



Cross County Historical Society
P. O. Box 943, Wynne, AR 72396

www.cchs1862.org

Cross County *ERA*

VOLUME 6—NO. 2

SPRING 2011

Dedication...

This issue of the ERA is dedicated to DeLoss McKnight, member of Cross County Historical Society. He was a Wynne Public Schools classmate to this editor from Kindergarten through 12th grade. DeLoss was born on June 15, 1931, and passed away at 11:37 p.m. on February 16, 2011, at his home. He was well known as an attorney and as a truly generous person. DeLoss was loved and appreciated by all residents of Cross County, plus numerous people across the State of Arkansas.



Cross County Museum
711 East Union, Wynne

CCHS Newsletter Wins Award at Byways Banquet

The Cross County Historical Society's newsletter, The ERA, won third place at the 11th Annual Delta Awards Banquet on Friday, February 18 at the Forrest City Civic Center. Competing in the Media Support category were Delta Crossroads Magazine, Piggott, Rector, Manila and Trumann, which won first place and Rob Johnson, Forrest City Broadcasting, which won second place. Each medium received a clear Lucite trophy.

The event was sponsored by Arkansas Delta Byways, with support from the St. Francis County Museum and the Forrest City A & P Commission.

Attending the banquet in support of this newsletter, Cross County *ERA*, and pictured here are Jim Rhea, Joy McMinn, *ERA* editor Bridget Hart (holding the trophy), Richard Hartness, Herbie Hartness, Theresa McCrary, Carol McCrary and Billy Sanders, all of Wynne.



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MUSEUM HOURS

The Cross County Museum is open Monday through Friday,
10:00 to 4:00
CALL 870-238-4100

Downtown Book Sale Successful

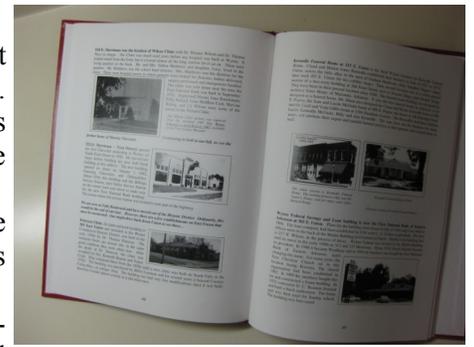
“A Virtual Tour through History in Downtown Wynne” has sold out two times and there are only ten books left. The total number of books sold is 141. The majority of the books have been picked up, but many have been mailed. The gross income to date is \$7050.00 which includes some postage overflow which goes into the fund. **All income from book sales goes to restoration of the New Hope School.**

Many Arkansas university libraries and the Butler Center have purchased the book. The Butler Center for Arkansas Studies is a department of the Central Arkansas Library System.

Books are still available. The book contains 95 captioned pictures and descriptions of early businesses in the downtown area. Many of the photos are railroad photos. A map of downtown Wynne is included, with labels showing where many of the old businesses were situated. Throughout the text are short stories and interesting facts researched and written by Bridget Hart. The book is based on a downtown Wynne tour by Rachel Silva, Staff Tour Guide with Arkansas Heritage.

The books sell for \$50 each plus \$5.50 shipping. For more information or **to order, call 870-238-8631** or the Cross County Museum at **870-238-4100** between 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, or write to Cross County Museum, P. O. Box 943, Wynne, AR 72396.

Please make your check to NEW HOPE SCHOOL.



A Remembrance of Home (Wynne) by Jim Gardner

I remember moving into a brand new house at 108 Eldridge Court from the smaller house on Hamilton Avenue (Silk Stocking Road) across from the large palatial Andrews home on the corner of Hamilton and Highway 1 in the late 1930s. I vividly recall playing ping-pong on the sun porch on Sunday, December 7, 1941 when it was announced the Japanese had attacked Pearl Harbor. I was twelve. Nobody thought my age would be involved, as surely, the whole thing would be over within a few months. Of course, it took longer, but still not long enough for my age group to be called. Initially, the screened porch located on the southeast corner was a concrete patio, but I don't think we called it by such a certified name back then. My dad had my brother Jack, sister Janet and me imprint our hand prints in the concrete on the south side up close to the house. Last time I checked—and that was several years ago—they were still there. Mrs. Audrey Clements, Florence Ann and Buddy lived to the south of us and Dr. and Mrs. Peterson to the north. There was nothing but cotton fields to the east. It was a wonderful place and time to live in a great city. We were truly blessed.

Major General James L. Gardner, son of J.L. Gardner of Wynne Lumber Company and 1947 graduate of Wynne High School, retired from the Air Force in December 1983 following 32 1/2 years of active duty in addition to 19 months in the Arkansas National Guard. He now lives in South Carolina.

Report from CCHS Board Meeting...

All Cross County histories were picked up by Acclaim Press on January 13 for printing in the Cross County Families History Book. There were 415 family, 30 business, 16 church and three club submissions. Total number of books sold is 344. The compiling of histories is complete; however, **orders for the book are still being accepted at the pre-sale price.** After they are published, they will be more expensive.

Richard Hartness recently represented District 1 in Washington, D.C. on Advocacy Day, a time to lobby for museums. The cost of his trip was \$1500. Other museums in the district have been requested to help with the funding. CCHS will donate \$250 toward the trip. In the near future, Hartness will submit a report to the Historical Society and to those contributing to the expenses.

HELP, a program developed to address specific needs of small museums, will offer a “Next Step” training class. HELP is supported by Mid-America Arts Alliance, Institute of Museum and Library Services, Arkansas Arts Council and the Arkansas Museums Association. Applications for grants will be submitted to aid in the expense of any attending members.

At the request of County Judge Jack Cauble, the historical society will apply again for a preservation grant to help repair the museum building which is the property of Cross County. The former county judge refused to sign the application because it contains a preservation easement clause. A preservation easement is a voluntary transfer of some rights inherent in property ownership. The historic preservation easement is a right or limitation, set forth in a legal instrument or deed, which allows the donor to retain ownership and possession of a historic property while granting a government agency or qualified non-profit organization the authority to protect the historic, cultural, architectural characteristics of the property. The covenants obligate the owner to refrain from actions that are incompatible with the preservation of and/or historic integrity of the property. See www.arkansaspreservation.com under Article V Administering the Grant, page 12.

The museum could use a paper shredder. Does anyone out there want to donate one?

Did you know that during WWII sports teams played nearby teams twice a season in order to save gasoline, which was rationed?

Cherry Valley Memories

by Mary Lee Mann

Cherry Valley is a small town of approximately 500 citizens located on Highway One approximately halfway between Wynne and Harrisburg. In the early 1930's it was considered a rowdy little town, due to the local whiskey store, pool hall and sale barn, where regular livestock auctions were held every Friday. Many of the gentlemen who attended these sales also visited the other two establishments, as well as local beer halls and restaurants, making for a lively time. Z. N. Halk owned a cotton gin, along with a general merchandise establishment. There were several other stores, one of the larger ones being the Misner Store and one of the older ones owned and operated by John Stark and his wife Florence. There was also a bank, post office and drug store. There were two beauty shops, Elizabeth's (Elizabeth Mann Stark) and Misner's, located in their store. There was a barber shop owned and operated by Pede Curtner, and in later years a second one run by Frank Fryar.

The War (*WWII*) brought with it a need for more farm products, especially rice and soy beans. Several families moved into the area to farm, including the Leonard Harmons, Wilhite Brothers (Burl and Cozie), Pauscherts, and Woods along with others. After the war an improved highway (Hwy. One) from Wynne to Jonesboro was constructed, paving the former gravel road and straightening the "kinks."

Following World War II many other changes occurred, including another and more modern cotton gin/fertilizer business, known as Hunter Gin (Malcolm Hunter). There were more grocery/general merchandise stores. Some of these were the updated Misner Store, Lloyd Carwell Store, Sam Anderson Store, Edward Balch Store and the Lewis Store. Grover Holcomb had a store and sold tickets for Missouri Pacific Bus Lines. Saturdays brought a hubbub of activity to the streets of Cherry Valley when folks from out-lying areas "went to town" to stock up on supplies and the latest gossip. During and shortly after the War many citizens rode the morning bus to Memphis for shopping and returned in the late afternoon on the train. In my freshman year at Cherry Valley High School I used this schedule to attend, riding the morning bus to school and back home in the afternoon on the train to White Hall where I lived. There were no school buses then and students were responsible for their own transportation.

There was a theater (Sunshine Theater) owned by Burley and Martha Graves that operated for a while, even with a late night showing on Saturday nights.

The original Cherry Valley school was a two-story red brick building, with a large gym constructed as a WPA project before the war, and included all twelve grades. There was a very active basketball program with enthusiastic local support and friendly rivalry with surrounding towns. As the number of students increased, an elementary school was constructed and grades one through six moved across town during the 1952-53 school year. The original building burned in 1962, and the students were transported to Harrisburg for several years. A new consolidated high school (Cross County High School) was later built which still educates students from Cherry Valley, Vanndale and Hickory Ridge. An annual reunion is held each year for everyone who ever attended Cherry Valley Schools. Anyone who is interested in information about these reunions may contact glesley@midsouth.rr.com.

There currently remains a restaurant, a dollar store and an Exxon Station, First National Bank and Cross County Bank. Few of the original families are left.....only memories. Not even a grocery store and so it goes....

P. S. On a visit to the Parker Homestead (in White Hall) I saw on display a small white satin child's coffin from the old Z. N. Halk store, donated by Grandson Norman Halk. There was an old ledger of accounts also, dating back many years. The Homestead is located in White Hall and contains many artifacts of years gone by, including an original and restored log cabin once occupied by a family from Cherry Valley.

If any of my memories are inaccurate I apologize and may be contacted at mlmann@pcsii.com.

Memo: I neglected to add that at one time Earl Dexter owned and operated a Ford Dealership. How could I forget since this is where I purchased my first car...a White one with red interior, four-door and "good to go".

Also, there was an old hotel located approximately where the Bank of Cherry Valley, now First National Bank, stands. It was owned and operated by a Mrs. Clampit, and later became a grocery store run by Jeff Clampit, her son.

As this is a WIP (work in progress, in quilting terms) I will be adding to it if someone wishes to add something.



Cherry Valley School 1955

We thank Mary Lee Mann for her contribution to the ERA.

To the Cross County ERA

Thursday, December 09, 2010

From the Reverend Dr. James T. Clemons

Your article on Harold Falls, former mayor of Wynne, (*Spring 2010*) was much appreciated and brought cherished personal memories.

The first time I saw him was at the high school athletic field, where several had gathered at the high jump pit for track practice under Coach Paul McFerrin. Harold (*Mayor of Wynne at the time*) was in shorts and track shoes, and his deformed leg and limp from polio were obvious. After a few minutes of conversation, he asked that the bar be raised a foot or so, then with just a few steps, went over it in a rolling motion with body parallel to the bar which I had not seen until that moment. Only a bit later did I learn he had been an outstanding high jumper at then Southwestern College in Memphis (*now Rhodes College*.)

In addition to his business and many church and civic activities, and many men in military service, he accepted the responsibilities of Scout Master. We met every Monday night, usually in the basement of the Methodist Church. Troop 17 had a long history, with a large number of Eagle Scouts, and was a leader among troops in the neighboring towns.

On a few occasions, he had me come by his Farm Equipment Store where he questioned me about a merit badge on which I was working. One visit comes clearly to mind. The merit badge was for music. Toward the end, he turned the subject to classical music, and asked, "Who were the Three B's?" When I explained that the term referred to the three great German composers, I could name only Brahms and Beethoven. He then named Bach, a name I did not recognize, but whose music I have since enjoyed for many hours in the sixty years since.

In the early forties, we had just a small group, and sometimes only four or five showed up. In addition to supervising scouting studies, and going with us on bike trips to camp out overnight, he often told us stories about how the city of Wynne was organized, where the income came from, and what plans were already being made for post-war development in the area. A few times he packed us in his car and drove on gravel roads around the county, telling us about their history, and once to Forrest City to see where a new power plant was to be built.

Your article mentioned many reasons for his being an outstanding man and leader, but I thought this additional dimension was worth noting.

Dr. Clemons, 81, was killed Friday, January 14, 2011 while attempting to board a train in Maryland in order to spend the weekend with his daughter, Rev. Margaret Clemons. He emailed this memory to the editor just five weeks before his death. His article, "The Tin Shop," was printed in the Spring 2010 issue of the ERA.

MEMORIAL GIFTS

To Cross County Historical Society:

Patsy Moyers

in honor of her family

Dr. Kenneth Beaton

in memory of Dr. Vance Crain

Faye Futch

in memory of Mrs. Clara Lewis

Wynne Business & Professional Women

in memory of Mrs. Helen Baker

Harold Hardwick/FNB

in memory of Mrs. Patty Lovrein

Luther J. LaRue

Billy George and Mildred Hall

Warren Wiltshire

Charles and Jean Snead

Wynne School Central Office

Curt and Cathy Hagler

John and Esther Killough

Marian Curtner

Dr. and Mrs. Richard Jackson

Tenny and Ida Howell

All in memory of DeLoss McKnight

To New Hope School:

Bridget, Ann, Charlie and Cliff Hart

Betty and Bobby Holland

in memory of DeLoss McKnight

Bridget Hart

memory of Wilbur English, New Hope student

To CCHS Endowment Fund Savings Account:

Wynne High School Class of 1949

in memory of DeLoss McKnight

Remember This?

Does anyone remember a coal chute rail spur at the intersection of Commercial and Terry Streets north of Attorney Jim Luker's office? A hopper coal car was pushed to the top of the ramp in order to drop coal into steam engines.

Remember...

... when Falls Boulevard was two lanes and known as State Street?

...the Quik Snak?

...the swimming pool and how it was drained every Sunday after closing for cleaning and then refilled, reopening on Tuesday?

...how cold the water was on Tuesday?

...the pavilion at the city park? the **only** city park?

...when KWYN was on State Street?

...the stores didn't close until 10:30 on Saturday night?

Our thanks to Luther Sigman and C. P. Dail for these memoirs.

1924 Book about Railroad Riot Available on CD

Written by a **Methodist 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 during a railroad union riot. Copies of the book are held in the Harrison Museum, but handling of the very fragile book is restricted.

The text of 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 870-238-4100. Make your check in the amount of **\$5.00**, payable to New Hope School. If ordering, include **\$4.00 postage**.

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

Hartness Book Remains Available

Wittsburg, Wynne, and Points Nearby, a new publication by Richard Hartness, is available in paperback, \$19.95, and in hardcover, \$29.95, plus \$4.95 shipping. The book is a combination of reprints of four publications Hartness compiled in 1970.

Hardcover books are available in Wynne at the Cross County Museum, Star Printing Company, Caldwell Discount Pharmacy, or from the author. Paperback books can be purchased from Mr. Hartness by calling 870-208-9311 or the museum at 870-238-4100.

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.

Valentine Gala Successful

The Cross County Historical Society wishes to thank everyone in the community for making our Valentine "Fashions Through the Ages" Gala on February 12 a major success. Our special thanks to the corporate sponsors: Addison Shoe Company, Cross County Bank, CrossRidge Hospital, First National Bank of Wynne, Greenway Equipment, Hays Food Town, and Ross Ford Toyota. We are grateful for the many auction items so generously donated for the occasion. They made the auction exciting, competitive and much fun. We're always grateful for the cooperation from our Chamber of Commerce for its help in notifying members and selling tickets for us. Our local News Leader and Wynne Progress, as well as our KWYN radio team, did a thorough publicity job for us. The table decorations were beautiful and festive. I won't begin listing names of museum staff and members who worked and coordinated to take care of every detail, or this letter would go on forever.

The Gala raised approximately \$18,000 for the Cross County Museum and Archives and was one of our most profitable fundraisers yet. We have many immediate and projected plans for our Cross County Museum and the income from the Gala will take care of ordinary expenses as we move toward our future goals. We are constantly striving to create a state-of-the-art museum and archives to be enjoyed by all.

Carol Brown, President, Cross County Historical Society

Pitts-Milam Barn Open for Visitors

Visitors may notice the Pitts-Milam barn, located west off Highway #1 north of Cherry Valley.

In 1938, Mr. Pitts hired Mr. Roy Jolly to build an elaborate, modern barn with sliding doors for the hall. These doors have been removed. Four windows are situated on each side of the barn and two the same size are in front. Five stalls for horses are on the south side. One crib has a stairway leading to the upper floor. On the north side are four corn cribs floored with concrete. The cribs have a hinged drop door for easy loading and unloading, and separate doors four feet wide with metal hasps for fasteners.

A hayloft with the traditional 5' by 6' door for loading and unloading hay lies in the east end of the second story. Two double windows are positioned on each side of this door. These windows measure 28" by 24". At the back or west side is a smaller door 48" by 42" and over the door is another double window.

The barn has a concrete foundation and is built of cypress. The roof is covered with corrugated tin with two decorative vents on top. The barn measures 34' by 50'.

In 1952 rice became the farm's main product, and storage was needed for the grain. Metal bins were not yet common, so the corn cribs were utilized as grain bins. They were sealed with tongue and groove pine which still remains in place. Mr. Hubert Whitby was the carpenter.

In early 2000, Jerry Milam had the barn cleaned and painted. Don Milam and Claython Diggs rebuilt the windows. A **Milam Barn** sign stands at the highway entrance to the barn. Inside the barn is a guest book for visitors to sign.

Call Judy Milam at 870-588-4312 for permission to visit the barn. *(Our thanks to Martha Milam and Judy Milam for this article.)*

WOULD YOU LIKE EMAILS FROM YOUR MUSEUM?

If you would like to receive email notices from the Cross County Museum, please contact Joy McMinn at the museum and let her know your latest email address at crossmuseum@sbcglobal.net or 870-238-4100.

DO YOU SIT AT TIMES WITH NOTHING TO DO? GO TO THE MUSEUM!! IT NEEDS A FEW OF YOUR HOURS!

CROSS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Wynne, AR 72396

crossmuseum@sbcglobal.net

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The ERA may be viewed on the website above.

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To contact editor: bhart1@sbcglobal.net

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

In Gratitude - AGAIN and AGAIN

Our appreciation goes to David Dowd, his secretary Kim, and the **Cross County Bank** for the printing of this newsletter. The bank is located in downtown Wynne 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.

New CCHS Members:

Chris Tatum, William Davie, Eddie Ransom, Sandra Tucker, Nancy Woolford, Dusty Luker, Joy McMinn, Garolyn Baldwin, John Reynolds, Melissa Holland, Jeff Guide, Woods Falls, Leta Franklin, Betty Teigen, Phillip Moery.

BUILD PRESERVATION IN CROSS COUNTY—JOIN YOUR COUNTY'S HISTORICAL SOCIETY **MEMORIALS ARE WELCOME**

Please make checks payable to Cross County Historical Society, New Hope School, or CCHS Savings Account, and mail to P. O. Box 943, Wynne, AR 72396 Persons donating \$15 or more to any of these accounts becomes a member of CCHS.

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

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