

The Happenings

February 1993

St. Joseph Museum

Pony Express Museum

Rhonda Clem



MUSEUM GETS FACE-LIFT

Because the weather cooperated, Mid-Continental Restoration, Inc., of Fort Scott, Kansas, was able to finish the exterior renovation at the St. Joseph Museum. After restoration work on the carriage house and museum building, a new coat of paint was given to both buildings just before Christmas. E.M. Gann was the painting contractor.

MAJOR GIFT TO PONY EXPRESS CAMPAIGN

Pony Express, Inc. - A National Memorial has been given a \$100,000 contribution from the R. Crosby & William Kemper Foundations, United Missouri Bancshares, Inc., and United Missouri Bank Northwest. Former National Pony Express Association rider, Dick Hoegh, astride his Arabian mare Thundra Al Keilah, delivered the cash to trustees and honored guests during a luncheon at the Pony Express Stables Museum. This major gift significantly advances the \$1.7 million capital campaign now in progress.

Pony Express, Inc., is spearheading the campaign to transform the museum into a National Memorial, a magnet, heritage tourism attraction of the highest caliber. On Sunday, December 20, the museum closed for extensive restoration and renovation. It will open as the Pony Express National Memorial on April 3, 1993, the 133rd anniversary of the Pony Express.

The Pony Express captured the imagination of the world in 1860, and holds it to this day. Last year the museum attracted over 40,000 visitors; 66% came from out-of-state, 33% were Missourians, and 1% were from foreign countries. Interest in America's western heritage continues to grow and cultural tourism is on the rise. Congress recently passed a bill making the Pony Express Trail part of the National Historic Trails System. All of the above factors make this an auspicious time to expand and enhance St. Joseph's unique Pony Express Museum.

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FROM THE DIRECTOR...

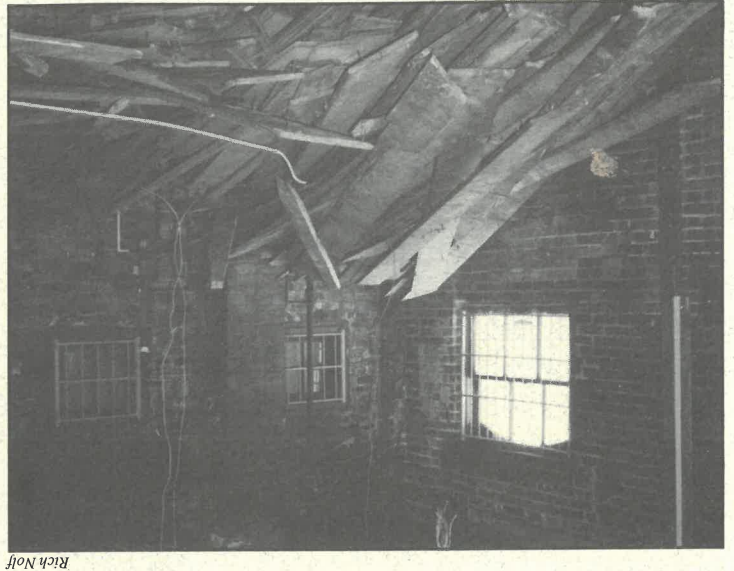
There was a point in time several weeks ago that I momentarily wondered what I had initiated with the desire for expansion! One wants change to take place, but there are times that you wonder what you have started. Change, certainly voluntary change, seems to carry with it contradictory feelings. I remember my first roller coaster ride. Once I was in the car, it was too late to back out! The exhilaration and rush that followed produced moments of anxiety and thrill, but an overall wonderful experience. (I loved those rides until I started to lose my equilibrium several years ago.) I also think of the desire to change my eating and exercising habits. I'm sure nearly everyone can identify with that and the constant effort that is required.

There, I've done it again and digressed from the point and feelings I was going to express. This moment that I referred to in the opening sentence was one that came about after I returned from Christmas vacation in Iowa City and Cedar Rapids.

I had left town Friday, shortly after the luncheon at the Pony Express Museum where a horse and rider rode in with a major gift announcement and a mochila full of money from the Kemper Foundation and United Missouri Bank. The museum exhibits were all in place for this event. It is true that the loft and all gift supply closets had been emptied the week before in anticipation of closing for renovation. But, the exhibits, as I had known them for many years, were all intact.

During the short four day week before Christmas, an enormous amount of change took place. On Monday morning, the building committee made the final bid selection and modified the contracts to meet our needs. Work commenced almost immediately. The staff totally dismantled the exhibits and cleared the building of all artifacts and useable material. To clear the museum was not an easy matter. The process was driven by Bonnie Watkins and Kathy Reno. Bonnie is curator of collections and Kathy manages the gift shops.

At left, the northwest corner of the Pony Express Museum after exhibit cases and interior walls have been removed.

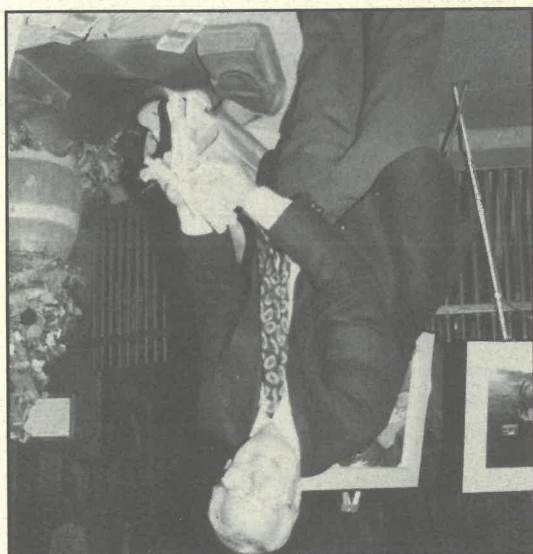


Rich Nolf

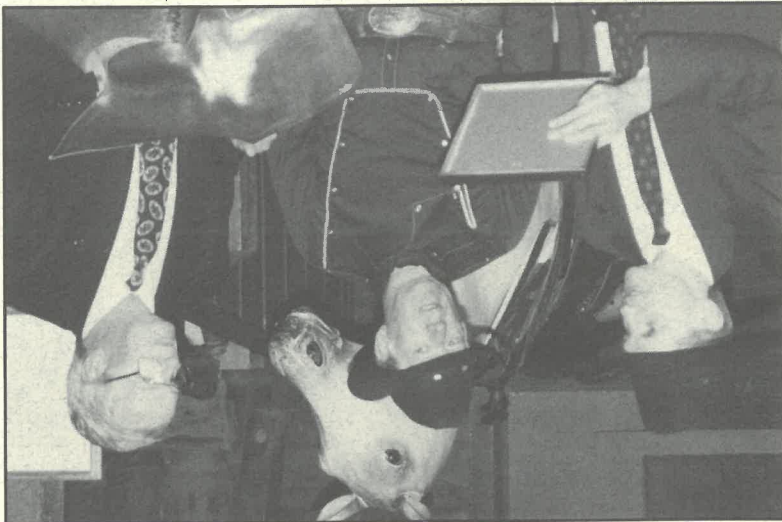
ST. JOSEPH & PONY EXPRESS MUSEUM STAFF

- PROGRAM**
- Rich Nolf Director
 - Jackie Lewin Curator of History
 - Marilyn Taylor Curator of Ethnology
 - Robbie Sipes Curator of Exhibits
 - Bonnie Watkins Curator of Collections
 - David Mead Curator of Natural History
 - Kathy Reno Gift Shop/Membership
 - Heidi Hornaday Curator of Development
 - Reva Fish-Rocha Public Relations Coordinator
 - Sandy Taylor Curator of Special Projects/Campaign Coordinator
- SUPPORT**
- Gail Rose Executive Secretary
 - Susan Noland Bookkeeper
 - Scott Koch Exhibits Technician
 - Sarah Elder Research Assistant
 - June Swift Secretary
 - Margaret Hiatt Librarian
 - Mary Knab Staff Assistant
 - Eric Robison Staff Assistant
 - Chris Fisher Maintenance Technician
 - Avis Batsell Receptionist
 - Lanell Mead Receptionist
 - Kem Paulman Receptionist
 - Camille Grable Receptionist
 - David Rich Receptionist
- ADJUNCT**
- Mike Fisher Archaeological Research Associate
 - Jim Feagins Archaeological Research Associate
 - Russ Mooney Saddle & Tack Consultant
 - Mary Helen Burrows Publications Consultant

Lee R. Keith, President & CEO, United Missouri Bank Northwest made the major gift announcement. Mr. Keith's corporate office is located in the Pony Express Neighborhood. "Our area is a very historic part of town," says Keith. "The bank is strongly committed to enhancing the neighborhood's physical appearance and quality of life. We are proud to support Pony Express, Inc.'s efforts. This gift represents a meaningful investment in St. Joseph's future, as well as its historic past."



Rhonda Clem



Top, Dick Deshon opens the mochila full of money. Bottom, left to right: Lee Keith, president and CEO of United Missouri Bank reads a proclamation; Dick Hoegh, the rider who carried the proclamation and the mochila; Dick Deshon, president of Pony Express, Inc.

In Bonnie's case, she monitored the proper storage of all the artifacts. When artifacts are removed from exhibition, they are returned to storage for proper care. The locations and care vary according to the nature of the artifact. The St. Joseph Museum owns over 40,000 artifacts, and it is Bonnie's responsibility to care for them!

Kathy monitored the dismantling of the gift shop and proper storage of the sales items. Kathy's sales stock must be as accessible as the collections, but for different reasons.

The other curators assisted in the decision making process and in dealing with the exhibit cases and general dismantling. All available staff worked very hard and many trips were made between the Pony Express Museum and the St. Joseph Museum.

The general contractor, Jim Walters Construction, moved in immediately after the staff had transferred the artifacts and simultaneously started digging for the foundations of the addition and removing all walls in the interior of the building.

As you might imagine, to come back after such a short absence and see all the changes had a real impact on me. I'm on that roller coaster for the whole ride. I'm "going the distance for the Pony Express!" All these changes had taken place (I knew they were going to take place, and I wanted them to take place), but I was not there as it happened. That's what caused the shock and impact. So when I came back and immediately went to the Stables to see the changes, a flash of chaos passed before my eyes.

Of course, there was absolutely nothing to be alarmed about since that is the function of the construction manager. That person is Jim Lehr of Lehr Construction. Jim is a person I've known and worked with for many years and maintaining organized chaos on a construction site is his profession. I have tremendous confidence in Jim's abilities to get the job done.

Since December 21, the changes have been immense and continue to occur daily. It really is exciting to be a part of this change. I can only imagine the impact that the completed museum will make. The expanded museum will be a very dramatic change - a departure from the past that you will enjoy as you experience the "moment in time."

Paul Meyer

PONY EXPRESS, INC. FUNDING UPDATE

Pony Express, Inc., gratefully acknowledges the following individuals, businesses and organizations for their generous contributions to the Pony Express Museum Restoration and Expansion Project:

Mrs. Cecil Baker
 Joy Baker/Mrs. Loren Baker
 Mary Elizabeth Banks
 Mr. & Mrs. Dennis Batsell
 William Bryngelson
 Mr. & Mrs. Robert Bucher
 Mr. & Mrs. Robert Butler
 George Carolus
 Mr. & Mrs. W.H. Chiles
 Stephen Cholak
 Mr. & Mrs. Chester Conrad
 Dr. & Mrs. Robert Corder
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 Rex & Louise Deshon, Jr.
 Mr. & Mrs. Anthony Drummond
 Harold Dugdale Trust
 Michael & Margaret Fisher
 Mrs. Lyman Fulkerson
 Virginia Galbraith
 Dr. & Mrs. Ray Glick
 Dr. & Mrs. Manning Grimes
 Mr. & Mrs. Clark Hampton
 Daniel & Fran Hegeman
 Elizabeth Hickman
 R. Haskell Hillyard
 Steve & Vicki Huff
 Mr. & Mrs. Fred Hunt
 Jerre Anne, Inc.
 R. Crosby Kemper
 & William Kemper Foundation
 Mr. & Mrs. Elton Klamn
 Ryan Koerner
 Mr. & Mrs. Theodore Kranitz
 Mr. & Mrs. Albert Kreek
 Mr. & Mrs. Kirk Lawrence
 Veda Lewis
 Dr. & Mrs. F. James Marston
 Mr. & Mrs. Noel McBride
 Suzanne Meierhoffer
 Ruth & Bill Mooney
 Janet Murphy
 Mr. & Mrs. William Mytton
 Mr. & Mrs. Marvin Nelson
 St. Joseph New Automobile
 Dealers Association
 St. Joseph News-Press/
 St. Joseph Cablevision
 Gladys Nolf
 Mr. & Mrs. Richard Optican
 Jeanne Patterson
 Pope, Nichols & Hicks
 Joseph Robidoux Questers
 Rhone-Poulenc
 Mr. & Mrs. Charles Richmond
 George Richmond
 Mr. & Mrs. P. Gordon Robaska
 Mr. & Mrs. Gary Rosenthal
 Mr. & Mrs. James Roth
 Mrs. Jean Runquist
 Mr. & Mrs. Melville Schmidt
 Specialists of Internal Medicine
 Mr. & Mrs. Donald Stallard
 Stevenson Family Pharmacy
 Susanne Teel
 John & Gene Teeter
 Charles H. Taylor Trust
 Mr. & Mrs. Creath Thorne
 Mr. & Mrs. Jack Tootle
 The Trust Company of St. Joseph
 Utz, Litvak, Summers,
 Powers & Manning
 Geraldine Wilkinson

NEW & REINSTATED MEMBERS

The St. Joseph and Pony Express Museum staff and board of trustees are proud to welcome the Mercantile Bank of St. Joseph as a new member. We are all very pleased by their interest in the future of the museums and we appreciate their generous support.

MEMBERSHIP FORM

Your Name (s) _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
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 Gift membership for: (please fill in your name above) _____
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 Daytime Phone () _____
 Please make your check payable to the St. Joseph Museum or Pony Express Museum and mail to:
 ST. JOSEPH MUSEUM
 1100 Charles Street
 St. Joseph, Missouri 64501-2874

Membership level:
 \$1000.00 Patron _____
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☐ New member ☐ Renewal ☐ Gift

Enclosed is a check for: \$ _____



Workmen place concrete forms prior to pouring the foundation for the rear half of the Pony Express Museum. Interior and exterior work is proceeding at an accelerated pace in anticipation of the April 3, 1993, opening. Photo by Rich Nolf.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

February 6 - Audubon Society Owl Prowl.
Contact Larry Lade for more information at 232-6125.

February 15 - Washington's Birthday.
Holiday Hours at the St. Joseph Museum 1-5p.m.

February 25 - "Wildlife Treasures of a Prairie River," Audubon program by Ron Klataske. 7:00 p.m. in room 102 of the Learning Resource Center at Missouri Western State College.

February 22 - St. Joseph Archaeological Society Meeting. 7:00 p.m. at the Bank of St. Joseph.

No OCTA Gateway Chapter Meeting in February.

For more museum information call 232-8471

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St. Joseph Museum
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St. Joseph, Missouri 64501-2874
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Sundays 1-5 p.m.

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Pony Express Museum
914 Penn Street, P.O. Box 244
St. Joseph, Missouri 64502-0244
Closed for renovation.

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

RECENT DONATIONS

Kansas City Public Library—photo-graphs and artifacts pertaining to the Robidoux and Messmore families of St. Joseph and Kansas City.

Ed and Mary Jo Sprague—late 1800s bottles from the Wallace Idaho Drug Company with original labels, purchased by donors in 1992.

Mrs. Howard R. Driggs—a flag which was used to decorate the graves of Pony Express riders in the 1930s and 1940s.

Charles Haskins—a book, *The Pony Express in Nevada*, compiled by the Nevada Bureau of Land Management in 1976.



Rhonda Clem

Top, a photograph, mounted on cloth, of Louis Robidoux and his wife Orral. Louis was the son of Jules Robidoux and grandson of Joseph Robidoux.

Right, a flag used by the Oregon Trail Memorial Association in 1938 to decorate the graves of Pony Express riders. The design is the same one created by Perry Driggs for use on Pony Express Trail markers.



Rhonda Clem

SHOP TALK

The Pony Express Museum book and gift collection has been moved to the St. Joseph Museum shop while the Pony Express facility is under renovation. All our items relating to the Pony Express may be purchased at the St. Joseph Museum store during regular visiting hours.



Rhonda Clem