



BARRY COUNTY REFLECTIONS

A Quarterly Publication of the Barry County Museum

Volume 1, Issue 2

June 2007

Treasuring the Past

Embracing the Present

Envisioning the Future

On Display -

- **March 2007**
Quilt exhibit by area quilters
- **April 2007**
Cassville primary school art exhibit

Display hours:

8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Monday through Friday

Fields' Photo Archives

SHO-ME Plaza
802-10 Highway 248
Cassville, MO 65625
417-847-1640

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New Barry County Museum takes shape

Barry County's past, present and future will all meet under one roof at the new Barry County Museum, now under construction on Highway 112, just outside of the Cassville city limits.

The 16,500 square foot facility will house artifacts and exhibits relating to the geographic, agricultural, industrial, educational and social development of the county.

Although many artifacts and displays have been collected, the museum will also address current topics and future trends.

Fields' Photo Archives, with its collection of more than one million negatives of people, places and events in Barry County, will relocate to the new museum building later this year.

Future plans also include providing space for displaying community art exhibits and



The metal structure for the new Barry County Museum stands out against the winter landscape on Highway 112 south of Cassville.

collections, a gift shop and a bookstore.

In addition to the museum, the 16-acre site will eventually include the Black schoolhouse, a log cabin, a pole barn for displaying antique farm machinery and a

nature area with a large stocked pond.

The Museum is funded through private donations, grant funds and proceeds from Fields' Photo Archives and Books & More.

Oral History Project preserves Barry County voices

The Oral History Project brings generations together through the recorded stories of the men and women who have made Barry County their home. Each story weaves a thread in the fabric of our county's history and helps build a foundation for our common future.

Since the project began in May 2005, more than 60 Barry County residents have been interviewed including Emory Melton, Eunice Lyall,

Wilma Hall, and 100-year-old Alta Coffey.

"Oral histories bring the past to life in a very personal way," says Schrediah Mahurin, project coordinator. "Many of the people, places and events recalled in the interviews might have been lost forever if not for the Oral History Project."

Each hour of recorded interview requires about 40 hours to produce and process into written form.

Completed histories are available for public viewing at the Barry County Museum office, temporarily located in the SHO-ME Plaza on Highway 248 in Cassville.

Tentative plans are to publish many of the oral histories in book form.

Contact the Barry County Museum at 417-847-1640 if you know a long-time Barry County resident, aged 80 or older, who would be interested in participating.

Black schoolhouse to be moved to museum site

Children's voices will echo once again through the old Black schoolhouse after it has been moved and renovated as part of the Barry County Museum.

Restoring and outfitting the schoolhouse will be an ongoing project. Several artifacts have already been acquired including the Mano school bell (donated by Ben and Sue Easley Hutton), large slate blackboards and a set of primers (donated by the family of Johnnie and Wilma Bailey), student slates (from Charles Vaughan), and school desks (from Fran Bolton).

Fields' Photo Archives has several class photographs ranging in date from the early 1930s until the late 1950s when the school was consolidated into the Cassville school system.

One major item the Mu-

seum currently lacks is information about the Black schoolhouse. Little more is known other than the land was deeded to the school district in 1879 by Otis and Martha Harbert.

The Black school is just one of 112 rural Barry County schools currently being researched by the Rural School Project. Fran Bolton and Penny Bailey began the project in 2005 with the goal of preserving information about these historic schools. The ladies meet Wednesdays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Barry County Museum office in the SHO-ME Plaza on Hwy 248 in Cassville.

If you have photographs or information about any rural Barry County school, please contact them at the Barry County Museum (417-847-1640).



Plans are to restore and refurbish the Black schoolhouse (pictured above) after it has been moved approximately five miles from its current location on Y Highway north of Cassville to the site of the Barry County Museum on Highway 112.

The one-room Black schoolhouse originally had a bell tower as shown in this photo (right) from the 1940s.

Photos from Fields' Photo Archives



Ma & Pa Fields captured Barry County life on film

In August 1933, in the middle of the Depression, Ma and Pa Fields arrived in Cassville in their 1929 Model A Ford Coupe pulling a homemade camper trailer.

For some time, Pa and Ma had been traveling from town to town taking pictures. As the demand for their services dwindled they would continue on to the next town.

But the demand in Cassville was so strong the couple stayed and opened their first photo shop on the north side of the square over Floyd Barber's Sanitary Food Market.

Throughout the next 62 years, thousands of people living in Barry County would have their pictures taken by

Ma and Pa, or later by their son, Max, and his wife, Margie.

Today, more than one million negatives from Fields' Photo Shop are preserved at Fields' Photo Archives in Cassville. Personal photographs, local events, school reunions and many other subjects of interest can be found in the collection.

Visitors may search the collection by subject name and request a contact sheet of relevant negatives.

Reprints of the photos are available for a modest fee determined by the print size. Profits from the Archives support the Barry County Museum.



Pa, Ma, Margie and Max Fields photographed life in Barry County for more than 62 years. The negative collection from their work is preserved at Fields' Photo Archives in Cassville.

Fields' Photo Archives is located in the SHO-ME Plaza on Highway 248 in Cassville. Hours are 9:00 a.m. to 4:30

p.m., Monday through Friday. Contact the Archives at (417) 847-1640 or e-mail fieldsphoto@mo-net.com.

Remembering the Old Smalley Store

This article was previously published in the *Cassville Democrat* in the early 1970's. Reprinted with minor revisions.

By Wayne Rowland

The "good old days" in Barry County weren't always as good we now remember them. Times were hard and money scarce. But almost everybody was "in the same boat" as they say. Kids were hardly aware that their folks were struggling to make ends meet.

There was work to do, but also time to enjoy life among kinfolk and good neighbors. Country stores were scattered throughout the county along with rural schools and country churches. Those were the places where people gathered to swap information, news and a little gossip.

One crossroads country store, built in 1924, was run by W.A. (Bill) Smalley and his good wife, Myra. It was two miles east of where Hilltop is today, toward Roaring River from Cassville. There was no road leading east from the store then.

The Smalley store sold gasoline, oil, kerosene (or coal oil) and general merchandise that included some dry-goods, candy, tobacco, groceries, overalls, shirts and dress goods. There were canned goods on the shelves plus bulk coffee, vinegar, peanut butter, crackers, lard, etc.

There was no electricity, but gasoline lanterns and oil lamps lit up both the store and the Smalley home nearby. A blacksmith shop was part of the Smalley's services too.

Thieves broke into the store one night making off



An Old-Time Convenience Store

The Smalley store pictured around 1926. The wooden structure measured approximately 15 feet wide by 30 feet deep. Kerosene and gasoline were stored in the lean-to on the left of the store. A hand-operated gasoline pump is partially visible between the store and the lean-to.

Photo courtesy of Edna Meryl Painter

with a stand of lard, a sack of sugar, some dress goods and other items. The "law" found the stolen goods west of Star City and the rascals were prosecuted.

The Smalleys operated the store 12½ years. They bought eggs and cream and took them to Cassville in a spring wagon or "hack" (more or less the pickup of those times).

The nearest school was Mt. Sinai, where the Mt. Olive church is now, east of the school. The store was open long hours. When closed, customers went to the house if they needed something badly.

Cassville was the nearest post office. The rural mail carrier brought news as well as mail and often brought items from town when re-

quested. Bascom Babb was the mail carrier on the route several years.

The store closed in 1937. Charles Jackson bought the building and moved it to 1206 Harold Street in Cassville.

Bill Smalley died in 1952. Some years later his widow married Charles VanZandt, a popular Baptist preacher. He died in 1971.

In an interview in the early 1970s, Myra Smalley VanZandt said, "I've lived a good and full life beyond the Biblical 'four score and ten years'". She was proud of her two daughters, Cleo House and Edna Painter; her grandchildren and great grandchildren; her stepchildren, Lisle and Charlene Jeffries, and their children.

Looking at the old photograph of the Smalley store,



Myra and Bill Smalley with their daughter, Cleo (House), around 1926.

Photo courtesy of Edna Meryl Painter

Mrs. VanZandt said, "I'm ashamed of all those tobacco signs. Looks like that's all we sold!"

Editor's note:

Mrs. Myra Smalley VanZandt passed away in March 1988 at 92 years of age.



**P.O. Box 338
Cassville, MO 65625**

Phone: 417-847-1640
Fax: 417-847-1641
www.barrycomuseum.org

The Barry County Museum

- Collecting, preserving and exhibiting items that illustrate the past, present and future of Barry County.
- Fields' Photo Archives - a collection of more than one million negatives available for public viewing and researching.
- Oral History Project - capturing the stories of long-time county residents to create a collective memory of Barry County life.
- Display space for community art exhibits and collections.

Postage

FIRST CLASS



Barry County Museum acquires Edens log cabin

In the late 1800s, James "Pa Jim" Edens built a log cabin for his family on what is now Greasy Creek road in Washburn.

Although it measures only 20 feet by 25 feet, "Pa Jim" and Mattie Walker Edens' twelve children were raised in the two story structure. The mothers of current area residents, Charles Weathers and Mona Bower, were two of the children who lived in the cabin.

In December 2006, the Barry County Museum acquired Edens cabin from its current owners. Plans are to move the cabin to the museum site, then restore and refurbish it as a working exhibit of early life in Barry County.