

The State Historical Society of Missouri

Spring 2023

# MISSOURI TIMES



Celebrating 125 Years



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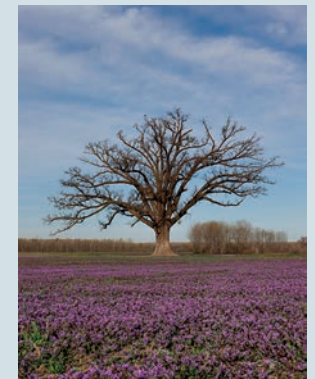
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## **COVER PHOTO**



The big Bur Oak tree in McBaine by  
Notley Hawkins, April 6, 2023.

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THE STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF MISSOURI  
**SHSMO**  
OUR HOME — OUR HISTORY

The trustees and staff of the State Historical Society of Missouri thank you for your support. Our mission since 1898 continues: collecting, preserving, publishing, and sharing Missouri history. We welcome you to each of our research centers, and we're always available online. Your gifts and annual membership to SHSMO will help us chart a course for the next 125 years and beyond!



SHSMO staff (standing) and trustees (seated) pose for a group photo at the Center for Missouri Studies, April 3, 2023. Photograph by Aubrey Rowden.



# History on Elm Series Explores the State's Rich History and Culture

A NEW program series kicked off in January to commemorate the 125th anniversary of the State Historical Society of Missouri. History on Elm features a range of topics related to Missouri history and culture. It is held the second Tuesday of each month from noon to 1 p.m. at the Center for Missouri Studies in Columbia.

SHSMO staff led many of the programs this spring, including "Ten Missouri Artworks that Help Us Understand Our History," presented by art curator Joan Stack, and "Sci-Fi Fandom in Missouri," by A. J. Medlock, coordinator of the St. Louis Research Center.



SHSMO Art Curator Joan Stack presents "Ten Missouri Artworks that Help Us Understand Our History," the inaugural program in the History on Elm series, at the Center for Missouri Studies on Jan. 10, 2023.



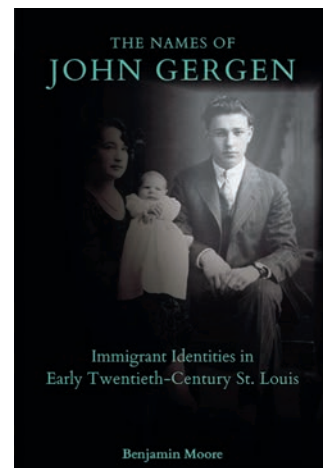
The documentary film *Oh Freedom After While* was shown as part of History on Elm, Feb. 14, 2023.

History on Elm has also featured author talks and a film screening. Benjamin Moore, winner of the 2022 Missouri History Book Award from the State Historical Society, spoke about his new book, *The Names of John Gergen: Immigrant Identities in Early 20th Century St. Louis*, in April. Moore's talk was co-sponsored by his publisher, the University of Missouri Press. In February, Candace O'Connor showed the documentary film *Oh Freedom After While*, which she wrote and co-produced. The University of Missouri's Ellis Library co-sponsored the screening at the Center for Missouri Studies as part of Black History Month.

On May 9, SHSMO trustee and past president Bob Priddy will interview executive director Gary Kremer about the Society's legacy and future. On June 13, Katie Seale, coordinator of the Rolla and Springfield Research Centers, will update the public on plans to commemorate the 100th anniversary of Route 66 in 2026.

History on Elm will take a break during the summer months of July and August, but plans are under way for an exciting fall lineup of new programs. On September 12, SHSMO will team up with *Missouri Life* magazine and Missouri Humanities for a screening of a new documentary film, *Exploring Missouri's German Heritage*. The fall and winter programming will also spotlight interesting subjects drawn from SHSMO's collections.

History on Elm is free to the public and there is no need to register in advance. Several of the programs, including "Ten Missouri Artworks that Help Us Understand Our History" and "Sci-Fi Fandom in Missouri," were held as virtual talks following the in-person programs and are available on the SHSMO website as part of the Society's On Demand programs.—BP



*The Names of John Gergen: Immigrant Identities in Early 20th Century St. Louis* by Benjamin Moore.

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# State Contest Brings National History Day Students, Teachers, and Judges to Columbia

By Danielle Griego

**T**HE University of Missouri-Columbia campus welcomed students back to an in-person state contest April 22 for National History Day in Missouri. The state and national contests moved to an online contest the past three years due to the pandemic. Top finishers will get the opportunity to participate at the national contest in College Park, Maryland, in June.

A grant by Missouri Humanities provided a paid internship to help with the contest during the spring semester. Many well-qualified college students applied for the internship, and an NHDMO alumna, Catherine Hannon from St. Louis, was awarded the position. Hannon first competed in NHDMO in 2018 with a project in which she researched women's suffrage. In 2020, her paper on St. Louis educator Susan Blow, who founded the first public kindergarten, placed first at the regional contest and third at the state level. Currently, Hannon is a third-year student at Maryville University majoring in history and secondary education with a concentration in social sciences. Her goal is to become a history educator so that she can share her love of the subject with students.

Hannon said that she has become a better writer, communicator, and teacher because of what NHDMO taught her, and she is happy to give back to a program that has helped shape her career plans. During her internship, Hannon created NHDMO resources, including

a video tutorial on how to write a thesis statement. She was involved in state contest planning and social media campaigns.

Earlier this year, students who competed in the 2022 state NHD contest were recognized on the Missouri House and Senate floors for their efforts. Students also received a framed resolution from their state representative and senator. Many of the students attending Day at the Capitol had the opportunity to discuss their projects with lawmakers.

Finally, two NHDMO educators were nominated for the 2023 Patricia Behring Teacher of the Year Award. Phillip Reed of Northwest High School in Cedar Hill was nominated for the senior division. Reed, a former NHD student himself, has been sharing his experiences of the program with students for six years. Beth Winton of John Warner Middle School in Columbia was nominated for the junior division. Winton's students have been competing in National History Day for 24 years, and she also has helped other educators learn more about the program. We wish these exemplary teachers and Missouri's national contest delegates the best of luck in College Park this summer.

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



Catherine Hannon, National History Day in Missouri intern.



Student Annalise Powell (center) of Columbia received a framed resolution from Sen. Caleb Rowden recognizing her participation in NHDMO. Pictured with Powell (left to right) are her parents, Sen. Rowden, and teacher Beth Winton, Missouri State Capitol, Feb. 8, 2023.



Katherine Wagner of Carthage holds a framed resolution from Sen. Jill Carter (far right) for Wagner's participation in NHDMO. Pictured with Wagner are her teacher Kayla Fultz (left) and her mom (right) and sister (front).

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# SHSMO and Missouri State University Host Missouri Conference on History

By Beth Pike

THE 65th annual Missouri Conference on History took place March 15-17 in Springfield. The conference brought many people together who are interested in Missouri history. Springfield native Anne Twitty, associate professor of history at the University of Mississippi, gave the keynote address on freedom suits in Missouri, including the suit by Dred and Harriet Scott that led to the notorious U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Scott v. Sandford*.

An 1807 Missouri territorial law allowed for an enslaved person to sue for freedom. Twitty noted that in 282 cases filed in St. Louis between 1814 and 1845, plaintiffs won 40 percent of the time. Among these cases, plaintiff Milly Sawyers lost twice in court against the men who enslaved her in St. Louis. Next enslaved by someone who took her to Springfield, she sued for a third time and was finally declared free by a Greene County Circuit Court in 1836 when the defendant failed to show up in court.

However, her newfound freedom came at a cost. Soon after she won her case, a group of white men, led by the founder of Springfield, John Polk Campbell, dragged Sawyers from her home and beat her viciously. None of the attackers were charged for this crime. Twitty said that documents seem to infer that Milly survived the beating, but she disappeared from the historical record following the attack. Twitty credits the work of archivists who bring stories like Milly Sawyer to light. "I regularly google names of enslaved persons. As new material is indexed and made available on the internet, we find more information about our past," said Twitty.

Amy Lutz and Helen Turner of the St. Louis Kaplan Feldman Holocaust Museum presented a panel discussion on Holocaust history in the Heartland. Lutz says she's been attending the Missouri Conference on History for three or four years and appreciated being able to present her own research and hear from others. Turner, who attended the conference for the first time, said it has helped her better understand Missouri. "I'm from the United Kingdom and lived in New York before moving to Missouri last year," said Turner, who described the



Welcome reception at Historic Firehouse No. 2 in Springfield.

conference as a "brain tingle" connecting her with other history-minded people.

Several scholars earned awards at a luncheon on the final day of the conference. Michael E. Verney, Drury University, received the Book Award for *A Great and Rising Nation: Naval Exploration and Global Empire in the Early US Republic*, published by the University of Chicago Press. The Lawrence O. Christensen Article Award was given to Kelly L. Schmidt, Washington University, for her article in the April 2022 *Missouri Historical Review*, "Slavery and the Shaping of Catholic Missouri, 1810-1850." Kay Ellis, Missouri Southern State University, won the Petra DeWitt Student Paper Prize for "How Silence and Subterfuge Ambushed a Senator: President Eisenhower's Methods in Dealing with McCarthy." Finally, Jisung Lee, University of Missouri-Kansas City, was awarded the Lynn and Kristen Morrow Missouri History Student Prize for "The Abandoned West: The First Year of the Western Sanitary Commission, 1861 to 1862."

Next year's Missouri Conference on History will be held in Columbia in March. Details and dates will be posted on [shsmo.org](http://shsmo.org) and sent to email subscribers. Many thanks to this year's steering committee, hosts, sponsors, speakers, and attendees for making the 2023 conference a success.





Left:  
Jisung Lee receives the Lynn and Kristen Morrow Missouri History Student Prize award from Jeremy Neely, MCH steering committee president.



Right:  
Kay Ellis receiving the Petra DeWitt Student Paper Prize award from Jeremy Neely.



Nathan Elwood presents a talk on Black activists, conspiracy, and discrimination in St. Louis during the period between WWI and WWII.



Kathleen Seale gives a history of the rotscope used in animation. The Rotoscope Collection at the Rolla Research Center includes material on filmmaking pioneers and their innovative technology.

# Sen. Thomas Hart Benton Sculpture Moved from U.S. Capitol to SHSMO Art Gallery



By Joan Stack

IN late February, a semi-truck pulled into the Center for Missouri Studies loading dock with an unusual delivery: a 5,000-pound marble sculpture that had stood in the National Statuary Hall of the U.S. Capitol Building since 1899. The sculpture represents Thomas Hart Benton, one of Missouri's first two senators. Benton served in the Senate from August 10, 1821, until March 4, 1851, becoming the first U.S. senator to serve five terms.

Born in North Carolina in 1782, Benton moved in 1815 to St. Louis, where he practiced law and edited the *Missouri Enquirer*, the second newspaper west of the Mississippi. As a champion of agricultural interests, Benton supported Missouri entering the Union as a slave state, but he also supported the prohibition of slavery in the western territories. Once elected to the Senate as a Jeffersonian Democrat, he acquired the nickname "Old Bullion" for his vocal support of gold and silver currency.

In the 1820s and 1830s he supported Jacksonian limited government, but in the 1840s he began to find himself more and more at odds with the pro-slavery elements of his party. In 1851 he lost his seat in the Senate during a power struggle with pro-slavery Missouri Democrats such as state supreme court judge William Barclay Napton, fellow U.S. Senator David Rice Atchison, and future governor Claiborne Fox Jackson.

Benton, however, did not give up. After winning a seat in the U.S. House of Representatives in 1852, he



Grace Cunningham, University of Missouri student and intern for former Sen. Roy Blunt, poses in front of the Sen. Thomas Hart Benton statue at the U.S. Capitol, July 2022.

continued to fight pro-slavery Democrats by opposing the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1853, a position that may have led him to lose his seat in the House in 1854. His daughter, Jessie Benton Frémont, became involved in politics when her husband, military explorer and California senator John C. Frémont, ran unsuccessfully for president in 1856 as the first Republican nominee for that office. Benton admired his son-in-law, who was an anti-slavery "Free-Soiler," but as a party loyalist, he supported the Democrats in the 1856 election. Benton's views on slavery continued to evolve, and he wrote a scathing indictment of the Dred Scott decision shortly before his death in 1858.

Years later, when it came time for Missouri to choose two notable Missourians to honor with sculptures in the U.S. Capitol, Senator Benton's long political career and historic influence made him an obvious choice. The other Missourian honored with a statue was Civil War general and U.S. Senator Francis P. Blair Jr. In 1899 Missouri gifted the sculptures of Benton and Blair to the Capitol collection. The artist of both sculptures was Alexander Doyle, who specialized in monumental bronze and marble statuary.

In the last twenty years, the Truman Library Institute led a campaign to raise more than \$400,000 for a new bronze figure of President Harry Truman to represent Missouri. This bronze sculpture by Kansas City artist Tom Corbin was placed in the Capitol rotunda on September 29, 2022. Since each state can sponsor just two





A Kansas City moving company unloads the statue of Sen. Thomas Hart Benton at the SHSMO Art Gallery, Feb. 22, 2023.



Paula Hobart, a Kansas City-based objects conservator, repairs a broken collar on the Sen. Thomas Hart Benton sculpture at the Center for Missouri Studies, March 27, 2023.

sculptures, arrangements were made for Doyle's marble sculpture of Benton to come to Missouri.

As a state agency dedicated to the preservation of art and history, the State Historical Society of Missouri was chosen as the new home for the Benton sculpture. The large and imposing figure dominates the back wall of the SHSMO art gallery on the first floor of the Center for Missouri Studies in Columbia.

The sculpture, slightly sullied and damaged during transport, has been cleaned and repaired. The beautiful marble figure is now a powerful presence in the gallery. Fittingly, this champion of the American West looks out toward the southwest while standing not far from the artwork of his great-great grandnephew and namesake, Missouri artist Thomas Hart Benton.

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



The Carnahan family poses next to the newly installed Benton sculpture in the SHSMO art gallery, Feb. 9, 2023. Left to right: former Missouri Secretary of State Robin Carnahan, former U.S. Senator Jean Carnahan, and Tom Carnahan.

# SHSMO 125th Anniversary Timeline



**1898**

SHSMO is founded by the Missouri Press Association and made a trustee of the State of Missouri a year later. It received its first state appropriation in 1901. The Society began operations in a small space inside present-day Jesse Hall on the University of Missouri campus. Newspaper publisher Edwin W. Stephens of Columbia served as the first president of the State Historical Society's Board of Trustees. Walter Williams, who served as secretary, would start the world's first school of journalism at the University of Missouri a few years later, in 1908. Isidor Loeb, a member of the university's history and political science faculty, was another chief supporter during the creation of the State Historical Society. Newspapers were among the Society's first collections. Missouri publishers continue to donate their newspapers, making the collection one of the largest of its kind in the country.

**1890s**

**1900s**

**1910s**

**1920s**



## Early 1900s

Francis A. Sampson, the first full-time SHSMO secretary, librarian, and director, donated his personal library in 1901. Sampson's library was thought to be the largest private collection of Missouri-related materials in existence at the time. In 1906, SHSMO began publishing the *Missouri Historical Review*, a scholarly quarterly that continues today. Lightning struck the Missouri State Capitol in 1911, destroying it for the second time by fire. People rushed in to save documents, and many state records were transferred from the Capitol to the State Historical Society that same year. The need for space to store the records contributed to the legislature's decision to provide funding for a new university library that could also be used by SHSMO. This library, later renamed for longtime faculty member and MU president Elmer Ellis, opened in 1915.

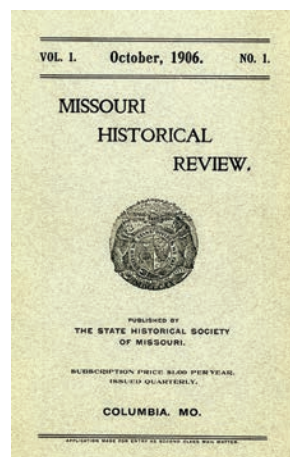
The Society moved into the library that same year under the new leadership of Floyd Shoemaker, who began a 45-year tenure as secretary, librarian, and director.



Floyd Shoemaker

## 1920s-30s

The collections continued to grow under Shoemaker as he became known for traveling across the state to promote the Society. In 1924, SHSMO acquired its first George Caleb Bingham artwork, a portrait of John Woods Harris, which was a gift from his heirs, Mattie Harriet Hendrick and Virgil Harris. Bingham's *Watching the Cargo* painting was purchased in 1927 for \$250. During the early 1930s, the staff researched and provided descriptions for 29 roadside markers installed along U.S. Highway 36.







Sarah Guitar

## 1950s

Reference librarian Sarah Guitar, a frequent contributor to the *Missouri Historical Review* and a key figure in the roadside marker program and other projects of the Society, retired after 39 years of service in 1957. The marker project that began in the 1930s was relaunched in a partnership with the Missouri Highway Department during the early 1950s. This phase of the project extended to other state highways throughout Missouri and was paid for through state appropriations.



Richard S. Brownlee II

1930s

1940s

1950s

1960s



## 1940s

In 1941 SHSMO purchased the J. Christian Bay Collection, which included almost 3,000 rare and valuable books, drawings, and biographical sketches of Middle Western Americana. An MU history professor at the time, Elmer Ellis, led the effort to establish the Western Historical Manuscript Collection at the University of Missouri in 1943. The WHMC would later merge with the SHSMO manuscript collection. The Society acquired several significant artworks during this decade, including Thomas Hart Benton's *The Year of Peril* paintings in 1944 and George Caleb Bingham's *Order No. 11* a year later in 1945.



## 1960s

Floyd Shoemaker retired in 1960, completing 50 years of service to the State Historical Society, and a new era began with Richard S. Brownlee II assuming the position of executive director. A journalism school graduate who later earned a PhD in history from the University of Missouri, Brownlee maintained close ties with the university, which helped secure a new space for the State Historical Society in the newly built east wing of University (Ellis) Library in 1961.

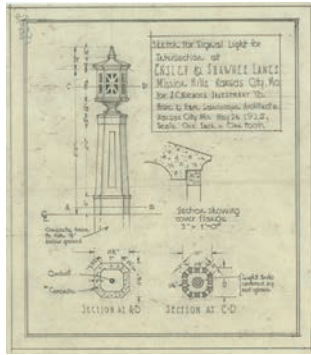
The Western Historical Manuscript-St. Louis Research Center opened in 1967 on the campus of the University of Missouri-St. Louis. The St. Louis center's collections now include everything from oral histories to manuscript holdings such as the papers of famed zoologist Marlin Perkins.

The center also holds the documents of labor, social justice, and environmental organizations. The St. Louis Research Center's efforts in the early 1990s to become a pioneer in digitizing its collections made it a leader in the field in the St. Louis area.



## 1970s

The Western Historical Manuscript-Kansas City Research Center opened in 1979 on the campus of the University of Missouri-Kansas City. Former Kansas City Mayor Charles Wheeler's collection of papers was the center's first accession. The collections in Kansas City have since grown to include more than 17,000 sets of architectural drawings from the 1890s through the 1980s, the Jewish Community Archives, the J.C. Nichols Company Records, the Native Sons and Daughters of Greater Kansas City Records, and the Irene Whitley Marcus Collection focused on the Black community in Kansas City dating back to the 1880s.



## 1990s

Almost a century after the founding of the State Historical Society, Avis Tucker, publisher of the *Daily Star Journal* in Warrensburg, became the first female president of the Board of Trustees in 1992. Tucker had also become the first female president of the University of Missouri Board of Curators in 1972, and in 1982 she served as the first female president of the Missouri Press Association.



## 1970s

## 1980s

## 1990s

## 2000s

## 1980s

The Western Historical Manuscript-Rolla Research Center opened in 1980 on the campus of the University of Missouri-Rolla (now Missouri Science and Technology). Highlights of the collections at the Rolla Research Center now include mining records, documentation of the region's railroad and transportation networks, American Civil War papers, and the Rotoscope Collection of unique cinematic films and filmmaking technology.

In 1985, Brownlee resigned as the top SHSMO administrator and was succeeded by the Society's associate director, James Goodrich. Like his predecessor, Goodrich was a graduate of the University of Missouri-Columbia Department of History and sought to make the organization's resources more widely available to researchers. As the National History Day program emerged in the 1970s and 80s, Goodrich placed a high priority on the History Day activities. By 1987, SHSMO had assumed primary financial and administrative roles in the annual National History Day in Missouri contest.



James Goodrich



## 2000s

*St. Louis Post-Dispatch* political cartoonist Tom Engelhardt donated 7,307 original editorial cartoons to the State Historical Society of Missouri dating from 1962 to 2001. This remains the largest single donation SHSMO has ever received to its extensive cartoon collection, which includes the Peter Mayo collection (a diverse assortment of more than 8,000 American cartoons and illustrations that Mayo donated between 1964 and 1975), the L.M. White collection of several hundred cartoons, and the Daniel Fitzpatrick collection of roughly 2,000 pieces, mostly donated by the Pulitzer Prize-winning *Post-Dispatch* cartoonist between 1945 and 1954.

A new era in the Society's history began when author and historian Gary R. Kremer became executive director in 2004. Among the Board of Trustees' goals for Kremer was to develop plans for a new headquarters to meet the growing need for a larger facility with better environmental controls to preserve its collections.

The State Historical Society received its first National Endowment for the Humanities — Library of Congress grant for the National Digital Newspaper Project in 2008, marking the beginning of an extensive effort to make millions of pages of Missouri newspapers available online.



Gary R. Kremer



## 2010s

The University of Missouri's Western Historical Manuscript Collection merged with the State Historical Society of Missouri in 2010, with SHSMO granted the "sole responsibility" for managing WHMC collections that documented the experiences and culture of Missouri and the Midwest.

Two more regional research centers opened, beginning with the Cape Girardeau Research Center on the campus of Southeast Missouri State University in 2013. This center allowed for expanded study and preservation of history in the southeast region of the state. Key collections there now include the papers of the Oliver and Oliver law firm from the 1880s to 1980s, photographs and business records for the Co-op Cut Rate Drug Store that operated for 50 years in Cape Girardeau, and bills of sale of enslaved persons in New Madrid County.

The Springfield Research Center opened in 2014 on the campus of what is now Missouri State University. The collections there focus on the history of southwest Missouri and the Ozarks. The Rose O'Neill Papers, donated by the artist's nephew, include drawings of O'Neill's famous Kewpie dolls. In 2021, the Springfield center added the RadiOzark collection of more than 400 phonograph records and recordings of shows by entertainers such as Tennessee Ernie Ford, Bill Ring, Red Foley, and Smiley Burnette.

Lynn Wolf Gentzler, SHSMO associate director and editor of the *Missouri Historical Review*, retired from the State Historical Society in 2014, completing 42 years of service to the Society and the Western Historical Manuscript Collection.



Lynn Wolf Gentzler

## 2010s

## 2020s

### 2019

2019 ushered in a monumental event for the State Historical Society—the opening of its own 76,000-square-foot building at 605 Elm Street on the MU campus. The Center for Missouri Studies received LEED Gold certification for being a healthy, efficient, and cost-effective facility. The building's dedication ceremony took place on Missouri Statehood Day, August 10.



### 2021

SHSMO organized statewide events for the Missouri Bicentennial, including the official ceremony at the State Capitol on August 10 to mark Missouri Statehood Day. More than 300 programs, events, and projects occurred statewide to commemorate the bicentennial. Later that year, the Kansas City Research Center expanded with a new 5,100 square feet of space at Miller Nichols Library on the UMKC campus.



### 2023

The State Historical Society of Missouri celebrates its 125th anniversary. Today, SHSMO's holdings include 45,000 cubic feet of manuscript collections, 28,891 original artworks, 8,800 oral histories, 4,725 newspaper titles, and many other items such as books, maps, photographs, sheet music, and audio-visual material. Fifty full-time and part-time staff, along with volunteers and a dedicated Board of Trustees, continue the mission to collect, preserve, educate, publish, and share Missouri history.



# SHSMO Continues to Dedicate Resources to Preservation of Missouri Newspapers

By Patsy Luebbert

NEWSPAPERS are often considered the first rough draft of history. Their pages have preserved essential records of local politics, issues, and events for hundreds of years. In addition to providing a record of the past, newspapers have also reflected the interests and values of the communities they serve.

In 1910, Miss Minnie Organ's three-part "History of the County Press of Missouri" was published in the *Missouri Historical Review*. Organ wrote, "It is among the chief glories of Missouri that the first newspaper west of the Mississippi river was established within her borders. In 1808 Joseph Charless, an ambitious young Irishman, came to St. Louis with a primitive printing outfit and on July 12 of that year took from the forms of his little Rampage press the first issue of The Missouri Gazette."

The collection and preservation of Missouri newspapers has been one of the State Historical Society's primary missions since its founding by members of the Missouri Press Association, who saw a need to establish a repository for the state's newspapers. The Society's collection now includes more than 60 million pages and is one of the largest collections of state newspapers in the nation. Since the late 1930s, SHSMO has pursued an active program of preservation microfilming. Today its newspaper microfilm collection has grown to more than 59,000 reels of film, with more reels added every year.

In 2008, SHSMO received its first of three National Endowment



A Boone County resident scrolls through a newspaper on microfilm at the Columbia Research Center, April 7, 2023.

for the Humanities grants to digitize historic newspapers and make the content word-searchable and freely available on the internet. With these grants, approximately 350,000 pages of newspapers were digitized and offered free online through the Library of Congress website *Chronicling America*.

SHSMO's digital newspaper program has continued to grow with additional funding sources. In recent years the Society has transitioned the digitizing of newspapers from grant funding to an agreement with newspapers.com that will allow more content to be added at a much faster

rate. The goal is to digitize 3,000 reels a year from the newspaper microfilm collection, targeting all viable papers that are in the public domain (published prior to 1964). As the State Historical Society celebrates its 125th anniversary, it continues to partner with the Missouri Press Association in preserving Missouri's newspapers for the next generations of Missourians.

*Patsy Luebbert is a senior archivist and administrator of the Missouri Digital Newspaper Project at the Columbia Research Center.*



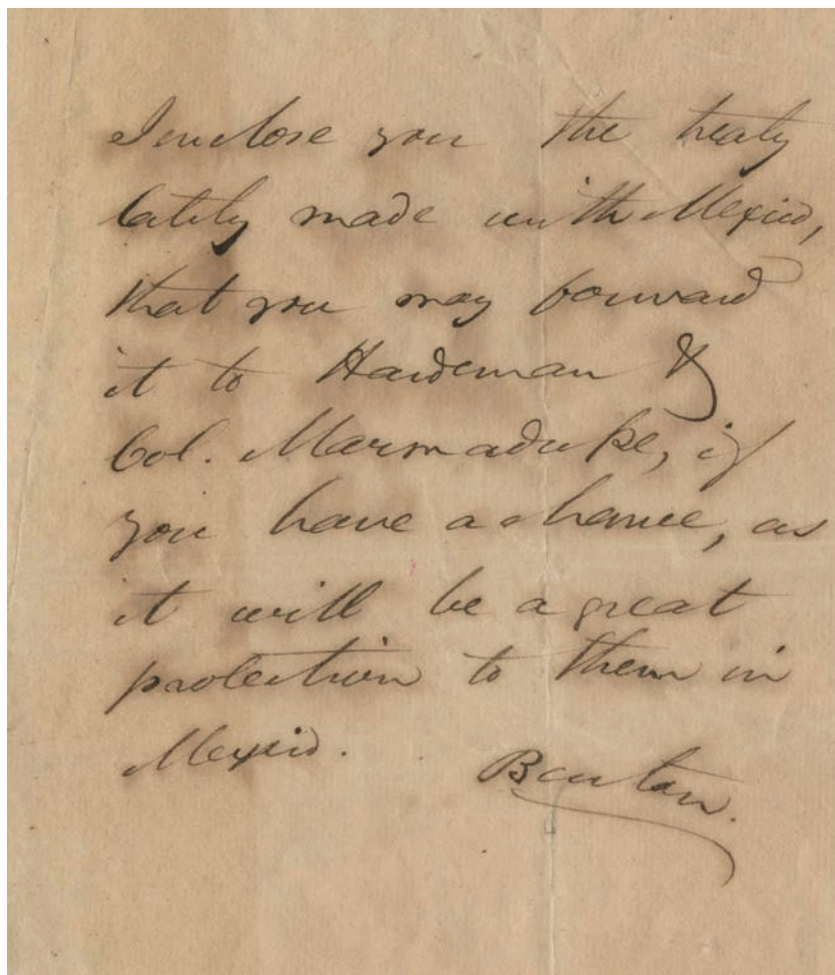
# Thomas Adams Smith Papers Considered SHSMO's First Manuscript Collection

By Laura Jolley

FROM the beginning, the State Historical Society of Missouri has made collecting historical material central to its mission. Francis A. Sampson, who became the first full-time secretary of the Society in 1901, traveled extensively throughout Missouri to grow the collection. He traveled by train so frequently that the Finance Committee asked him to apply for free railroad passes.

In 1905, on one such excursion, Sampson met with the grandchildren of Thomas Adams Smith, a brigadier general during the War of 1812. Their grandfather eventually settled in Saline County on a farm he called "Experiment." Born August 12, 1781, in Essex County, Virginia, Smith entered the U.S. Army in 1803 and was promoted to colonel in 1812 while serving in Florida. Two years later, he became a brigadier general after being transferred to New York. Following the war, Smith moved to Missouri, where he continued to serve in the military. In 1819 he became receiver of public monies at the land office in Franklin. After retiring from public life to his Missouri farm, Smith died on June 25, 1844.

The Smith Papers are an account of the brigadier general's time in the army and his work with the Franklin land office. The military correspondence and letter books provide insight into military affairs in east Florida during the War of 1812. The records include troop movements, orders, courts-martial, clashes with



Indigenous populations, and reports on troop morale. Letters in the collection also came from friends commenting on state and national elections and Missouri statehood. The Thomas Adams Smith Papers have been digitized and can be accessed at [digital.shsmo.org](http://digital.shsmo.org).

*Laura Jolley is the assistant director, manuscripts, at the Columbia Research Center.*

This letter in the Thomas Adams Smith Papers appears to be signed by Sen. Thomas Hart Benton and dated 1828-1829.

# A Librarian's View of the J. Christian Bay Collection

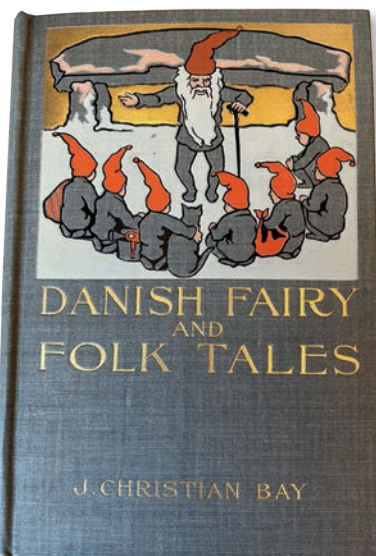
by Amy L. Waters

THE J. Christian Bay Collection purchased by SHSMO in 1941 includes nearly 3,000 rare books, drawings, and other material offering insight into early Middle Western Americana. The oldest book in the collection—and at the State Historical Society—is a Latin edition of Martin Frobisher's account of his second Arctic expedition published in 1580. The most valuable books in the Bay Collection are a 20-volume set of Edward S. Curtis's *The North American Indian*. Other notable volumes include John James Audubon's *The Birds of America* (1840-1844), Thomas L. McKenney's *History of the Indian Tribes of North America* (1858), and Henry Rowe Schoolcraft's *Journal of a Tour into the Interior of Missouri and Arkansas* (1821).

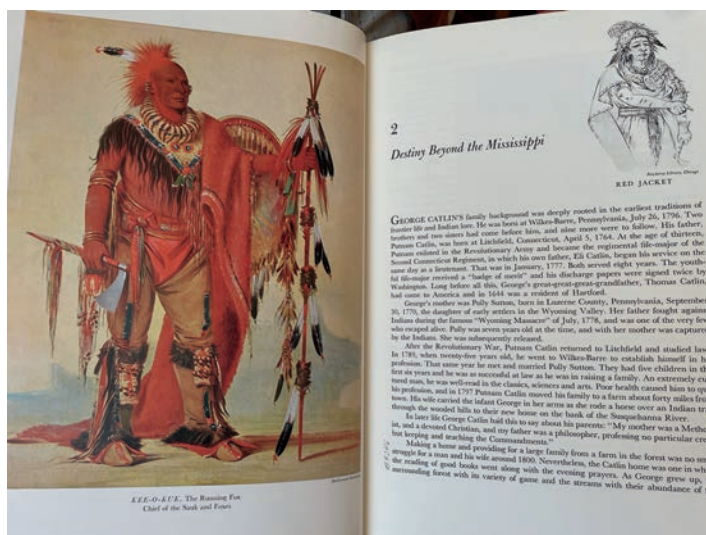
The Bay Collection was accessioned into the SHSMO reference collection in a manner unlike any other set of books at the Society. To preserve the condition of the books, no labels, stickers, or stamps were applied to them. The books were accessioned starting with number B0001, which was handwritten on page 19 of the book. We're unsure of why that page was chosen, so it remains a bit of a mystery. The books were originally organized in alphabetical order by author, or by title if there was no author.

Some of the books considered to be extremely rare were given a special location in the dedicated Bay Room at the former SHSMO headquarters in Ellis Library. Instead

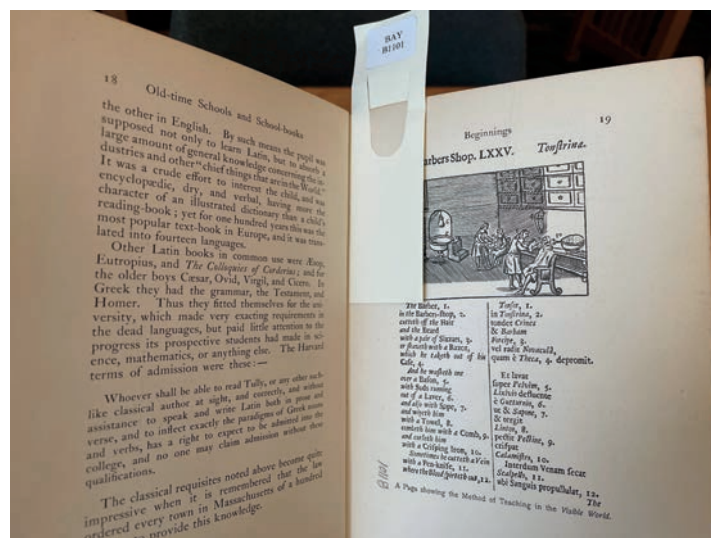
*Danish Fairy and Folk Tales* (published 1899) compiled and translated by J. Christian Bay, written by Sven Grundtvig, Evald Tang Kristensen, Leopold Budde, and Ingvor Bondesen.



*George Catlin and the Old Frontier* (pub. 1959) by Harold McCracken.



*Old Time Schools and School Books* (pub. 1904) by Clifton Johnson.





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of the traditional library call number sticker on the spine of the book, the Bay Collection books have archival bookmarks with the call number inside, if possible, at page 19.

All the Bay Collection books are maintained in the Special Collections book room in the closed stacks at the Center for Missouri Studies. They can be requested and viewed by all

registered patrons at the Columbia Research Center.

*Amy L. Waters is a senior librarian at the Columbia Research Center.*

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## Irene Cortinovis Established Unique Collections Representing the Diversity of People and Organizations in the St. Louis Area

By A.J. Medlock

ARCHIVISTS and librarians are essential to historians or anyone else seeking historical records. The State Historical Society is fortunate to have a long history of such professionals working on behalf of the public. St. Louis native Irene Cortinovis was one of the many trailblazing archivists who significantly impacted SHSMO during her tenure as an associate director at the St. Louis Research Center.

Newly minted with a master's degree in history from the University of Missouri-St. Louis, Cortinovis began working at the St. Louis Research Center in 1970, just two years after it was formed, and while it was still part of the Western Historical Manuscript Collection. As the head of the center in the 1970s, Cortinovis vigorously acquired manuscript collections reflecting the voices of women and minority groups in the St. Louis area. Her efforts resulted in the acquisition of some of SHSMO's most valued collections, including the Young Women's Christian Association of St. Louis Records, the DeVerne Calloway Papers, and the Harriett F. Woods Papers.

Cortinovis also established the St. Louis Research Center's Oral History Program. Under her guidance, she and University of Missouri-St. Louis History Department students conducted oral histories with local community members, including immigrants, jazz musicians, labor union leaders, African American community leaders, and women.

During one of her interviews, she spoke with a suffragist who had participated in the "Golden Lane" protests at the 1916 Democratic National Convention in St. Louis, urging the party to support women's right to vote. The protesters wore yellow sashes emblazoned with the words "Votes for Women." In a 2014 interview with former UMSL chancellor and State Historical Society trustee Blanche Touhill, Cortinovis recalled that she asked the former suffragist what had happened to the sash. Her response was, "Well, I've got it in the other room. Do you want it?" Because of Cortinovis, the "Votes for Women" sash, one of a few of its kind still in existence, is preserved at the St. Louis Research Center.



Irene Cortinovis, circa 1980-1982.

After retiring in 1980, Cortinovis remained active in the field. She administered UMSL's Black History Project, which resulted in photographs, correspondence, and related materials now included in the UMSL Black History Project Collection, one of the St. Louis Research Center's most used collections.

*A.J. Medlock is the coordinator of the St. Louis Research Center.*

# Outstanding Collection of Architectural Records Offers Insight into Kansas City History and Its Influence on Design in the Midwest

By Whitney Heinzmann

SINCE its founding in 1979 the Kansas City Research Center has acquired a variety of notable collections, including more than 17,000 sets of architectural drawings from the 1890s to the present. One of the center's first collections, the Alfred E. Barnes Jr. Architectural Records, contains hundreds of architectural blueprints including plans for the Kansas City Power and Light Building, one of downtown Kansas City's most prominent landmarks. The collection boasts more than 70 cubic feet of supplementary materials consisting of correspondence, job specifications, and photographs centered on Barnes's architectural career. It covers about 400 projects developed by the Hoit, Price, and Barnes architectural firm and its predecessors between 1900 and 1940.

Alfred E. Barnes Jr. came from a lineage of distinguished architects in Kansas City. His father, Alfred Edwards Barnes, designed stations for the Kansas City Southern Railway, while his grandfather, Asa Beebe Cross, designed the original Jackson County Courthouse and Union Depot, the predecessor to Kansas City Union Station. The elder Barnes also designed many homes in the Quality Hill neighborhood of Kansas City, as well as the Sauer Castle residence in Kansas City, Kansas, and the Vaile Mansion in Independence. SHSMO also holds the papers of Cross, who is considered



The Kansas City Power and Light Building under construction in 1930 (top) and after completion in 1931 (left).



to be the first professional architect in Kansas City.

The skyscrapers designed by Hoyt, Price, and Barnes add a distinct look to the Kansas City skyline. They include the 22-story Kansas City Athletic Club, the 28-story Southwestern Bell Telephone Company Building, the 32-story Fidelity Bank Building, and the 34-story General Office Building for the Kansas City Power and Light Company, which

was the tallest building in Missouri when it was finished in 1931. The firm ended in 1941.

In addition to his career, Alfred Barnes Jr. was active in numerous professional organizations. He died in 1960 at the age of 68 and is buried at Mount Washington Cemetery in Independence. His legacy lives on in building designs across Kansas City and is preserved by the architectural collection held at the Kansas

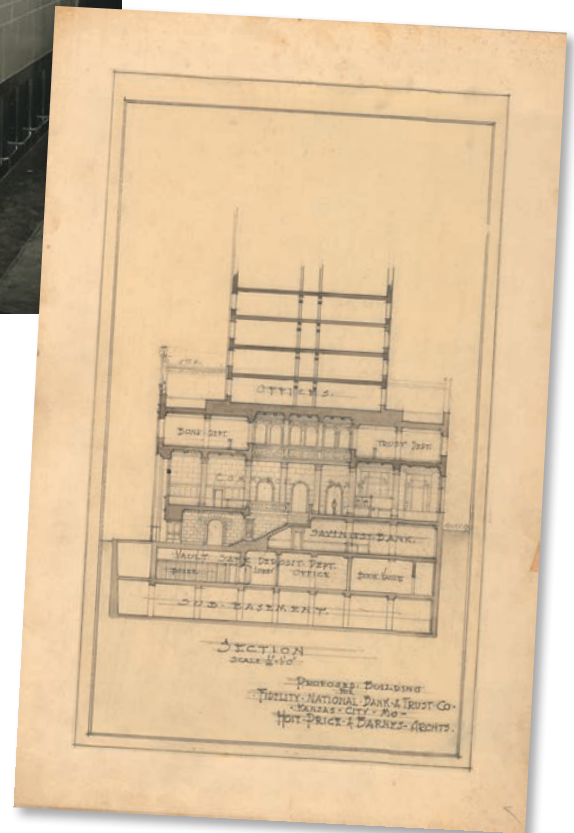
City Research Center. The collection, donated by his widow, Clara Knotter Barnes, greatly aided in establishing the Kansas City Research Center as a premier repository for materials related to architecture and the built environment in the Midwest.

*Whitney Heinzmann is the coordinator of the Kansas City Research Center.*



The architecture team for Municipal Auditorium: William Cassell, Edwin Price, Homer Neville, Henry Hoyt, Alonzo Gentry, Alfred Barnes, 1935.

Proposed drawing of Fidelity National Bank & Trust Co., Kansas City.



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# Circuit-Riding Preacher Recorded a Wealth of Family Histories in Phelps County

By Kathleen Seale

**O**NE of the first collections processed at the Rolla Research Center provides a wealth of information on the births, marriages, and death records of many residents in the northern Ozarks who met a circuit-riding preacher from the late 1870s to 1912. John J. Watts served as an ordained preacher at Beaver Creek Baptist Church in Phelps County and spread the Gospel to nearby counties as he traveled by horseback. Also working as a teacher and farmer, Watts encountered many families in the region and recorded their genealogy. He kept meticulous

notes. Genealogy remained a passion for Watts throughout his life, and he produced more than 30 volumes of material.

Born in 1839, Watts grew up in Maine. He enlisted in the Union army in 1862 and became a second lieutenant in the 24th Regiment Maine Infantry Company B. He participated in the siege of Port Hudson, Louisiana, and was honorably discharged in less than a year. After the war he settled in Phelps County in 1871. Ten years later Watts moved to Piney Township in Pulaski County, where he owned 160 acres. Soon after, Watts married Mary Jane Woolsey,

and the couple raised six children.

Watts came across many families by way of marriage ceremonies and burials. He recorded the history of entire households, including birth dates, marriages, and deaths. His attention to detail included locations of significant events. Even the times of birth or death were noted, if known.

Donated in 1980, the John J. Watts Papers were one of the first collections acquired by the Rolla Research Center. The collection has been widely used since that time. To make the Watts Papers more accessible, volunteers created a name



Reverend John J. Watts in his horse-drawn buggy, circa 1910.



index of the volumes that totaled 325 pages. Microfilmed copies allow greater circulation of the collection through Interlibrary Loan.

In 2020, SHSMO staff and volunteers began to digitize, transcribe, and create metadata for the Watts

volumes so that they could be placed online. So far, 3,600 pages are online at [digital.shsmo.org](http://digital.shsmo.org). The volumes, more than 100 years old, are fragile, so reproducing the contents in digital form will preserve the collection even more. Be sure to check out the Watts

Papers and other digital records contained in SHSMO's Genealogy and Family History Collection.

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



Above: Photograph of four of the five daughters of William and Catherine Sturgeon, circa 1900.

Right: Watts recorded birth and marriage dates for the William Z. and Catherine Sturgeon family.

# SHSMO's Oral History Program Helps Us Understand Missouri's Culture and History

By Sean Rost

FOR the past 30 years, the State Historical Society has had a full-time oral historian recording, transcribing, and processing thousands of interviews that preserve Missouri's history, culture, and heritage. The first oral history project focused on Missouri's Boot-heel region and was a collaboration among SHSMO, the University of Missouri Folk Arts Program, and the MU Museum of Art and Archaeology. The National Endowment for the Arts and the Missouri Arts Council provided funding to support this first project. By the end of its first decade, SHSMO's Oral History Program had created multiple collections to address the complexity of our state's history, including the Politics in Missouri Oral History Project, Missouri Environmental Oral History Project, Missouri Newspapers Oral History Project, and Missouri Ex-POWs Oral History Project.

More than 7,000 interviews are part of the growing oral history collection. Women as Change Agents began in 2014 and features leaders in their professional and personal lives within the city and county of St. Louis. A more recent collection that began in 2018 is the Missouri Innovation & Exploration Oral History Project to document aerospace, medical, scientific, and industrial technological innovation developed in Missouri or by Missourians.

The State Historical Society is also the repository for several oral history projects conducted by local and statewide organizations. Notable



World War II veteran Jay Garms is interviewed by Sean Rost at the Missouri Veterans Home in St. James as part of the Missouri Veterans Oral History Project in 2018. Garms died May 29, 2022. He was 97 years old.

collections include the Kansas City Monarchs Oral History Collection, featuring interviews with individuals who played for or were associated with the Kansas City Monarchs of the Negro National League; the Marshall Dial Oral History Collection, containing interviews from Dial's Bootheel radio show, *The Stories They Tell*; the Alex Primm Oral History Collection, featuring interviews conducted by Primm with Ozarks residents from the 1980s to the 2000s; and the St. Louis Oral History

Collection, which includes interviews on various topics with St. Louis residents conducted by Western Historical Manuscript Collection staff and University of Missouri-St. Louis students.

Patrons can access the oral history collection at [shsmo.org](http://shsmo.org). Click the Oral History tab under Research and Collections.

*Sean Rost is the assistant director of research at the State Historical Society of Missouri.*



# Locked Safe Reveals Records of a late 19th Century Law Practice

By Bill Eddleman

ARCHIVISTS often feel as if they are opening a holiday gift when they examine documents and photographs in a newly donated collection. The contents might be ordinary—or they may contain unexpected gems. A recent donation by SHSMO trustee H. Riley Bock provides a prime example.

Most of the Riley Family Papers came from a safe originally owned by the Riley & Riley Law Firm of New Madrid. Henry Clay Riley Sr. graduated from the Washington University Law School in 1876 and bought the safe shortly after moving into a new office in the building where the *Weekly Record* newspaper is now located. New Madrid County voters chose him as circuit judge in 1892—a job he held until his retirement in 1910.

Judge Riley and his son, Henry Clay “Boone” Riley Jr., formed the partnership of Riley & Riley in the early 1900s. After Judge Riley died in 1920, his son continued the law practice (and using the safe) until his death in 1952. In that time, the safe withstood four floods without damage to the interior. After Boone Riley’s death, the safe remained locked until the *Weekly Record* purchased the building. Robert Riley, a nephew of Boone Riley, moved it to a new location. The building changed hands, and the safe was forgotten.

Eight years ago, the safe was in a storage area in the back of a barber shop when Rick Nowell purchased it. Nowell restores and sells old safes.



Land Warrant No. 38278 for 80 acres to Moses Stallions for War of 1812 service in Capt. Dodd's Company of Kentucky Militia, July 16, 1856. Judge Henry Clay Riley may have received the unused land warrant in payment of legal fees.

He opened the safe and found it was full of documents, which he gave to Riley Bock, a great grandson of Henry Clay Riley Sr. Later, Bock donated them to the State Historical Society.

The donation includes a diverse mix of financial, legal, and personal documents associated with the Riley & Riley law firm. They provide an overview of life in New Madrid County in the late 19th century and first half of the 20th century. One of the most unique “gifts” in the collection is an unused land warrant issued for War of 1812 service.

Additional materials include a plat map book and business ledgers that belonged to Charles C. Bock, Riley Bock’s paternal grandfather. There is also a printed photograph, a circuit judge commission, a large map of judicial circuit courts in Missouri, and microfilm rolls from the donor’s historical research. The Riley Family Papers are available for research at the Cape Girardeau Research Center.

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

# Papers by Ozarks Author Helped Initiate Collections at Springfield Research Center

By Haley Frizzle-Green

**M**ORE than 80 archival collections have been acquired by the Springfield Research Center since it began in 2014 at Missouri State University's Meyer Library. Some of the first collections came from Suzanne Wilson, an author and journalist born in 1937. They contain valuable histories of southwest Missouri, including folk songs from the Ozarks, manuscripts from 19th century naturalist S. Fred Prince, and Wilson's personal and professional papers.

A native of Des Moines, Iowa, Wilson earned a bachelor's degree in journalism from the University of Missouri in Columbia in 1959. She began her career in advertising and sales promotion at *Better Homes and Gardens* in Des Moines and later wrote for the alumni office at the University of Missouri. After moving to Joplin with her husband, Terry Bladow, and their two children, Wilson began her freelance writing career in 1972, publishing her work in magazines such as *Scouting Magazine*, *Missouri Conservationist*, and *National Geographic Kids*.

In 1975, Wilson published a children's book, *The Midnight Flight of Moose, Mops and Marvin*, and she also wrote short stories for *Asimov's Science Fiction* magazine under the pseudonym P. J. MacQuarrie. From 1981 to 2001, Wilson was a writer-in-residence for the Missouri Arts Council's education program, where she taught creative writing workshops. In 1977, she and James Mueller, a photographer and envi-

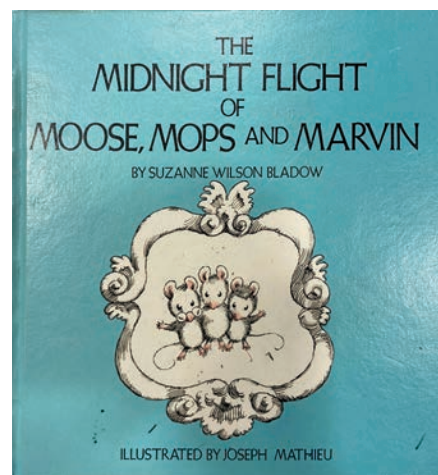


Suzanne Wilson, author.

ronmentalist, founded PhotoSpiva, a national photography competition in Joplin. Wilson married Mueller in 1983 after the death of her first husband. Today she lives in Fort Collins, Colorado.

Wilson struggled with what do with 40 years' worth of writing, photographs, and creative writing workshop files. With help from her friend, Virginia Laas, a trustee and former president of the State Historical Society, Wilson decided to donate her papers and other interesting items to the Springfield Research Center. Among her donated material are recordings of Ozarks folk songs. Wilson also donated James Mueller's work to the Rolla Research Center.

Knowing that archivists found items of historical value in my



*The Midnight Flight of Moose, Mops and Marvin* by Suzanne Wilson Bladow, published by McGraw-Hill, 1975.

papers, I have a great appreciation for the Society's work," wrote Wilson. "The stories of anyone's life are worth preserving, so don't dare think of recycling! Generous people who care about your work, your life story, your ancestors, will arrive at your door."

The State Historical Society of Missouri is grateful to all its donors, including those who entrusted their donations to the Springfield Center during its early years. As the center continues to expand its southwest Missouri collections, the public will see how important it is to add their stories and life's work to Missouri's historical record.

*Haley Frizzle-Green is an archivist at the Springfield Research Center.*



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# SHSMO Welcomes New Staff

**S**INCE the winter months, new staff members have come on board the State Historical Society of Missouri at research centers in Columbia, St. Louis, and Kansas City.

**Doug Genens** joins SHSMO as an oral historian. A native of St. Louis, Genens received his PhD in history at the University of California, Santa Barbara. After a brief stint in Boston, he returned to his home state and is working at the Center for Missouri Studies.

Also in Columbia is **Cynthia Evans**, who is an assistant preparator in

the SHSMO Art Gallery. Evans is a multimedia artist and fabricator from El Paso, Texas. She is working toward an MFA degree in fibers from the University of Missouri.

**Nicholas Raya** has joined the Columbia Research Center as an archivist. Raya is a native of Hutchinson, Kansas, and holds a bachelor's degree in history from the University of Kansas. He is currently studying for a master's degree in library and information science at the University of Missouri.

**Emily Fisher** joins the Kansas City Research Center as a part-time

archivist. Before moving to Nevada, Missouri, from Colorado, she received a bachelor's degree in liberal arts from Cottey College. She plans to finish a master's degree in public history at the University of Central Missouri in May 2023.

The St. Louis Research Center welcomes **Rachael Heriford** as a part-time archivist. Heriford grew up in St. Charles County and will begin a master's degree in library and information science at the University of Missouri-St. Louis in the fall.

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## CHEERS TO 125 YEARS

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# Volunteer Spotlight

## Jim English

By Beth Pike

One does not need to be born in Missouri to appreciate its diverse terrain, varied culture, and interesting past in the country's heartland. These qualities have kept Jim English, a retired professor of plant pathology at the University of Missouri, fascinated by the state he has called home for much of his life. Born in North Carolina, English lived in 12 states before coming to Missouri to teach and continue his research. Both he and his wife, Charlene, have planted roots in Columbia since arriving together more than 30 years ago.

Before English was recruited at MU's College of Agriculture, he worked at the University of California-Davis, where he researched grape diseases, an important field for California's wine industry. He was part of a team of researchers who discovered that by removing the leaves of a plant, the micro-climate of the plant's canopy changes and disease can be stopped.

At Mizzou he worked with Missouri's grape industry and researched diseases of alfalfa and other forages. He has also studied root disease pathogens in soybeans, strawberries, and white oak forests. "Soil microbiology is a mind-blowing science of how pathogens interact with plants and how to manage diseases to help plant health," English said.

Upon retiring from MU several years ago, English found more hours

to devote to another interest—genealogy and Missouri history. English's first assignments as a volunteer at the State Historical Society in 2017 were assisting newspaper projects and transcribing World War II letters. He then branched out to the editorial department, helping to locate illustrations for articles in the Missouri Encyclopedia and using his analytical skills to create and improve databases for the *Missouri Historical Review*.

"I really enjoy talking with Jim on the days when he's in—his enthusiasm for Missouri history and his interest in the projects we are working on is contagious," said John Brenner, managing editor of the State Historical Society. "And we would not be nearly as far along with the Encyclopedia without him."

On Thursday afternoons, visitors to the Center for Missouri Studies are greeted by English, who enjoys a regular shift at the welcome desk in the John K. Hulston Lobby. He helps them find their way inside the building and answers their questions about the Society's resources and upcoming programs.

"The environment is welcoming. I feel a calm presence here, and that greatly helps when you're trying to do research," said English.

English said he became interested in volunteering for the Society out of eagerness to learn more about the complexity of Missouri and its personality shaped by a geographic location in the middle of the country.



Jim English finishes a volunteer shift at the Center for Missouri Studies in Columbia, Feb. 2, 2023.

"I think it's important to have that sense of Missouri as the nation's epicenter," he said. "The State Historical Society recognizes the importance of our unique place."

In addition to researching his family's genealogy, English enjoys bicycle rides and music. He has played clarinet, piano, and bassoon, and has found time to learn a new instrument—the most difficult one he has tried—the bagpipes. English joined the Boone County Fire Protection Pipes and Drums band after experiencing the music from Scotland firsthand. His Michigan-born wife is descended from the MacLeods, the famous Isle of Skye family featured in the *Highlanders* movie and TV series. Jim and his wife attend a gathering of the MacLeods in Dunvegan, Scotland, every four years. So, the next time you're visiting the State Historical Society in Columbia, be on the look-out for English. He can tell you a great deal about Missouri history, its plant diseases, and his wife's extended roots from one of Scotland's best-known families.



# Looking Ahead

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The SHSMO Art Gallery is open to visitors Tuesday through Friday, 10 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. and each Saturday, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.



## Fragile Earth: 50 Years of Environmental Editorial Cartoons

Now through Winter of 2024, Art Gallery, Center for Missouri Studies

Since the 1930s, environmental issues have played a growing role in shaping public policy in the United States. Decades of activism have called attention to the dangers of pesticides, pollution, deforestation, extinction, and climate change. This exhibition examines original editorial cartoons from the 1930s to 2000s by Missouri artists that explore these environmental concerns.



## African American Heritage in the Ozarks

Now through September 30, Wenneker Family Corridor Gallery, Center for Missouri Studies

This new exhibition highlights the voices, memories, and history of African American people who call, or have called, the Ozarks home. In 2021, the State Historical Society of Missouri was awarded an American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) grant through the National Endowment for the Humanities and Missouri Humanities for a project titled "African American Heritage in the Ozarks." An exhibit with links to online content from the project is on display in the Wenneker Family Corridor Gallery on the second floor of the Center for Missouri Studies.



## Ozark Music Festival documentary screening, with live music by Pat Kay & Ben Miller featuring Emma Burney

June 9, Cook Hall, Center for Missouri Studies, film screenings at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m.

In 1974, concert goers flocked to Sedalia for the Ozark Music Festival. Often called Missouri's Woodstock, the festival drew a crowd estimated as large as 350,000, comparing it to the crowd that gathered at Max Yasgur's dairy farm in New York in 1969. The Ozark Music Festival featured more than 30 musicians, including Lynyrd Skynyrd, Bob Seger, the Eagles, the Charlie Daniels Band, the Ozark Mountain Daredevils, and more. A Missouri State Senate report called the three-day festival a disaster. Almost 50 years later, many Missourians look back on the event with nostalgia. Join us for this free documentary screening by filmmaker and former Sedalia resident Jefferson Lujin as he takes us back to the summer of 1974.



## History on Elm: Collecting for the U.S. Route 66 Centennial

June 13, noon-1 p.m., Cook Hall, Center for Missouri Studies

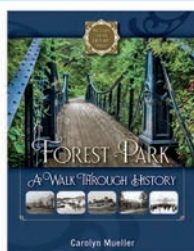
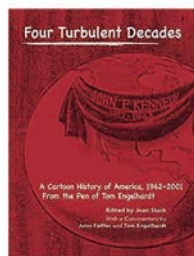
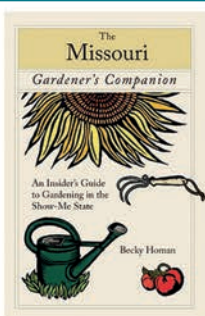
Plans are under way for the 100th anniversary of the "Mother Road" in 2026. Many organizations and individuals in states along the route are involved in planning efforts for the 100th anniversary. Kathleen Seale, coordinator of the SHSMO Rolla and Springfield research centers, will talk about the collections initiative and how Missourians can get involved in this historic celebration.



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