

Ralls County Historical Society Minutes

Wednesday, July 24, 2024

10:00 a.m.

Center Town Hall

Center, MO

Ron Leake, Delores Woodhurst, Sandie Storm, Mary Jackson, and Brad Stinson attended the meeting of the Ralls County Historical Society on Wednesday, July 24, 2024, at 10:00 a.m. at Center Town Hall.

Project Updates:

- **Combining RCHS's Library and Museum:** The space/organization committee met on June 26, 2024. A summary of the meeting was shared. The committee visited both the library and museum and made a plan for some immediate changes. The museum will be measured, and a diagram of the space will be developed before the next meeting. Sandie Storm and Mary Jackson are currently compiling Ralls County cemetery information, including contact information for each known cemetery. Sandie shared that archival quality page protectors will be needed to preserve the work and ensure it is around for many years. Storm shared a list of categories for the museum/library, and this information will be used by the space/organization committee. A consensus to continue paying rent on the library was reached.
- **John Ralls Donation:** Delores Woodhurst shared the physical box of Ralls family correspondence that has been received. Bill Dexheimer and Ben Akers previously expressed interest in transcribing and archiving the document.
- **Fort Mason Project:** Bill Dexheimer was unable to attend today's meeting, but he did convey that the property for this project is now in the county's ownership. Donations may be made to the County of Ralls, PO Box 400, New London, MO 63459. Please include "Fort Mason Monument Project" in the memo. Questions may be emailed to bdexhei@gmail.com.
- **Missouri Mule Museum:** Progress continues to be made on this project. In the process of working with a donor to purchase a building for this project, RCHS was notified that their state tax-exempt status is no longer active. Earlier today, Delores mailed paperwork to Missouri's Secretary of State to begin the process of restoring RCHS's state tax-exempt status.
- **Membership Drive:** The membership drive is underway, with Phase I being the email campaign. The mail campaign will begin soon. Delores shared several items of interest related to the organization's mailings, including a special cancellation that the Ilasco Historical Society uses and information about "Every Door Direct Mail" options. Both of these items will need to be explored if RCHS wants to consider using them.
- **Fundraiser:** Those in attendance discussed a Chili Cook-Off as a possible fundraiser. Sheriff Stinson shared information from cook-offs he has attended/participated in. Delores will check with The Junction to see if hosting the event at their location is a possibility. It was also discussed that it would be nice to host the event in a location that is in a downtown area that also encourages shopping in local businesses. Delores will check with the City of Perry regarding the use and availability of the lot beside Perry City Hall. If possible, it would be nice to coordinate this fundraiser with the Grand Opening of the mule museum. The Society would also have auction/raffle of donated items.
- **Volunteers:** We continue to need volunteers for various projects. To learn more, please contact Ron at 573-248-7445. Delores again shared that the Historical Society is approved as a host site for the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP). SCSEP is a work-based training program for older Americans to build/enhance/update job skills to be able to look for and find a job. To be eligible, SCSEP applicants must be at least 55 years old, unemployed, meet the income requirements, have low employment prospects, and need job skills training. Visit the website below for more information and to apply: <https://ser-national.org/.../scsep-application-for-services/> Those in attendance shared the possibility of exploring summer internships for college students and working with high schools to make counselors and students aware of volunteer opportunities that are available and look good on college and work applications.
- **Communication:** We will use Remind to share information about the Historical Society, including meeting information. To sign up, text @chk3kad to 81010. If you're having trouble with 81010, try texting @chk3kad to (415) 749-9891. Standard text message rates apply.

- **Taxes and Other Paperwork**

- In Fall 2022, RCHS discussed the possibility of a sales tax ballot item to provide a consistent funding source for the organization. After speaking with Brandy Flynn, the county clerk, it was determined that a 501c3 is not eligible to receive funds from a sales tax. This information was shared as a follow-up to previous discussions.
- Sales Tax Exempt Application: Once the Society's Missouri non-profit corporation status is restored, Delores will complete the sales tax exemption application.
- Missouri Non-Profit Corporation: As stated above, Delores has filed paperwork to restore the Society's Missouri non-profit status.

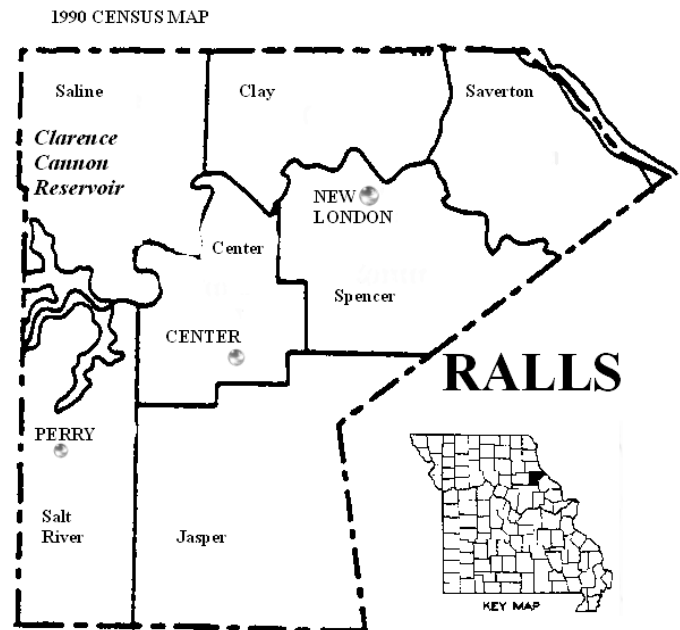
- **Impact Statement:** Delores shared a list of business members. This list, along with the list of individual and family memberships, will be used to create an impact statement for RCHS. At next month's meeting, a list of projects RCHS has participated in over the years will be compiled.

Financial Information as of 6/30/2024

Balance Last Statement			\$5,302.76
	<i>Debits</i>	<i>Credits</i>	
Interest		\$0.04	
Check (to be reimbursed)	\$ 68.86		
Utilities	\$111.89		
<i>Total</i>	<i>\$180.75</i>	<i>\$0.04</i>	
Current Balance			\$5,122.05

Executive Committee (15 members): Blank spots below indicate vacancies in our executive committee that we need to fill. If you are interested in being a representative on the executive committee, please contact Delores Woodhurst at 573-248-7445 or dvwoodhurst@gmail.com.

- Officers (5)
 - President: Ron Leake
 - Vice-President: Delores Woodhurst
 - Secretary: Carolyn Trower
 - Treasurer: Sharon Lake
 - Historian:
- Directors (10)
 - Center Township:
 - Spencer Township:
 - Salt River Township: Cindy Lynn
 - Jasper Township: Lola McDonald
 - Saline Township:
 - Clay Township:
 - Saverton Township: Bill Dexheimer
 - Perry: Jeanie Gay
 - Center: Mary Jackson
 - New London: Brad Stinson



President's Update:

- Ron Leake again shared that he is in need of help at the Historical Society. If you are willing to help by volunteering your time and talents, please contact Leake at 573-248-6147. Ron would also like to establish "Open Door Sessions," where individuals visit the museum, sit and talk, and enjoy a cup of coffee. The idea of having designated speakers at these sessions was also discussed. To close the meeting, those in attendance shared a Ralls County fact or story. A summary of the conversation is below.
 - Alice Pearce, who played the nosy neighbor Gladys Kravitz on Bewitched, is the grandchild of Joseph and Sarah LaFrance Clark of Perry.
 - Sheriff Stinson shared that Laura Hawkins, the inspiration for Mark Twain's character Becky Thatcher, is buried in a Ralls County cemetery, and he shared a picture of the tombstone.
 - While compiling cemetery records for Ralls County, Storm shared an epitaph that made she and Jackson chuckle: *Here resteth the body of Mr Thomas Shippard, who was here interred the 11th of July 1771, in the 82nd year of his age. "God works wonders now and then. Here lies a lawyer-an honest man."*
 - Memories of Halloweens spent in cemeteries scaring teenagers.
 - The last man out of the Alamo, John William Smith, was the 2nd sheriff of Ralls County.

Next Meeting: RCHS's next meeting will be Wednesday, August 21, 2024, at 10:00 a.m. at Perry City Hall. The public is invited and encouraged to attend. The meeting adjourned at 11:00 a.m.