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The Bemis Story

Where Industry and Friendliness Blend Into Progress

A publication of the Bemis Historical Society – www.bemishistory.org

Spring 2008

Annual Bemis Days Event May 16-17, 2008

Mark your calendars! Our annual Bemis Days event is quickly approaching and will be held on Friday and Saturday, May 16-17. Approximately 1,000 current and former Bemis residents and workers are expected to attend this year's event.

Festivities will kick off at 4:30PM on Friday at the old Bemis Theatre, future home of the Bemis Mill Village Museum. Visiting and reminiscing will be the agenda from 4:30-6:30PM, so bring a lawn chair and enjoy talking with old friends and classmates. Gaylon & Betty Cooper have generously agreed to provide a delicious bar-b-que dinner starting at 5PM. The cost is \$5, with all proceeds going toward our museum project.

At 6:30PM, the John Norvell family will take the stage singing inspirational music. Bemis' own W.S. "Fluke" Holland and talented band members kick off an evening of Rock-A-Billy at 7PM – dancers get ready! Festivities on Friday will end at 9PM. Even though the nine o'clock whistle no longer blows, anyone who has ever lived in Bemis knows that the streets roll up at 9PM. In our minds and hearts, the nine o'clock whistle will always blow.

Saturday events are from 9:30AM-3PM and include:

- Displays by local artists and the graduating classes of 1952, 53 and 56.

To set up a display, or for more information about Bemis Days, contact Joel Jackson at 424-0739.

- 10AM – Music by the Pea Pickin' Possum Band. Bus Tours of Bemis narrated by June Holloway. Tours of the Bemis United Methodist Church in honor of their 100th anniversary.
- 11AM – Music by the Possum Band with Raybon Moore. Bus Tours of Bemis continues. Bar-b-que lunch prepared and sold by Gaylon & Betty Cooper.
- 1PM – Storytelling, including guests from the Jackson Storytelling League. Pull up a chair and hear some great "Bemis Yarns." A music and reminiscing program is also available at the Bemis United Methodist Church at 1PM.

All good things must come to an end. Bemis Days will conclude at 3PM on Saturday. Most of us will leave carrying memories of old friends, neighbors and classmates, some we have not seen in almost a lifetime. We hope that YOU will be one of those people we see.

Many thanks to Joel Jackson, who has single-handedly organized this year's event. Thanks also to these supporters who helped make our event possible: Jackson Energy Authority (JEA), Tennessee Concert Sound, Kroger South, Jackson Recreation & Parks, and Gaylon & Betty Cooper. Our hats are off to you!

NEWS FLASH:

Museum Floors Refinished

Even as you read this article, the lovely original floors of our future museum are being sanded and refinished. If you join us for the Bemis Days events, you will see these old floors restored to their original magnificence!

Bobby Sisson, long-time and reputable floor refinisher, was chosen to perform this work. He and craftsman Eddie Campbell are doing an admirable job of repairing wood, putting down thresholds, staining some of the non-matching wood and refinishing the rest. Be prepared to be “wowed” when you see the floors in May.

Mr. Sisson is also sanding the concrete entry hall floors. Society members plan to patch some of the concrete and seal it prior to Bemis Days. This will bring us one step closer to completing the entry hall renovations.

We Need Your Two Cents Worth – *AND MORE!!!*

The newly elected officers (Board) of the Bemis Historical Society voted to press forward with refinishing the future museum’s original floors, even though we do not currently have grant funding for the project. Refinishing the floors will cost the Society approximately \$10,500. That money will need to be repaid to the Society’s treasury.

At Bemis Days we will be accepting special donations that are restricted to the floor refinishing project. All amounts are welcomed and appreciated. For those who choose to make a substantial donation of \$500 or greater, your name will be recognized on permanent signage that will give a brief history of the museum floors.

If you are unable to attend Bemis Days and would like to donate toward this worthwhile project, send a check or money order marked, “for floor project” to the Bemis Historical Society, P.O. Box 9266, Jackson, TN 38314-9266.

New Officers Elected

A big thank you to our outgoing officers! They successfully led us through the majority of interior renovations at the museum made possible through the Save America’s Treasures grant. Those officers are Joel Jackson, Chairman; Kaye Patrick, Vice-Chairman; Rosalee Gibbons, Secretary; Joe Roark, Treasurer; Carolyn Davis, Past President. Your dedication to our museum project is appreciated by all Society members.

Welcome to our incoming officers: Anita Ruth Roark, Chairman; Frank Murchison, Vice-Chairman; Kaye Patrick, Secretary; Jimmy Mitchell, Treasurer; Joel Jackson, Past President (Board member). They were elected unanimously at the March meeting and began their duties with the April meeting.

One of the first initiatives of the new Board is to complete all interior renovations at the museum for the entry hall, exhibit area and break room. Our goal is to ready the building and make it available to rent, both prior to and after it becomes a functioning museum. Currently our building is an “expense” to the Society. It is the intention of the Board to ensure that the building becomes a revenue source – at minimum, to produce enough revenue to become self-sustaining. Watch for your Summer 2008 newsletter to read about additional initiatives the new Board will undertake.

Donations

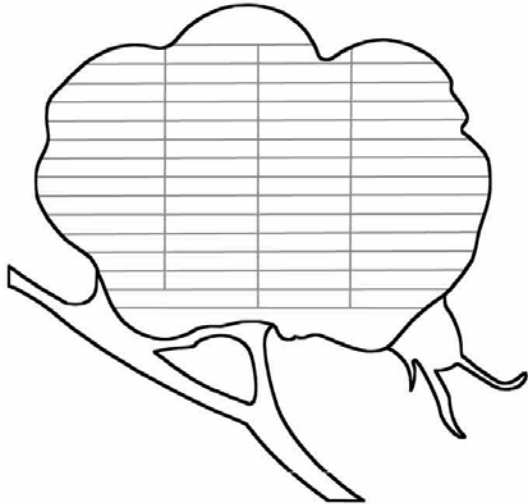
Thank you to the following supporter for his recent donation:

Damon P. Becker

**COMING THIS SUMMER:
Cotton Boll Remembrance Display**

Now that the major interior renovations are complete, it is time to move our Cotton Boll Remembrances to a permanent display inside the museum. We have been working with Gable & Schubert in Chicago to design a permanent display and the Board is very close to approving the design below.

The display (below) will be 3'-3 11/16" tall by 3'-5 11/16" wide. It will be made of brass covered with baked on white enamel (the stem will be brown). The display will contain 48 1-1/2" tall white plates, each of which will hold an engraved memorial or honorarium.



The Cotton Boll Remembrance Display will be hung in a place of honor in the entry hall of our museum. Current plans are to have it installed by late Summer. If you have already purchased a Cotton Boll Remembrance, you will be contacted by letter in mid-June to confirm the engraving for your plate.

Cotton Boll Remembrances are honorariums or memorials at the \$500 level of giving. What a wonderful way to honor family and friends *permanently* in our new museum!

Cotton Boll Remembrance

The following Cotton Boll Remembrance honorarium has been made:

**In Honor of the
Employees of the Bemis Cotton Mill**
by: Leon A. Droll & Family

Honorariums/Memorials

In Honor of Richard "Dick" Fisher
City Lumber Company
In Memory of Charles Tippet
Mrs. Jolene J. Tippet
In Memory of Clifford Kee
J. B. Young Class of 1949
In Memory of Nell Marie Fisher Jones
Patricia A. Cristil

Artifact Donations

Photo Workers at Loom
Joel Jackson
1923 & 1939 City Directories
Jim Pruitt
Photo Bemis Fishing Club
Ken Thomason
Tennis Racquet
Smoking Stand
Meat Tenderizer
Meat Grinder
Meat Serving Paddle
Cooler Wall Hook
Bear Ice Pick
3 Brass Hooks
1946 "Washington" Photo from 3rd Grade
2 "Mr. Kirby" Class Sling Shots
1950 "Matthews Cabinet" Yard Stick
1950 "Walls & Jones" Yard Stick
1940 ICRR Lantern
Richard & Margie Simmons
JBY Sweater 1953
JBY Football Pin 1953
JBY Basketball Pin 1953
Graduation Invitation JBY 1955
JBY Class Composite 1954
JBY Class Composite 1955

1951 Meeow
1953 Meeow
1954 Meeow
1955 Meeow
Owen McNatt
Blueprint of BEMIS/FROGMOOR
David Fisher
“MILL OFFICE” Plaque
Robert Droll
1966 3X12 “BEMIS” Car Tag
Bobby & Sara Scoggins
Ellis Kinder Hall of Fame DVD
Hall of Fame Program
“Summer of 49” Book
Red Sox Encyclopedia
8X10 History of Kinder
11X15 Kinder Fire Chief
11X15 -1941 Kitty League Champs
11X15-1942 Jackson Independents
Ellis Kinder Day Proclamation 2007
“SUN” 2006 Kinder, Hall of Fame
All Star Score Card
8X10 Gilliam Family
Molly Stancell
Harold West Rx Bottle
String Ball & Bat
Bruce Rogers

8X10 “Cotton Bag Sewing Contest”
1963 Schedule “Cotton Bag Contest”
Presentation of Trophy at Contest
3-8X10 Jo at Jack Parr/Contest Winner
8X10 Jo with Winning Entries 1963
Cora “Jo” Evans
Various 1944-1956 Check Stubs
Job Assignment Pad
Mike Stow
VHS “The King’s Other Life”
From Fiber to Dress
Laura Mize

***Bemis United Methodist Church
Celebrates 100 Years***

Members of the Bemis United Methodist Church will celebrate their 100th anniversary on May 17 & 18. Join them on Saturday for tours of the church starting at 10AM and a music & reminiscing program at 1PM in the sanctuary. On Sunday a brunch will be held at 9AM followed by a special worship service by Dr. Rob Sylvester at 10:30AM. Long-term members will be recognized. To make a reservation for the brunch, or to purchase \$45 commemorative church plates or \$8 packets of note cards, call 731-422-4997.

The Bemis Historical Society
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