

The Happenings

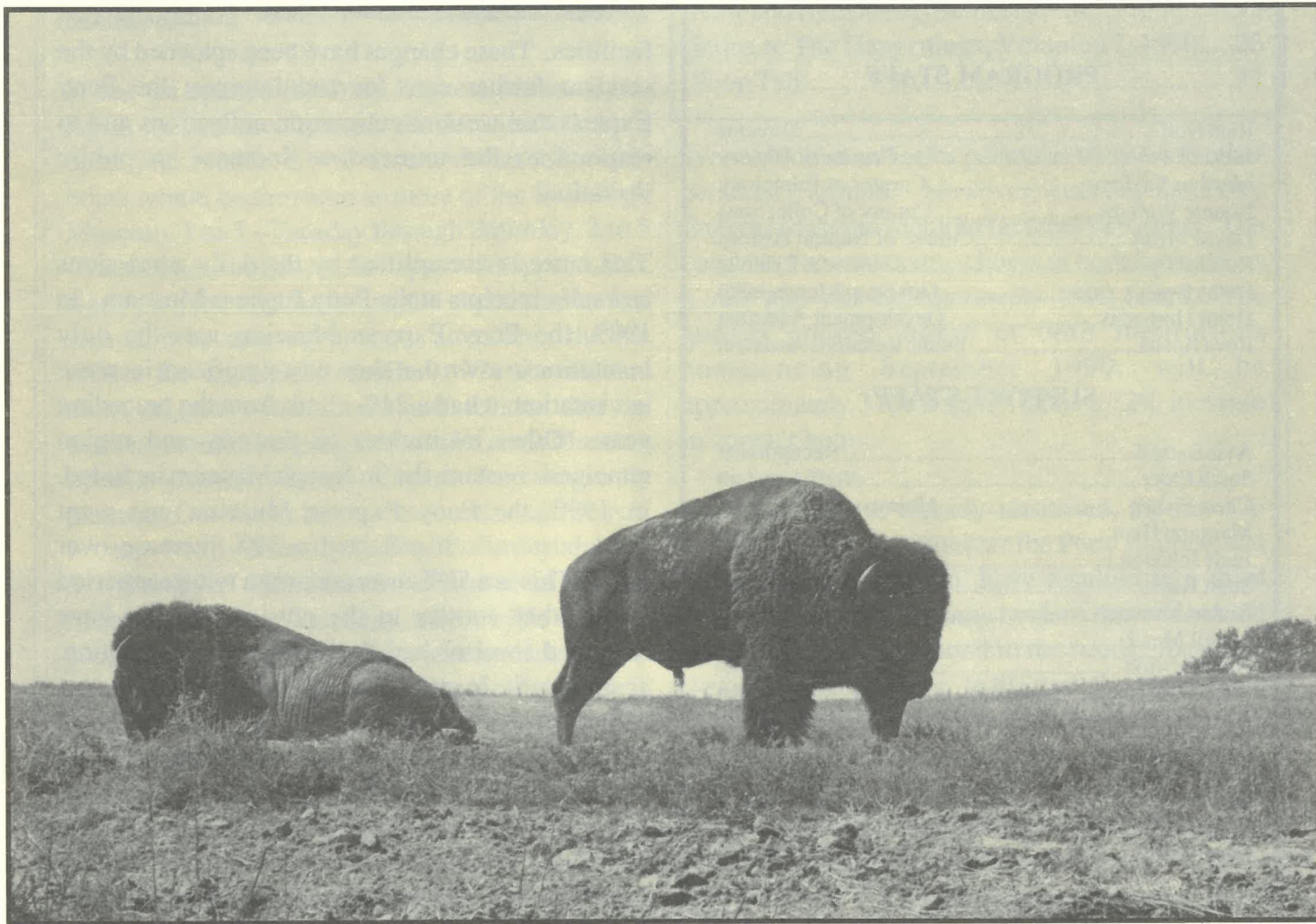
St. Joseph Museum
Pony Express Museum

Volume 18

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Number 1

David Mead



American bison graze on native prairie grass near Lincoln, Nebraska.

From the Director

Significant changes are occurring at the St. Joseph and Pony Express Museums. These changes are reflected in the organizational structure of the staff, responsibilities of the staff and staff contact hours at the two facilities. These changes have been spawned by the need to further care for and interpret the Pony Express and western emigration collections and to respond to the tremendous increase in public visitation.



This latter is exemplified by the daily admissions and sales receipts at the Pony Express Museum. In 1989, the Pony Express Museum was the only institution in town that showed a significant increase in visitation; it had a 24% climb from the preceding year. Other institutions in the city and region remained constant, the St. Joseph Museum included. In 1990, the Pony Express Museum just went "gangbusters." It reflected a 34% increase over 1989! This is a 58% increase over a two year period when other entities in the city and region have remained level or had declines in their visitation, again, the St. Joseph Museum included.

It appears that the start of the Pony Express "is the place to see." It used to be that when we had a \$300 day of combined admissions and sales we would be delighted. This past summer \$300 days became commonplace. Early in the summer we broke \$400, then \$500, then \$600 and then we jumped to over \$800 in a single day. We had a day of over 400 people and well over \$800 combined admissions and sales! Of course this didn't happen every day, but admissions and sales were good all summer.

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May I remind you at this point, that the admission monies and museum shop net profit represent a major portion of our operating budget.

This surely is the time to act to further interpret the Pony Express. Public awareness of the western emigration has been on the increase for several years now. We are approaching a zenith of awareness and now is the time to capitalize on it. I feel very strongly that the television series, "The Young Riders," has made a dramatic impact. Furthermore, there was the National Trails Bill before congress adding the Pony Express Trail and California Trail to the National Trails System. Although that bill failed to pass in the waning moments of the legislative session, it is sure to be reintroduced this year for another try.

When we opened the Pony Express Museum last April, we had already made the decision to keep it open year round. It was assumed that the winter hours would be the same as those of the St. Joseph Museum, 1 to 5 - Tuesday through Saturday, 2 to 5 - Sundays and holidays. As September approached, signifying the conclusion of the traditional tourist season, it became obvious our attendance did not reflect the anticipated decline. We reevaluated those original winter hours and decided that the demand merited keeping the Pony Express Museum open a greater number of hours than originally planned. Our winter hours, October through March, became 9 to 5 - Monday through Saturday and 1 to 5 - Sundays. Holidays were treated as regular Monday through Saturday days. We had no preconceived ideas as to what our attendance would be during the months of October through March, because we had never been open through the winter before. To date, we have all been amazed at how good the attendance has been, even on bad, cold winter days!

When we made the decision to open the Pony Express Museum all day long in the wintertime, we decided to duplicate those hours at the St. Joseph Museum and market it through the Pony Express Museum. All that was required at the St. Joseph Museum was someone at the museum shop to serve

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as receptionist and sales person as there were other personnel around. However, staffing the Pony Express Museum required far more personnel. The combined annual contact hours at both institutions a year ago was approximately 1800 hours. The annual contact hours at both institutions commencing September 1990, will be approximately 3100 hours. That is a 72% increase in contact hours.

The two changes already identified, the need to further care for and interpret the Pony Express and the increased visitation, have resulted in a third change. It quickly became evident that we needed additional staff to respond to the needs created by these first two changes. In the past, the structure of the museum staff has been fairly straight forward. I have served as the intermediary facilitator between and with the board and staff. The staff itself was divided into two categories: curatorial/program staff and support staff. However, I have decentralized the administration and have made selected curatorial staff responsible for certain areas of the operation and those support staff involved.

Jackie Lewin, Kathy Reno and Avis Batsell became responsible for the management of the receptionist

and gift shop personnel at both museums. They were to seek-out, interview and hire additional personnel to meet the preceding needs. Robbie Sipes was assigned the responsibility of monitoring physical needs of both facilities. The increased traffic necessitated an additional part-time custodial/maintenance person. Robbie and Scott Koch did the interviewing and hiring. What evolved is that Chris Fisher was hired. He cares for and monitors both physical plants with the help of Richie Masoner. Scott is now able to focus his attention on the maintenance of exhibits. Because of the competency of Scott, Richie and Chris, Robbie's involvement has been reduced to an advisory role, but he is still the lead curator in that area. All the men still combine whenever there is special need for physical labor that has to be accomplished.

Martyn Taylor, in addition to her responsibilities as Curator of Ethnology, was asked to serve as my administrative assistant. She has been involved in the hiring and managing of secretarial staff.

Bonnie Watkins, Curator of Collections, manages both the paid and volunteer personnel that work with collections. David Mead, Curator of Natural History, is in charge of publications and our resource for graphic design. Heidi Hornaday and Reva Rocha work both independently and in collaboration with each other and the rest of the staff meeting the needs of their respective areas of responsibility, development and public relations.

When I first became director in 1968, there was a staff of six, full and part-time. Today we have a staff of 25, full and part-time. Although there are many rewards through this staff expansion, there are also some losses. With a smaller staff I was able to experience a much closer interrelationship with everyone, and we all had a close sense of camaraderie. The expanded number of staff has diluted the intensity of that camaraderie. However, one of the challenges of administration is to focus on the needs of the staff and facilitate this sense of camaraderie. The expanded staff has also changed my job description to that of being more of an administrator and less of a hands-on exhibits designer/fabricator.

As I look into the future there will be continual change, and it is my desire that we as a staff anticipate, respond to and react positively to these changes. The Pony Express Museum and the St. Joseph Museum are tremendous assets to the city of St. Joseph. As we respond to the increased level of tourism, the entire city benefits. The Pony Express is an incredible era of American history. We have just begun to tell the story of the Pony Express.

Robbie Sipes

Bill Johnson, right, Iowa State Historical Museum, explains exhibit techniques to Robbie Sipes, Curator of Exhibits.



David Mead

STAFF BEGINS EXHIBIT RESEARCH

As part of the ongoing planning for expansion at the Pony Express Museum, the curatorial staff of the St. Joseph and Pony Express Museums has been traveling in recent weeks. We have been reviewing the work of various exhibit contractors throughout the midwest. This research has allowed us to see many interesting exhibit techniques that are being incorporated into museums.

It is our goal to see as many different styles of exhibition as possible. By doing this, we hope to come up with the best style of exhibition to fit in with the stables setting and provide a visiting experience as unique as the Pony Express itself.

LANDSCAPING WITH NATIVE PRAIRIE PLANTS

An Experiment in Natural History

by David Mead
Curator of Natural History



Near the southwest corner of the St. Joseph Museum grounds lies a strip of tall grasses and other plants that look a bit out of place (above right). In fact, they are not out of place at all, but quite at home there; they are all indigenous to northwest Missouri. They are part of a museum experiment in landscaping with native plants, a concept that is not widely accepted. However, the rationale behind it becomes apparent as one considers the historical perspective. Native plants were here and thriving hundreds of years ago, without the help of man.

Before the coming of the white man, the northwest Missouri landscape was much different from today. It was *not* heavily forested, as many people would imagine. In fact, this corner of the state was mostly covered with tall grasses, often higher than a man's head. In *Presettlement Prairie of Missouri*, published by the Missouri Department of Conservation, Walter Schroeder estimates that some northwest Missouri counties were over 80% prairie. Most of northwest Missouri was over fifty percent prairie, according to Schroeder.

Courtesy of Missouri Prairie Foundation



The plow hastened the demise of northwest Missouri's tallgrass prairie.

Timber was restricted to deep ravines in the Loess Hills and along major streams and rivers. Frequent prairie fires killed encroaching timber but were beneficial to prairie plant species, which have deep root systems. Fire burned away the dry thatch of grasses and encouraged vigorous new growth.

Because prairies were practically devoid of trees and other woody vegetation that required clearing, they were converted to farmland with relative ease. Early settlers discovered that by simply turning over or "breaking" the fertile soil, prairies could become productive cropland. Prairies also made good pasture for livestock, but frequently they became overgrazed and were reseeded with bluegrass and other introduced grasses. Early settlers were deathly afraid of prairie "wildfires" and worked hard to control and put out any fires that occurred. Without fire to eliminate the encroaching timber, prairies gradually gave way to woodlands. Settlers from the east welcomed the growth of the forests, which

economy of agriculture and establish the only significant population of prairie chickens in northern Missouri.

With the exception of Dunn Ranch, tallgrass prairie remnants in northwest Missouri are confined to a few isolated tracts of pastureland, old cemeteries and rural road right-of-ways. They have suffered many changes due to overgrazing, timber encroachment and heavy usage of herbicides. These remnants are not pristine but can give one an idea of how the landscape must have once looked.

The other type of prairie found in northwest Missouri is the *mixed-grass* or *dry prairie*, dominant in the Loess Hills which form the eastern border of the Missouri River floodplain. Mixed-grass prairie is characterized by shorter grasses such as buffalo grass, little bluestem and side-oats grama, mixed with occasional clumps of tall grasses. Forbs include soapweed yucca, lead plant and blazing star. The Loess Hills are exceptionally deep deposits of loess, a fine-grained, cohesive quartz silt. They are unique landforms found nowhere else in the world (refer to *The Happenings*, Vol. 17, No. 4, page 32). They are quite steep and extremely well drained, making soil conditions quite dry. Due to their unusual composition, the Loess Hills are inhabited by plants and animals found nowhere else in the state. Several of these species are rare and endangered and/or on the western edge of their range. Loess

Greater prairie chickens abounded on northwest Missouri's vast grasslands.



Jim Rathert; Courtesy of Missouri Prairie Foundation

here.

The largest remaining tract of tallgrass prairie in northwest Missouri is Dunn Ranch, approximately 1,200 acres of native grassland in Harrison County, owned by Frosty Meadows and his son, Morrey. The Meadows are cattle ranchers with more than a casual interest in the preservation of native prairie. They have tried to manage Dunn Ranch for grazing while preserving native flora and fauna. Although it has been increasingly more difficult to do, the Meadows have managed to survive in the tough

was more familiar to them than the treeless prairies. Gradually prairies were diminished to a mere fraction of their former range. Only a few prairie remnants exist to remind us of this once vast "inland sea."

Prairies are known as "grasslands," but are also home to a great diversity of other herbaceous plants known collectively as *forbs*. Forbs are the flowering perennial plants which give the prairie its brilliant colors in spring and summer. Although all prairies are dominated by grasses and forbs, there are several distinctive types of prairies. Two basic types can be found in northwest Missouri.

Most of northwest Missouri was *tallgrass* or *mesic prairie*; rolling hills dominated by grasses such as big bluestem, Indian grass and switchgrass. Common forbs included compass plant, wild indigo and purple coneflower. Tallgrass prairie is characterized by deep, rich topsoil which is well drained but retains moisture for a



Mixed-grass prairie occurred in the unique Loess Hills of northwest Missouri. Once known as "Devil's Backbone," this bluff overlooking St. Joseph was a fine example of a Loess Hills prairie. This photograph was taken before the bluff was excavated to provide a base for Highway 36. What remains of Devil's Backbone is near 14th and Duncan and now known as Carden Park.

Hills prairies remind one of landscapes commonly found far to the west, on the Great Plains.

Because they are too steep to cultivate, the Loess Hills contain several mixed-grass prairie remnants. They have suffered many changes due to overgrazing (which leads to severe erosion) and encroachment of timber. The largest mixed-grass remnants in Missouri are found on southwest-facing ridges and hilltops in Holt and Atchison Counties.

Native prairie in northwest Missouri is "as old as the hills," but landscaping with native prairie plants is still a relatively new concept here. Many people consider these plants to be "weeds" and attempt to eradicate them with herbicides whenever possible.

Observing the beauty of prairie wildflowers in bloom, however, illicit a much different response. Add the native's ability to survive our climate with very little watering or maintenance, and the concept of landscaping with native prairie plants becomes quite attractive to the home gardener.

A major element in any landscaping project is the **lawn**. People spend more time creating and maintaining an attractive lawn than any other aspect of landscaping. Usually, the desired lawn is composed of bluegrass, fescue or some other non-native cool-season grass. These grasses were brought here from the eastern United States or Europe. They grow best in a cool, moist climate and require continual watering, fertilizing, mowing and weeding

to do well in northwest Missouri. These non-natives are not well suited to our long, hot, dry summers. A native substitute for these lawn grasses is buffalo grass, a fine, short grass found in the mixed-grass prairies of the Loess Hills. Once established, buffalo grass requires no watering or weeding and only needs mowing once or twice a summer. It spreads by sending out runners (like strawberry plants do) to create a thick, blue-green carpet that thrives even during drought conditions.

Not only does a buffalo grass lawn require less work, it is also less expensive. Neither benefit is apparent at first. Due to a limited supply and increasing demand, buffalo grass seed costs more than other grass seed. It also takes some time and effort to prepare a seed bed and establish a good stand of buffalo grass. Although the initial investment is greater, in the long run it pays off. Imagine the cost in time and gasoline one could save if he only had to mow the lawn once or twice a year! Think how the water bill would drop if one never had to water his lawn! Because it requires no fertilizer, herbicides or watering, a buffalo grass lawn is also more environmentally sound.

Another element of landscaping architecture is **ornamental grass**; tall, stately clumps of heavy-headed grasses, strategically placed on the lawn. Indian grass, switchgrass and big bluestem, natives of the tallgrass prairie, make excellent ornamental grasses.

squirrels and other seed-eating animals. Prairie gardens can provide a haven for wildlife in an increasingly urban habitat, where monocultures of non-native grass have created a virtual desert for a diversity of wildlife.

Aesthetic aspects of landscaping with native prairie plants are appealing to many people, too. It is another way of preserving the natural heritage of America; a heritage that is rapidly vanishing. Our culture has strived to create a homogeneous landscape where once there was an amazing variety of habitats and ecosystems. One can travel the length and breadth of the United States and observe bluegrass lawns with European starlings and house sparrows can provide them shelter from predators and the elements. The bright, fragrant blossoms of native flowers appeal to butterflies, bees and hummingbirds. Prairie forbs amazed and fascinated early settlers. The natural history of our nation can be restored in part by the use of native plants in landscaping.

often large and tall, while mixed-grass species are smaller and shorter, but not less attractive. All of them are perennial, which means that they come up each year on their own. Like buffalo grass, they are a little more expensive than tulips, petunias or other non-natives and take a while to establish. However, they also are relatively maintenance-free, once established. Native prairie plants are well-adapted to the climate in northwest Missouri and may actually flourish during drought years.

Heavy heads of Indian grass wave gracefully in the prairie breeze. This tallgrass prairie native makes a good ornamental grass, reaching heights of over seven feet.



Jim Rathert; Courtesy of Missouri Prairie Foundation

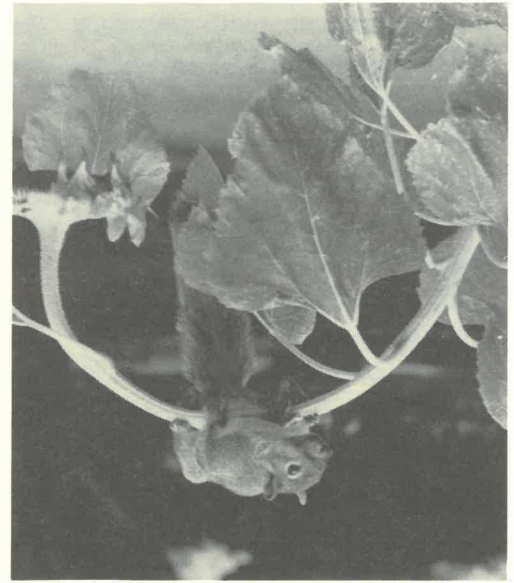
Probably the flashiest elements used in landscaping are *flower gardens*. This is where the use of native plants can really shine. There are many species of prairie forbs which can be used, with showy blossoms representing every color of the rainbow. Forbs native to the tallgrass prairie are

Far left, a squirrel caught in the act of stealing a meal of sunflower seeds from the museum's prairie garden. Landscaping with native plants will attract wildlife for your viewing enjoyment.

Black-eyed Susans, left, add a splash of gold to a prairie flower garden.



Courtesy of Missouri Prairie Foundation



David Mead

David Mead, Curator of Natural History, is an advocate of prairie preservation and restoration. He is a long-time member of the Missouri Prairie Foundation and a frequent contributor to the Missouri Prairie Journal.

EXPERIMENTAL PRAIRIE PLANTINGS AT THE ST. JOSEPH MUSEUM

GRASSES

COMMON NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME	SOURCE
little bluestem	<i>Andropogon scoparius</i>	seed
sideoats grama	<i>Bouteloua curtipendula</i>	seed
buffalo grass	<i>Buchloe dactyloides</i>	seed
Indian grass	<i>Sorghastrum nutans</i>	seed
big bluestem	<i>Andropogon gerardi</i>	seed

FORBS

yellow coneflower	<i>Echinacea paradoxa</i>	seed
butterfly weed	<i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>	seed, plants
New England aster	<i>Aster novae-anglae</i>	seed
silky aster	<i>Aster serotinus</i>	seed
tickseed coreopsis	<i>Coreopsis lanceolata</i>	seed, plants
prairie coreopsis	<i>Coreopsis palmata</i>	seed
pale purple coneflower	<i>Echinacea pallida</i>	plant
rattlesnake master	<i>Eryngium yuccifolium</i>	plant
western sunflower	<i>Helianthus occidentalis</i>	seed
rough blazing star	<i>Liatris aspera</i>	seed, plants
prairie blazing star	<i>Liatris pycnostachya</i>	seed, plants
horse mint	<i>Monarda fistulosa</i>	seed
prairie beard tongue	<i>Penstemon tubaeformis</i>	seed, plants
gray head coneflower	<i>Ratibida pinnata</i>	seed, plants
black-eyed Susan	<i>Rudbeckia hirta</i>	seed
sweet coneflower	<i>Rudbeckia subtomentosa</i>	seed, plants
blue sage	<i>Salvia azurea</i>	seed, plants
royal catchfly	<i>Silene regia</i>	plant
compass plant	<i>Silphium integrifolium</i>	seed
rigid goldenrod	<i>Solidago rigida</i>	plant
rose verbena	<i>Verbena canadensis</i>	plant
pokeweed	<i>Phytolacca americana</i>	volunteer
goat's beard	<i>Tragopogon dubius</i>	volunteer
wild four-o'clock	<i>Mirabilis nyctaginea</i>	volunteer

PRAIRIE SOURCES

The following is a list of sources for information on native prairie plants and their propagation. Also included are sources for seed and bare-root plants. Some bare root plants are recommended for quick results, since establishing plants from seed takes a little longer. A combination of both works well for quick, economic results.

Publications:

Conway, Carl. 1988. *Prairie Restoration*. The Missouri Conservationist 49 (4): 12-19.

Costello, David F. 1981. *The Prairie World*. University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Denison, Edgar. 1973. *Missouri Wildflowers*. Missouri Department of Conservation, Jefferson City, Missouri.

Duncan, Patricia D. 1978. *Tallgrass Prairie: The Inland Sea*. The Lowell Press, Kansas City, Missouri.

Mutel, Cornelia F. 1989. *Fragile Giants: A Natural History of the Loess Hills*. University of Iowa Press, Iowa City, Iowa.

Nelson, Paul W. 1987. *The Terrestrial Natural Communities of Missouri*. Missouri Natural Areas Committee, Jefferson City, Missouri.

Runkle, Sylvan T. and Roosa, Dean M. 1989. *Wildflowers of the Tallgrass Prairie*. Iowa State University Press, Ames, Iowa.

Schroeder, Walter A. 1981. *Presettlement Prairie of Missouri*. Missouri Department of Conservation, Jefferson City, Missouri.

Steyermark, Julian A. 1963. *Flora of Missouri*. Iowa State University Press, Ames, Iowa.

The Missouri Prairie Journal, Missouri Prairie Foundation. Any issue.

Seed and Plants:

Missouri Wildflowers Nursery
9814 Pleasant Hill Road
Route 2, Box 373
Jefferson City, MO 65109
314/496-3492

Sharp Brothers' Seed Company
Route 4, Box 237A
Clinton, MO 64735
816/885-7551

Stock Seed Farms
R.R. 1, Box 112
Murdock, NB 68407
402/867-3771
or 1-800-759-1520



A native prairie coneflower.

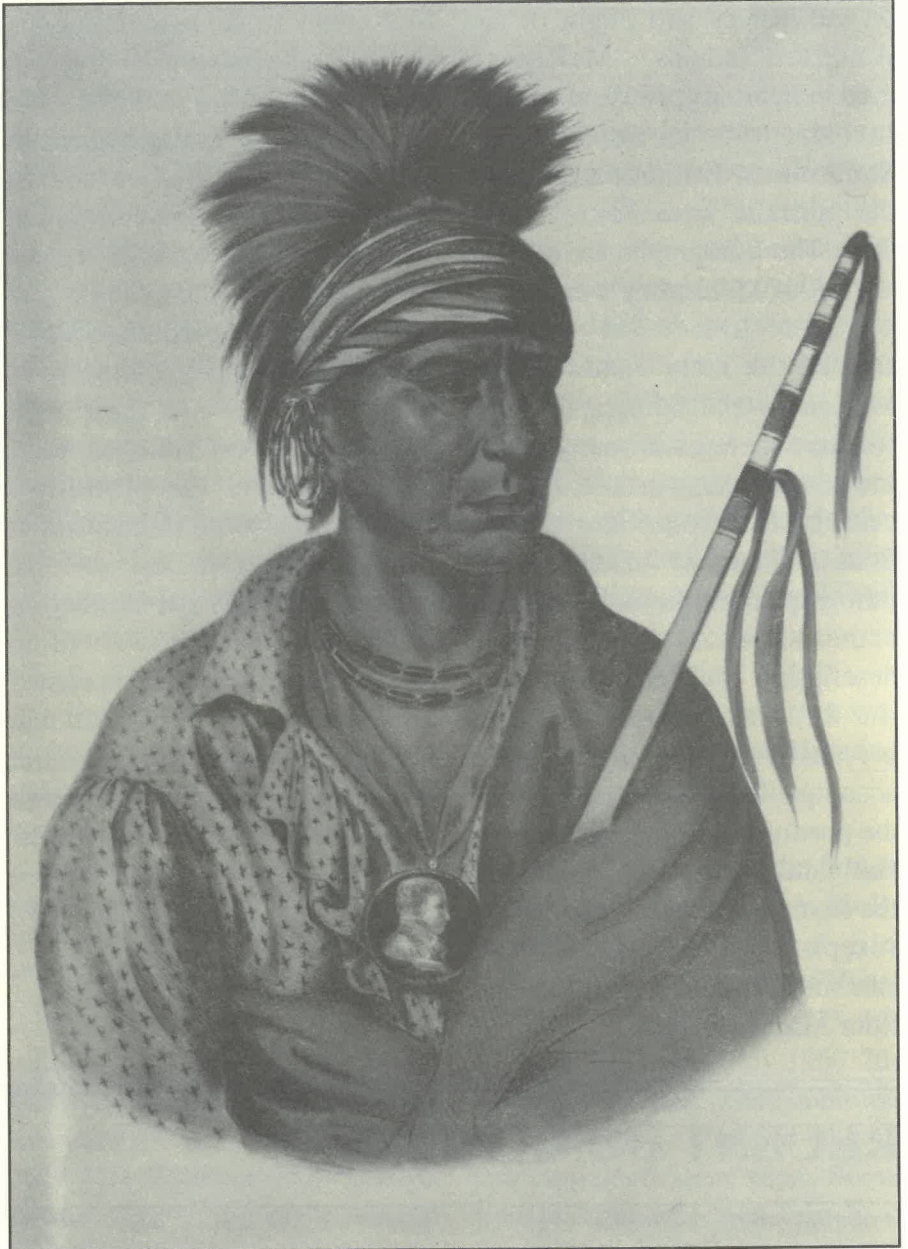
Courtesy of Missouri Prairie Foundation

arti-FACTS

Of roughly 3,000 pieces in the Harry L. George collection at the St. Joseph Museum, approximately seventy are McKenney-Hall lithographs of Native Americans who lived in the first half of the 19th century. The lithographs were taken from portraits which were usually painted while the Indians were in Washington, D.C., to act as delegates for their tribes in negotiating treaties.

Colonel Thomas L. McKenney, Superintendent of Indian Trade under Presidents James Madison, James Monroe, John Q. Adams and Andrew Jackson, was interested in the lives, customs and dress of the people he managed. Knowing that their way of life would soon disappear, McKenney had the idea of an Indian portrait gallery. He arranged for the Indian delegates visiting Washington, D.C., to sit for their individual portraits. The artist was most often Charles Bird King, a noted painter of the time.

James Hall, a frontier lawyer, judge, author and newspaper editor, financially aided McKenney's ultimate dream which was to issue portfolios of lithographs taken from the portraits. The first of three volumes was published in 1836 and included, in addition to the lithographs, a general history of the tribes and individual biographies. Success was on the horizon until the Panic of 1837



Notchimine, an Iowa warrior whose portrait was painted in 1837 by Charles Bird King in Washington, D. C.

caused the sale of the \$120 sets to immediately drop off to a trickle. McKenney and Hall parted company, but McKenney fought hard to keep his gallery in print. Every dollar he could raise was directed toward printing and the

final volume was finally published in 1844. The portfolio continued to be published in various forms through the 1840s and 50s.

To increase interest in the portfolios, McKenney often toured

St. Joseph Museum Archives

with the portraits giving lectures on the history and plight of the American Indians. McKenney died in February, 1859, at age 74. In 1865, while on display at the Smithsonian Institution, most of the portraits were destroyed by fire. The lithographs are all that are left of McKenney's dream.

One of the main values of the McKenney-Hall lithographs is that we have pictures of many of the Indians prominent in the early 19th century history of the United States. In many instances, the lithographs are the only likeness of the Indians. Another asset is the description McKenney wrote of the Indians whom he knew personally. These descriptions accompanied each lithograph in the portfolios. Some McKenney-Hall lithographs are on exhibit on the first floor back hall of the St. Joseph Museum. Others are exhibited periodically in the second floor Mini Gallery.

*gee-ninga. Non-che-ning-ga; Nan-che-ning; Non-Notch-ee-ning-a; Nan-che-wing-ga; (No Heart of Fear); Nau-che-wing-ga; *Other spellings included: Nache-ninga*

In the early 1800s (when McKenney began assembling his portraits) the Iowa tribe lived in the vicinity of what would become St. Joseph. Several members of the tribe made the journey to Washington, D.C., so their portraits were painted. Lithographs of these paintings were included in the McKenney-Hall portfolios. White Cloud the Elder, his wife Rantchewaima and their son, White Cloud the Younger, were all included in the portfolios. Another Iowa who is included is Notchimine*, or No Heart, an Iowa warrior who was the brother of White Cloud the Elder. According to McKenney, Notchimine earned his name because of his skill and ruthfulness in battle and the contempt with which he viewed life, either his own or his enemy's.

Marilyn Taylor, Curator of Ethnology

By 1836, Notchimine (about 38 years old at the time) had grown weary of war and visited the Osage (the Iowa's traditional enemy) with a peace proposal. The initial offer was refused by the Osage, but Notchimine continued to seek peace. He was party to a treaty that was finally worked out between representatives of the Iowa and Osage and signed at the War Department in Washington in 1837. It was at this time that Notchimine's portrait was painted. The picture accompanying this article is a photograph of a lithographic copy of Notchimine's portrait.

Noharts Creek, which flows north through Brown County, Kansas, and Richardson County, Nebraska, is named for the Iowa warrior who instigated a lasting peace with the Osage.

RECENT DONATIONS

Mary Helen Burrowes - a water color painting by Harrison Hartley, circa 1938, of the Jesse James house in its original location on Lafayette Street, and a book, entitled *St. Francis Xavier Parish 1890-1990*.

James E. Potter - a copy of a paper, "Firearms On The Overland Trail," written by the donor and presented at the 1990 Oregon-California Trails Association meeting.

Gage County Historical Society - two advertising cards from the 1800s for the St. Joseph firms, G.W. Chase & Son, manufacturers of fine candies and Sommer, Richardson & Co. manufacturers of fine crackers.

Albert and Elizabeth Kroff - babies', women's and children's clothing from the Kroff family, circa 1925.

Once We Had Cleaner Streams: *Voices From The Archaeological Past*

by Jim D. Feagins, Archaeological Research Associate

THE DIVERSITY OF MUSSEL species found on certain prehistoric Indian sites in the St. Joseph area clearly depicts a cleaner environment during a bygone age. Many species that were once present in the area's streams have disappeared.

In this age of increasing air pollution, acid rain, pesticide and nitrate contamination in our water supply, and with almost overflowing landfills, people obviously are concerned about the quality of our environment and what the future holds. Environmentalists seek to study trends from the past in order to predict the future. They look at past records and attempt to find patterns of change and continuity. The longer the period of data from the past, the better the background for more accurately predicting conditions to come. Fortunately, the record of past environmental conditions is not limited to just what has been recorded by people in historic times. There are also records in tree rings, rock outcrops, glacial ice and the soil, to name a few. One simple example of a paleoenvironmental record from near St. Joseph recently came to this writer's attention. This record is from the field of archaeology.

In 1965, R. B. Aker excavated many mussel shells from trash-

filled pits in two prehistoric archaeological sites located approximately 25 miles south of St. Joseph (Aker, personal communication). These pits were originally exposed by erosion and (in one case) bulldozer activity. The data from the mussel shells is important since various species are good indicators of local water quality and the amount of pollution present. Certain species will not survive in a polluted environment. By knowing the cultural context in which the shells are found, they can be dated to a particular archaeological time period. Thus, the water quality today can be compared with what it was like at a certain time in the prehistoric past.

These two sites, 23PL59 and 23PL60,¹ are located near one another in west central Platte County, Missouri. The sites were occupied, between A.D. 1000 and A.D. 1250 (O'Brien 1978:13) by a group of people whom archaeologists have labeled the Steed-Kisker phase. This cultural group occupied an area generally centered between Kansas City and St. Joseph.

They lived in unfortified, dispersed and clustered farmsteads and small

hamlets located on stream terraces and adjacent slopes (Feagins 1989:31-32). Their thatch-covered, square and rectangular houses contained internal hearths. Basin and bell-shaped storage pits are found in and around the structures. When these pits were no longer useful for storage, the Steed-Kisker people would often fill them with garbage and other trash. While corn was their most important crop, squash, sunflower, beans, marshelder and gourd were also raised (Adair 1988:45). A significant part of their diet was supplied by gathering and hunting wild plants and animals.

The most diagnostic of the Steed-Kisker artifacts are the shell-tempered (and occasional grit-tempered) pottery vessels (Wedel 1943:75; Calabrese 1975:36; O'Brien 1977:60; Riley 1967:26-27; Shippee 1972). Their common wide-mouthed, globular-shaped jars contained short rims. Some were plain, undecorated, vessels—Platte Valley Plain ware—and others contained decorative designs (Fig. 1) on the shoulder of vessel—Steed-Kisker Incised ware (Calabrese 1969:70-73; Chapman 1980:292-293, 297). In addition to jars they also manufactured bowls, an occasional water bottle and the so called "bean pot" with a pan-like, short, straight handle.

¹23 refers to Missouri and PL to Platte County

Awls, scapula hoes and other bone tools were made by these people, along with chipped stone knives, scrapers, drills, graters, choppers and projectile points (Fig. 1). Their thin, triangular in shape. Groundstone celts (ungrooved axes), shaft and awl abrading stones, manos (grinding stones) and pipes were occasionally manufactured. The Steed-Kisker people also used shell to make beads, pendants and other ornaments.

The mussel shells Aker found in two trash-filled storage pits in site 23PL59 and from one pit in site 23PL60 (Cole, et al. 1966:8-9) were unmodified, except for the burning of the shells found in one pit and one shell which had a hole drilled through it (Aker, personal communication). The burning could have occurred while cooking the mussels for food or while preparing the shell for crushing into temper for pottery manufacture. Some cultures used the meat from mussel shells as a source of food (Parmalee and Klippel 1974). It is not known if the Steed-Kisker people occasionally used them in this manner. Shell-filled pits are not commonly found on Steed-Kisker sites. For example, during the Smithsonian Institution's extensive excavation of the Steed-Kisker site, 23PL13, in 1939, only three mussel shells were found

simply dumped into the pits. Aker described the three pits as being "full of mussel shells." They also contained a chipped stone celt, a broken groundstone celt, projectile points, an elk antler

The author photographs an archaeological site.



Courtesy of Jim Feagans

digging tool, a bone awl, a bone ornament, daub, a tiny pottery water bottle and a number of Steed-Kisker pottery sherds (Aker, personal communication; Cole et al. 1966:8-9).

Some of the shells Aker found (those that had been burned) were in a fragile state of preservation. From the one hundred or so shells he collected, Aker attempted to sort them according to species. An example of each species was turned over to the Kansas City Archaeological Society in care of J. Mett Shippee, an archaeologist then with the University of Missouri, Columbia. They in turn were donated to the Smithsonian Institution. At that institution, they were identified by Joseph P.E. Morrison, Associate Curator of the Division of Mollusks.

A copy of Morrison's letter to Shippee (dated June 14, 1966) was recently rediscovered by Aker and copied for this writer. Morrison examined 12 shells from site 23PL59 and four were examined from site 23PL60. From the 16 samples, 12 different species of mussels were identified. As was expected, the formal taxonomic names for some of these species of mollusks had been changed since Morrison first identified them. Thus, some of the Latin terms for the species had to be updated (see Table I). However this did not create any major problems when

comparing the prehistoric sample with the mussels still present in northwestern Missouri.

Undoubtedly, the majority of the mussels recovered from sites 23PL59 and 23PL60 came from nearby streams such as Bee Creek or perhaps even Moppin Branch or the Platte River. Of the 12 species identified by Morrison from the Steed-Kisker samples, only four are positively determined as still present in Northwest Missouri (Table I). Three additional species were present in this part of the state as late as 1920, but they have not been observed there in recent years. While some species are fairly resistant to pollution and problems due to soil erosion (and to a lesser degree channelization), each species that has disappeared from the area is an indication of a serious problem with the water environment. Perhaps only half of the species of mussels found in the archaeological sample are still present and even some of them are rare for this area today. It is clear that the stream environment has greatly deteriorated in the last 750 to 1,000 years, since Steed-Kisker times.

It should be understood that modern archaeological techniques are capable of documenting paleoenvironmental change on a much more refined level than was available 25 years ago, at the time of Aker's excavation of the three pits. However, there is a lesson to be learned from this example.

Mussels filter water through their bodies, removing the nutrients they

need to survive. If the silt content suspended in the water is too high, it will clog up or hinder the functioning of their filtering system. Also various chemicals in water can be fatal to the mussels. The ability of some species to survive greater amounts of silt and certain chemicals may partly depend on the specific environmental niche that different species occupy. Industrial and agricultural activities in historic times have increased the erosion of area soils and the amount of chemicals washing into the streams. Herbicides and insecticides of various types are among the chemicals that mollusks now encounter. Can it be that what is fatal to these lower organisms is completely harmless to humans? When referring to a variety of animal life, Jacques-Yves Cousteau states, "I assure you that our destinies are linked with theirs in the most profound and fundamental manner. All life is interconnected. . . . We dump pollutants seemingly out of sight in the rivers and sea, but they eventually come back to us and our children with devastating impact. . ." (Cousteau 1990:2).

While the water quality of our streams and lakes has long been a concern, thanks to archaeology and the Steed-Kisker people we have added proof that (at least locally) the water environment was much safer prehistorically than it had become after the Indians were displaced. The archaeological evidence concerning the Steed-Kisker people, clearly depicts a simpler time—a time when their

way of life was not so all-encompassingly detrimental to the environment as our life styles are today. The Steed-Kisker folks and the mussels they gathered have something to teach us, if we will but listen to their "voices from the past."

Acknowledgements:

I wish to thank Dennis E. Figg of the Missouri Department of Conservation-Jefferson City, Alan C. Buchanan of the Fish and Wildlife Research Center, MDC-Columbia, and R. B. Aker of Parkville, Missouri, for furnishing information useful in writing this article.

*Jim D. Feagans
Archaeological Research Associate*

As an adjunct staff person, Jim Feagins is a part of the professional staff, but receives no reimbursement for his services. Jim's interests are illustrated by his choice of vocation (he is a teacher) and his choice of avocation (he is an avid archaeologist). As a science teacher in Grandview, Missouri, he is actively passing on his knowledge to his students. Jim is president of the Missouri Archaeology Society. His continuing interest in the field has been especially evident through his numerous articles in various publications.

(decorated)

E-F, I Steed-Kisker Incised ware

K-M arrowpoints

J small biface

pottery rimsherds

A-D Platte Valley ware (plain G-H blunt-end scrapers

A, C, F, K, & M from the Steed-Kisker site—23PL13; B, D-E, G-J, & L from site 23PL110.

Illustration by Jim D. Feagins

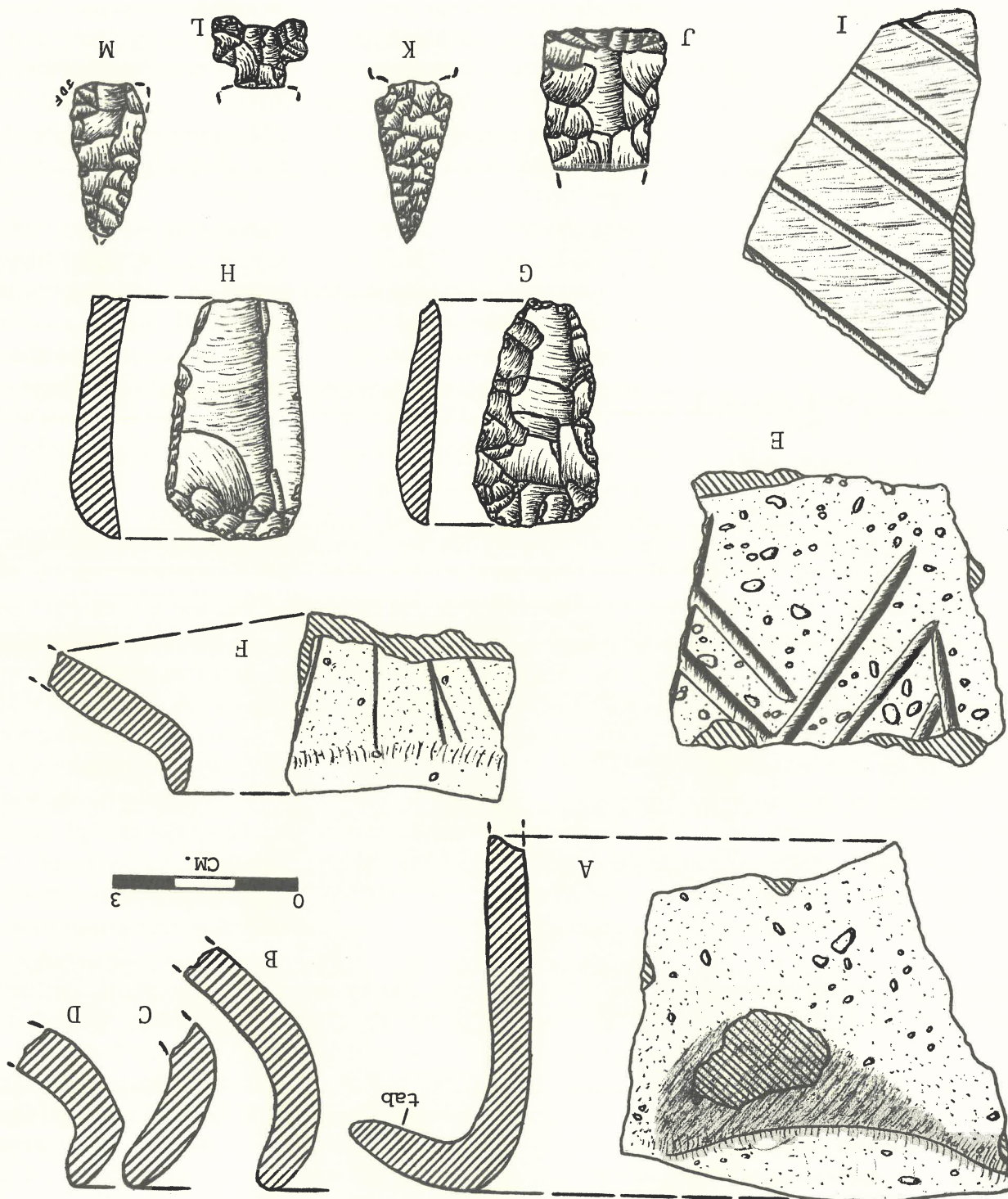


Figure 1. Typical Steed-Kisker Artifacts from Platte County, Missouri.

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TABLE I: SUMMARY OF MUSSEL SPECIES FROM TWO STEED-KISKER PHASE SITES FROM PLATTE COUNTY, MISSOURI

Morrison's taxonomy	Accepted ¹ taxonomy	Morrison's specimen #s	Common name	Site(s)	Modern Occurrence in Area and Comments ²
1. <u>Amblema costa</u>	<u>Amblema plicata</u> <u>plicata</u> (Say 1817)	3 & 7	Threeridge	23PL59 & 23PL60	Found in only a few locations in NW MO (including Andrew & Platte Cos.); common in southern part of state; tolerant
2. <u>Lampsilis cardium</u>	<u>Lampsilis ventricosa</u> (Barnes 1823) ?	10	Pocketbook	23PL60	Abundant species south of the Mo. River; found in a variety of stream habitats
3. <u>Lampsilis fallaciosa</u>	<u>Lampsilis teres</u> <u>teres</u> (Rafinesque 1820)	8	Slough Sand	23PL59	Not found in northern part of MO; prior to 1920 it was still present in Buchanan Co.
4. <u>Lampsilis luteola</u>	<u>Lampsilis radiata</u> <u>luteola</u> (Lamarck 1819)	12	Fat Mucket	23PL60	Not found in NW MO; mainly present between the Ozarks and the Missouri River
5. <u>Ligumia recta latissiam</u>	<u>Ligumia recta</u> (Lamarck 1819)	13	Black Sandshell	23PL59	Widespread in central MO & Ozarks; but not in NW MO; it was present in Buchanan Co. prior to 1920
6. <u>Megalonaia gigantea</u>	<u>Megalonaia nervosa</u> (Rafinesque 1820)	2 & 15	Washboard	23PL59	Abundant in central MO streams and Mississippi River; found in east & south part of state; it was in Atchison & Buchanan Cos. prior to 1920
7. <u>Obliguaria reflexa</u>	<u>Obliguaria reflexa</u> <u>reflexa</u> (Rafinesque 1820)	9	ThreeHorn WartyBack	23PL59	Most common in northern Ozarks; rare in northern MO; it was found in Andrew & Buchanan Cos. before 1920
8. <u>Potamilus alatus megapterus</u>	<u>Potamilus alatus</u> (Say 1817)	1 & 14	Pink HeelSplitter	23PL59 & 23PL60	Found in eastern, southern & central MO today; it was found in NW MO (including Platte Co.) prior to 1920; can occur in lakes
9. <u>Quadrula bullata</u>	<u>Quadrula pustulosa</u> (Conrad 1835)	4 & 5	Pimpleback	23PL59	Common in central MO; also found in NE & NW MO
10. <u>Quadrula quadrula</u>	<u>Quadrula quadrula</u> (Rafinesque 1820)	11	MapleLeaf	23PL59	Common in eastern Kansas and MO; rare in NW MO; common in lower portions of streams; can occur in lakes
11. <u>Tritigonia verrucosa</u>	<u>Tritigonia verrucosa</u> (Rafinesque 1820)	16	Buckhorn or PistolGrip	23PL59	Widespread in MO; collected in Buchanan Co. before 1920
12. <u>Truncilla truncata</u>	<u>Truncilla truncata</u> (Rafinesque 1820)	6	Deer Toe	23PL59	Found in Salt River, northflowing streams, & SE MO; prior to 1920 it was found in Buchanan Co.

¹from American Fisheries Society 1988²after Oesch 1984; supplemented by Alan Buchanan, personal communication; and Murray and Leonard 1962

EARTHQUAKE!!

NEW MADRID FAULT,
DECEMBER 16, 1811

It has been several months since the "earthquake scare" of last December and talk of the New Madrid fault has subsided. However, it might be interesting to note the events of another December, that of 1811, and the thoughts of John Bradbury who happened to be near the epicenter of a major earthquake along the New Madrid fault.

In mid-December 1811 the New Madrid fault began to shake, resulting in around two thousand earthquakes and tremors over the next few months. Three of these have been estimated to have been of eight magnitude.¹ These three (December 16, January 23 and February 7) and fifteen aftershocks were felt as far away as Washington, D.C., or a distance of 750 miles. News in the 1800s traveled slowly and it took weeks for people in the east to know the cause of the tremors.² No seismographs were in use for the study of earthquakes until the 1890s.

John Bradbury, a Scottish naturalist commissioned in 1809 by the Botanical Society of Liverpool to collect and study the plant life of North America, was traveling down the Mississippi River when the earthquakes began. He was on the last leg of a journey that most men just dreamed about. After coming to America in late 1809, he made preparations for a trip west. The spring and summer

of 1810 were spent in the area around St. Louis. Then in March 1811, the opportunity arose to accompany the overland Astorian expedition up the Missouri River.³ He only traveled with the Astorians as far as the land of the Mandan Indians in present-day North Dakota and then returned down the Missouri River to St. Louis in late July 1811. About ten days after his return to St. Louis, he became ill with a fever and was not able to travel again until the beginning of December.

Bradbury then traveled down the Mississippi River to New Orleans and by sea to New York. He had hoped to journey back home to England, but the War of 1812 broke out and his trip was postponed for four years. During this time he traveled and collected plant specimens in Ohio, Kentucky and Indiana. He wrote of his experiences in a journal entitled *Travels in the Interior of America in the Years 1809, 1810, and 1811*. His writings have been favorably compared to the *Journals of Lewis and Clark* for their descriptions of the Native Americans of the period.⁴

Between St. Louis and New Orleans, Bradbury and his fellow travelers had experienced an "earth shaking" experience. On December 5, Bradbury left St. Louis and arrived in the area of St. Genevieve that evening. New Madrid was reached on the evening

of December 14 and Bradbury purchased supplies. He was not too impressed with the town and wrote that it was "only a few straggling houses. . . There are only two stores, which are very indifferently furnished." On December 15, Bradbury commented upon the amount of river traffic: "In the course of this day, we passed no fewer than thirteen arks, or Kentucky boats, going with produce to Orleans; all these we left a considerable distance behind, as they only float with the stream, and we made considerable head-way with our oars." That evening they moored at a small island just above a particularly treacherous part of the river called the "Devil's Channel." It was a shallow area which was full of submerged (planters) and partially submerged (sawyers) trees and they wanted full light to navigate through this section of the river.

At about two o'clock⁵ in the morning of December 16, they were awakened by a loud noise and such violent shaking of the boat that they were afraid the boat would turn over. The river looked as if a storm was taking place and the sound of falling trees could be heard along with the screaming of the birds. There was much confusion among the crew as they watched while "the perpendicular banks, both above and below us, began to fall into the river in such vast masses as nearly to sink our

into the boat. We were again on bank, loosed the cords, and jumped which the two men ran down the "Coupez les cordes!" on hearing called out to the men in the boat, moving rapidly into the river. I As the bank appeared to me to be them and stopped their progress. over the chasm, a tree fell close by island, but before they could get the bank to save themselves on the Bradbury wrote: "The men ran up was nearly as bad as the first one. on the boat, a shock occurred which two men were loosening the ropes push on down the river. Just as Bradbury and his crew decided to water and the crew killed.

three had been washed over with they had passed the day before, they soon learned that of the boats Indian corn floated past them, and canoes containing only clothes and with foam and drifting timber. Two By this time the river was covered had counted twenty-seven shocks. by daybreak Bradbury and his crew intervals of six to ten minutes and continued throughout the night at a sloping bank." The shocks saved by our boat being moored to clearly that our lives had been had fallen into the river. I now saw yards; and at each end, the banks that it could not be less than eighty examine its length, and concluded He continued: "I took the candle to least two feet."

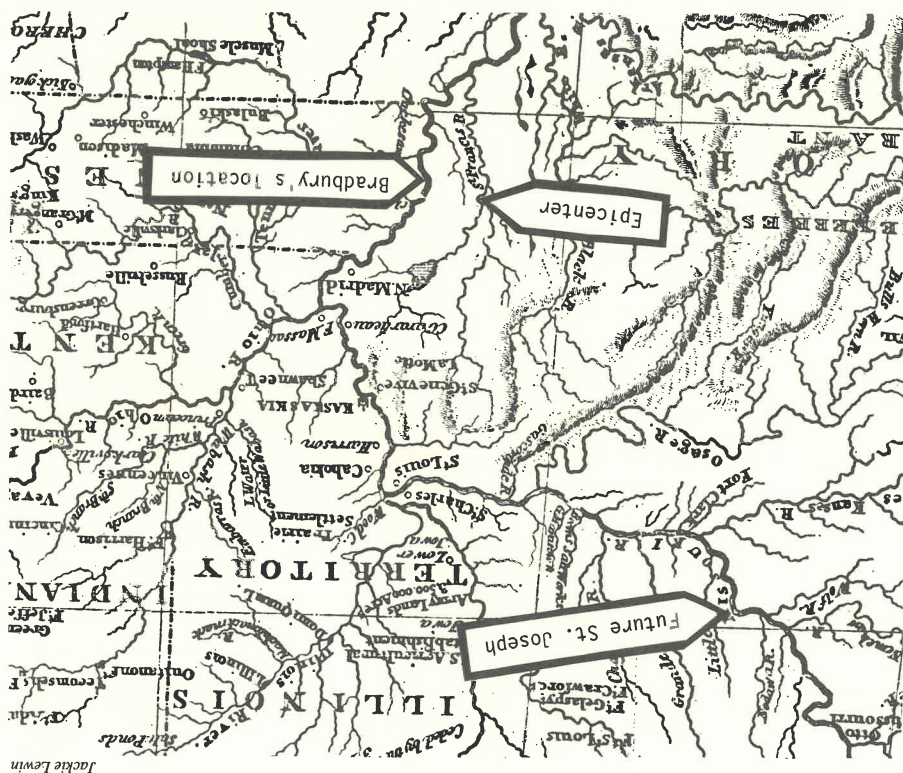
"being not less than four feet in width, and the bank had sunk at went ashore and found a chasm second less severe shock, Bradbury start again at two thirty. After this The shaking stopped but only to boat by the swell they occasioned."

the river: the Chenal du Diable (Devil's Channel) was in sight..." The channel appeared to be impassable so they pulled up on shore again to compose themselves and have breakfast. While moored at this site they experienced three more shocks, one of which almost threw a man into the river as the sand kept giving away under his feet. The men were still terrified so Bradbury decided "to give to each of them a glass of spirits, and reminding them that their safety depended on their exertions, we pushed out into the river." Through much effort and skill the oarsmen steered the boat through the dangerous channel. "Immediately after we had cleared all danger, the men dropped their oars crossed themselves, then gave a shout which was followed by mutual

lying open on the table." No more shocks took place until the morning of December 17. Meanwhile, Bradbury and his men continued on down the river. Near the site of present-day Memphis, they came upon a group of approximately twenty people in one log house. Bradbury said: "I found them almost distracted with fear, and that they were composed of several families, who had collected to pray together. On entering the house, I saw a bible

was in a state of dissolution." the day. He wrote that "all nature that they go ashore for the rest of safer on the river, the men insisted although Bradbury felt they were when another shock occurred, and They continued until mid morning congratulation on their safety."

A section of the "Map of the United States of America" engraved for Bradbury's travels. Note the area that seismologists calculated to be the epicenter of the December 16 earthquake and the location of Bradbury on the Mississippi River.



One of the men who appeared to be looked upon by the others as knowledgeable told Bradbury that the shocks were caused by a comet that had appeared a couple of months earlier. The comet had two horns and the earth had rolled over one of the horns and was now stuck between the horns. If the earth was not able to get over the other horn, it would be destroyed. Bradbury did not think it wise or useful to argue with him. A total of four shocks occurred on December 17.

Five shocks were experienced on December 18. Some of these again threw trees into the river. On the 19th, there was one shock while they were near the mouth of the St. Francis River. There were two shocks on the 20th and one long one on the 21st. This was the last shock that Bradbury recorded.

On Christmas Day, Bradbury camped with a group that had been near New Madrid at the time of the first shock, and they said that the buildings in the village had been extensively damaged and that the "greatest part of the plain on which the town was situated had become a lake, and the houses were deserted." However, this must have been a rumor since no eye-witness accounts tell of the town being covered with water until the shock of February 7, when only part of the town was covered for a few hours. It was not until the spring floods of 1812 that the town was completely claimed by the river.

The account of John Bradbury is an extremely valuable one for historical research. He was an articulate and educated man who traveled halfway around the world and happened to be in the right

place at the right time to record events of value and interest to the future reader.

Jackie Lewin, Curator of History

ENDNOTES:

1. St. Louis seismologist Otto W. Nuttli estimated that the Richter magnitudes were 8.6 on December 16, 8.4 on January 23 and 8.7 on February 7. For an explanation of his conclusions, see Otto W. Nuttli, "The Mississippi Valley Earthquakes of 1811 and 1812," *Bulletin of the Seismological Society of America* 63:1 (February 1973).
2. For a survey of contemporary accounts of the 1811 - 1812 earthquakes see James Lal Penick, *The New Madrid Earthquakes (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1981)*.
3. John Jacob Astor of the Pacific Fur Company sent one group of men overland and another group of men by sea to the mouth of the Columbia River on the present-day Oregon and Washington border. Their purpose was to extend his furtrading empire into the northwest. These men were called Astorians. Part of this group, consisting of 40 men, spent the winter on Nodaway Island just north of St. Joseph. Bradbury wrote in his journal of collecting plant specimens and of the number of pigeons at this site. He also noted the dead buffalo floating down the Missouri River.
4. Bradbury, John, *Travels in the Interior of America in the Years 1809, 1810 and 1811*, Volume V of *Early Western Travels*, edited by Reuben Gold Thwaites (Cleveland: Arthur H. Clark Col, 1904), p. 14. Thwaites says that Bradbury's journal is "the record of a traveller of unusual intelligence, of a naturalist of rare enthusiasm, of a man with human qualities."
5. Also in his narrative, Bradbury referred to ten o'clock in the evening as the time of awakening to the first shock. However, after the shock, he "observed" the time and saw that it was near two o'clock. Two o'clock seems to be the accepted time.

COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAMS

November 27, 1990	Marilyn Taylor presented a program on Native Americans to 55 second graders at Eugene Field Elementary School.
December 1	The Pony Express Museum was the setting for the Dulcimer Workshop given by Allen Macfarlane and Lawrence Chapman. Eight people attended.
December 4	25 second graders at Hawthorne Elementary School heard Marilyn Taylor talk on Native Americans of the southern United States.
January 9, 1991	Kathy Reno and Jean Sweet represented the St. Joseph Museum at the Kansas City Sports and Recreation Show. The St. Joseph Museum worked in cooperation with the St. Joseph Area Chamber of Commerce to feature the attractions of St. Joseph and the surrounding area.
January 14	Kathy Reno, Carol Wills and Avis Batsell attended the Gift Show at the Amigo Merchandise Mart in Kansas City.

WALMART CONTRIBUTES TO CONSERVATION

It is always good news to hear that a company is doing well and making a profit. It is even better news when that company shares its profit with the community. At the December board meeting of the Midland Empire Audubon Society (MEAS), Bill White, manager of St. Joseph's Walmart, presented a \$5,000 check to the local Audubon group. Ten Walmart stores in the region contributed to the donation which will be used for local conservation efforts. Contributing Walmarks are located in the Kansas communities of Atchison, Hiawatha, Leavenworth and Marysville; the Missouri towns of Bethany, Cameron, Maryville, St. Joseph and Savannah; and the Nebraska town of Fairbury.

MEAS plans to use the contribution to sponsor "Audubon Adventures" for all fifth grade classes in schools whose districts are served by the donor stores. "Audubon Adventures" is a national youth program designed to educate children about natural history and the environment. Topics include recycling, endangered species, habitat conservation, etc. A committee being formed by MEAS will work with school administrators to set up the fifth grade programs.

The St. Joseph Museum would like to congratulate MEAS on receiving the funding for the "Audubon Adventures" program. We would also like to join in with MEAS in thanking Walmart. It is very gratifying for the conservation community to receive this kind of support.

MUSEUM HILL NEIGHBORS KEEP ACTIVE

The Neighborhood Association reported that Christmas lights were put up at Smith Park this year. Everyone commented on how nice they looked. Several items still need to be done before the Smith Park project can be closed.

The group has been taking subscriptions for *Old House Journal* as a money-making project. This has been very successful and will be continued in the future. Jan Bumgardner gave a short but interesting history of the Museum Hill group in connection with the membership drive which has been continued until March.

SUPPORT STAFF FILL IMPORTANT POSITIONS AT MUSEUMS



Melissa O'Connell, Secretary, enters data on a wordprocessor.

The St. Joseph Museum would like to introduce to you two of our newest staff members, Melissa O'Connell and Scott Koch. Melissa is a 1989 Central High School graduate. She began working at the museum as a part-time secretary in May 1990 while attending Missouri Western State College. When the demand for Melissa's secretarial skills increased, she was happy to become a full-time employee. Melissa's cheerful attitude, smile and sense of humor aid her greatly in meeting the demands placed upon her by the rest of the curatorial staff.

Melissa enjoys spending time with her 15 month old son, Shylo', and her father, Jim Comer. Other activities she likes are swimming, softball, boating and water skiing. Being a native of St. Joseph, Melissa is interested in our city's history and learning more about our heritage.



Scott Koch, Exhibits Technician, prepares to cut a board on the radial-arm saw.

institutions spend thousands of dollars on exhibits, but virtually nothing on the maintenance of those exhibits. It just makes good practical sense to care for that exhibits investment.

Scott Koch is the Exhibits Technician at the St. Joseph Museum. He first came to the museum in the fall of 1988 while he was a student at Missouri Western State College (MWSC) majoring in Leisure Management. As a part of that program, students are required to contribute 25 hours of volunteer service to three recreational entities. One of Scott's choices was the St. Joseph Museum where he "got hooked" and later did his extensive 100-hour field experience/practicum.

Scott is now a full-time employee and enjoys working at the museum because it enables him to share his ideas and interests with the public. He is a 1985 graduate of Galt High School and completed his Leisure Management degree at MWSC in 1989. Scott has always been interested in wildlife and its preservation. Before coming to the museum, he worked for the Missouri Department of Conservation and as a State Park Naturalist for the Missouri Department of Natural Resources. In his spare time, Scott enjoys bicycling, camping and all types of outdoor activities.

As an exhibits technician, Scott's focus is on the maintenance of exhibits. This is a progressive position in museums. Many

Carol Wills, Bookkeeper

UPCOMING EVENTS

March 15-26 - The Midland Empire Audubon Society's (MEAS) "Spring River Conference" will be held in Kearney, Nebraska. For more information contact David Mead at the St. Joseph Museum.

March 16 - The MEAS field trip to "Search for Woodcocks," Old Trimble Wildlife Area. Meet at Perkins Restaurant, 4:00 P.M. Dr. Leo Galloway will be the leader.

March 23 - The MEAS field trip to "Swan Lake and Fountain Grove Wildlife Areas." Meet at Perkins Restaurant parking lot at 7:00 A.M. Mike McKenzie will be the leader.

March 25 - The St. Joseph Archaeological Society meeting will be held at 7:30 P.M. at the Bank of St. Joseph, Woodbine and Faraon Streets.

April 3 - Marks the celebration of the 131st Anniversary of the Pony Express. Pony Express riders' graves at three local cemeteries will be decorated to commemorate this event.

April 6 - *Tentative date* for a field trip to the Dunn Ranch near Eagleville, Missouri, to see prairie chickens. Coordinated by the St. Joseph Museum and Missouri Western State College (MWSC).

April 6 - Gateway, Oregon-California Trails Association (OCTA), trip to Independence to tour the Frontier Trails Center and attend the dedication of Merrill Mattes collection of books, diaries and documents given to OCTA Headquarters.

April 13 - MEAS will have a field trip to the Fish Hatchery and Weston Bend State Park.

April 15 & 16 - *Tentative dates* for a prairie workshop and field trip, cosponsored by MWSC and the St. Joseph Museum.

April 18 - "Endangered Species of Missouri" will be the topic for the MEAS program. The speaker will be Dennis Figg. The program will be at 7:00 P.M. at MWSC, Learning Resource Center, Room 102.

April 20 -21 - MEAS will sponsor a canoe trip to south Missouri.

April 27 - MEAS will have a work day at Squaw Creek National Wildlife Refuge.

April 29 - The St. Joseph Archaeological Society meeting will be at 7:30 P.M. at the Bank of St. Joseph, Woodbine and Faraon Sts.

Late April - Gateway, OCTA, field trip to White Cloud, Kansas area.

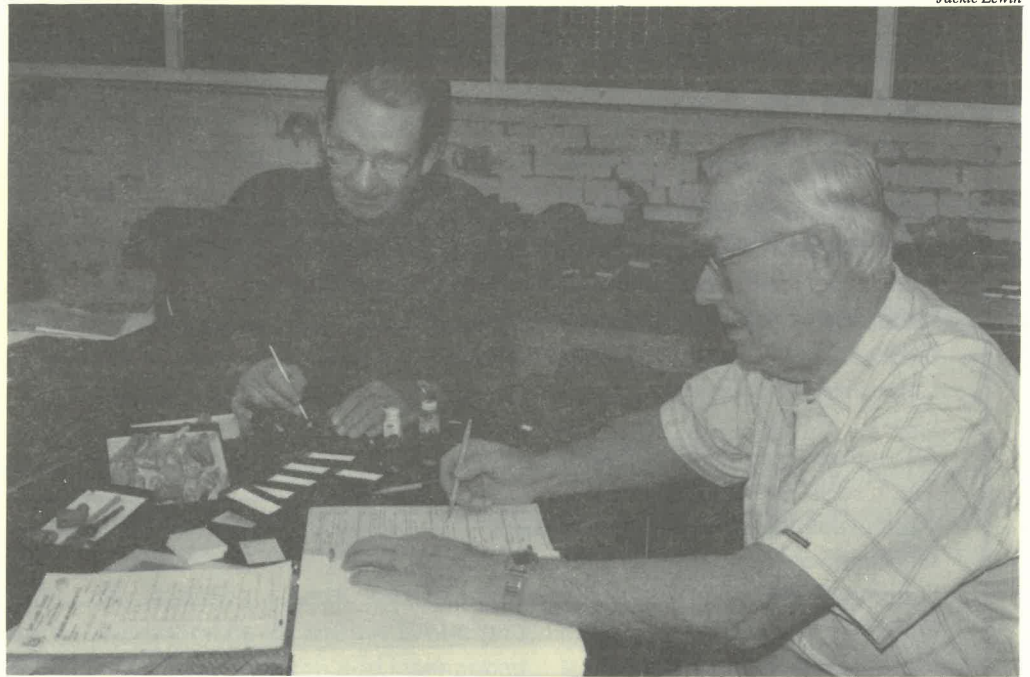
Now through Spring - The "Harris Addition to the City of St. Joseph" photographic exhibit will be on display at the St. Joseph Museum.

Reva Rocha, Public Relations Assistant

Collections

Jackie Lewin

Volunteers, such as Mike Fisher and Ed Barlow, are continuing work on several areas of the collections this winter. With their help and expertise, in this case in archaeology, each item is being properly accessed, numbered and placed in its appropriate niche in storage.



Museum volunteers Mike Fisher and Ed Barlow help to catalog one of the many archaeological collections donated to the museum.

The next area to be tackled is the archaeological artifacts which were dug out of the ground during the excavations behind the Pony Express Museum in the summers of 1989 and 1990. Hopefully, this work will begin this winter. Numerous artifacts were taken from the dig. Each item will be examined,

washed, numbered and identified. This is a large undertaking in itself. Also, other items of an archaeological nature are being continually donated over the year, and they must also be accessed. However, given time, our competent staff and volunteers will be able to handle things, just as they have in the past.

Bonnie Watkins, Curator of Collections

131st Pony Express Anniversary Celebration

April 3 marks the 131st Anniversary of the first Pony Express ride. This year, to commemorate this historic event, the graves of the four Pony Express riders buried in St. Joseph will be decorated.

Two of the fearless riders are buried at the Ashland Cemetery, one at Mt. Auburn and one at Mt. Mora. Before you visit the grave sites, please stop by either the St. Joseph or Pony Express Museum and get a flyer giving the locations of each grave site as well as information about each rider.

The grave markers will only be displayed on April 3.

NEW AND REINSTATED MEMBERS

The St. Joseph and Pony Express Museum staff and board of trustees would like to welcome **Mr. and Mrs. Robert Dunnigan** and **Mrs. Geraldine Jackson** as new members. We appreciate their interest in the museums, and we are very grateful for their generous support.

Kathy Reno, Gift Shop/Membership

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SHOP TALK

In January, the St. Joseph and Pony Express Museum book shops received their first shipment of a newly published book for children that tells the story of the Pony Express. *The Pony Express: Hoofbeats in the Wilderness* is written by Joseph J. Dicerto and published by Franklin Watts, Watts, Inc.

The book contains seven chapters entitled: "The Right Time in History," "A Dream Becomes a Reality," "Putting It All Together," "The Challenge of the Land," "The Journey and the Adventure," "Heroes on Horses" and "Passing into History". The book is a beautifully illustrated hardback that is sure to capture the interest

of children. The author has also included an extensive index and a list of related titles for further reading that will be of help to young students who are researching the subject.

This book is one example of the many ways in which the St. Joseph and Pony Express Museum curators are called upon as a source of historical information. Curator of History, Jackie Lewin, was contacted by the author for help in his initial research and later asked to aid in editing the final manuscript. In response to a request for related photographs, Curator of Collections, Bonnie Watkins, selected various photographs, illustrations and

slides of paintings from the museum collections to be used in the book. In addition to mentioning the photographs that were supplied courtesy of the Pony Express Museum, St. Joseph, Missouri, Mr. Dicerto also included a note of thanks to Jackie at the bottom of his dedication page: "A special thank you to Mrs. Jacqueline Lewin of the Pony Express Museum, for her valuable help in gathering information for this book."

It is always a pleasure to be able to add a new book on the Pony Express to our shops, and we are particularly proud to be able to offer this one.

Kathy Reno, Gift Shop/Membership

JOIN THE ST. JOSEPH MUSEUM!

The St. Joseph Museum and the Pony Express Museum are cultural institutions established for the purpose of preserving our history. We strive to provide top quality interpretive exhibits, preserve our priceless collections and act as an educational resource for our community and beyond. Our goal is to keep abreast of current exhibit techniques, provide educational programs for youth and continue our work in the areas of collection and research. To succeed, we need you. You can contribute through a donation of your time (**as a volunteer**), materially (**adding to our collections**), or your membership donation (**monetary contribution**.) Together, we make the St. Joseph Museum and the Pony Express Museum institutions we can all be proud of. All monetary contributions are equally divided between the St. Joseph Museum and the Pony Express Museum unless otherwise specified.

BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP:

Members of the St. Joseph and Pony Express Museums have the benefits of receiving museum publications, free admission throughout the year, museum gift shop discounts and discounts on museum sponsored field trips. Members also have the opportunity to attend "Members Only" events such as exhibit openings, autograph sessions and tours of storage areas.



Saint Joseph Museum

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I wish to help by pledging to donate ___ hrs. per week.

I prefer ___ (time) on ___ (day of week).

Please make your check payable to the St. Joseph Museum or Pony Express Museum and mail to:

ST. JOSEPH MUSEUM
11th and Charles Streets
St. Joseph, Missouri 64501

Please call me at _____ (phone #)
at _____ (time of day).

I wish to help materially. I have a (Historic)(Ethnological)(Scientific) material contribution which I would like you to consider.

NOTE: If you have questions, please call the St. Joseph Museum at 232-8471 and ask for the Coordinator of Volunteers to make an appointment.