolution

BY BILL EDDLEMAN

Relecting on the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution, it might seem unlikely that southeastern Missouri had any role. However, hostilities did directly affect those who lived in Ste. Geneviève. Lands west of the Mississippi were French until the 1762 Treaty of Fontainebleau, when France ceded Louisiana to Spain. Lands east of the Mississippi went to Great Britain under the 1763 Treaty of Paris, which ended the Seven Years' War. Many French inhabitants of the Illinois Country, not wishing to live under British rule, moved west of the river to St. Louis or Ste. Geneviève.

Spain entered the American Revolutionary War against Great Britain in 1779. The Spanish required a more formalized militia in their colonies than had the French. The volunteer *milice* (militia), organized in Ste. Geneviève in 1770, consisted of well-trained men aged 15 to 50, with officers assigned and promoted by the Spanish government. The *Capitaine de Milice* was François Vallé père.

The lieutenant governor of Upper Louisiana, Fernando de Leyba, stationed in St. Louis, received word in April 1780 of an invading force of British-led allied Native tribes. The sole defensive structure in St. Louis was a dilapidated wooden fort, so he ordered four stone defensive towers to be built. Only one three-story tower, called Fort San Carlos, was hastily completed. It stood at the site of present-day Fourth and Walnut Streets near the Gateway Arch.





The Battle of St. Louis, May 26, 1780, by Mitchell Nolte, Courtesy of THGC Publishing.

Leyba quickly called in hunters and nearby local militias. The largest non-local contingent Leyba ordered into St. Louis was the Ste. Geneviève *milice*. Led by Lt. Silvio Francisco de Cartabona, the *milice* included one sergeant, one corporal, three soldiers, and 60 militia volunteers from Ste. Geneviève. They traveled up the Mississippi River to St. Louis in two

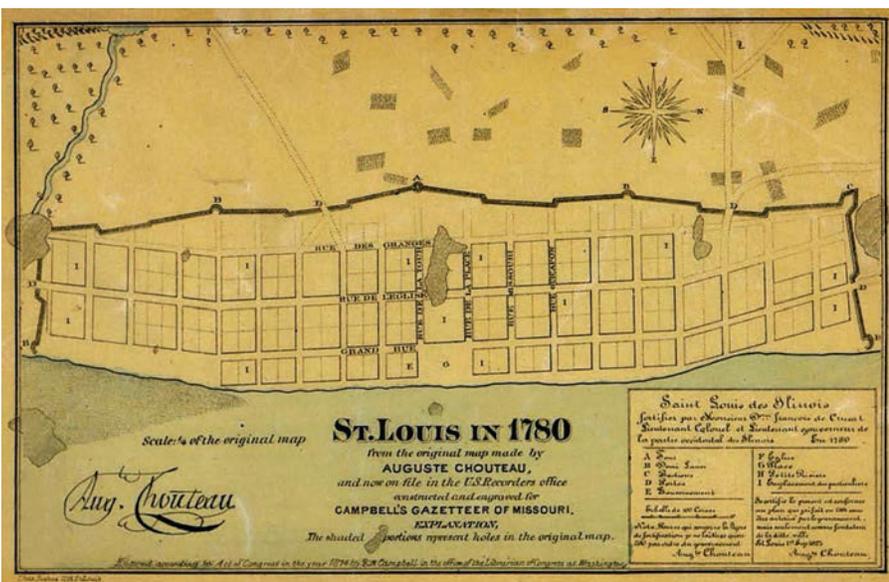
bateaus or flat-bottomed boats with swivel cannons and 20 days of supplies. Four days later, all the militia had arrived in St. Louis. The force, including the Ste Geneviève contingent, totaled 310 defenders.

The attack occurred on May 26, 1780, by 700 to 900 Native warriors and a few dozen traders and volunteers supported by a few Canadians

and British officers. Attempts by the attackers to provoke the defenders to leave the tower and entrenchments were unsuccessful. After several hours, the attackers withdrew. Historians credit the Ste. Geneviève *milice* with turning what could have been a defeat into a victory for the Spanish that prevented Great Britain from gaining control of the Mississippi Valley.

Much more on the Battle of St. Louis can be found in *The American Revolutionary War in the West* by Stephen L. Kling Jr. et al. It includes a chapter on Ste. Geneviève by SHSMO trustee Robert Mueller.

Bill Eddleman is the coordinator of the Cape Girardeau Research Center.



Map of St. Louis in 1780, SHSMO Map Collection.

Sculpting Missouri Stories

Three New Additions to SHSMO's Art Collection

BY JOAN STACK

The State Historical Society of Missouri recently welcomed three remarkable sculptures into its art collection. All were acquired through a generous donation earmarked for sculpture purchases by the late William "Bill" Guitar Little. Each work not only enriches the Society's sculptural holdings but also reflects a distinctive aspect of Missouri culture—from jazz innovation and Indigenous identity to literary visualization by Thomas Hart Benton.

Sculptor Edward "Ed" Dwight created the bronze sculpture of jazz legend Charlie "Bird" Parker in the 1990s. The sculpture is painted in strategic areas, capturing the Kansas City-born musician/composer playing the instrument he loved. Negative space replaces Parker's torso, directing our gaze to his head and saxophone. Dwight carefully balanced the heavy bronze forms so that the sculpture seems almost weightless, a striking metaphor for Parker's seemingly effortless innovation and mastery of complex music.

Dwight's own story amplifies the artwork's significance. Born in Kansas City, Kansas, the son of Kansas City Monarchs second baseman Ed



Bronze sculpture of jazz legend Charlie "Bird" Parker by Edward Dwight, 1990s.



Gathered, bronze sculpture by John Dale Free, 1972.



Maquette (plaster bust model) of character Jim Casy by Thomas Hart Benton, 1939.

Dwight Sr., the young sculptor began his career as an aeronautical engineer, breaking barriers in 1961 when he became the nation's first African American astronaut trainee. Although he never flew in space for NASA, he retired from the military and earned a degree in sculpture at the University of Denver in 1977. In central Missouri, Dwight's *Soldiers' Memorial* sculpture at Lincoln University was erected in 2007. At age 90 he revisited his roots as an astronaut trainee for commercial space agency Blue Origin, becoming the oldest person to travel into space in 2024.

From the rhythms of jazz and the depths of space, we move to a more quotidian subject representing the quiet dignity of rural ranch life with John Dale Free's 1972 bronze sculpture, *Gathered*. Free, a Native Osage artist, grew up on his grandfather's cattle farm in northeastern Oklahoma, where he later worked as a rancher and trained for the rodeo. He studied art in Taos, New Mexico, but eventually settled in Pawhuska,

Oklahoma, headquarters of the Osage Nation. The Osage people were removed from their native lands in Missouri and Arkansas in the early nineteenth century, and with this sculpture SHSMO honors an Indigenous artist with deep roots in the land that became Missouri.

Finally, we turn to Thomas Hart Benton's plaster bust of the John Steinbeck character Reverend Jim Casy, an extremely rare three-dimensional work by an artist best known for paintings and lithographs. In preparation for his compositions, Benton often modeled figures in clay to study light and perspective, but few of these preparatory maquettes survive. This bust relates directly to the 1939 lithograph *Jim Casy* in SHSMO's collection. This print is one of six lithos Benton created for Twentieth Century Fox's promotion of the John Ford film *The Grapes of Wrath*.

Together, these three sculptures form a compelling trio, each rooted in a distinct cultural moment, yet united by themes of resilience, identity, and artistic innovation. Thanks to Bill Little's vision and generosity, they now stand as enduring touchstones in our collection.

Joan Stack is curator of art collections at the State Historical Society of Missouri.

Preserving and Sharing Tom Engelhardt's Editorial Legacy

BY MAGGIE MAYHAN

Sitting at her computer, University of Missouri graduate student Ja' Licia Gainer is exploring renowned editorial cartoonist Tom Engelhardt's 1960s cartoons in digitized issues of the *St. Louis Post Dispatch*. Engelhardt's drawings responded directly to historical events with poignancy and humor, capturing global, national, and local issues that stirred controversy. As an SHSMO intern, Gainer is working with the collection to make it more accessible.

Several years ago, Engelhardt and his family generously donated over 8,000 of his original drawings to SHSMO, substantially expanding the Society's collection of editorial cartoons. His artwork is now a significant part of the art collection, but when the images were initially added to the digital collections, there was not enough time to provide a complete description of each cartoon's subject matter and significance.

To make the collection more visible and accessible, Engelhardt's daughter, Christin, donated funds for SHSMO to hire a research intern to update the descriptions and metadata. "It's important for these cartoons to be a resource for historians, authors, teachers, journalists, students, and any other type of researcher," Engelhardt shared.

"Art is very accessible," said SHSMO art curator Joan Stack. "Even people who aren't interested in reading scholarly journals or poring

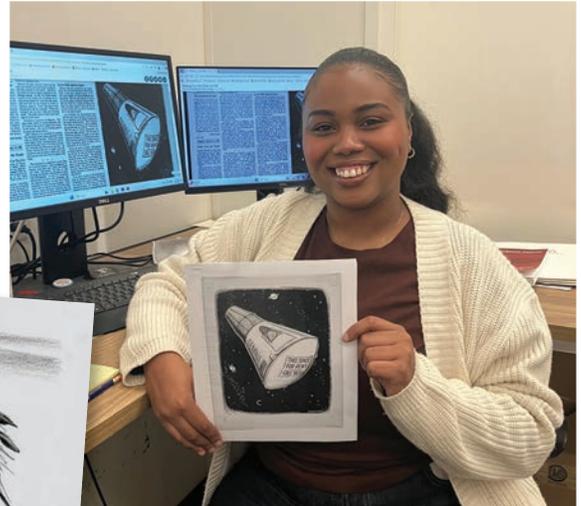


Editorial cartoon by Tom Engelhardt shows a crow wearing a Jim Crow hat and reading the U.S. Civil Rights Commission Report on top of the Gateway Arch in St. Louis, 1970.

through newspapers can look at works of art and immediately begin to understand the past."

As a teaching assistant, artist, and student, Gainer is able to view the collection from several perspectives as she adds more detailed descriptions and subject codes. "These updates will allow researchers more access to find and learn about these editorial cartoons, and it gives a public audience more historical context about the cartoons Engelhardt made," Gainer said.

An artist who focuses on oil painting in her own work, Gainer is also quick to appreciate the rich detail of Engelhardt's original cartoons in the SHSMO art collection. "I'm able to see Engelhardt's 'artist's hand'—shading strong lines with ink and



Ja' Licia Gainer displays an editorial cartoon by Tom Engelhardt.

using white pencils to create highlights. It is as though I'm able to envision Engelhardt making these editorial cartoons."

Gainer also notes Engelhardt's strength in his subject matter. "He wasn't afraid to highlight the societal, environmental, political, and global issues during the turbulent decades he witnessed...boldly calling out issues...he kept being brave."

Many of his editorials followed the Civil Rights Movement, which Gainer found interesting. "He used his artwork to show the wrongdoings of segregationists and Ku Klux Klan members and illustrated the truth that change needed to happen."

Thanks to these efforts, Engelhardt's legacy is becoming more accessible, now freely available anywhere in the world and more easily found. Through his cartoons, Stack emphasized that "you can study all kinds of different things that happened here in Missouri but also around the world. The images help us understand who we are as Missourians and as Americans."

Maggie Mayhan is the assistant director, advancement, at the State Historical Society of Missouri.

Saturday Nights at Mooneyham Junction Where the Music Played On

BY HALEY FRIZZLE-GREEN
AND DOUG GENENS



Dan Brown and the Ozark Mountain Trio, n.d.



Ellen and Burel Mooneyham, 1964.

Though few remember it now, southwest Missouri, and Springfield in particular, once rivaled Nashville as the nation's country music capital. Programs like the ABC-televised *Ozark Jubilee* brought thousands of fans to Springfield each Saturday night and reached over 25 million viewers between 1955 and 1960. When the program ended, Springfield's prominence on the country music circuit declined. The music, however, did not stop. While recording a recent oral history on Ozark music with Sybil Mooneyham, we learned that the country music scene remained alive and well in the region thanks to local venues like Mooneyham Junction.

Beginning in 1961, Mooneyham's mother and father, Ellen and Burel Mooneyham, began inviting musician

friends to their farm off Highway 60 outside of Billings. Though the music was largely an informal jam, the sounds coming from Sybil's home attracted neighbors looking for entertainment. Word began to spread, and soon the crowds became too large for the farmhouse to contain. The music moved out to the yard, where the Mooneyham family set up hay bales and a wagon for people to sit and perform on. In 1962, a friend suggested that the family transform the Quonset hut that stored their farm machinery into a music venue, and Mooneyham Junction was born.

Live country music was played every Saturday night at Mooneyham when the family wasn't too busy with farmwork. Sybil's father built a small stage, but people



Audience at Mooneyham Junction, 1964.

continued to sit on hay bales until the local funeral home donated its old chairs. Sybil's mother, a practicing Baptist, may have frowned upon dancing, but that didn't stop her and others from doing a jig from time to time. While the informal jams continued in the barn, over time, bands formed among the regular players. While many of the attendees could be described as more traditionally rural, Mooneyham's concerts also attracted a growing number of "longhairs" who shared a love of country and bluegrass music.

Such was the story for Jan Lee, who met her future husband, Charles, at Mooneyham Junction, describing him as a sort of local Elvis who took the stage clad in a black cowboy hat, black slacks, and black boots. The two soon fell in love and began a lifelong career together playing music. Charles and Jan became fixtures at Mooneyham Junction but also played in the burgeoning bluegrass festival circuit in Missouri, Oklahoma, and Arkansas.

Mooneyham Junction closed its doors for the first time in October 1981. The family marked the occasion with a bluegrass concert, pig roast, and potluck. In 2013, Mooneyham Junction hosted a concert for Jan and Charles's 50th wedding anniversary. While conceived



Mooneyham Junction, 2025.

initially as a one-off, the celebration kicked off ten more years of music. Following the COVID-19 pandemic, and wanting to spend more time with family, Sybil ended Mooneyham's encore in 2023. While the music may have stopped for now, Mooneyham Junction's legacy of preserving and promoting local Ozark music lives on.

Sybil Mooneyham and Jan Lee's interviews are part of a larger oral history project documenting the music history of southwest Missouri.

Haley Frizzle-Green is an archivist at the Springfield Research Center. Doug Genens is an oral historian at SHSMO.

Join the Journey

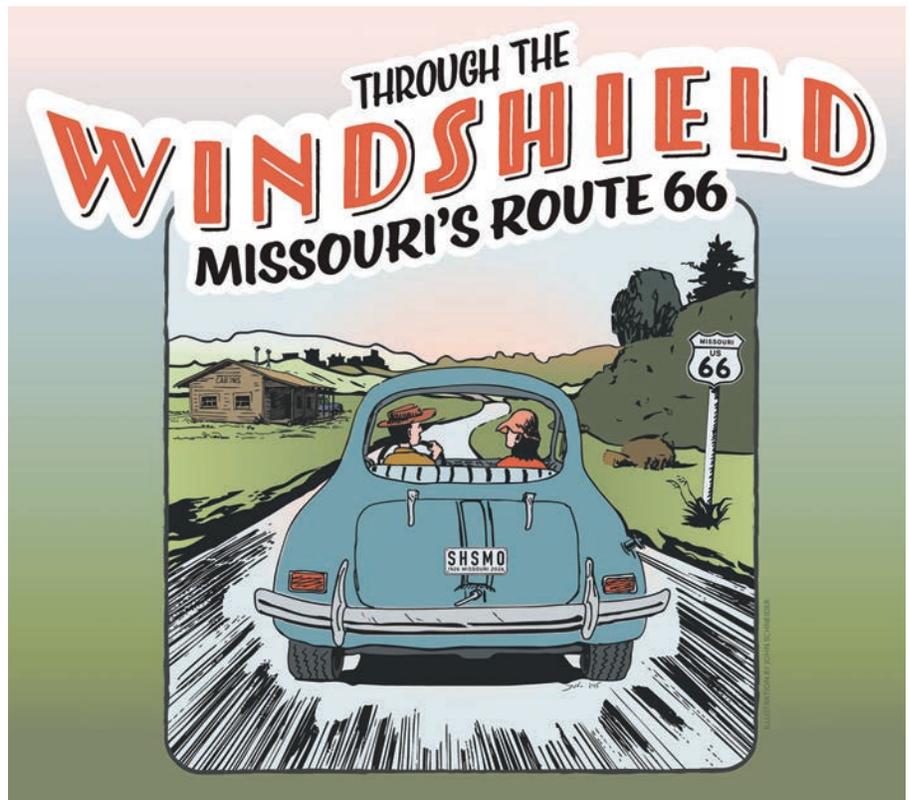
Missouri Marks Route 66's Centennial with Exhibits, Events, and Online Experiences

BY KATHLEEN SEALE

Celebration of Route 66's centennial is finally here! The State Historical Society of Missouri has installed a new exhibition, *Through the Windshield: Missouri's Route 66*, at the Center for Missouri Studies' Wencker Family Corridor Gallery. Please join us for an opening reception on February 5. The exhibition tells the stories of people and places in Missouri that helped make Route 66 a national icon and a prism through which to understand the history and culture of twentieth-century America. Many of the images are less well known, and some were recently acquired as part of SHSMO's growing collection on the Mother Road.

A smaller mobile exhibit will travel to communities across the state that are interested in sharing the story of Route 66 through Missouri. Organizations that would like to host the travel exhibit may request it and traveling displays on other topics at shsmo.org/exhibitions/travelingexhibit.

The State Historical Society is also collaborating with Google Arts and Culture to celebrate the centennial on its interactive website. SHSMO was chosen as one of 20 organizations to partner with the National Trust for Historic Preservation in showcasing Route 66 collections. This new online resource includes exhibits, images, maps, architectural drawings, stories, and other material related to the history of the famous highway. Visit SHSMO's Route 66 web page for a link to Google Arts and Culture's Route 66 project.



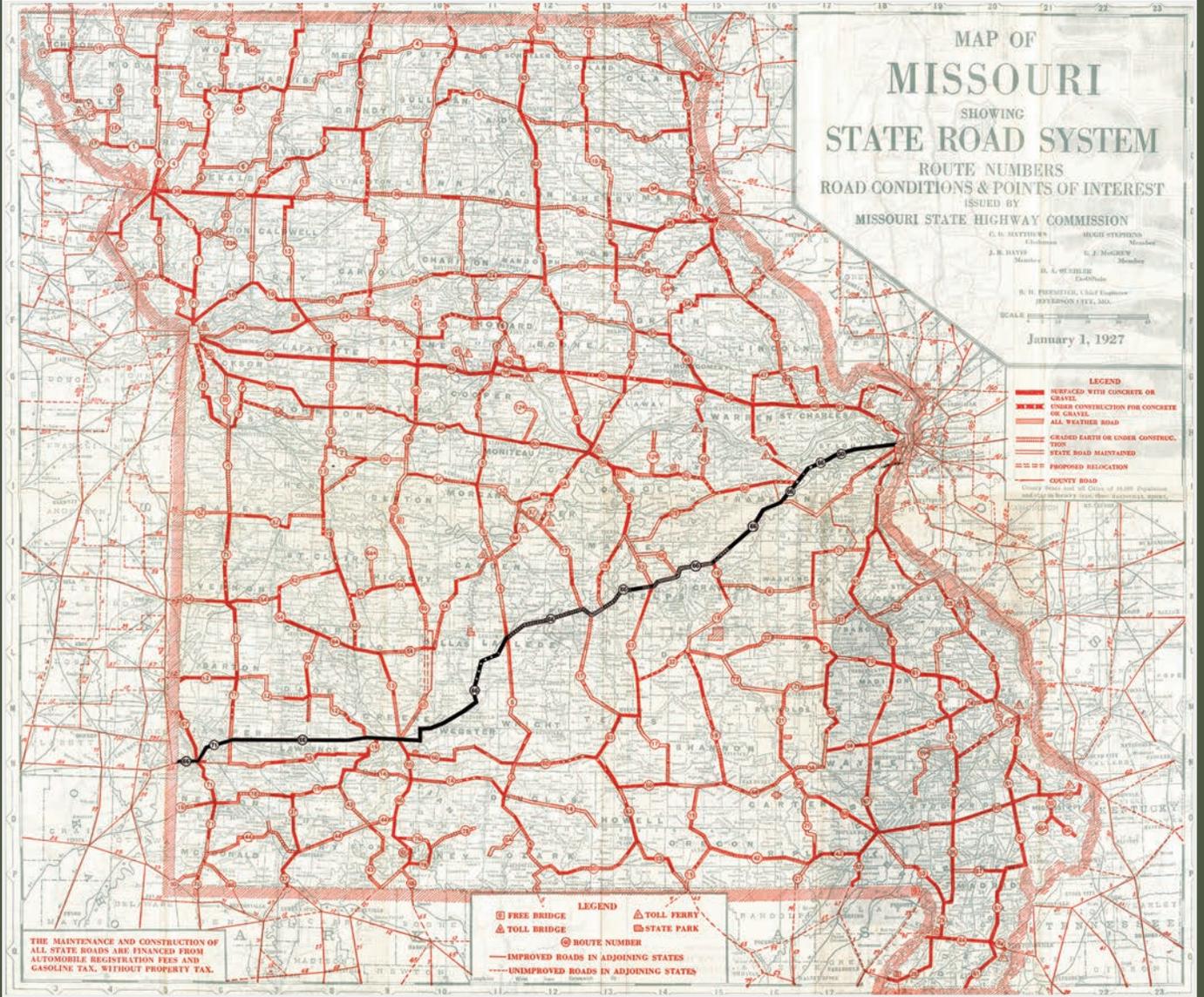
Route 66 logo/illustration for exhibit.

SHSMO is offering Route 66 programs online and in person throughout 2026. On February 10 at 1 p.m., author Susan Croce Kelly will discuss the life of "Father of Route 66" Cyrus Avery and the invention of Route 66 as part of a free online speaker series hosted by Research Route 66, a national organization helping the public to learn about the iconic highway. On March 10 at noon, I will present "Telling Missouri's Route 66 Story" at the Center for Missouri Studies as part of the History on Elm series, which is open to the public. In addition, a monthly webinar series, *Asphalt to Archives: Telling the Missouri*

Route 66 Story, will be held on Zoom from April through November. Join us on the second Thursday each month as SHSMO staff members discuss a wide variety of stories that occurred on Missouri's portion of the Mother Road.

Bookmark [shsmo.org/route 66](https://shsmo.org/route66) to stay up to date with news, events, projects and more. We will also highlight collections, oral histories, photographs, and videos. We hope to see you on the road with us this year!

Kathleen Seale is the coordinator of the Rolla and Springfield Research Centers.



Papers of *Star Trek* Fandom Organizer Beamed Aboard the St. Louis Research Center

BY AJ MEDLOCK

The St. Louis Research Center recently acquired the Linda Lakin Papers, one of many collections chronicling St. Louis's vibrant science fiction fandom community and the role women played in fostering such communities. Lakin was a devotee of *Star Trek* and its chronicle of the adventures of Captain James T. Kirk and the crew of the U.S.S. *Enterprise*. Although NBC canceled the television series after three seasons in 1969, *Star Trek*'s ardent, women-led fan base kept it alive by creating fanzines and hosting conventions featuring actors from the show. In Missouri, fans such as Kay Johnson and Denny Arnold hosted *Star Trek* conventions in Kansas City, and published underground *Star Trek* magazines. Lakin found herself caught up in the excitement and decided to co-host Space Trek, a series of *Star Trek* fan conventions in St. Louis from 1982 to 1988.

Lakin's papers document the stresses she encountered with the Space Trek conventions in the 1980s. In her narrative about the conventions, she recounts the numerous roadblocks and headaches she faced: the initial resistance she met from Johnson and Arnold, who advised her against tackling such an ambitious project; the financial anxiety associated with raising money for celebrity guests and venues; and the intense

work schedules overseeing every possible detail to ensure the convention went smoothly. Lakin notes that she and her volunteers "...lose sleep, we work long into the nights, we turn our brains to mush working out every little detail, and this is all before the con event starts."

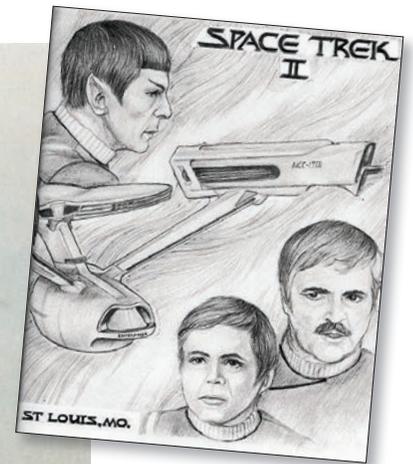
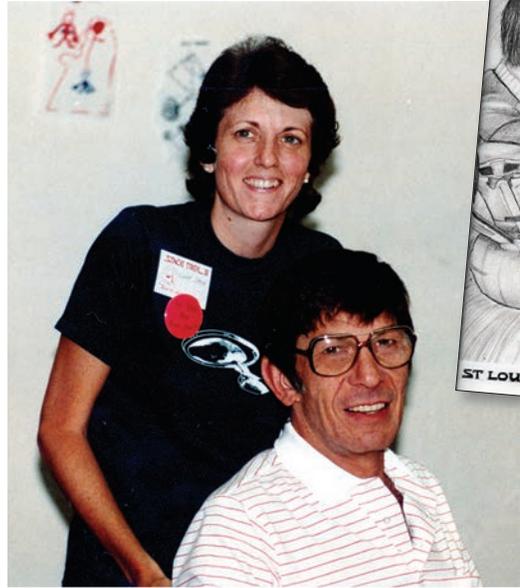
Despite the anxiety surrounding Space Trek, Lakin notes the joy that came from co-organizing the conventions. The photographs and VHS tapes in the collection offer a fun glimpse of the convention, showing *Star Trek* costume contests and fans lining up to meet their favorite stars from the show, including one of Lakin's favorite actors, Leonard Nimoy, who played First Officer Spock. Although Lakin was nervous about meeting Nimoy, the two shared several warm and funny moments. In one instance, she recalls eating a scalding-hot pie at the Space Trek II convention banquet with Nimoy:

"We weren't warned ahead of time, but Jimmy [James Doohan] did pass the news down the line as soon as he had taken a bite. Just as Jimmy said, 'Watch out, the pie is hot,' Leonard stuck a bite in his mouth. He sat perfectly still and made a mumbling sound under his breath. I had a bit

in my mouth and knew there was no way you could chew it until it cooled off a bit. The only alternative was to just hold it in your mouth for a minute. I was finally able to swallow that first bite and noticed that Leonard had done the same. He turned to the rest of the table and said, 'Watch out, the pie's hot.'"

Lakin eventually hosted five Space Trek conventions. She was one of many women who fostered *Star Trek* fandom by organizing conventions, writing and publishing zines, and organizing letter-writing campaigns in support of *Star Trek*. Without women like Lakin, it is difficult to imagine *Star Trek*, or science fiction fandom in general, reaching its current cultural relevance. Although time and money prevented her from continuing the conventions, she noted that "the feeling of accomplishment and of doing something to the very best of my ability still sticks with me today and I have a feeling it always will. I learned so much and broadened my horizons so vastly that the words fail me to describe it."

A. J. Medlock is the coordinator of the St. Louis Research Center and life-long Trekkie.



Convention booklet for Space Trek II, 1983.

Linda Lakin with Leonard Nimoy, 1983.

Jones-Lemon Papers Detail a Century of Agriculture, Education, and Civic Leadership in Northwest Missouri

BY MOLLY SLOAN

The Jones-Lemon Family Papers span over a century of northwest Missouri history. United by the 1904 marriage of Edward Jones and Nell Lemon, both the Jones and Lemon families were prominent in early twentieth-century Nodaway County, operating successful farms. Horace Jones was instrumental in the founding of the town of Parnell, which he named after the popular Irish politician Charles Stewart Parnell. When Jones first settled in Missouri in 1872, he purchased more than six thousand acres of farmland that would later become Parnell's schoolhouse, parks, and cemetery. His son, Benjamin Allyn Jones, became a Hall of Fame thoroughbred horse trainer who first learned to race on the streets of Parnell.

After fighting for the Union in the Civil War, James Harvey Lemon and his wife, Emily, moved their family from Illinois to Nodaway County. Lemon served three terms in the Missouri House of Representatives, during which he introduced House Bill No. 311, the Nodaway County Normal Bill. The bill allowed for the creation of the teacher's college that would later become Northwest Missouri State University.



James Harvey Lemon, sergeant of the 119th Regiment, Illinois Volunteer Infantry, 1864.



Exterior view of the Horace Jones home in Parnell, n.d.

Lemon's granddaughter Kathleen Jones later attended Northwest. Jones, a longtime teacher and author, composed a history of Parnell and collected materials related to the Jones and Lemon families.

The Jones-Lemon Family Papers contain materials from both branches of the family, including photographs,



Portrait of the Spivey family. From left to right: Bruce, Levi, Flora Colleen (Lena), Mary (Mollie) Kautz Spivey, and Lawrence. Mary Spivey was the sister of Emily Lemon.



An unidentified man operates a side-delivery rake on the Jones family farm in Parnell, n.d.



Emily Jones Cowden, daughter of Nell Lemon and Edward Jones, sits inside a parked car, n.d.

agriculture and business documents, school records, and other artifacts. The collection is available to view at the Kansas City Research Center.

Molly Sloan is an archivist at the Kansas City Research Center.

Volunteer Spotlight

Barb Shettlesworth

By Lily Kleinhenz

St. Louis native Barb Shettlesworth's childhood included visits to the Saint Louis Zoo and Art Museum, skating at Steinberg Ice Rink every Sunday in winter, and enjoying the sweet taste of fudge at Famous Barr department store. Shettlesworth grew up in University City and graduated from University City High School in 1970. She moved to Columbia to study library science at the University of Missouri, and while in college she met her future husband, Don Shettlesworth.

Shortly after marrying her college sweetheart, Shettlesworth worked as an employee benefits manager and later managed the gift shop and volunteers at Boone Hospital in Columbia. "It was there, managing the volunteers, that I realized how valuable volunteers were to any organization." Shettlesworth says she feels like she grew up at the hospital, and later her son, Joel, was born there. After a 40-year career, she retired in 2017.

After retiring, Shettlesworth missed the social interaction that work provided, so she began volunteering at SHSMO during the Spring of 2018 in the newspaper archives. Shettlesworth files, organizes, and alphabetizes 130 print newspapers that the Society collects. SHSMO newspaper librarian Katelyn Ziegler says Shettlesworth is integral to the newspaper preservation program: "Not only does she brighten the whole atmosphere, she is reliable and does a really good job keeping track of everything." Her volunteer work also includes removing unneeded inserts from newspapers, downloading e-editions, and entering data in the database.

During her time at the State Historical Society, Shettlesworth has seen many changes, including the construction and opening of the Center for Missouri Studies on Elm Street. She has also seen a decline in printed papers in the state: "There have been fewer and fewer printed papers coming in because they are going out of business or moving to digital platforms."



Barb Shettlesworth stands next to shelves of newspapers sent to the Center for Missouri Studies for preservation.

Despite the reduction in print, Shettlesworth believes newspaper preservation is very important. "People will come in and use them for research and genealogy," she said.

Shettlesworth enjoys the environment at SHSMO and says that it helps her stay busy and active. Outside of volunteering twice a week, she enjoys attending exercise classes at the Activity & Recreation Center in Columbia and visiting her brother and family in Florida. "Barb is really fun to have around and has a great sense of humor. I always enjoy seeing her," raves Ziegler.

Lily Kleinhenz is a journalism student at the University of Missouri-Columbia and an intern at SHSMO.

Looking Ahead



Missouri History Day Filmmakers Showcase

February 7, 1:30-3:30 p.m., Center for Missouri Studies

Join us as we celebrate Missouri History Day filmmakers and screen several short documentaries produced by National History Day in Missouri alum and professional artist Brian Hawkins of Kansas City, along with Rohan Deshpande, a current History Day student from St. Louis. Hawkins, an award-winning animator and filmmaker, will have some of his art pieces for sale to benefit the National History Day program in Missouri.



Missouri Conference on History

March 11-13, Old Kinderhook, Lake of the Ozarks

Register now for the 2026 Missouri Conference on History at Old Kinderhook at the Lake of the Ozarks, hosted by the Missouri State Archives and with the State Historical Society of Missouri as administrative sponsor. Anyone interested or involved in historical research, historical preservation, the teaching of history, or other history-related professions is invited. More information is on the conference's website: shsmo.org/mch.



History on Elm

2nd Tuesdays at Noon, Center for Missouri Studies

History on Elm continues through June at noon on the second Tuesday of each month. On February 10, the program will feature a documentary film by Tami Hale and Ozark Vitality, *Soaring Together: A Tuskegee Airmen Story*, about James Shipley, a Tuskegee airman from Tipton, Missouri. Kathleen Seale, coordinator of the State Historical Society's Rolla and Springfield research centers, will present "Telling the Missouri Route 66 Story" on March 10. Author Eric Vickrey will discuss his recent book, *Runnin' Redbirds: A Look Back at the 1982 St. Louis Cardinals*, on April 14.



The Politics of Water in the Art of George Caleb Bingham and Thomas Hart Benton

Through September 26, William Guitar Little Missouri Gallery of Art

A new exhibition in the William Guitar Little Missouri Gallery of Art inside the Center for Missouri Studies examines artworks by George Caleb Bingham and Thomas Hart Benton. It focuses on the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers as vital trade arteries for the entire nation. On display are steamboat tickets, illustrations for works by Mark Twain, and classic Bingham images that celebrate the economic vitality of the rivers while suggesting that the federal government can play a role in regulating them for the benefit of the American people.

NONPROFIT ORG.
 U. S. POSTAGE
 PAID
 COLUMBIA, MO
 PERMIT NO. 58



605 Elm Street, Columbia, MO 65201 | (573) 882-7083 | shsmo.org
 CAPE GIRARDEAU COLUMBIA KANSAS CITY ROLLA ST. LOUIS SPRINGFIELD

Ready to Wear
 A HISTORY OF THE FOOTWEAR AND GARMENT INDUSTRIES IN ST. LOUIS
 BY VALERIE BATTLE KIENZLE
 Ready to Wear by Valerie Battle Kienzle: \$20

Freya Butterfly Necklace: \$19

THEATRE OF THE AMERICAN FRONTIER
 Theatre on the American Frontier: \$45

FRANCES LEVINE
CROSSINGS
 Women on the Santa Fe Trail
 Crossings: Women on the Santa Fe Trail: \$35

Watching the Cargo Notecards: \$17

SHOW-ME AMERICA 250
 Educate • Engage • Celebrate
 Show-Me America 250 Sticker: \$1

THE RICHARD BOOKSTORE

A Curated Guide to Missouri Literature & Artisans



located in the
Center for Missouri Studies
 605 Elm Street | Columbia, Missouri | 65201
 SHOP.SHSMO.ORG