

MISSOURI TIMES

The State Historical Society of Missouri

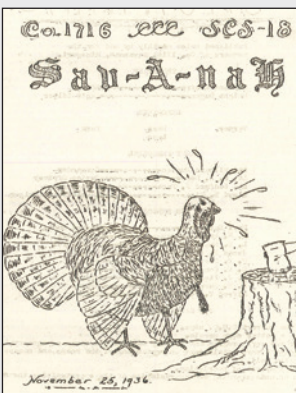
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US Senator Blunt, Former Associate Director Bradbury Honored at 2017 Fall Lecture and Annual Meeting

US Senator Roy Blunt was awarded the 2017 Trustee Appreciation Award during the Center for Missouri Studies Fall Lecture and Annual Meeting weekend. The award, determined by the State Historical Society of Missouri's Board of Trustees, recognizes individuals who demonstrate extraordinary commitment to SHSMO's mission to collect, preserve, and share Missouri's history.

John Bradbury, the former Rolla Research Center associate director, received SHSMO's 2017 Distinguished Service Award at the Annual Meeting luncheon on October 7. Established to recognize extraordinary service to and support of the Society, the award has been given annually since 1968.

Senator Blunt, a fifth-generation Missourian, has demonstrated a deep passion for Missouri and its history over the course of his career. A former high school history teacher, he has served as a Society trustee since 2005 and is currently SHSMO's third vice president.

In presenting the award, Gary Kremer, SHSMO's executive director, said that Blunt was chosen in recognition of his active advocacy for the organization throughout his tenure as a trustee. Blunt's backing of the Center for Missouri Studies building project has been crucial in securing funding and legislative support, Kremer remarked.

"Frankly, anybody here who is reasonable at all would have known that this building would never be built. This is a truly amazing accomplishment."

—US Senator Roy Blunt

Blunt deflected credit by thanking Kremer; Bob Priddy, SHSMO president; Kurt Schaefer, former Missouri state senator; and Stephen N. Limbaugh Jr., SHSMO past president, for their work on the project.

"Frankly, anybody here who is reasonable at all would have known that this building would never be built," Blunt said. "This is a truly amazing accomplishment."

Bradbury retired from the Rolla Research Center in 2015. During more than 35 years of service to SHSMO, he acquired, catalogued, and prepared descriptions and finding aids for a wide variety of collections preserving essential documentation



Gary Kremer, left, the State Historical Society's executive director, presents the 2017 Trustee Appreciation Award to US Senator Roy Blunt. Blunt was honored for 12 years of active advocacy on the Society's Board of Trustees. *Photo courtesy of Notley Hawkins Photography*

of Missouri's past. He also contributed original scholarship on Missouri history topics.

"John has been far more than an archivist and an assistant to researchers," Kremer said. "He is one of the finest scholars of Missouri history it has been my privilege to know. His passion for research and writing has resulted in roughly 100 scholarly articles and books, as well as many book reviews, newsletter stories, and other outreach pieces."

Bradbury remains active with the State Historical Society of Missouri as a Center for Missouri Studies senior fellow.

At the annual meeting of the membership, Michael Gallagher of St. Louis, Lucinda Rice-Petrie of Kansas City, Kurt Schaefer of Columbia, and Dred Scott of Independence were elected as new members of the board of trustees. —**Continued on page 8**

Letter from the State Historical Society of Missouri President

We have a great story to tell about the importance of the Center for Missouri Studies. And you can help us tell it, because it needs to be told throughout our state.

By the time you receive this *Missouri Times*, I will have spoken to five groups in three weeks about the opportunities the Center will give us to save Missouri history, and to serve Missourians by offering them information they need to help them understand who we are

and how we became what we are as a state and its people.

We want to come to your area to tell this story. If you want a speaker for your county historical society meeting, a Chamber of Commerce dinner, or any other large-group function, please contact us. We can't wait to bring our message to you.

We'll talk about the new building and some new ideas we're developing for increasing our service throughout

Missouri. We'll share some area history you might not know. And, yes, we will encourage the audience to help us meet some new financial obligations we will assume when we move into our new home.

This project is not just something your State Historical Society is doing for itself. We hope Missourians will want it to be a benefit for everyone in the state—and will want to help us make it the best benefit possible.



Bob Priddy, SHSMO president

We'd love to be at your head table.

Bob Priddy
President, Board of Trustees

State Historical Society Announces Grants to Support Local History, Bicentennial Projects

At its annual meeting on October 7 the State Historical Society announced it will offer funding in 2018 to local Missouri cultural heritage institutions in support of their efforts to preserve historic material and provide programming on local history topics.

SHSMO will award up to \$500 per calendar year, per organization, through Brownlee Grants, named in memory of Dr. Richard S. Brownlee, the Society's executive director from 1960 to 1985. A maximum of \$5,000 in total grants will be awarded in January, and the grant period will run through the end of 2018.

"Five hundred dollars doesn't sound like much, but from my experience, for local organizations that can be the difference between having the supplies they need or not," said Gary Kremer, SHSMO executive director. "It can also mean being able to host a workshop or bring in a special lecturer for programs that otherwise might not be possible."

The State Historical Society is accepting applications now through December 15 for projects in one of three focus areas: historical

records preservation, educational or programming activities, and observances of the bicentennial of Missouri's statehood in 2021.

"The Missouri bicentennial will be here before we know it, and the Brownlee Grants are a wonderful way to ensure that we are commemorating the uniqueness of our communities," said Michael Sweeney, SHSMO's bicentennial coordinator. "While meeting with people around the state, we are learning that local history is as important to individuals as our state history. Missourians tend to experience global issues through a local lens."

Grants are available to Missouri cultural heritage institutions, and preference will be given to local historical societies. For more information, including how to apply, visit shsmo.org/awards/brownlee or contact SHSMO at 573.882.7083 or contact@shsmo.org.

"We look forward to supporting a wide variety of local projects and in turn many of our communities throughout the state," Sweeney said. "Helping cities and towns across the state preserve our history and start working on ways they would like to celebrate our 200th year is a wonderful way to honor Dr. Brownlee."

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St. Louis Center Associate Director Retires

Nancy McIlvaney, associate director of the St. Louis Research Center, retired in October after ten years of service with the State Historical Society. She served chiefly as the photograph specialist at the St. Louis center until she was promoted to associate director in 2017 following Zelli Fischetti's retirement.

"During her decade with the Society, Nancy has done so much; I am especially thankful that the St. Louis office has benefited from her leadership this past year," said Gary Kremer, SHSMO executive director. "Changing leaders is hard, and she helped make the process easier for everyone."

McIlvaney was crucial to the growth of one of the St. Louis center's greatest assets: a dynamic collection of photographs that includes images of the Gateway Arch's construction.

"Thanks to years of hard work by her and the rest of the St. Louis staff, we have a photo database of the visual history of the city of St. Louis and surrounding counties that has grown to more than 176,500 images, with 40,785 photos scanned," Kremer said. "Much of this important record of the city's changing landscape is accessible to patrons anytime day or night." The scanned photos are available online at shsmo.org/photograph.

A fifth-generation St. Louisan, McIlvaney joined the SHSMO staff in 2007. She previously served as the curator of special projects and was an adjunct lecturer in the Museum Studies graduate program at the University of Missouri–St. Louis.



Nancy McIlvaney, associate director of the St. Louis Research Center, retired in October after a decade at the Society.

Work of Renowned Street Photographer Finds Home at SHSMO, Art Currently on Exhibition

Acclaimed street photographer Jon Luvelli is establishing a collection of his works within the State Historical Society of Missouri's permanent art collection. Luvelli's fine art photography has garnered worldwide attention for its distinguished images of Midwestern townscapes.

The first installment of photographs is

"By allowing spectators to view twenty-first-century central Missouri through an artist's eye, Luvelli helps us better understand the state and its people."

—Joan Stack, SHSMO art curator

currently on display at the State Historical Society's Columbia art gallery on the ground floor of Ellis Library.

A native of Como, Italy, Luvelli grew up in a small town near Columbia, Missouri. According to Joan Stack, SHSMO's curator of art collections, his work casts an aesthetic spotlight on contemporary life in the county roads and midtown streets of the Show-Me State.

"Luvelli avoids stereotypical visions of country life in favor of black-and-white works picturing people and places most individuals overlook or sometimes choose to ignore," Stack said. "By allowing spectators to view twenty-first-century central Missouri through an artist's eye, Luvelli helps us better understand the state and its people."

In an August 7, 2016, review of Luvelli's *Unseen Columbia* exhibition at the Boone County Historical Society, Aarik Danielsen, *Columbia Daily Tribune* arts and entertainment editor, wrote that Luvelli

captures Columbia's collective history through his focus on the unnoticed.

"All are equal in Luvelli's viewfinder," Danielsen wrote. "The children and aged, the black and white, the police and the passed-out in the street. The photographer forces us to reckon with economic realities we would do anything not to see."

Stack said Luvelli's work also conveys social messages, never shying away from the complicated

subjects of racism, poverty, sexuality, abuse, and addiction.

"Black-and-white photography suits these subjects," Stack said. "The stark contrasts of

light and dark call attention to a quotidian world in the shadows, and subtle variations of gray encourage us to find beauty in forms customarily viewed as unsightly."

Luvelli's work augments the State Historical Society's diverse art collection, which includes photographs of the American West by Edward Curtis, Thomas Hart Benton's *Year of Peril* World War II series, numerous paintings by George Caleb Bingham, and many other pieces illustrating Missouri's regional and westward expansion history.

To view the special exhibition, visit the State Historical Society of Missouri's Columbia center from 8 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. Tuesday through Friday and 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. on Saturdays.



Emotions by Jon Luvelli was taken in downtown Columbia on September 26, 2013. One of the first pieces donated to the State Historical Society of Missouri by the artist, it is part of a permanent collection of Luvelli's work that is being established at the Society.

Executive Committee Proposes Bylaws Change, Membership Invited to Comment Prior to February Board of Trustees Meeting

The Executive Committee of the State Historical Society of Missouri Board of Trustees moved at its July 28 meeting to amend the Society's bylaws. The proposed amendment reads:

"Motion to Amend Article IV by adding to Section 2 or creating a Section 2A as follows: In addition to the number of trustees described above, there shall also be a class of trustees known as emeritus/a trustees. This class of trustees shall consist of trustees who have been elected to at least two three-year terms as trustees but who are no longer able to attend meetings of the Board of Trustees or participate actively in board functions. Emeritus/a trustees shall not have the right to vote at board meetings nor shall they be counted toward a quorum for board meetings. Emeritus/a trustees shall be so designated at the discretion of the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees."

In Section 2, the bylaws state that SHSMO must have one trustee from each congressional district of the state and 14 trustees elected at large. This currently equals 22 elected trustees. In addition to the elected trustees, the Society's president, vice presidents, all former presidents, and the ex officio members also constitute members of the Board of Trustees. There is currently no provision for trustees who wish to stay involved but have difficulty attending meetings.

The proposed amendment will be discussed and voted on at the Board of Trustees meeting on February 7, 2018, at the Capitol Plaza Hotel, 415 W. McCarty Street, Jefferson City. State Historical Society of Missouri members are invited to comment before the vote in one of two ways. Members can write to the Society sharing their comments prior to February 7. Comments may also be made in person at the February 7 meeting.

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Columbia Educator Finds Success with National History Day and the State Historical Society

Success. Its definition depends on who is asked to define it. For Gretchen Trower, a gifted education teacher at Gentry Middle School in Columbia, it has to do with her students' excitement to learn and a feeling of accomplishment when they excel.

Trower, a fourth-year participant in National History Day in Missouri, is constantly creating new opportunities for her students to better understand historical events and the contexts in which they occur. That is one reason she attended one of the four educator workshops SHSMO hosted over the past year.

"The Great Content for Your Classroom workshop was extremely useful to me as an NHD teacher," Trower said. "It gave me a better understanding of how to effectively incorporate using and analyzing primary sources in the classroom."

"The workshop also taught me how to locate primary sources in the collections that my students could use for their National History Day topics," Trower added. "I took everything I learned during the workshop back to my students, who appreciated learning how to navigate different databases to find relevant resources."

After the session, Trower also scheduled a hands-on tour for her students at the Columbia Research Center.

"It was an amazing experience watching my students read and analyze propaganda posters, comic books, ballet playbills, books, and even microfiche," Trower said. "There is something incredible that happens to students' understanding of history when they experience it tangibly."

Finding primary sources and learning to make use of them are key elements of the NHD program. The State Historical Society of Missouri works closely with teachers participating in National History Day to help them draw resources from the Society's collections.

"It was an amazing experience watching my students read and analyze propaganda posters, comic books, ballet playbills, books, and even microfiche. There is something incredible that happens to students' understanding of history when they experience it tangibly."

—Gretchen Trower, Gentry Middle School teacher

"The State Historical Society of Missouri has been incredibly accommodating and has become an exceptionally supportive element during the NHD process," Trower said.



Above Gentry Middle School teacher Gretchen Trower, second from the right, visited with state senator Caleb Rowden of Missouri's 19th District when her students Greta McNamee, left, and Amanda Kurukulasuriya, right, were honored at the 2017 Day at the Capitol in Jefferson City. **Left** Three of Gretchen Trower's students analyze a propaganda poster during a tour of SHSMO's Columbia Research Center and the University of Missouri's Special Collections in Ellis Library.

She said she recommends the State Historical Society and NHD to other

educators looking for ways to engage students in historical exploration.

"The experience I've had with National History Day and with the State Historical

Society of Missouri has been phenomenal," Trower said. "NHD provides a rigorous learning experience and structure for students, which allows me to introduce more challenging curriculum objectives in the classroom that require students to use advanced analytical and critical thinking skills."

For more information about National History Day in Missouri, visit nhdmo.org. To arrange a tour of any of the State Historical Society of Missouri's six research centers, please contact SHSMO at contact@shsmo.org or visit shsmo.org/tours.

Bills of Sale: Cape Girardeau Papers Offer Valuable Details on Enslaved African Americans

Family historians with African American ancestry often have a tough time finding documentation older than the 1870 federal census that followed Emancipation. Freed blacks were recorded in that census, but enslaved Missourians seldom appeared in the earlier census records. When they did, it was often without surnames. Researchers must rely instead on wills, probate inventories, and rare listings in property deeds to obtain names and ages of African Americans, and to determine changes in the ownership of enslaved ancestors.

That is why bills of sale for slaves, even though they are a stark reminder of the cruelties of slavery, are highly valued by African American genealogists. A recent donation to the State Historical Society's Cape Girardeau Research Center by Stephen W. Sikes includes eight slave bills of sale from 1845 to 1852. The documents name 13 people, many with ages included, who were purchased by William Sikes, an ancestor of Stephen W. Sikes.

The Sikes family was prominent in antebellum southeast Missouri. William Sikes owned a large farm in New Madrid County. His brother John founded Sikeston in 1860 and had a store in the town for several years afterward. The Sikes family traces its Missouri roots

Researchers must rely instead on wills, probate inventories, and rare listings in property deeds to obtain names and ages of African Americans, and to determine changes in the ownership of enslaved ancestors.

to Needham Sikes, who settled in New Madrid County at about the time of the War of 1812.

William Sikes bought numerous slaves to labor at his farm. The bills of sale in the Sikes Family Papers (CG19) show the locations of the sellers. Some of them lived nearby in New Madrid or Scott Counties, while others were in Cape Girardeau County 30 miles to the north.

New Archivists Augment Staff in Springfield and St. Louis Research Centers

This fall the State Historical Society of Missouri welcomed two new archivists. Jami Lewis began working at the Springfield Research Center in September, and A. J. Medlock joined the center in St. Louis

in October. Their work will include processing collections, completing digitization projects, and assisting researchers and other patrons.

Lewis holds a bachelor's degree in history from Drury

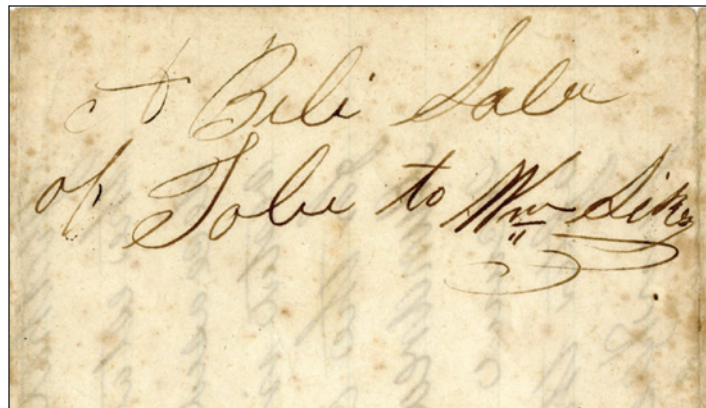
University and is currently completing her master's degree in history at Missouri State University. Prior to joining the State Historical Society, she was an archivist at the History Museum on the Square in Springfield. Born and raised in southwest Missouri, Lewis grew up near Route 66.

"Jami is a welcome addition to the Springfield Research Center," said Gerald Hirsch, SHSMO senior associate director. "We are excited to see how her connections and deep interest in southwest Missouri history will result in the growth of local collections and opportunities for outreach."

Medlock has a master's degree in library and information

science from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and a master's in public history from Southeast Missouri State University. He joins the State Historical Society of Missouri after working as an associate historian on the Soldiers Memorial Project at the Missouri History Museum. A lifelong Missourian, Medlock traces his roots in the state to southeast Missouri in 1850.

"The St. Louis Research Center is rich in social and environmental history of Missouri," Hirsch said. "We are excited to add A. J. to the team. He will help us increase the number of collections we are processing and digitizing for patrons."



This bill of sale is the record of William Sikes's purchase of Toby, an enslaved black man about 25 years old, on September 9, 1845, in Benton, Missouri. Sikes spent \$586 to acquire Toby in Scott County. His surname is unknown.

Three of the bills are from the estates of deceased owners, indicating that Sikes or his agent had to travel to estate sales that were probably advertised locally. Other sellers such as Hiram Sloan and Samuel Hill were large slaveholders in the region. Additional suppliers included Seburn Shy, James Lee, John N. Jackson, and the estates of Dr. Alfred P. Ellis, Samuel Young, and Morgan Hill.

In 1850 William Sikes probably still owned some of the slaves listed in these bills of sale, as individuals of the correct age are listed on the slave schedule for his household in that year's census. There were others, however, who do not appear in the census. Sikes died

in 1853, so further research in New Madrid County probate files may reveal more information about individual slaves.

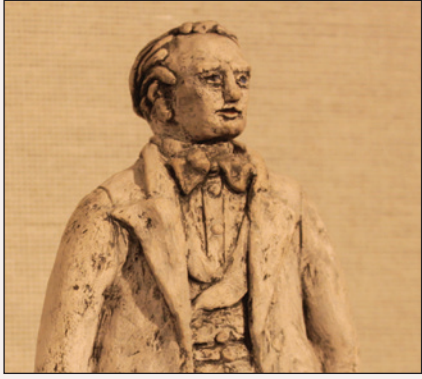
In addition to the bills of sale, the Sikes Family Papers include original deeds and a personal property tax assessment from 1845 to 1859. The collection is available to patrons at the Cape Girardeau Research Center or at any other SHSMO center by request.



Jami Lewis, Springfield center archivist.



A. J. Medlock, St. Louis center archivist.



November

Being Bussabarger Exhibition
Now through May 2018 Columbia

Painter, sculptor, and ceramist Robert Bussabarger (1922–2013) lived and worked in Missouri for over 50 years. This new exhibition, *Being Bussabarger: Ceramics, Paintings, Sketchbooks, and More*, pays tribute to the artist's creative spirit with a retrospective selection of his artworks from the 1950s to the 2010s. The wide range of media within the Society's collection of Bussabarger's art demonstrates the depth and breadth of his talent. The exhibition in the Columbia center's main gallery opened October 31 and will run through May 5, 2018.

December

Gift Shop Open House
December 2 10 a.m.-noon Columbia

Share your love of Missouri with items from the State Historical Society of Missouri gift shop. Whether it is an indulgence for yourself or the perfect present for that hard-to-shop-for person, the gift shop offers books, art, notecards, and other gifts that highlight your state heritage. At this Columbia Research Center event, you can browse while enjoying light refreshments. SHSMO members receive 10 percent off all purchases! If you are unable to attend in person, please see selections in the expanded online store at shop.shsmo.org.



January

Jon Luvelli: Images from Central Missouri Walk-Through
January 13 1:30 p.m. Columbia

Join SHSMO to learn more about the fine art photography of Jon Luvelli. A Missourian from a small town near Columbia, Luvelli has gained national and international recognition for his street photography. His images are distinguished by their focus on Midwestern townscapes and underlying social messages. The stark contrasts of light and dark encourage viewers to find beauty in uncustomary forms. This exhibition of photos, the first installment of a permanent Luvelli collection at SHSMO, represents central Missouri and casts an aesthetic spotlight on contemporary life along its county roads and midtown streets. The event will be held in the corridor gallery at the Columbia Research Center.

February

Black History Month
February 1–28 SHSMO Social Media

All month long the State Historical Society of Missouri will share the African American experience in Missouri as told through the personal papers of individuals, families, and organizations within SHSMO's collections. Find us on Facebook and Twitter through the Society's home page (shsmo.org).

Annual Day at the Capitol
February 7 Jefferson City

Meet National History Day in Missouri students, learn more about how this innovative program encourages them to explore history, and share your passion for history education with legislators at this daylong event in the Missouri State Capitol.

Missouri Council for the Social Studies Conference
February 23-24 Kansas City

Visit with SHSMO staff members at their exhibitor's booth and discuss ways to use resources from the Society, the National History Day in Missouri program, and the upcoming Missouri bicentennial in your classroom! The conference will be held at the National World War I Museum. Visit mosocialstudies.com/conference for more information.



Looking ahead

Missouri Conference on History March 14–16 Jefferson City

You are invited to submit paper, panel, or student poster proposals for the sixtieth annual Missouri Conference on History. Hosted by the Missouri State Archives and sponsored by SHSMO, the 2018 conference will be held at the Capitol Plaza Hotel in Jefferson City. Proposals in all fields of history, including public history and historic preservation, are invited. Submissions of complete sessions, including panelists, chair, and commentator, are welcomed. For additional information, please visit the Missouri Conference on History web page at shsmo.org/mch.

National History Day in Missouri April 28 Columbia

Come witness the knowledge, enthusiasm, and creativity of hundreds of students from across the state as they share their History Day research projects exploring the 2018 theme of Conflict and Compromise in History. They will compete for state honors in categories including documentaries, exhibits, papers, performances, and websites. Add to their learning experience by signing up to be a contest judge at nhdmo.org/judges. The state contest will be held on the University of Missouri campus. Top finishers will advance to the National History Day Contest in June.

Bluegrass Pickin' One More Time May 20 Rolla

Join SHSMO and longtime mid-Missouri radio host Wayne Bledsoe in honoring Mona Jones and the Bluegrass Travelers, Jim Orchard and the Ozark Bluegrass Boys, and Jimmie Allison and the Ozark Rounders at an afternoon of live bluegrass. The festival will be held at the Havener Center on the Missouri University of Science and Technology campus. Watch for further details as they are announced at shsmo.org/events.

Columbia Center's Microfilmed Newsletters Preserve the Legacy of the Civilian Conservation Corps

The SHSMO reference microfilm collection includes a unique set of newsletters: bulletins created by enrollees in the Civilian Conservation Corps. One of the most successful emergency programs of the New Deal, the CCC helped to educate and employ millions of young men during the Great Depression.

An enrollee in the Civilian Conservation Corps had to be an unmarried man between the ages of 18 and 25, and in most cases a member of a family that was on local relief. Upon passing a medical exam and/or completing a period of physical conditioning, the CCC recruits served a minimum of six months, with the option to stay for up to two years. They were paid \$30 in cash every month, with the expectation that \$25 would be sent home to support their families. The men were provided with clothes, bedsheets and blankets, toiletries, and any other articles deemed necessary for their employment.

The first CCC camp was established in Virginia in April 1933. At the program's peak in the fall of 1935, it included 2,652 camps throughout the country. The contiguous 48 states were divided into nine corps areas, with Missouri and seven other states (Arkansas, Kansas, Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, Iowa, and Nebraska) placed within the Seventh Corps Area. An enrollee's serial number indicated the corps area where he was enrolled, with all Missouri enrollee serial numbers starting with C7. The Seventh Area headquarters was in Omaha, Nebraska.

In March 1936 there were 54 camps in Missouri. The Missouri projects included soil conservation; drainage; national forest, state forest, and state park work sites; and one biological survey camp.

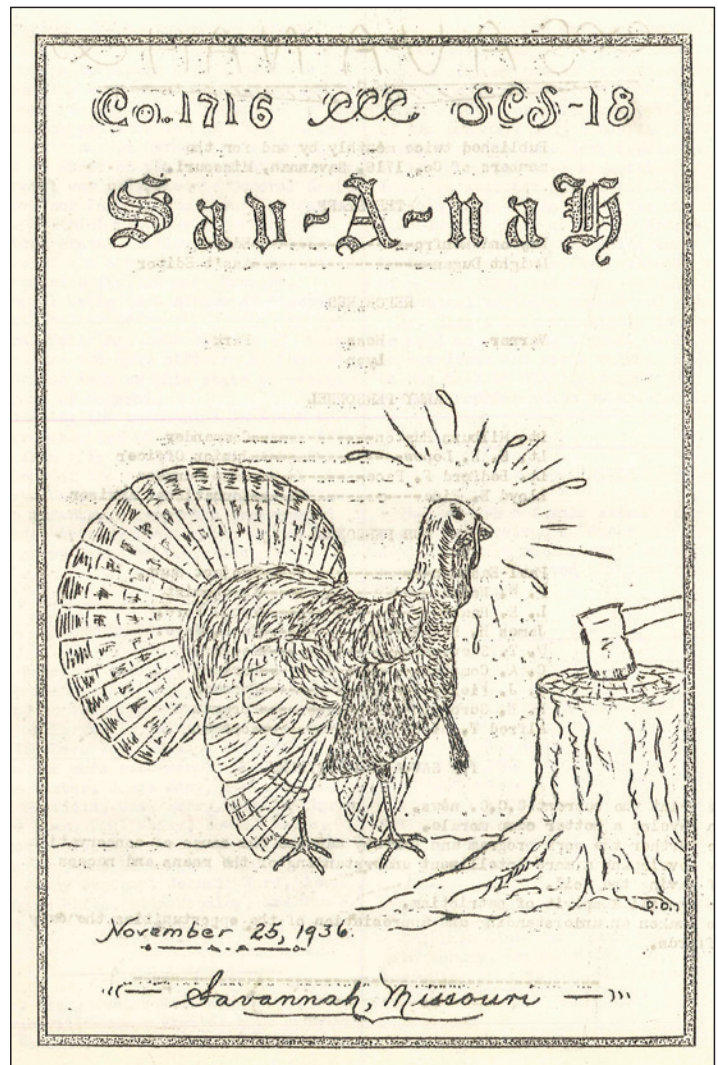
The Civilian Conservation Corps newsletters were created to provide a source of information for the men at the camps. They contain rules and announcements regarding proper conduct both in camp and when on leave. The newsletters also provided social information, including news about current and former enrollees.

While some of the newsletters closely resembled newspapers and were printed on a press, most of them were hand-drawn creations. They contain a mixture of text and illustrations, along with the occasional advertisement for local businesses. The names of the company newsletters varied widely and were often regionally influenced; the Missouri publications included the *Butler Bugle* (Butler, Company 3755), *Pershing Press* (Laclede, Company 1713), *Tom Sawyer Journal* (Florida, Company 1743); and *Swamp Angel* (New Madrid, Company 3729).

The Civilian Conservation Corps came to a close when the United States entered World War II and young men began filling the military ranks. Yet its impact is still felt today, primarily in our national and state parks. The men of the CCC planted more than 290 million trees, constructed 67,000 miles of service roads and trails through

timbered areas, built over 2,000 lookout houses and towers for fire detection, completed 23,000 buildings and other structures, and also contributed flood control and fire break work.

SHSMO's collection of Civilian Conservation Corps newsletters represents just a small portion of what exists at the national level. The Center for Research Libraries in Chicago is digitizing a larger selection of the circulars, including a selection of the Missouri company newsletters that are available at the Columbia Research Center.



The November 25, 1936, *Sav-A-nah* newsletter celebrated the Thanksgiving holiday with a hand-drawn illustration.

Center for Missouri Studies Fall Lecture and Annual Meeting—Continued from Page 1

Eight trustees were reelected: Blunt, Rodney Boyd, Edward C. Matthews III, Kenneth B. McClain, Edward W. Scavone, William W. Sellers, Beatrice B. Litherland Smith, and Jeffrey E. Smith.

SHSMO also announced the following awards: Missouri History Book Award: Christopher Phillips, *The Rivers Ran Backward: The Civil War and the Remaking of the American Middle Border* (\$1,500)

Eagleton-Waters Book Award: Micah W. Kubic, *Freedom, Inc. and Black Political Empowerment* (\$1,000)

Missouri Historical Review Article Award: Taylor Desloge, "Creating the Lung Block: Racial Transition and the 'New Public Health' in a St. Louis Neighborhood, 1907-1940" (\$750)

Mary C. Neth Prize: Sharon Romeo, "The First Morning of Their Freedom": African

American Women, Black Testimony, and Military Justice in Civil War Missouri" (\$500)

Lewis E. Atherton Prize, Master's Thesis: Anna K. Roberts, College of William and Mary, "Finding Their Place in an American City: Perspectives on African Americans and French Creoles in Antebellum St. Louis" (\$500)

Friends of Sacred Structures: Collection Safeguards History of Kansas City Preservation Group

Across Missouri, passionate historic preservation groups strive to sustain the state's architectural, cultural, and historic landmarks. One such organization, the Friends of Sacred Structures (FOSS), focuses on the preservation and restoration of religious buildings in the Kansas City area.

Since its incorporation as a nonprofit organization in 1992, FOSS has served over 170 religious and community organizations by providing free expert technical assistance. FOSS's team of retired architects, engineers, and other volunteers work with church congregations to develop plans for maintaining their structures through inspections, project management, referrals, assistance in securing and evaluating bids, project oversight, and general maintenance and repair.

FOSS's efforts go beyond preserving the stability of physical structures. The group also works to provide safe and functioning space for community outreach programs, giving special attention to institutions that provide essential services to the community such as daycare, after-school programs, food pantries, free meals, and overnight shelter.

Friends of Sacred Structures provides educational forums as well to acquaint the public with the value and benefits of historic preservation. In 2004,

Friends of Sacred Structures' efforts go beyond preserving the stability of physical structures. The group also works to provide safe and functioning space for community outreach programs, giving special attention to institutions that provide essential services to the community.

Kansas City adopted a resolution recognizing FOSS, the only organization of its kind in the area, for its "devoted efforts



Onlookers watch as a crane places the steeple on top of the newly roofed chapel at Stroud's Oak Ridge Manor.

toward maintaining the life and vitality of the treasured, historical houses of worship."

FOSS's records provide a wealth of documentation regarding its commitment to the religious structures of the city and the communities these institutions serve. The Friends of Sacred Structures Records (K1370) at the State Historical Society of Missouri's Kansas City Research Center include documents, photographs, and notebooks on religious structures assisted by FOSS. The records, which cover the years from 1992 to 2015, also include materials related to locations targeted by



A descendant of an original member of the congregation cuts the ribbon at the White Oak Chapel ceremony. As the Friends of Sacred Structures's first large-scale relocation project, it is the best-documented collaboration in the collection.

Researchers may be interested in the large group of files concerning individual churches. Of these files, none compare to the information related to FOSS's first large-scale project, White Oak Chapel. Built in 1912, the chapel was part of a small post-Civil War settlement of former slaves in north Kansas City. The church was scheduled for demolition before FOSS stepped

in to assist. In 1996, the FOSS team collaborated with church leaders to move and preserve the structure, which now sits at Stroud's Oak Ridge Manor restaurant.

The Friends of Sacred Structures collection is available for viewing at the Kansas City center. Patrons may also request it at any of SHSMO's five other research centers across the state.

St. Louis Center Papers Reveal Life of Confederate Soldier

The recently digitized Dyson–Bell–Sans Souci Papers (S0016) at the St. Louis Research Center offer an intimate look at the daily lives and personal convictions of Civil War soldier Absalom Roby Dyson and his wife, Louisa Johnson Dyson, as well as Confederate nurse Amanda Robertson. The collection includes letters and photographs of Dyson, a Franklin County farmer, schoolteacher, and postmaster who joined the Southern cause.

Dyson served in the Fifth Missouri Infantry of the Confederate States Army from 1862 to 1864. The Fifth Missouri was stationed in Missouri, Arkansas, Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia during that time. Much of the collection consists of Dyson's letters to Louisa, in which he recounts camp life, military battles, medical conditions, and a recurring desire to return home to his wife and daughter. She responded that he should stay until the war was over.

Dyson was wounded several times, notably during the Battle of Corinth and

at Champion Hill during the fight for Vicksburg. In Mississippi he encountered Robertson, who served as his caretaker. Much of her correspondence with both Dysons survives in the collection.

As a war nurse and a widowed single mother, Robertson's letters to Louisa Dyson shed light on life in the Deep South immediately after the war. She describes her fervent belief, like the Dysons, in the Confederate cause. Robertson vehemently resented the Union troops that raided her homestead. She also took exception to African Americans freed from slavery.

Roby Dyson did not survive the war. He succumbed to poor camp and medical conditions, becoming sick early in the summer of 1864. Despite his insistence that he would get better and return to the front, he died near Selma, Alabama, that June.

The papers also include correspondence between Dyson and several of his old schoolmates from Steelville Academy, as well as letters of both Dysons to and from other



Louisa Johnson Dyson of Franklin County, Missouri.

family friends. For more information about the collection, visit the Society's website at <http://shsmo.org/manuscripts/stlouis/s0016.pdf>. The letters are also online for viewing in the American Civil War in Missouri collection: <http://digital.shsmo.org/cdm/landingpage/collection/amcw>.

Long Distance Affair: Rolla Donation Records Missouri Couple's Romance during World War I

A few months after joining the US Army in January 1917, Elige Dees sent a letter to Mae Dupree Bilbrey, a childhood acquaintance. It would be the first of many letters exchanged by the couple in a correspondence that led to marriage while Dees served in the military during World War I and its aftermath.

The Elige and Mae Dees Letters (R1453), recently donated to the Rolla Research Center, contain the personal letters of Lige, as he was known to friends and family, and Mae during their courtship and first year of marriage.

Dees was born on June 20, 1895, in Ojibway (a town in Wayne County, Missouri, that no longer exists), and grew up with Mae in the Williamsville area. The two attended the same school, but were not in touch until Lige sent Mae his first letter in April 1917 with a



The envelope for a letter from Lige Dees to his wife, Mae.

photo of himself in uniform. Due to a misunderstanding regarding each other's marital status, they had not communicated prior to Lige leaving to join the army.

Over the next year, Lige and Mae courted through the mail against her parents' wishes. Many of the early letters describe their daily lives and offer mutual vows of fidelity. The couple eloped in March 1918 while Lige was home on leave from Camp Forrest in Georgia, where he was a corporal in Company D of the Fifty-Third Infantry, Sixth Division. After he had returned to the camp, Mae wrote to him that her mother cried upon hearing of their wedding, but her father said he would not stand in their way.

In the first months of their marriage, Lige moved frequently, going from Camp Forrest to Camp Wadsworth, South Carolina; Camp Mills, New York; and then overseas to France and Germany with the American Expeditionary Forces. He shipped out to France in June 1918 and did not return stateside until a year later.

The army censored his letters home, but while in France, Lige wrote of General John J. Pershing's inspection of the Sixth Division in April 1919. He wrote that the general gave the men a "nice long talk" and seemed like a "pretty nice old chap."

Lige and Mae had more difficulty keeping in touch once he was overseas, and the letters became sporadic while he served in Europe. But Lige told Mae not to "worry about me riting [sic] for sometimes I can't rite I have just come out of the trenches...but I'll rite you as often as I can."

After Lige was discharged with the rank of sergeant in 1920, he and Mae had four children. Mae worked periodically as a teacher and is listed as a farmer on the 1940 census. Lige's record notes that he was unable to work, which his World War II draft card confirms. He was identified as a disabled veteran and never called into service again. The couple remained together until his death in 1968 in Poplar Bluff.

Thank You, State Historical Society of Missouri Volunteers and Interns

Each year talented individuals generously serve as volunteers and interns in support of the State Historical Society of Missouri's collection, preservation, and educational outreach programs.

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Late Comedian Dick Gregory Documented in Collections at St. Louis Research Center



Dick Gregory at the Crystal Palace nightclub in Gaslight Square, St. Louis, 1961. Image from the Thelma Blumberg Photograph Collection (S0402.125)

Civil rights activist, comedian, and St. Louis native Dick Gregory passed away on August 19 in Washington, DC. He was the first African American standup comedian to achieve success with white audiences using politically relevant humor.

The St. Louis Research Center's collections include several photographs of Gregory from his early days performing at Gaslight Square. The Video Collection (S0832) includes a videotaped lecture he delivered to the Coalition on Political Assassinations in Dallas in November 1992.

Born in 1932, Gregory grew up in poverty in St. Louis during the Great Depression. After graduating from Sumner High School, he attended Southern Illinois University on a track scholarship, but his studies were interrupted in 1954 when he was drafted into the US Army. In the service he discovered his talent as a comedian, and he embarked on a career in comedy after returning to civilian life.

Gregory gained prominence during the 1960s with his sharp, incisive commentary on race relations. His often satirical comedy made him a controversial figure, but he nevertheless paved the way for other well-known black comedians such as Bill Cosby and Richard Pryor.

Gregory embraced and supported many causes over the course of his long career, most famously the civil rights and anti-war movements. Later in his career he developed an interest in political conspiracy theories and began discussing them in his act. In 1977 he was the first person to bring the famous Zapruder film of the John F. Kennedy assassination to national television. Gregory was also an advocate for dietary health emphasizing fasting and vitamin supplements.

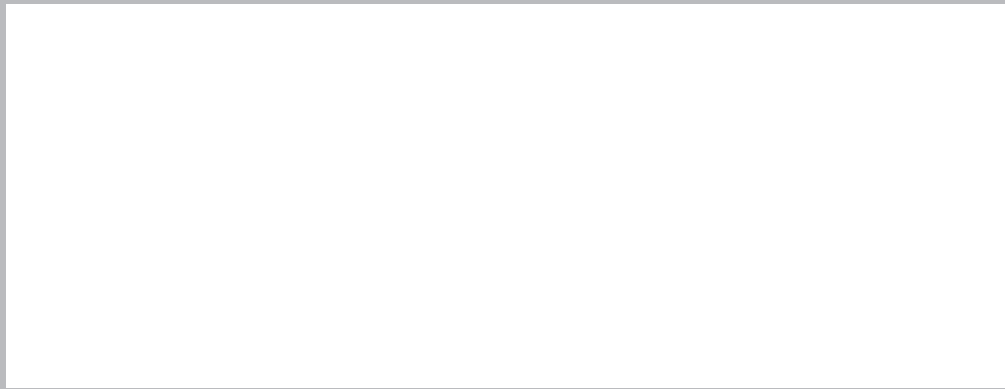
His last performance in St. Louis was at the Helium Comedy Club at the St. Louis Galleria on May 14, 2017.



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