

Shelby County Historical Society

A group of Shelby Countians met at the courthouse in Shelbyville on August 14, 1963 to organize a Shelby County Historical Society for the preservation of records, artifacts, mementoes and other facets of the county's past.

The group, which elected Mrs. Ola B. Wilson temporary chairman and Miss Katharine Drain temporary secretary, agreed to hold a "Founder's Night" on Thursday, Aug. 22, 1963, in the circuit court room in the courthouse.

A committee to draft the constitution and by laws of the new group was named by Mrs. Wilson and included A. Loy Jones, Mrs. Tom Bierly and Will Davis of Shelbina. The group, which was instructed to set the first dues at \$1 yearly when writing the bylaws, were to present the results of their work at the Founders meeting.

Everyone interested in formation of the county society, which was to become an auxiliary of the State Historical Society, was invited to attend the Founders meeting and those joining at that time were to be known as "Founders" of the society. A "Charter Night" was to follow the adoption of the constitution and bylaws and those joining by that time, or within a period set by that time, were to become "charter" members.

Those at the exploratory session included Mr. and Mrs. W. B. Pickett, Mr. and Mrs. W. C. Hewitt, Mrs. Emmett Goe, all of Shelbyville; Mrs. Merrill Bower, Bethel; and Mrs. Welch Greenwell, Shelbina, in addition to the temporary officers and members of the constitution and bylaws committee.

Founder's night was held Aug. 22, 1963 at which time twenty-nine were present and were recognized as the original Founders. They met in the courthouse in Shelbyville and elected the following officers: A. Loy Jones, President; Katharine Drain, 1st Vice-President; Ronald Spilker, 2nd Vice-President; Alice Priest, Secretary; Ola B. Wilson, Treasurer; Joan Bierly, Historian. Directors elected were: Alverda Ridgway, Lucille Bower and True Dickerson. Publicity chairman appointed was Mrs. Gladys Goe; program chairman, Kenneth Lasley; and Mrs. Welch Greenwell, museum chairman.

With 210 charter members, the highlight of the organization was the "Charter Night" dinner held on October 24, 1963 in the Masonic Temple, Shelbina, with 130 in attendance. The Shelbina Order of Eastern Star served the ham dinner. Loy Jones, President of the Shelby County Historical Society, was Master of Ceremonies and Rev. John O. Gooch, minister of the Shelbyville Methodist Church gave the invocation.

Dr. Richard S. Brownlee, Secretary of Missouri State Historical Society, was guest speaker. Mrs. Charles Corbin and Rolin Boulware sang a collection of Civil War songs. Mrs. Ola B. Wilson spoke on "Shelby County Firsts"; Mrs. Marion Gonnerman spoke on "The Bethel Colony"; Mrs. Robert E. Crist spoke on "John Forbes Benjamin"; and Miss Gladys Powers spoke on "The Civil War in Shelby County".

With a slate of good officers, enthusiasm abounding and 210 members, the Shelby County Historical Society was off to a good start!

The next meeting, held in January of 1964, President Loy Jones announced that a museum collection had already begun and that several pieces had been donated to the society. The search for a suitable place for the museum was begun.

In the following meeting held by the society, the accumulation of Shelby County's history began. The early attorneys of the county, as well as the early doctors, were discussed. A collection of records of the schools, as well as the churches, in the county was started as were exhibits relative to World War I and of the early agricultural history.

At the July meeting, 1964, it was announced that a room in the county courthouse, formerly used by the Sheriff, had been secured for use as a museum. The program for this meeting concerned Oak Dale and some of the first settlers of the county. Also brought up at this meeting was the subject of the Lone House, which at one time was the only house between Palmyra and Shelbyville. Report was also given that Oak Dale was the first community in the County and had the first Post Office. Many of these first programs and reports later proved to inspire the society into further works in their direction.

In April, 1965, Harry Libby, Jr. was appointed to fill the office of secretary due to the death of Miss Alice Priest. Miss Katharine Drain became the president by the death of President Loy Jones. At this meeting Roy Neff reported on his work of listing and compiling data with the help of Vernon Smith, concerning the cemeteries of the county. A report was given by Emmett Goe and Harry Libby of having a monument to mark the first site of the county court.

At the July, 1965, meeting a concern of the history of Bethel Colony was begun with the program being a visit to the Bethel Colony and a tour of Elim and the colony cemetery, Hebron.

At the annual dinner meeting, October, 1965, a panel discussion of the role of the county in the Civil War was held. An interesting point brought out was that Gen. U. S. Grant, later President of the United

States, began his career in Shelby County with the battle of Salt River Bridge. Roy Neff reported at this meeting that he had finished compiling data on all the war dead and, also, data on the surrounding township's cemeteries. The following officers were nominated and elected at this meeting: President, Katharine Drain; Vice-President, Herbert Williams; 2nd Vice-President, Ronald Spilker; Secretary, Harry Libby; Treasurer, Ola B. Wilson; Historian, Joan Bierly.

At the July, 1966, meeting Roy Neff made the suggestion that a survey of the schools previously existing in the county be made.

In October, 1966 at the annual dinner meeting, Emmett Goe and Ray Bedwell showed a drawing of the bronze tablet of the marker that was to be erected at the site of the first county courthouse. New officers were nominated and elected at this meeting. They were: President, Ola B. Wilson; 1st Vice-President, Mrs. Helen Jones Nicely; 2nd Vice-President, Ronald Spilker; Secretary, Mrs. Pearl Caldwell; Treasurer, William Tarbet; Historian, Mrs. Joan Bierly.

At the January, 1967, meeting, Emmett Goe announced that a marker had been placed at the site of the first settler's home, Obadiah Dickerson. The site is near the Salt River bridge on Highway 15. The cemetery survey cards were completed, it was reported, and volumes were made of these, one of which was sent to the State Historical Society, Columbia; one to Shelbina Library and one for the Historical Society. Mr. Roy Neff had made a chart locating all the cemeteries on a large map of the county. The thought of restoring a rural schoolhouse was brought up at this meeting with the consideration being tabled.

The subject of re-publishing the Shelby County part of the old 1884 county history was brought up at the April, 1967, meeting. At this meeting, it was announced that the former treasurer's office in the courthouse was also available to increase the size of the museum. After this meeting, the members attended the dedication of the Shelby County Historical Society's marker which commemorated the site of the first session of the Court held in Shelby County in the home of William B. Broughton near Oak Dale.

At the annual dinner meeting held in October, 1967, the officers that were holding offices were renominated with the exception of Miss Gladys Powers being nominated as Historian. The officers were elected to serve another year.

At the January meeting, 1968, Roy Neff announced that he had found one available rural school building and a site for it at the Shelbina Lake; further investigation into the matter of purchasing the school was called for after discussion by the society. At the

following meeting in April, 1967, the society discussed the possibility of preserving the old Walkersville Mill wheels that were in the City Park in Shelbina. At a later meeting it was reported that iron bands had been placed around these wheels.

October, 1968, new officers were elected for the coming year. They were: President, Estel T. Hardy; Vice-President, Charles Timmons; 2nd Vice-President, Mrs. Virgil Vandiver; Secretary, Mrs. Emmett Goe; Treasurer, Mrs. Margaret Farley; Historian, Miss Gladys Powers. The following were elected to the Board of Directors: Roy Neff, Miss Katharine Drain, Vernon Smith and Ralph VanHouten.

Miss Gladys Powers reported at the April meeting, 1969, that over 350 reprints of the History of Shelby and Monroe Counties had been sold and project was declared a huge success. There was, also, a discussion of printing a new history of Shelby County from 1911 to the present time. A discussion was then held concerning moving the museum from the upstairs rooms in the Courthouse to the basement.

At the July, 1969, meeting Ralph VanHouten reported on the moving of the museum from the upper room in the courthouse to the basement and stated the county court had agreed to help with the expenses of renovating the rooms.

In October, 1969, the officers of the current year were renominated and elected. Mrs. Virgil Vandiver gave a report concerning the Lone House located near Emden.

At the April meeting, 1970, Clarence Bower presented pictures of old homes in Bethel. The pictures and information were to be sent to the Missouri Park Board concerning the preservation of a block of historical buildings in Bethel. It was reported at the July, 1970, meeting that the Missouri State Park Board showed some interest in the old houses in Bethel, the Benjamin House, Shelbina, and the Block House site, Hunnewell. Virgil Vandiver made a motion, which was carried, to erect a historical marker at the Lone House near Emden.

New officers were elected at the October, 1970, meeting. They were: President, Charles Timmons; Vice-President, Roy Neff; 2nd Vice-President, Mrs. Virgil Vandiver; Secretary, Mrs. Emmett Goe; and Treasurer, Mrs. Margaret Farley.

At the January, 1971, meeting, it was announced that information concerning residents and other information of the county be gathered, starting at the present time, for a new history of the county to be completed by 1975. It was announced that the Town of Bethel had been permanently registered as a historical site in the National Register.

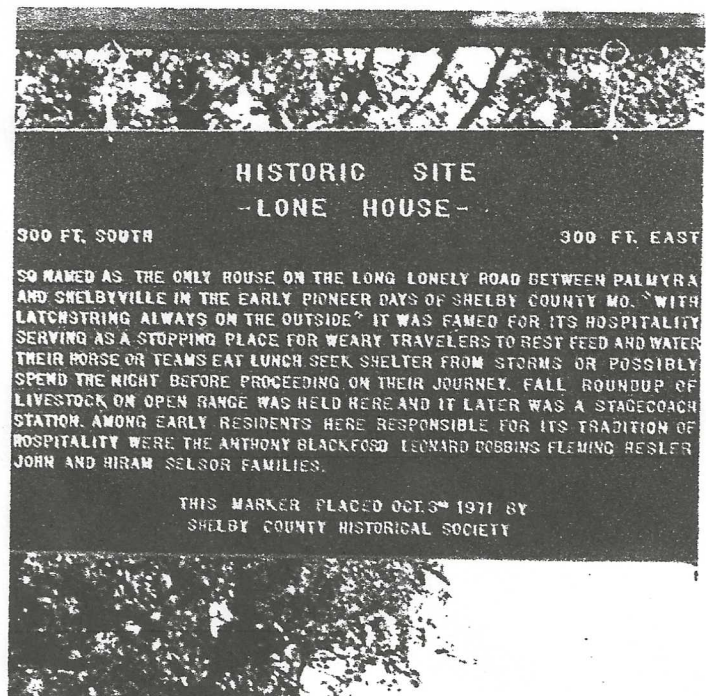
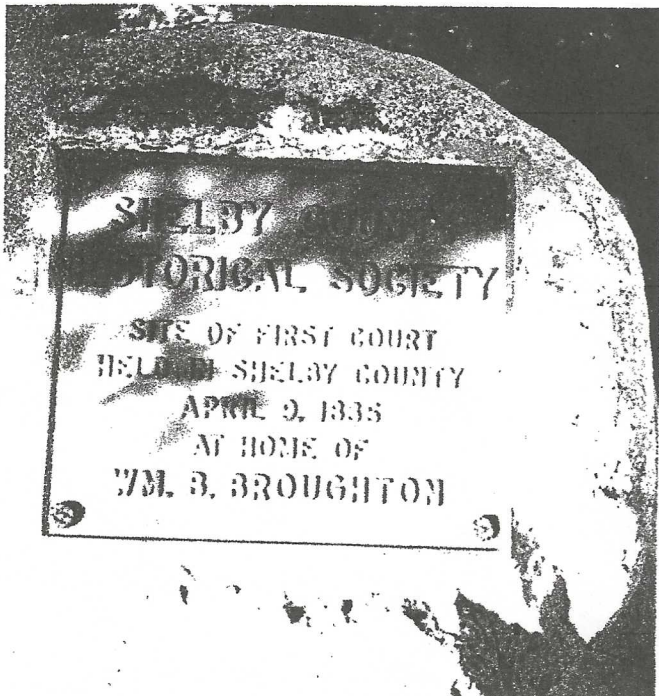
A final move of the society museum was decided on at a special meeting held in July, 1971. The move would be made from the courthouse basement to the original rooms in the upstairs in the courthouse. The move was necessitated because of the flooding of the basement rooms. The committee also voted to start work on the new Shelby County History dating from 1911.

At the regularly scheduled July, 1971 meeting, Ivo Blackford, Emmett Goe and Mary Vandiver, committee for the erection of the historical marker at the Lone House, reported that the marker would be placed in the near future.

Ivo Blackford reported at the October meeting that Mr. and Mrs. Lester Ritchie, Emden, would

donate an old log house on their property to the society to be restored at the present site or to be moved to a new location. The same officers were elected for another year.

The Shelby County Historical Society has a number of plans for the future including the log cabin at Emden, the Bethel Colony, and the general accumulation of history of the county. The society feels that this new history book, "The History of Shelby County from 1911" may be the first step to the establishment of the history of Shelby County since its beginning in the 1830's to the present time. It is hoped that this history is as cherished and remembered as the memories are that formed this book.



Shelby County Historical Society

Charter Members

Ola B. Wilson
 Katharine Drain
 Will Davis
 A. Loy Jones
 Mrs. Welch Greenwell
 Mrs. Tom Bierly
 Mrs. W. C. Hewitt
 Mrs. Emmett Goe
 Mrs. Merrill Bower
 Mrs. Wm. B. Pickett
 Wm. B. Pickett
 Ronald Spilker
 Mrs. Ronald Spilker
 Emmett Goe
 Mrs. M. G. Ridgway
 Mrs. H. P. Gaines
 Mrs. Harold Gilbert
 W. True Dickerson
 Miss Nellie Looney
 Mrs. Beulah Botkin
 Mrs. Keith Bradshaw
 Kenneth Lasley
 Mrs. Kenneth Lasley
 Mrs. Robert E. Crist
 Gladys Powers
 John Claggett
 Mrs. Weldon Johnson
 Miss Alice Priest
 Harry Libby, Jr.
 Mrs. Harry Libby, Jr.
 Mrs. Myda Christine
 Mrs. Mary Erwin
 Harold Gilbert
 Mrs. Al Worthen
 Mrs. Gilbert Keith
 Merrill Bower
 Mrs. Marian Gonnerman
 Wm. E. Botkin
 Mrs. Wm. E. Botkin
 Mrs. Will Davis
 Mrs. David Hawkins
 Mrs. Tom Oswald
 Dr. Gladys Bower
 Mrs. Chas. Lichty
 Mrs. Don Roads
 Donald Easdale
 Mrs. Donald Easdale
 Charles E. Baker
 Wm. E. Tarbet
 Mrs. Wm. E. Tarbet
 George H. Bunney
 Mrs. Roger Finney
 Roger Finney
 Mrs. Martin Nicholson
 Louis S. Hawkins
 Mrs. R. L. Caldwell
 Claude Douglass
 Mrs. Claude Douglass
 Mrs. L. O. Williams
 Mrs. Willard Stevenson
 Mrs. Dean McDaniel
 David Oliver
 L. J. Oliver
 G. Carson Carmichael
 L. O. Williams
 Mrs. Bernie Hyatt
 John D. Hyatt
 Mrs. Harold Hawkins
 Pamela Hawkins
 Thomas V. Proctor

Mrs. Glenn Greening
 Mrs. Kenneth Stewart
 Mrs. Clyde Green
 Archie Carroll
 Mrs. Helen J. Nicely
 Mrs. Nettie Day
 Ira B. Day
 Mrs. Flora Churchwell
 Mrs. Bess E. Givans
 Mrs. Goldie Nichols
 Mrs. L. S. Thomas
 Mrs. Pearl Smoot
 Miss Helen Spencer
 Mrs. Hugh Parker
 Mrs. Kathryn Sams
 Mrs. J. A. Claggett
 Chester C. Calvert
 Mrs. Chester C. Calvert
 Mrs. Cessna Lowe Miller
 William Mann
 Ralph VanHouten
 Mrs. Ralph VanHouten
 Virginia Norris
 Mrs. Virgil Vandiver
 Mrs. Donley Fox
 Mrs. W. M. Hilber
 Estel S. Baker
 Lena Fay Baker
 Isaac Looney
 Mrs. Edward Claussen
 Mrs. Ray Bedwell
 Ray Bedwell
 Donald Shouse
 → Mrs. Donald Shouse
 Donley Fox
 Herbert G. Williams
 → Mrs. H. G. Williams
 W. C. Hewitt
 John O. Gooch
 Mrs. John O. Gooch
 A. Charles Thale
 Mrs. A. C. Thale
 Mrs. Donald Hardy
 Donald Hardy
 T. F. Lindsey
 Mrs. Vera Yancey
 Mrs. Frank C. Wine
 Mrs. Raymond D. Brown
 Mrs. Rosabelle Dawson
 Josephine Parker
 Wm. O. Parker
 Mrs. W. L. Lucas
 W. L. Lucas
 Mrs. Lora G. Mehlis
 Mrs. Lucille H. Dempsey
 Baker Dempsey
 Miss Margaret McCarty
 Mrs. Alma Davis
 Mrs. Juanita Harrison
 Mrs. Virginia Drake
 Willard Stevenson
 → Mrs. William Werr
 William Werr
 → Clyde Burch
 → Mrs. Clyde Burch
 James H. LeHue
 Mrs. Lucille G. Tarbet
 Omer Tarbet
 Mrs. Grace Forman

Miss Marjorie K. Boling
 Mrs. Pearl Boling
 Mrs. H. Baxter Hall
 Weldon S. Stevenson
 Miss F. Mae Caldwell
 Dr. Emmett B. Carmichael
 Floyd Schoonover
 Mrs. Floyd Schoonover
 R. H. Wailes
 Mrs. R. H. Wailes
 R. G. Ranney
 Miss Martha Turney
 Mrs. C. R. Byland
 Miss Nadine Morgan
 John W. Staggs
 Mrs. John W. Staggs
 Mrs. Hettie Burk
 Mrs. Russell Purvis
 Mac A. Johnson
 Mrs. Gladys Keith
 Mary E. Ledbetter
 Ross Ledbetter
 Mrs. Martha Winans
 Edgar P. Blanton
 David Hawkins
 Mrs. Weldon Blackford
 Weldon Blackford
 Mrs. Lyndell Dodge
 Mrs. Marie Snider
 → Aida Ridgway
 → Rogers Hewitt
 → Mrs. Rogers Hewitt
 Leon Ralls
 Wm. O. Easdale
 Mrs. Wm. O. Easdale
 Mrs. Omer Fletcher
 Mrs. Martha Maddox
 Lewis C. Bethards
 Russel L. Yancey
 A. L. Freeland
 John Danklef
 Mrs. Jency Barkley
 Roy Neff
 Mrs. S. C. Turner
 Chas. P. Taylor
 Mrs. Roy LeGrand
 Julius Buckman
 Mrs. J. M. Buckman
 Mrs. Tommie Williams
 Mrs. Nell Douglas
 Lavern Weisenborn
 B. F. Dobyns, Sr.
 J. D. Davis
 Mrs. J. D. Davis
 Miss Gertrude Dobyns
 Mrs. Minnie B. Jones
 Dan Taylor
 Mrs. Archie Carroll
 Miss Vadia Rice
 Mrs. Bessie Staggs
 Mrs. Agnes Hardy
 Harold (Ted) Bair
 Mrs. Harold Bair
 Carol Greenwell
 Welch Greenwell
 Theibert Bower
 Vernon L. Drain
 Mrs. Ralph Branscomb
 Jim Kemp

Alive

1972—Officers And Members Of The Shelby County Historical Society

President ----- Ivo Blackford

Vice-President ----- Mrs. Doris Wallace

Secretary ----- Mrs. Gladys Goe

Treasurer ----- Mrs. Margaret Farley

Historian ----- Miss Gladys Powers

Board of Directors

Mrs. Alverda Ridgway
Mr. Ralph N. VanHouten
Mrs. Vera Yancey

127 Members

Nedra Garrison
Nellie Looney
Isaac Looney
Merrill Bower
Mrs. Merrill Bower
Clarence Bower
Mrs. Clarence Bower
Lester Ritchie
Mrs. Lester Ritchie
Ivo Blackford
Kathryn Blackford
Walter Schmidt
Mrs. Walter Schmidt
Margaret Farley
Vera Yancey
Frank Broughton
Eleanor Troxell
Katharine Drain
Mrs. Lora G. Mehlig
Lynn Douglass
Sandra Douglass
Gladys Goe
Emmett Goe
Mrs. H. P. Gaines
Mary Jo March
Laverne March
Mark March
Ola B. Wilson
Katherine Pickett
Wm. B. Pickett
Madge Miller
Arlene Dempsey
Mrs. Kenneth Stewart
Helen White
Mrs. Ray Winget
Ray Bedwell
Mildred Bedwell
Helen J. Nicely
Margaret Lasley
Mrs. Wm. K. Lasley
Anna Baker
Stanley Baker

Joyce English
Wm. E. Tarbet
Nadean Tarbet
Clifford Critchlow
Walter Foehringer
Kathlyne Foehringer
Kathryn Sams
Dr. Howard L. Ragsdale
Helen Threlkeld
Chas. H. Timmons
Mrs. Ethel Timmons
Omer R. Edwards
Mrs. R. L. Caldwell
Mary Frances Troy
Glenn Wallace
Mrs. Doris Davis Wallace
E. L. Davis
Gerald Bonnel
Margaret Bonnel
Carole Stoneburner
Bernice Mahoney
Al Sharp
Mary Ann Sharp
Dr. Emmett Carmichael
Nadine Morgan
Marjorie K. Boling
Jessie Mae Greenwell
Joan Bierly
Agnes Hardy
Estel T. Hardy
Louis S. Hawkins
Mrs. L. S. Hawkins
Rolin T. Boulware
Mrs. R. T. Boulware
Carter Blanton
June Blanton
Edgar P. Blanton
Mrs. E. P. Blanton
J. A. Buckman
Mrs. J. M. Buckman
Wilson Ratliff
Mrs. Wilson Ratliff

Roy Neff
Vernon Smith
Elizabeth Powers
Gladys Powers
Helen Wood
Jessie M. Carothers
Ben Dobyns, Jr.
Mary Dobyns
Chester Calvert
Leona Calvert
Lester Ridings
Mrs. Lester Ridings
Juanita Harrison
Aida Ridgway
Alverda Ridgway
Helen Spencer
Mrs. Leona Snider
Lewis C. Bethards
Lloyd Jackson
Mrs. Lloyd Jackson
Dr. Gladys Bower
Pearl Caldwell
Hazel Hawkins
Okla Peoples
Marian Peoples
Mary Vandiver
Virgil Vandiver
Ralph VanHouten
Opal VanHouten
Mrs. James Hall
Mrs. Melvin Montgomery
Mrs. Leon Schwada
Marion Gonnerman
Virginia Griggs
Robert Walters
Bernice Walters
Mary Ellen Vecere
Mrs. Pius Buckman
Leon Runyon
Elizabeth Runyon
Adrian Fullerton
Dorothy E. Fullerton