

Cross County Historical Society

P. O. Box 943, Wynne, AR 72396

www.cchs1862.org

Cross County *ERA*

Vol. 5—No. 1

WINTER 2010

President's Message

Hello Friends,

I can't believe another year has come and gone. I want to thank you, the members of CCHS, for giving me the opportunity to serve as President this year. It has been a GREAT year. Many people have worked extremely hard. Although we haven't finished everything we had hoped to, we have accomplished much.

Our main goal for this year and the next few is to build a new exhibit space that will tell the story, "Cross County and its People." The first step in that goal is to have a written narrative for the development of the exhibit. Early this year the Board hired Shelly Drummond Museum Solutions for that job. After much research and lots of hard work, we believe the written narrative will be completed by the end of January. Then we will begin the task of raising dollars through fundraisers and grants to build the exhibit.

As part of our research for Museum Solutions, we began an oral history project. Libby Washington, with help from others, developed a set of questions that we used for the project. Over a period of about 2 months we were able to conduct 20 interviews with citizens from across the county. We had lots of fun and learned some interesting stories. We also partnered with the Wynne Jr. High and Wynne Intermediate schools to encourage students to interview their grandparents. This will not only add to our collection but will also be used as a learning tool for young people and hopefully stimulate their interest in what we are doing at the museum.

Another goal for the year was to update our Constitution and By-laws. George Anne Draper and Georgia Ross spent the year re-writing and editing, and in October the membership approved our New Constitution and By-laws. Thanks for a thorough job, ladies.

In the spring we were lucky to find a federal program that hires senior citizens for 20 hours a week in local organizations. We have been able to have three ladies in our museum for most of this year. They have been a valued asset in inventorying many of our records, photographs, and artifacts. With their help, we have also been able to keep the museum open five days a week. We have hired Hope Mullins part time. Hope was an intern with us a couple of years ago when she was a college student. She has been very successful in training the senior workers, and together they have accomplished more work than we dreamed they could.

There is still a lot of that work to do, but we are well on our way.



We Share our Hope and Joy

The Cross County Historical Society members wish you Hope and Joy through the coming year. And we wish it for ourselves, also, for years to come, not only in the form of mental and physical well-being, but in two special employees we are fortunate enough to have at the museum, Hope Mullins and Joy McMinn, both of Cross County. Although not having Faith and Charity, we still feel lucky to have Carolyn and Betty working with Hope and Joy. Carolyn Baldwin of Wynne and Betty Middleton of Colt, along with Joy, are employed through a senior program which we hope will continue for many years. All four of the women are willing to do whatever any museum needs. They copy and send pictures, write letters, act as docents, send emails, do research, answer questions, create decorations, clean up, accession artifacts, collect donations, and anything else needed. Blessings come to us through Hope, Joy, Betty and Carolyn!



*Cross County Museum
711 East Union, Wynne*

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MUSEUM HOURS

The Cross County Museum is
open Monday through Friday,
10:00 to 4:00

A Beautiful Church Remembered

Wynne Presbyterian Church, shown here with its Christmas wreaths and a winter covering of snow, was one of the earliest churches built in Wynne. The first service was held here on September 2, 1894. The roof was destroyed by fire in 1969. The church was located in the 600 block of North Church Street, the current Miss Polly's Day Care Center.

During the early 1900s, the church was used for one day as a clinic for removing tonsils. My father, Jack Herman, had his tonsils removed there and told me the story of how he was laid alongside other children while the doctor moved from one to the other, operating.

Many of the stained glass windows from the church were saved after the fire and are now seen in several residences in the county.

It seems appropriate to share this photograph during this Christmas season.
- Editor



Togo, Arkansas?

How did this little town get its name?

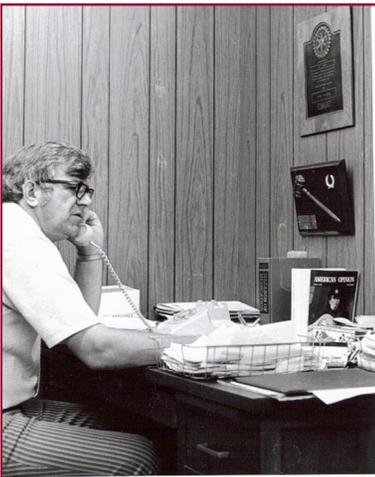
We have received a note from Mrs. Jeannean Wood McCutchen of Parkin, daughter of Tom Wood, regarding the naming of the little town of Togo.

It seems there are two stories floating about, and Mrs. McCutchen wants us to know her story of the naming of Togo as told to her by her "Grand Paw Wood" who owned the property.

First, the story others know: There was a high-ranking and famous Japanese warrior named Togo Heihachiro who was born in 1848. He was such a good warrior that he was elevated to koshaku (marquis) by Emperor Hirohito on May 29, 1934. The following day Togo died at age 86. Because Admiral Togo was Internationally respected, Great Britain, the United States, the Netherlands, France, Italy, and China all sent warships to take part in a Tokyo Bay naval parade in the late admiral's honor.

Mrs. McCutchen's story as told by Grand Paw Wood: Many years ago, Mr. Wood bought some heavily timbered property near Parkin. The men worked hard out in the forest and enjoyed having good food followed by good beer. Mr. Wood kept his men happy. Their supplies, which came down the Mississippi from St. Louis to Memphis, always had a large supply of beer. Mr. Wood could supply the beer; however, he had trouble delivering their mail. The men had to send and receive mail whenever someone went to Parkin or Earle. They began to mention having their own post office. Mr. Wood looked into the possibilities and learned that in order to have a post office, the place must have a name. After many names were tossed around, one of the men jokingly suggested that they name the little timber community "Togo" in honor of their Togo Beer.

States Mrs. McCutchen, "Grand Paw Wood would laugh to think any of the loggers would even know who a Japanese admiral was in that day and time."



Who is this? He was not a native of Cross County. He and his wife moved from Memphis to Wynne in 1954. He became one of the most loved and needed persons in the county. He died on January 24, 1991. He was a business man; a father of five; a choir member; a person still missed by all who knew him. Find the answer in this issue.

Museum definition: do-cent (**doe**-sent, **doe**-sent) *n.* A teacher or lecturer at certain universities who is not a regular faculty member.

1924 Book about a Railroad Riot Available on CD

Written by a minister who lived at 714 Harrell Street in Wynne, *The Harrison Riot* is a true story of Rev. J. K. Farris's hair-raising adventures in Harrison, Arkansas in 1924.

Rev. Farris had preached at the **Methodist Church in Wynne** from 1901 to 1904. In 1924 he was sent to Harrison to help minister to the railroad strikers and also to non-union railway laborers. The two factions, plus the officials of the Missouri and North Arkansas Railway, could not settle the strike amicably. Much blood was shed during the course of the twelve month strike. One man was hanged in the melee, many were flogged, and families starved or were run out of town, escaping with only the clothes on their backs.

After the town somewhat quieted, Rev. Farris left Harrison for Wynne quite shaken but unharmed. He began writing his book immediately and resided in Wynne for the rest of his life, dying in 1936. The book is on CD and available by contacting Bridget Hart, 503 N. Killough Road, Wynne, AR 72396 or bhart1@sbcglobal.net. It is also available by calling the Cross County Museum at 238-4100. Make your check in the amount of \$5.00, payable to New Hope School.

MY EARLY YEARS

By Ruby Sullivan Davis, Born November 23, 1910, died December 16, 2003

There were ten children (five boys and five girls). Three died young and one at age 20.

My dad and brothers, when they were old enough, worked cutting and hauling logs to the saw mill. At one time, my dad was half-owner in a saw mill.

We had mules and horses for the wagons. We used the wagons to go to Church and to town for groceries.

The boys rode the horses to see their girlfriends on weekends.

In later years, trucks took over the work. We kept some horses. We also had a buggy by that time.

When I was seven years old, on my birthday, I rode in a car for the first time. Our closest neighbor bought this new Ford car. I was about 12 when my family bought one.

The roads were all dirt and when it rained, it was better not to go out in the car. You might get stuck in the mud.

I lived on a 40-acre farm. Part of it was to grow food for the mules and horses, also hogs and cattle. We also had fruit trees and a vegetable garden and strawberries, chickens for eggs and to use.

My dad would buy flour, meal and rice by the 100 lb. bags. My mother, with our help, would can fruits and vegetables. Also, dry a lot of apple slices on top of the tin barn roof. The canned fruit would go into the cellar, which was a hole about eight feet deep and about eight feet square with a roof over it. Steps to use and shelves.

Water was our problem. We caught water in barrels for clothes washing and cistern water for drinking. If these gave out, we would go several miles to a creek and fill the barrels. It would take several trips between rains.

To wash clothes, we had a big black iron wash pot to boil the clothes in. First, we would put clothes in a tub and soak. Then wring out, put in the hot pot for a few minutes, take out, rub dirt out, then rinse and starch if needed. They were dried on a wire line across the yard. Everything was ironed with irons heated in the fireplace in winter or on top of the cook stove in summer. This was before we had electricity. We didn't have electricity until after World War II.

Many of the deaths and health problems of years past are gone and new ones have taken their place. Vitamins are taken now to help improve our health. Also, better diets and eating habits.

Christmas—oranges, bananas, English walnuts.

Winter—snow cream.

Milk in summer kept cool by lowering it on a rope down into the cistern (*a deep hole or tank for holding water guttered from a roof.*)

We went to a two room country school (*New Hope School*) up through the eighth grade. We had lots of fun playing ball made from strings and the bat was a piece of wood, narrow on one end. Also, a game of hopscotch and marbles.

To go to the ninth grade, I stayed in town (*Wynne*), 3 1/2 miles from home. The cost was \$3.00 a week. One of my brothers drove the car. I went on Monday morning and was picked up Friday afternoon. After two years, my younger brother started. We walked the 3 1/2 miles in all kinds of weather. We walked part way down the railroad track. We had to be careful of trains. Our school lunches were buttered biscuits with home churned butter or homemade jelly, sometimes some tea cakes.

I married a farm man (Roy Sylvester Davis) and this meant I would work in the fields like the other farm women. I milked a cow before going to the field to hoe the cotton and corn or pick the cotton or pull the corn. We worked almost 'til time to have a baby, soon back to the fields with our baby on a pallet. This went on until I had three little girls to carry to the field. Elaine, Eloise and Jean.

The price of cotton and other farm produce fell so low we couldn't make the payments on the money we borrowed to make the crop and pay for the land we bought.

My husband worked at a gravel pit for 10 cents an hour, nine hours a day for several months.

We sold the land and bought 10 acres from my dad and mother (William L. Sullivan and Laura Ann Sanders Sullivan) and built a house on it. Our two other children were born there. Our son and another daughter (Roy "Sonny" and Rosemary.)

They went to the same schools where I went.

By this time, my husband was working for the Arkansas Highway Department getting 25 cents an hour. He worked there until World War II was on for several months. He worked as a carpenter for some of the war plants that were being built all around the country. Later, he went to California and worked at Hunters Point in San Francisco. This was a repair place for ships that the Japanese had struck and damaged. One Sunday they had a visitor's day. He carried us to see the ship he was working on. On the way home, we heard on the car radio about the atomic bomb that the United States had dropped on the Japanese. A few days later, another one was dropped and soon the war was over.

In July 1969, this same ship we were on in August, 1945, was used to pick up the astronauts that had walked on the moon.

After coming back to Arkansas soon after the War ended, he worked as a carpenter in Arkansas and later in Memphis, Tennessee. One of the places he worked on was Elvis Presley's house on two occasions. He worked at a rice mill several years. We sold the house in Arkansas and bought a nice place in Memphis.

As I was raised in a Christian home, I became a Christian at an early age and was baptized into the Baptist Church (Harris Chapel Baptist Church). I was baptized in a river with several others.



Ruby S. Davis

WOULD YOU LIKE TO HONOR A LOVED ONE?

Funds are needed in three areas of the Historical Society: to finish the goal establishing an Endowment Fund (the former penny fund); to maintain the museum; and to restore the New Hope School. Gifts made in memory are listed in issues of *The ERA*, and are welcomed. All gifts to New Hope School are also listed on the bulletin board located on the lawn of the New Hope School. Make your check to one of three accounts: **(1) CCHS (future endowment fund); (2) Cross County Museum (maintenance); or (3) New Hope School (restoration)**, all at P. O. Box 943, Wynne, AR 72396. *Please state on the Memo line to which account you are donating. Thank you for any contributions made to keep our historical society active.*

President's Message Continued -

Michelle Slabaugh and I gave a power point presentation to several local organizations, including Rotary, local church groups and others. I was a guest on KWYN's Yawn Patrol three times to promote activities at the Museum.

We were able to have two terrific programs at the museum this fall. The publicity seemed to have worked because both had excellent attendance and got good reviews. Thanks to the program committee chaired by Charlene Nicholson, we had a program entitled Black History of Arkansas and Cross County and another just last month on Cross County Railroads. There are at least three programs already planned for next year. January 19 is the date for a program on the National Military Cemetery to be located in Cross County. On May 15 Rachel Silva will conduct a "Walk through History" with a walking tour of the downtown area. In September CCHS will sponsor the program "A Cemetery Has a Story to Tell." These and other programs should be fun and interesting to a lot of people.

One project we were not able to finish was the opening of a new classroom with space for meetings and rotating exhibits. We actually received a grant that would have helped us complete that project, but were required to return that grant because of a conflict. We will find other funding and within this next year I believe we can make that goal a reality.

We have finished numerous other projects, and with work from many volunteers, we have accomplished a lot.

I want to thank each of you again for selecting me to serve as Cross County Historical Society President for one more year. You have appointed an energetic, new board to work with and with its help and the help of all of you, I know this coming year will be more successful than last year.

One thing to remember, the Board of Directors meets on the third Thursday of each month. It is a board meeting where the board takes care of business, but all members are welcome to attend. We want to keep everyone informed about our work; therefore, we are posting the minutes of our Board meetings on the CCHS web site for all to see, and immediately informing the members via email.

We will have more committees working and many opportunities for anyone willing to work with us in the coming months. Just let me know if you're interested.

Thanks for all your support. Have a wonderful new year!
Carol Brown, CCHS President

WYNNE, ARKANSAS: A LOOK BACK AT 1947 Again Available

DVDs of the narrated, originally silent **film made in 1947**, are available for \$25.00, payable to Downtown Wynne, at the Cross County Museum, 711 East Union, Wynne, phone 870-238-4100, or by calling Bridget Hart at 238-8631.

Featured in the film are the first meeting of the Wynne Chamber of Commerce, a significant Rotary meeting in the Women's Progressive Club building, Baptist and Methodist Church members emerging from the now demolished churches, many classes of students and teachers in the Wynne Schools, the football game with Clarendon on Wynne's flooded football field, and wet fans in the stadium.

Some people in the film: J.C. White, Carol Lou Eldridge, Hulan Bridges, Clara Henson, Alva Jane Jackson, James Billings, Beryl Thomas, Patsy Everett, Mary Ann Satterfield, Kathy Hagler, Hershel Glenn, Ed Leverette, Odessa Maggitt, Horace Proctor, June Rutledge, Lucille Boger, Sam Fisher, Clyde Ford, Joan Brown Matthews, Jimmy Sugg, Lavella Garner Crawford, Howard Holloway Johnston, Betty Ann Harrell Dangeau, Jere Kernodle, Louise Bowers Jones, Genny Bowden Tate, Mary Ford Hunter, Eloise Davis Roberts, and C. T. Gibbs. Many homes of Wynne are spotlighted: 820 East Union, 1112 E. Hamilton, 924 Hamilton, 505 Lemons, 110 Eldridge Court, 925 E. Hamilton, 115 Eldridge Court, the Kernodle home at the north end of Eldridge Court, and Hays Food Town offices at 503 Levesque.

CROSS COUNTY HISTORY

By Jimmie Sadler James

Cross County, Arkansas traces its beginning to an act of the General Assembly, passed 15 November, 1862, entitled, "An Act to Establish the County of Cross." The county was taken out of Poinsett, Crittenden and St. Francis counties. Cross County is bounded on the north by Poinsett, on the east by Crittenden, on the south by St. Francis, and on the west by Woodruff and Jackson counties. Cross County is divided into twelve townships: Hickory Ridge, Mitchell, Coldwater, Twist, Brushy Lake, Searcy, Tyronza, Fair Oaks, Ellis, Bedford, Wynne, and Smith.

Cross County was named for Col. David C. Cross, an officer of the Confederate Army who came to the area in the 1840s. Eventually, he was to own 85,000 acres of land, making him a wealthy man and the most extensive landowner in the county. Col. Cross died August 21, 1874, at the home of his friend, William Perry Wilkins, and is buried in the Wilkins family cemetery, south of Wynne.

There have been five county seats. The town of Wittsburg was designated as the first county seat, but due to Union forces patrolling the area during the Civil War, county business could not be conducted there. Three commissioners were chosen to decide where the county seat should be located. April 18, 1863, they chose Pineville as the county seat. Dr. B. D. McClaran was the first County Clerk. No courthouse was erected at Pineville. Dr. McClaran lived near Pineville and the county's business was conducted in his home.

In May, 1865, commissioners met at Pineville and selected the town of Cleburne as the next county seat. Cleburne, named after Patrick R. Cleburne, a Confederate general from Helena, Arkansas, who had been Col. Cross's commander in the Civil War, was located in the center of the county. Col. Cross deeded the center block in the town containing 3/5 acre to the county on which to build a courthouse. His residence on the site was used as a temporary courthouse. The county seat was at Cleburne from 1865 to 1868.

As early as 1866, petitions had been circulated asking that the seat be changed to Wittsburg. In June 1868, three locating commissioners were elected, and in October 1868, they selected Wittsburg, by now a thriving river port, as the next county seat. Wittsburg was the county seat from 1868 to 1884.

In 1882, when the Helena branch of the Iron Mountain and Southern Railroad was completed, Wittsburg began to decline. Steam trains were replacing steamboats. Many business and professional people were moving to Vanndale, which was located on the new railroad. An election was held, and in 1884, Vanndale was declared the next county seat. The first (*brick*) courthouse was built there in 1888.

Meanwhile, the town of Wynne, south of Vanndale, was growing. Wynne started in 1882 when a train derailed, leaving one boxcar without wheels and off the tracks. The boxcar was placed upright and designated Wynne Station in compliment to Capt. Jessie W. Wynne, a veteran of the Civil War and a prominent businessman and banker of Forrest City, Arkansas. Wynne was formally incorporated May 28, 1888. In July, 1903, a petition was presented to the county court, asking that an election be held to move the county seat from Vanndale to Wynne. Wynne won the election and has remained the county seat of Cross County, Arkansas.

MEMORIAL GIFTS:

To Cross County Historical Society:

Sara and Nevil Boone, *memory of*
Audrey Clayton
Liberty Vanaman
Earnest McCorkle
Teal Boone

To New Hope School:

Bob Kittrell, *memory of*
Miss Estelle Sullivan
Jacob Turner, Jr., *memory of*
Jacob Turner, Sr.
Doug/Sharon Middlebrook, *memory of*
Sharon Forrester
Virginia Caudell, *memory of*
Sharon Forrester
Pat Burnett, *memory of*
Sharon Forrester
John and Donna Horton, *memory of*
Sharon Forrester
Eldon Waddell
Wynne Class of 1949, *memory of*
Marlon W. Walls

New Hartness Book Available

Wittsburg, Wynne, and Points Nearby, a new publication by Richard Hartness, is available in paperback, \$19.95, and in hardcover, \$29.95. The book is a combination of reprints of four publications Hartness authored in 1970. To obtain the book, send your name, address, phone number and number of copies to Cross County Historical Society, P. O. Box 943, Wynne, AR 72396.

Hartness is a Wynne native. He holds a Master's Degree in History from Arkansas State University. He is the author of *Wittsburg, Arkansas: Crowley's Ridge Steamboat Riverport 1848—1890*, published in 1978.

CROSS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P. O. Box 943

Wynne, AR 72396

crossmuseum@sbcglobal.net

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The ERA may be viewed on the website above.

WINTER 2010

CD About Cross County Found on the internet is the following ad: "Cross County History and Genealogy. An informative and historical overview of Cross County, Arkansas including two separate books on one CD which include 4 historical maps (1855, 1895, 1898, and 1915); plus the sections 1890 Goodspeed Publishing Company *Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Cross County, Arkansas* book on CD including 103 family biographies. An important resource for the study and research of Cross County, Arkansas history and genealogy." See link: http://www.hearthstonelegacy.com/cross_county_arkansas.htm

Answer to Who is This? : Bill Argo, Argo Drug Store, Wynne 1954—1991

In Gratitude - AGAIN

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

BUILD PRESERVATION IN CROSS COUNTY—JOIN YOUR COUNTY'S HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Fill out the form below and mail with your check to the Cross County Historical Society, P. O. Box 943, Wynne, AR 72396.

Members receive annual renewal letters.

MEMORIALS ARE WELCOME

Memberships: Individual \$15__ Family \$25__ Institutional \$35__ Sustaining\$50__ Patron \$100__ Benefactor \$250__ Advocate \$500__
Lifetime \$1000__

Name _____ Email Address _____

Address _____

GIFT: () In memory of () In Honor of _____

Address _____

Please notify the following of this gift: _____

Address _____

**Please make checks payable to Cross County Historical Society and mail to P. O. Box 943, Wynne, AR 72396
501 (c) (3) Non-profit Organization**

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