



Cross County Historical Society

P. O. Box 943, Wynne, AR 72396

www.cchs1862.org

Cross County *ERA*

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SUMMER 2008

Cross County Museum Displays New Hope School Model

Robert Crawford, former student of the New Hope School which closed in 1951, has created a model of the old school for display at the Cross County Museum.

Inside the miniature two-room school are two teachers' desks, many tiny student desks, chalkboards, and two pot-bellied stoves.

Sitting behind the little building is one of the two outhouses which were designated by gender. The roof of the miniscule outhouse opens, revealing a two-holer.

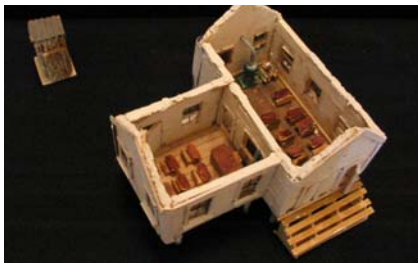
The little schoolhouse roof which can also be removed, is covered with silver corrugated pieces, representing the tin roof on the actual school.

The tiny model can be seen at the Cross County Museum at 711 East Union, Wynne.

The full scale school building is located at 3762 Highway 284, east of Wynne. Application has been made to list the 105-year-old school on the National Register of Historic Places.



Cross County Museum
711 E Union, Wynne AR



The inside and the outside of the New Hope School model are shown above with the school's hand bell included for scale.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO HONOR A LOVED ONE? Funds are needed to help finish the goal to establish a CCHS Endowment Fund. Make a memorial donation to the Cross County Historical Society proposed Endowment Fund by sending your check to Cross County Historical Society, P. O. Box 943, Wynne, AR 72396, or drop it off at the museum at 711 East Union. Earmark your check: *Endowment Fund*. These funds will be used for scholarships for Cross County history students and for maintenance.

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New Hope School Gets Bulletin Board

Charlie Hart of Little Rock has made for the New Hope School a free-standing bulletin board in which to place notices. The six-by-four-foot signboard has a Plexiglas window that can be lifted in order to tack up notices. The sign stands on two legs positioned into the ground directly in front of the temporary parking space at the school. Lists of donors, teachers, students and happenings of the New Hope School Restoration Project are placed inside the new notice board. The school is located at 3762 Highway 284, Wynne, AR. Drive from Wynne toward Village Creek and take a look. If you would like to help, send your check to New Hope School Project, P. O. Box 943, Wynne, AR 72396.

Do you know the identity of the Arkansas Lieutenant Governor who resided for many years on Hamilton Avenue in Wynne? See the answer somewhere in *The ERA*.

COMING TO ARKANSAS

By Florence Halstead

During the late 1950s, Byron Halstead and Fred, my husband, of Halstead Industries, Zelienople, Pa, wanted to build a factory west of the Mississippi River. They had covered many of the eastern states with copper products, and their desire was to open a market where they had none, across the Mississippi River. Freight rates were much higher when products were shipped from the east across the big river to the west. Additionally, the brothers needed a state with a right-to-work law; that is, a state where a non-union member could work in a unionized factory. There was no right-to-work law in Pennsylvania; everyone belonged to the union. Some strikers had become unruly, harassing workers, and causing a lot of damage such as broken windows, etc. Therefore, Fred and Byron closed the Pennsylvania factory, leaving the employees without work for a year while the debates continued. The dispute was finally settled in Halstead's favor and the plant was reopened.

During this time, the Halstead Company received a brochure from the Arkansas Industrial Development Committee (AIDC) telling about many Arkansas locations for prospective factories. With the idea of saving on freight, working with non-union people, and opening additional markets, Byron and Fred talked it over and decided that Fred and I should travel right away to Arkansas to check out these cities. Other requirements we should look into were whether the city would be able to furnish enough manpower, electricity, gas and water to run a large factory.

We wanted to be home for Christmas with our children, Diane and Jerry, and the rest of the family, so plans were made to leave right after New Year's Day. The year was 1960.

We lived in a home at the top of the highest hill in the county, with a nine-tenths mile long driveway, the hill on one side and a drop-off on the other. On the morning we planned to leave, we arose to freezing rain laid atop two months of packed snow. After loading the car, Fred attached a log chain from the rear of the family car to the tractor, put me in the driver's seat, and mounted the tractor, which was equipped with tire chains. This tension prevented the car from sliding about uncontrolled, and from possibly dropping off the steep side of the road. We crept down the drive in tandem, low gear on the car and granny-low on the tractor. We left the machine at the bottom of the hill for the return journey back up, and began our trip to Arkansas.

It took several days to get to Arkansas. There were no interstate highways during the early sixties.

The first cities to check out were West Memphis and Blytheville where we found that West Memphis already had some industry, and Blytheville had the Air Force Base, so it didn't need Halstead.

The plan was to find a town small enough to need us and able to supply manpower for us. We drove to Little Rock and based ourselves in the Holiday Inn. Every day we went to one or two of the towns on our list. Forrest City had some good points, as did Wynne; they were both rated high for our needs. Wynne seemed to have the friendliest people; everyone waved to us as we drove by. When Friday arrived, we were tired, so we decided to spend the weekend in Wynne, and not drive back to Little Rock. We checked into the Dallas Motel, run by Rex and Syble Brawner. We walked over to the Yellow Jacket Restaurant where we listened to the local coffee drinkers telling their stories and jokes. We couldn't understand their southern accents and thought they were talking a foreign language. When the waitress came to take our order, she couldn't understand our Yankee accent, so we pointed to what we wanted on the menu. After a good lunch, we rested, then over the weekend we drove around the countryside.

At the Yellow Jacket, we had asked where to find someone with the Chamber of Commerce office and were told that attorney Gerald Blackburn was the president of that association.

On Monday we went to the McKnight/Blackburn Law Office and met DeLoss McKnight and Gerald Blackburn. We told them we needed things for a large copper tubing factory, such as electric power, gas, water, manpower, etc. After a short conversation, we saw DeLoss slip a note to Gerry. Gerry immediately left the room. When he came back in, he gave DeLoss a note. At that time, they both seemed to become more interested in us. About ten years later, DeLoss told me what the notes were about. It seems that a few weeks before that, a couple of con artists had come into town and the attorneys' first thoughts were that here were more shysters. Gerry had checked us out with Dun and Bradstreet and found that our company was listed with a high rating. That's when they decided that we were legitimate and decided to help us. They suggested that we go see Jim Hart at the power company. They made an appointment for us for that afternoon.

Fred decided to get a haircut, so while he did that, I checked out the stores to see what kind of shopping there would be for Halstead employees brought to Wynne. It didn't take long to look inside Van Atkins, The Hub, Meyers, and the Ben Franklin Five-and-Ten-Cent Store, so I went back to the barber shop to rest and get out of the cold wind. The barber had been listening to Fred and me talking and asked us if we were visiting someone in town or just passing through. We didn't want to tell anyone what we were in town for, so we said, "Just sorta passing through." The barber told us that Fred was his last customer during the morning and that he was going to lock up the place to go home for lunch; he invited us to go with him. We were in a fix, because we had an appointment with Mr. Hart and couldn't tell that, so we begged off someway.

That afternoon we met with Mr. Hart. Jim was flabbergasted when Fred mentioned how much electricity we needed to operate the plant. He told us that that amount of current was more than the entire city used, but that they could work things out. With that settled, we had to make sure we could obtain supplies and be able to freight the copper expediently.

Even though Forrest City and Wynne were small towns, they were close to Memphis where we could get supplies, and close to the railroad for shipping. Fred always said that it was better to be a big fish in a little pond than to be a little fish in a big pond, so both towns were looking good to us.

We went back to Little Rock and traveled south, north, and west. No town showed us what we had found in Wynne and Forrest City. When we returned to Zelenople and discussed the possibilities, we decided that the *City with a Smile* was the place. The rest is history. Halstead opened in Wynne in 1963.

Contributed by Florence Halstead, June 11, 2008

One of the largest copper tubing factories in the world, Halstead Industries, located on Highway 1 North in Wynne, employed 1100 persons. It was sold to Mueller on November 20, 1998. In addition to furnishing many jobs in the area and contributing to numerous civic organizations, the Halstead family gives ten \$2000 scholarships each year to deserving graduates of the schools in Cross County.

President's Message

I hope everyone is having a safe and enjoyable summer. As I think about what's happening with the society, the museum, and the New Hope School Project, I want to encourage you to consider your area of interest, contact the museum (238-4100) and let us know where you can help. We are in need of more daytime adult volunteers. Our goal is to have enough workers so that everyone would only have to come in two times each month. Our current schedule is Tuesday thru Friday from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. So, an immediate need is for someone to volunteer to do Mondays.

Last quarter we announced our receipt of the AHPP Planning Grant. Capitol Exhibit Services, Inc, of Virginia conducted a three-day workshop and returned a workshop summary. Now we have information and artifact-gathering to do - artifacts that meet exhibit requirements. Please consider helping where you can. More specifics will be announced in the coming weeks. The June meeting was a discussion about action plans to submit to Capitol Exhibits for incorporation into the exhibits designed.

It's exciting to see how word of the museum is getting out. We have had high school class reunions, family reunions (recently, the Mohr family,) a Crowley's Ridge Teachers' Cooperative field trip for educators from Cross County High School, and a group of Ph.D. candidates from Arkansas State University (working on the proposed Hamilton Avenue Historic District,) as well as individual patrons. Research requests from the website/internet are also increasing.

The next quarterly speakers will be Scott Ausbrooks and Erica Doerr, with the Arkansas Geological Survey, Little Rock. The meeting will be on 15 July 2008, at the Wynne Fire Department's meeting room. The subject is the New Madrid Fault and Earthquake Preparedness. The Cross County Amateur Radio Club is our co-sponsor; and several emergency groups around the county are being contacted to attend.

Look through this issue of *The ERA* for more about the society, the museum, the New Hope School Project, and a story about the arrival of the Halstead family to Wynne over 40 years ago.

See you at the monthly meetings!

Regards, Richard

Hamilton Avenue Surveyed for National Register Status

A survey for National Register status for Hamilton Avenue between Killough Road and Falls Boulevard, and including Eldridge Court, was begun on June 16 by Dr. Ruth Hawkins, Director of Arkansas Heritage SITES, and a number of graduate students enrolled in Arkansas State University's Heritage Studies Ph.D. program. The Hamilton Avenue area contains 60 structures.

Requirements of the National Register state that 50% of the resources in a prospective district be at least fifty years old and retain as much of the original architectural design and materials as to properly reflect the period of significance. A district must also have a documented association with persons who made contributions to local, state, or national history. "A lieutenant governor of Arkansas resided for many years on Hamilton Avenue..." says Joe Dooley, Chairman of the Hamilton Avenue project. Documentation is being researched regarding President Bill Clinton's possible overnight stay in a home on Hamilton Avenue.

The idea of Hamilton Avenue becoming an historic district was born two years ago and is headed by Joe and Martha Dooley who live in his family home on Hamilton Avenue.

To defray the cost of the graduate students' trips, film and film processing, Dr. Hawkins has requested monetary assistance, payable to the ASU Foundation, earmarked for the Arkansas Heritage Sites. These deductible contributions may be left with Joe Dooley at 824 Hamilton or mailed to ASU, PO Box 2050, State University, AR 72467.

CROSS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P. O. Box 943

Wynne, AR 72396

crossmuseum@sbcglobal.net

www/cchs1862.org

The ERA may be viewed on the website above.

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In Gratitude

Our appreciation goes to the **Cross County Bank** for the printing of this newsletter. The bank is located at 1 Cross County Bank Plaza, PO Box 9, Wynne, AR 72396, Telephone 870-238-8171, with branches in Wynne, Hickory Ridge, and Cherry Valley.

Hickory Ridge History Book for Sale

35 Degrees 24 Minutes North 91 Degrees West: A Town Called Hickory Ridge by Don Evans, Isaac Bratcher, James Jeffers, and Johnny Wilson. Price \$40.00. Contact Johnny Wilson at 870-697-2993 or johnny.h.wilson@att.net.

List of Members If you would like a list of members of the Cross County Historical Society, please call 870-238-4100 or email crossmuseum@sbcglobal.net and a copy will be mailed to you.

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THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEEDS YOU! (And Cross County needs the Society!)

If you would like to become a member of the Cross County Historical Society, fill out the form below and mail along with your check to the Cross County Historical Society, P. O. Box 943, Wynne, AR 72396. Members receive annual renewal letters. MEMORIALS ARE WELCOME.

Would you like to **save postage** and view the newsletter on the website instead of receiving a hardcopy at home? _____

Memberships: Individual \$15__ Family \$25__ Institutional \$35__ Sustaining \$50__ Patron \$100__ Benefactor \$250__ Advocate \$500__
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Disclaimer: Neither the Board of Directors, nor the Cross County Historical Society, Inc. assumes any responsibility for statements made by contributors to this newsletter. Correspondence or comments concerning such matters should be addressed directly to the author(s).

Answer to *Do You Know?*: Arkansas Lt. Governor J. L. "Bex" Shaver lived at 1012 Hamilton, Wynne, for many years.