

MILL MUSINGS

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THE SCHOOLHOUSE IS FINISHED!

Our goal was to complete the schoolhouse before the Franklin County Historical Society picnic on Monday, July 19 (see below). We were able to move in all the furnishings for the school “open house,” finishing a few days before the picnic. As well as a functioning bell in the tower, the schoolhouse now features 20 vintage desks with inkwells, two schoolmasters desks, a restored pump organ, and many late nineteenth century items. These include several maps, lunch pails, slate boards, an 1885 school clock, books and texts, kerosene lamps, a Remington typewriter, antique pencil sharpener, and early crank telephone. Two of the most prominent features are a pot belly stove in the center of the room and a “homemade” blackboard. John fashioned 20 hooks in the forge for the hats and coats. The front porch of the schoolhouse has a functional bucket pump that draws water, and a primitive bench made by “Buck” Robinson and donated by Lois Bruner. The schoolhouse is available for tours by request most days we are open. We hope to be able to hold educational programs soon.



HISTORICAL SOCIETY PICNIC

On Monday, July 19, the Franklin County Historical Society held their picnic at Falls Mill. This was the first meeting of members since the pandemic began. There was a threat of rain that day, so we set up tables on the porches of the log house and inside, and hosted about 45 people. Luckily the rain held off. The newly completed one-room log schoolhouse at Falls Mill was the program. John gave a short introduction based on an article he had written for the historical society newsletter *Tidings* on the one-room schoolhouses in our county. John took small groups of the picnickers to the schoolhouse, where he showed them the furnishings and discussed the planned use of the building. They were greeted by Christy Anderson, who volunteered to come dressed as a nineteenth century “schoolmarm.” Special guests at the picnic were John and Kelly Bush. John and his construction company helped with the schoolhouse, including the roof, ceiling and drainage system. He also donated the window sashes and rear door. We were grateful that the members offered so many complimentary remarks about the schoolhouse. It was a long construction project but well worth the finished product.

THE REMINGTON TYPEWRITER



In furnishing the schoolhouse with items representing the late 1890's, John had the idea that a typewriter from the period would be an interesting addition. After searching the Internet, he found an old Remington in California that needed some repairs. The seller reduced the asking price by half, and the typewriter arrived a few weeks ago. After making repairs and ordering a new ribbon, John was able to type on it. The serial number dates it to early 1898. It is a Remington Standard Model 6, and has an unusual feature. It is called an under strike typewriter because the user cannot see what he or she is typing until the entire carriage is lifted up. In other words, the keys strike under the carriage roller instead of on top. These lost favor around 1910, when the top strikers were gaining ground. John also replaced the ribbon in a 1929 Royal typewriter donated by Sally Thomas. It had been used by three generations of Sally's family.



NEW VOLUNTEER

Our friend Melissa Holloway has been volunteering at the mill on Fridays. This has proven a great help to us, as Fridays have continued to be busy with visitors. Melissa and Paul Holloway and family have been museum members for many years. One Friday Melissa brought her goat "Little Pete" over to test out the "dog/goat power" treadmill. Pete stood on the treadmill to eat his treat, but despite considerable coaxing, would not walk. Melissa plans to bring a larger goat next time.

Hardest congratulations to former volunteer Lillian Holloway, Huntland High School valedictorian class of 2021. Lillian will be attending the University of the South, Sewanee this fall. We miss having her here greeting visitors and wish her well in her future education.

DONATIONS FROM MARY HOWE

We were contacted a few months ago by a friend near Huntsville, Tom Possert, who told us his neighbor Norman Howe had passed away and left a large collection of antique items in which we might be interested for the museum. Norman's widow, Mary, was planning to move and needed to find homes for as much of the collection as possible. John met Tom at Mary's house and was overwhelmed by the extent of the collection. Norm had specialized in antique stoves, but had also acquired numerous kerosene lamps and heaters, antique electric fans, books and manuals, and a wide variety of other collectibles. After three trips, we acquired through donation a large number of these items, some of which are now on display in the mill, with others going into the one-room schoolhouse. We are very grateful to Mary for her generous gifts and to Tom for thinking of our museum as a home for these artifacts.

OTHER DONATIONS

In addition to the donations from Mary Howe, we list the following: Early school and poetry books and a slate board from Ronald E. Young; two antique school desks from Tom McGill; a Rayo kerosene lamp from Larry Hasse; original art work from Brandon Rone; a Swiss made hand knitting machine from Marty Leblanc; an original book by James Whitcomb Riley of his poem *Out to Old Aunt Mary's*, donated by our longtime friend Sally Thomas of Chattanooga. There were also many monetary donations from museum members that continued to help with the completion of the schoolhouse. We are very grateful to all who contributed to the development of the museum.

GROUP TOURS

Since the last newsletter, we have conducted several home school group tours. We also had a local Mennonite school as well as one near Smithville, Tennessee, tour the mill and museum. On Saturday, June 12, a group of about 135 Mennonite and Amish families toured the mill. They were in the area for a reunion of Rose Helmuth's family. Rose and Glenn operate Glenrose Cabinets in Belvidere. We were able to operate the 1830 wool carding machine for them. Thanks to the volunteers who demonstrated that day, Steve Walker, Gary Runyon, and the members of the Middle Tennessee fiber guild and their spinning wheels.

DEATHS OF FRIENDS AND MUSEUM MEMBERS

We are always saddened to report the deaths of friends since our last newsletter. Longtime museum supporter Walter Zimmerman passed away at the age of 94 after a brief illness. We were fortunate to have met with Walt a few months before his death to talk about his experiences in a one-room schoolhouse near Belvidere. He also was kind enough to give us a copy of his autobiography about his long life in Franklin County. To all his family, we offer our condolences.

Henry Beachy, another longtime friend, died of complications from COVID. Henry owned the tractor repair service in Huntland. He spent many an hour helping keep our old tractors running. We extend our sympathy to his wife Clara and their children.

Terry Holder also passed away. He had been our neighbor, occupying the old Robert Mann house (one of the builders of Falls Mill) since long before we arrived here. Terry and Margaret operated a large farm now managed by their son Dennis. Terry was, in his youth, a champion sheep shearer, and demonstrated that talent at Pioneer Skills Day many years ago. We also extend our sympathy to his family.

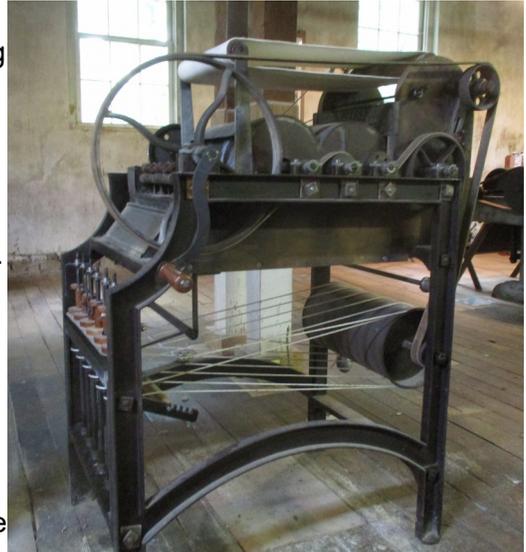
MUSEUM MEMBERS PICNIC

We have scheduled the museum members picnic for Sunday, October 3 from 1 to 3 in the afternoon. The date is tentative depending on the track of the COVID-19 virus. Shane Adkins is scheduled to perform. The schoolhouse will be open for tours beginning at 12:30. Come help us celebrate the 150th anniversary of the dam and the 40th anniversary of the Museum of Power and Industry. We also encourage all who may attend to be vaccinated against this dreaded virus. Please check the Website fallsmill.com for any changes or updates about the picnic.

PLANTATION SPINNER

We have been doing some work on our plantation (or gin) spinner, trying to make it operational. It is a machine that was developed before the Civil War period for the processing of cotton in the home. It is hand cranked, and was designed to gin, card, and spin cotton in one small machine. There were several thousand of these manufactured, most by a company in Cincinnati, but others in individual shops on a type of "franchise" basis. There are around 37 still known, most in museums, and none of which are currently workable.

The machine we acquired was donated by Traveler's Rest Museum in Nashville, and is one of two known to have been made by Hugh Joyner in his shop in Hendersonville, Tennessee, probably in the late 1840's or 1850's. We spent many hours restoring it and making parts. The latest parts were new gin saws and rib plate. The rib plate has slots so the saws can pull the cotton fibers through, but the seeds are too large and are therefore separated.



Museum member Bill Friday is pursuing the re-manufacture of these machines for use in India, so he is quite interested in trying to troubleshoot our machine to make it operable. We have spent many an hour tweaking it, and are finally making headway with the ginning process. We are plowing new ground because we have not been able to find operational directions or a working machine anywhere.

Check your museum membership card, and if it is time to renew, please join us at the Museum of Power and Industry, Inc., at Falls Mill for another year! Thank you for your contribution.

Check the contact/calendar page of the website fallsmill.com for special events.

INDIVIDUAL/FAMILY MEMBERSHIP \$25.00 per year _____

TAX DEDUCTIBLE MUSEUM DONATION \$ _____



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