

HAPPENINGS

January/February 1996

St. Joseph Museum

Pony Express National Memorial

TOUR GROUPS AT THE PONY EXPRESS



Volunteer Dennis Riche leads a group on a tour of the Pony Express National Memorial.

The new eight-day trip will include all sorts of sights and activities such as: the birthplace of Ulysses S. Grant; three presidential museums; the Amana colonies; the Roseman Bridge and Francesca's house in Madison County; the original site of the Field of Dreams where "ghosts" appear in the cornfield to play ball with interested guests; a working farm and an authentic 1840s wagon train trip.

In St. Joseph, Tauck guests will enjoy lunch by the river at the Sunset Grill before touring the Pony Express National Memorial and heading off to Kansas City to the Steamboat Arabia Museum.

Photos by Clint Sims

The Pony Express National Memorial has enjoyed an impressive increase in adult group visitation since the museum reopened in 1993. That year, as in previous years, the museum was visited by approximately a dozen adult tour groups. In 1994 the number increased to 35 tour company visits and a dozen adult groups from various travel and hobby clubs. In 1995 the number increased again to 60 tour company visits and 26 visits by other types of adult groups.

While reviewing the reservation book for 1996, we were pleased to notice that we had 59 tour buses and four adult groups already booked in 1996. With most of the year still ahead, 1996 is sure to be our best year ever for tour group attendance.

We are particularly excited to announce that Tauck Tours is including the Pony Express National Me-

morial in their new "America's Heartland" tour package.

Tauck Tours, in existence since 1925, has become one of the largest companies in the travel industry. For the past six years, Tauck Tours has been voted the #1 Tour Company in America by the American Society of Travel Agents.

Last spring Phil Otterson, Director of Product Operations for Tauck Tours, was escorted through our region by Kris Lokemoen, Group Tour Manager for the Missouri Division of Tourism. He liked what he saw. In the August issue of Tauck's newsletter he wrote about "Heading to the Heartland" in 1996. The Midwest is an undiscovered destination filled with Americana," Mr. Otterson observed.



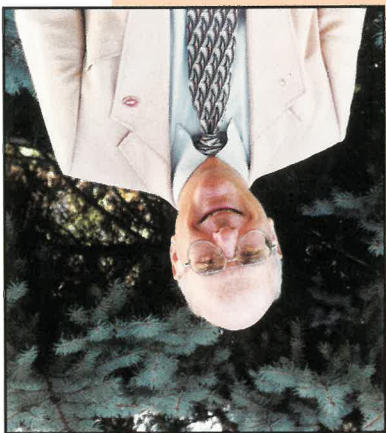
Tour groups are becoming a common sight at the memorial.

Story continued on page 6

FROM THE DIRECTOR

On February 23, a van load of staff went to Leawood United Methodist Church in Leawood, Kansas, for the funeral of Al Kreek. Al had been diagnosed with Alzheimer's seven and a half years ago, and at some point during the advanced stages, his body was invaded by cancer.

Rich Nolf



Al and Esther Kreek became an essential part of the St. Joseph Museum's extended family through their involvement with Prairie View Festival. When we first started discussing the idea of a festival, invaluable advice was given to us by Paul Stock, a St. Joseph resident who was a Silver Dollar City craftsman. Paul thought that we needed lots of music at the Prairie View Festival, and he suggested Esther Kreek. He mentioned that she was playing her hammered dulcimer that weekend in downtown St. Joseph, so I went down to meet her. Our recollections of that first meeting seem to grow each time they are retold! For 11 of the 12 years that we held Prairie View Festival, Esther and Al were there from dawn until dusk. The only year that they missed was when Esther's mother passed away. Esther and Al also provided insight and encouragement to the museum staff as they planned, executed, and evaluated each Prairie View Festival.

Al brought home Esther's first hammered dulcimer as a gift. Like a duck takes to water, Esther took to the hammered dulcimer. As Esther's skill and engagements grew, Al went everywhere with her. He was a meticulous caregiver. He carried instruments, drove her to performances, stomped his feet to the rhythm, and was a part of every performance. He was always

ST. JOSEPH MUSEUM & PONY EXPRESS NATIONAL MEMORIAL STAFF

PROGRAM

Rich Nolf, Director
Jackie Lewin, Curator, PENM
Marilyn Taylor, Curator of Ethnology
Carol Willis, Curator of Collections
David Mead, Curator of Natural History
Robbie Sipes, Curator of Exhibits
Sarah Elder, Curator of History
Kathy Reno, Museum Shop Manager
Clint Sims, Graphic Artist
Dee Phillips, Director of Marketing & PR

SUPPORT

Susan Noland, Bookkeeper
Sawnya Kernes, Secretary
June Swift, Secretary
Scott Koch, Exhibits Technician
Chad Lawhon, Exhibits Technician
Dale Brizendine, Maintenance Technician
Albert Bingham, Maintenance Technician
Mary Knab, Research Assistant
Kem Mills, Curatorial Assistant/Receptionist
Georgia Brooks, Receptionist
Lori Calloway, Receptionist
Jerome Goolsby, Receptionist
Marcelene Green, Receptionist
Marlys Hauglie, Receptionist
Helen Matthews, Receptionist
Allana Smith, Curatorial Assistant/Receptionist
Amy Glogner, Receptionist
Leonard Elliott, Receptionist

ADJUNCT

Mike Fisher, Archaeological Research Associate
Jim Feagins, Archaeological Research Associate
Russ Mooney, Saddle & Tack Consultant
Esther Kreek, Historical Music Coordinator

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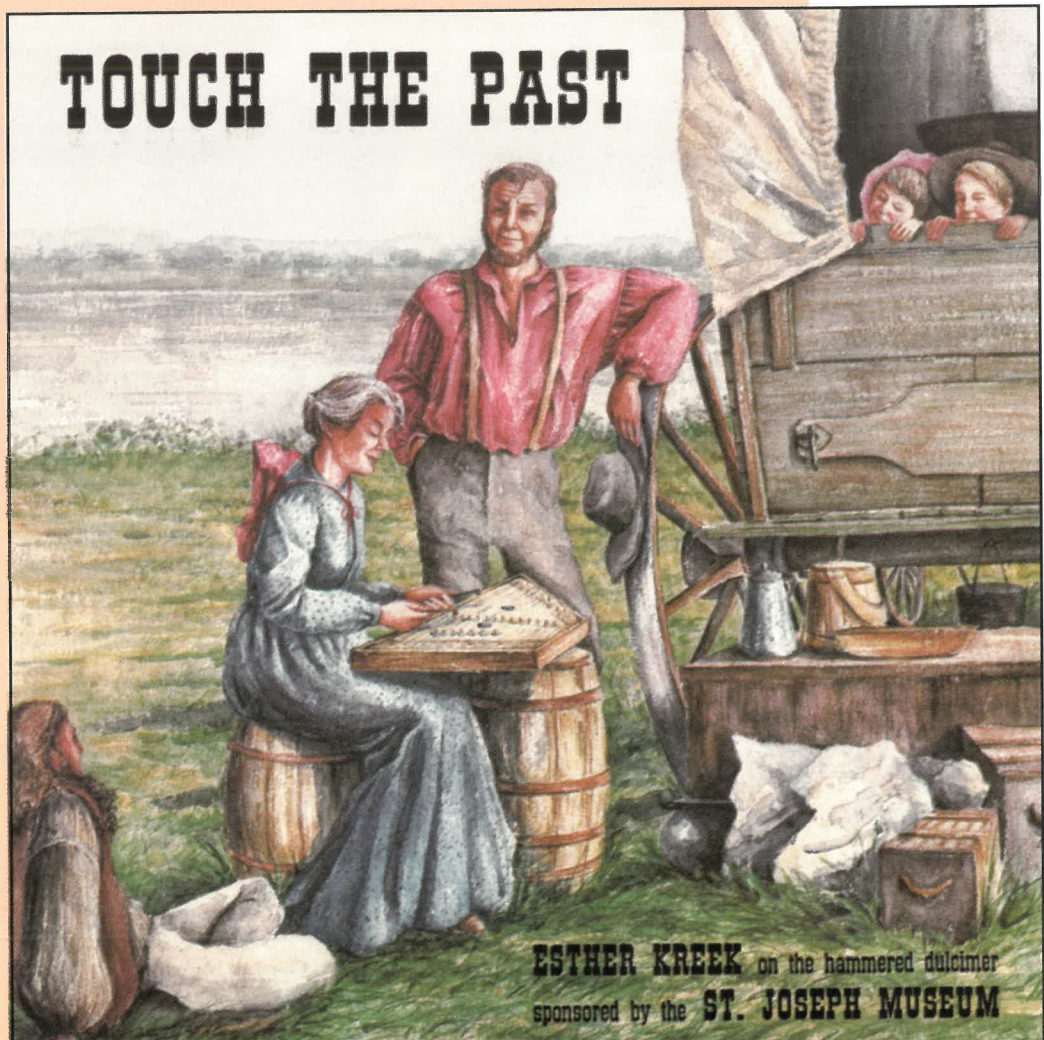
St. Joseph Museum, Inc.,
and Pony Express, Inc.,
not-for-profit corporations,
P.O. Box 128, 1100 Charles Street
St. Joseph, Missouri, 64502-0128
(816) 232-8471
Fax: (816) 232-8482.
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her most ardent supporter and the leader of her fan club.

One of the significant moments in the relationship between the St. Joseph Museum and Al and Esther Kreek was our first oral history recording of music along the Oregon and California Trails entitled "Touch the Past." Cindy Barber, an artist in Cameron, was hired to paint the recording's cover, which portrayed a pioneer woman playing a dulcimer with her husband standing next to her by a covered wagon. You can see the likenesses of Esther and Al in that painting.

The staff has continued to grow since the last Prairie View Festival, so a number of the staff never had the chance to experience that part of the museum's history. Those of us who did went to Al's funeral. It was a time of sharing, a time of music, and a time of story telling about that gentle, supporting man.

The museum will continue to work closely with Esther, although her workshops and commitments



Al Kreek proudly watches as Esther plays the dulcimer on the cover of "Touch The Past."

are increasing dramatically all over the country, and the opportunities for Esther to come to the St. Joseph Museum are decreasing. However, she will be here for the kick-off evening for Children's Week on April 9!

Although Al has not been with us for some time because of the advancing stages of Alzheimer's, his impact on Esther's life and the lives of the people that surrounded him will be felt for years. He enriched the life of everyone who met him, and he is very sadly missed.

Rich Noel

A HUGE SUCCESS! FIRST ANNUAL TASTER'S CHOICE CHILI FEST

Thank you to all of the many people who supported the Taster's Choice Chili Fest held on January 23. A special thanks to Karen and John Foley who graciously opened their home to over 225 people who attended the event. The chili fest was a fundraiser sponsored by the board of the

P o n y

Express Na-

tional Memorial

in which \$6,500 was

raised to further the pro-

grams of the museum.

Karen Foley chaired the event. She was

"pleased by the wonderful support, especially on such

a cold, snowy evening," and she wanted to "thank the

board for pulling together to make the event such a suc-

cess. It was a fun team to work with." Others who

helped Karen and John in hosting the evening were

Bob and Mary Lynn Brown, Linden and Beverly

Black, Mignon and Dick DeShon, Jim and Karen

The varied
chilis

Gordon and
Robaska and
Mike and Janet
Taylor.

Graves, Clark and Nancy Hampton, Stan and Doris
Hall, Cort and Tracee Hegarty, Jim and Suzanne
Lehr, David Oliver,

J u n e

eral choices of desserts were served.

ning, and seafood. In addition, sev-

etarian , white, award-win-

and chicken, coyote, veg-

included blackbean

delicious and

fered were

o f -



success that it should be an annual event.

the fun next year. The board committee has de-

If you missed this year's chili fest, plan to join in

THE TRUNK PROGRAMS



Clint Sims

Sarah Elder Curator of History at the St. Joseph Museum.

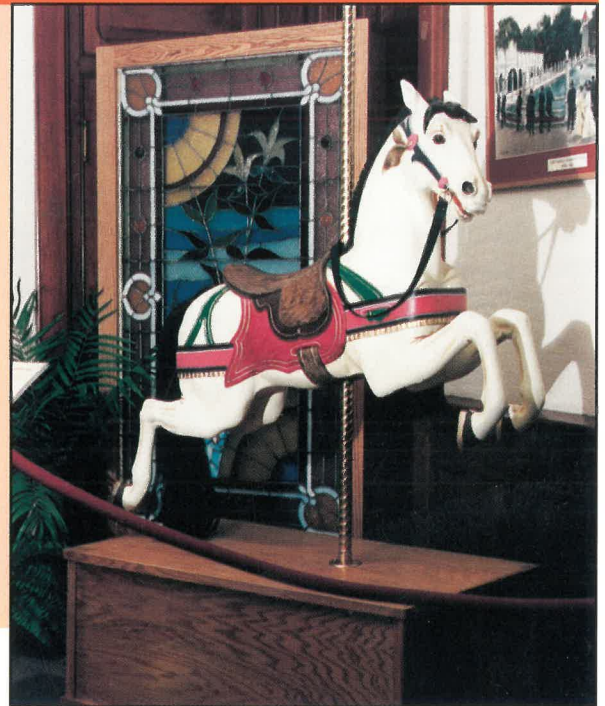
The St. Joseph Museum has always provided programs for schools and civic organizations. It might be a traveling exhibit that the teacher can keep in the classroom or a curator might take some artifacts from collections to a school and discuss their significance.

As curator of history, I handle any request for a historical program. The most requested program for me is "The Trunk." The Trunk is a large box filled with artifacts, both antiques and replicas, that would have been used on the Oregon-California Trails. Some of the more popular items with the students include the leather bullwhip, the cap and ball pistol, and the punched tin lantern.

Since I started taking The Trunk out two years ago, I have spoken at numerous schools in St. Joseph and the surrounding area, including Parkway, Humboldt, and Skaith Elementary Schools in St. Joseph, and Stewartsville, Mound City, and Mid-Buchanan Elementary Schools in Northwest Missouri. Many of the teachers have an Oregon-California Trails unit each year, so I have gone to these schools on a repeat basis. For example, Parkway Elementary celebrates Missouri Day every October. They have speakers come to the school to teach the students about various things in pioneer history. This is the third year I have taken The Trunk to Parkway.

I really enjoy taking The Trunk and other programs to the different schools and watching the students' faces when they learn something new about the Oregon-California Trails or about St. Joseph history. It is one of the more delightful aspects of my job. ✂

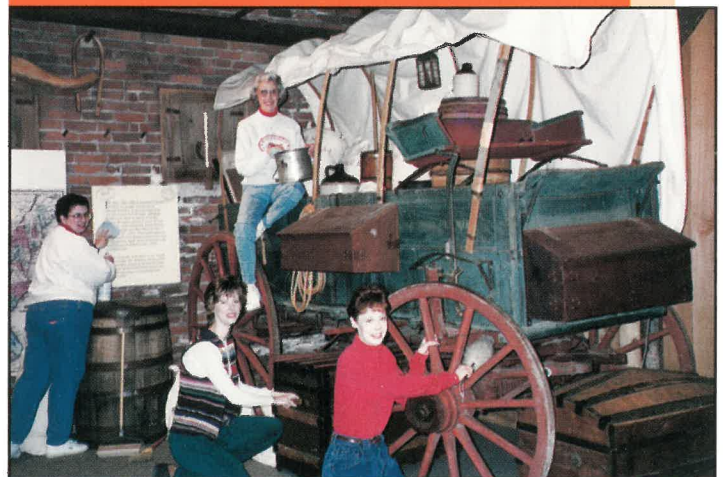
CAROUSEL HORSE AT ST. JOSEPH MUSEUM



Clint Sims

The Lake Contrary carousel horse previously donated by Mrs. Manning Grimes has been restored to its former glory. Visitors activate a motion sensor causing the horse to move up and down while "In the Good Old Summertime" plays in the background.

PRE-SPRING CLEANING



Jackie Lewin

Visitors always rate the Pony Express National Memorial high in cleanliness. This is due to the staff members who take pride in maintaining the museum. Pre-spring cleaning around the covered wagon left to right: Amy Gloggner, Allana Smith, Marcelene Green, and Kathy Reno.

MUSEUMS TO PARTICIPATE IN KANSAS CITY PROMOTION

In the spring, beginning in mid-April, both museums will participate in a media campaign in Kansas City. This promotion will be done in conjunction with the local Convention and Visitors Bureau through the use of a grant. Our objective is to tap into a fertile market just a few miles south of us and to encourage those people to make day trips to this area. Two mediums have been chosen to accomplish this task: radio and print. Both avenues will make concentrated efforts to penetrate the market they reach. The media campaign is designed to run just prior to the tourist season.

The radio station selected is KUDL (98.1 FM) which is a match with our targeted audience. The format is an adult contemporary station with a target market of age 25-54. Four publications have been selected and will focus on three key geographic areas, all of which have responded favorably to past CVB advertising campaigns. They are: North Kansas City, Johnson County, and Lawrence. The radio station selected also covers these same areas so the two mediums can complement each other. The publication for the area North of the River is the *Kansas City Star* and

Story continued from cover

Tauk Tours has booked 25 tours at the Pony Express National Memorial in 1996 and 25 tours for 1997.

Reaching a greater share of the professional tour company market has truly been a group effort. The staff of the Buchanan County Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) works to promote St. Joseph to tour companies all over the United States and Canada. Representing the attractions of St. Joseph at the American Bus Association Marketplace and the National Tour Association helps us to expand our audience. The Missouri Division of Tourism provides advertising opportunities for our facility as well as including the Pony Express National Memorial in familiarization tours of the state for tour operators.

Of course, the most important key to building a good customer base is good service. The Pony Express Na-

edition. The publications for the Johnson County area are the *Kansas City Star* and *Johnson County edition* and also the *Sun Newspapers*. The publication for Lawrence is *Lawrence Journal-World*.



The Kansas City area is a viable market for recruiting tourists to this area. The areas targeted have easy accessibility to St. Joseph as well as appropriate disposable income to make a trip to St. Joseph.

national Memorial staff and volunteers work together to ensure that guests have a pleasant and informative visit. To meet that goal, we have developed new methods of welcoming and guiding large groups through our facility. We have learned that it is important to treat the members of a group as individuals and to avoid too much regimentation in the tour. We have also found that our ability to be flexible is helpful. When we have that last minute reservation or special request our volunteers are quick to say, "I can handle that," and we can't thank them enough. We very much appreciate their willingness to share their knowledge and enthusiasm for the history of the Pony Express with our guests.

Meeting people from all over the country is really a lot of fun for all of us at the memorial. We are very excited about all the guests we will be welcoming in 1996, and we are already making plans for 1997.

RECENT DONATIONS TO THE COLLECTIONS

PONY EXPRESS NATIONAL MEMORIAL

Rick Gilmore - Three maps of the Pony Express Trail. All are illustrated with a picture of a saddle and mochila, sketches of the states the trail went through and a list of Pony Express Riders. The artist is "Honnell - Kansas City, Kansas."

Dorothy King - A newspaper, "Winners of the West," Volume VII, Number 9, dated August 30, 1930. The newspaper was published monthly in St. Joseph.

URGENT NEED FOR VOLUNTEERS

The Pony Express National Memorial has an urgent need for about 15 volunteers to help with school groups. This would be a short-term commitment on the part of a volunteer of one day (3 to 5 hours) a week for 9 weeks. April and May are extremely busy with school tours. At times, 200 - 300 children visit in a four-hour period. Guides are stationed around the exhibit area to maintain the quality of their visit. This provides someone to answer questions for the students and to help them with the many hands-on exhibits. All volunteers will receive training and guidance in a March 27 training session. If you feel that you would like to make a donation of your time and talents to the Pony Express National Memorial, please contact volunteer coordinator Allana Smith at 279-5059.

NEW & RENEWED MEMBERS:

Terrance Allen	Mrs. Roy Nelson
Mr. & Mrs. John Burns	Mrs. J. Norris
Edward Cackowski	Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Reck
Mr. & Mrs. Fred Canfield	Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth Rhoades
Mary Conrad	Michael & Nancy Roddy
Catherine Crouch	James H. Roth
Marion Davis	Jean Runquist
Connie Dilka	Mr. & Mrs. Gene Sanders
Mr. & Mrs. Walt Drannan	Mrs. Don Schuler
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Fisher	Mr. & Mrs. Leroy Stingley
Mr. & Mrs. Rod Fletcher	Dr. John Tapia
Stanley & Doris Hall	Mr. & Mrs. Richard Thomas
Alex Horvath	Don & Beverly Thornton
Mr. & Mrs. Randy Herzog	David & Lynn Tushaus
Kenneth Hines, PhD.	Mr. & Mrs. C. VanderMolen
John & Betty Holton	Randall Vanoel
Wilma & Dorothy Hurst	Mr. & Mrs. Clyde Weeks
Geraldine Jackson	Huston Wyeth
Robert E. Johnson	Mr. & Mrs. W.O. Wylie
Robert & Mary Kemp	
John Klein	Businesses:
Veda Lewis	Boehringer Ingleheim
Mr. & Mrs. Larry Lucas	Robert J. Brown Lumber
Mariella Manville	

Memorials

St. Joseph Museum

From Clark and Nancy Hampton
In Memory of Al Kreek

From Clark and Nancy Hampton
In Memory of Hilda Gordon Rosenthal

From Clark and Nancy Hampton
In Memory of Bob Schmidt

Pony Express National Memorial

From Richard DeShon
In Memory of David Polsky

From Richard DeShon
In Memory of Frank Erickson

From St. Joseph Museum staff
In Memory of Frank Erickson

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

April 3 - 136th Anniversary of the Pony Express.

April 9 - Opening day activities of Children's Week at the St. Joseph Museum at 1100 Charles Street. Activities will take place from 3:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. For more information call the St. Joseph Museum at 232-8471.

April 10 - 14 - Continuation of Children's Week at the St. Joseph Museum. Open 9 a.m. - 5 p.m., April 10 thru 13 and open 1 p.m - 5 p.m., Sunday, April 14.

April 13 & 14 - Pony Express Anniversary Celebration. Regular museum hours. For more information call the Pony Express National Memorial at 279-5059.

April 29 - The St. Joseph Archaeological Society will meet at 7:30 in the community room of the Pony Express National Memorial. Kickoff of the state-wide Archaeology Week with special guest speaker Ralph Rowlett.

April 30 - During the day at the St. Joseph Museum, 1100 Charles St., St. Joseph, Missouri, Mary Knab will discuss the special "King Hill Artifact" exhibit to visitors.

May 1 - During the day at the St. Joseph Museum, 1100 Charles, St. Joseph, Missouri, Tom Holloway will explain artifacts in the Jesse James exhibit to visitors.

May 1 - During the day at the Robidoux Row Museum, 3rd & Poulin Sts., St. Joseph, Missouri, Margaret Fisher will explain the archaeological excavation at the museum to visitors.

May 3 - During the day at the St. Joseph Museum, 1100 Charles St., St. Joseph, Missouri, Edward Barlow will discuss the Archaeology exhibit with visitors.

May 3 - During the day at the Pony Express National Memorial, 914, Penn St., St. Joseph, Missouri, Michael Fisher will explain the archaeological excavation at the museum to visitors.

May 7 - Field trip to Kansas City to view Smithsonian Exhibition. For more information call the St. Joseph Museum at 232-8471.

May 10, 11, & 12 - Heritage Weekend. Special activities and events at both the St. Joseph Museum and Pony Express National Memorial. Regular museum hours.

May 14- Gateway Chapter of OCTA meeting at 7:00 in the community room of the Pony Express National Memorial.

May 27 - The St. Joseph Archaeological Society will meet at 7:30 in the community room of the Pony Express National Memorial.

June 17-21 - Museum Camp. For more information call 232-8471

St. Joseph Museum

1100 Charles Street, P.O. Box 128

St. Joseph, Missouri 64502-0128

Monday through Saturday 9-5 p.m.

Sunday & Holidays 1-5 p.m.

Pony Express National Memorial

914 Penn Street, P.O. Box 244

St. Joseph, Missouri 64502-0244

Monday through Saturday 9-5 p.m.

Sundays 1-5 p.m.

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