



Photo courtesy of USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service

Farm Life Exhibit Coming in October

Old Independence will host the nationally traveling exhibit *Farm Life: A Century of Change for Farm Families and Their Neighbors*, October 21-November 30. The exhibit looks at what it means for families to live on and work the land over the past 50 years. It is organized around four familiar areas of farm-related activities – the farmhouse, the fields, the barn and community gatherings.

Old Independence is displaying artifacts and photographs from north central Arkansas to accompany the exhibit. The museum has planned a series of special programs in conjunction with *Farm Life*. At a gala musical opening on October 19th, Danny Dozier and friends will perform music inspired by working the land. The October 27th family fun day will offer animals on-site, stories and activities inside the museum. A brown bag lunch on Nov 1st, will showcase the documentary *Cabin Field*. November 4th brings an afternoon of gospel music and on November 11th a talk by historian Brooks Blevins.

Museum staff encourages advance registration for school tours for the *Farm Life* exhibit. Check the museum web-site www.oirm.org or the North Arkansas Co-op for information.

The *Farm Life* exhibit is possible through NEH on the Road, a special initiative of the National Endowment for the Humanities. *Farm Life: A Century Of Change for Farm Families and Their Neighbors* was organized by the Chippewa Valley Museum, Eau Claire WI; it is traveling nationally through Mid America Arts Alliance.

Amanda Nikkel New Docent Coordinator

Amanda Nikkel joined the Old Independence staff as docent coordinator in September. She replaces Vikki Roberson Gentry, who is expanding her bath & body firm Body by Vikki, building a house in Mountain View and generally keeping busy.

Amanda will take on scheduling, recruiting, and appreciating the museum's invaluable docent corps. A longtime Old Independence volunteer herself, Amanda brings first hand knowledge to the job.

Amanda comes to Old Independence with a background in museum education. She has worked on the staff of Historic Latta Plantation in North Carolina and The Home Place in Kentucky as well as consulting and volunteering with Historic Arkansas Museum and Old Independence in Arkansas. Here in Batesville she served as executive director of Main Street Batesville in 2004-2005 and currently serves on the board of that organization. Amanda, her husband Brad and their daughter Clara live in downtown Batesville.



Photo courtesy of Brad Nikkel

From the director

Jo Blatti



Fall brings renewed energy and this year is no exception. Old Independence will host the nationally traveling exhibit - *Farm Life*:

A Century of Change for Farm Families and Their Neighbors. Museum staff and volunteers have been working for many months on special programs to accompany the exhibit during its run in north central Arkansas. Mark your calendar for the school tours, musical events, family fun day and talks associated with *Farm Life*.

Our holiday program this year will feature readings from Christmases past. The program, which was first researched and presented at Old Independence several years ago, explores how Christmas changed from a rowdy public event into the domestic, family-centered holiday we celebrate today.

The museum is in a season of change as well. We welcomed brand new staff member Amanda Nikkel on page one. Administrative assistant April White joined the staff in the spring, replacing Teresa Russell, who joined her husband Bruce in Little Rock this summer after a long commute. April brings a wonderful set of skills from the Ozark Interpretive Association in Blanchard.

I'm part of the change as well – leaving Old Independence this fall after eight rewarding and productive years to see what is over the horizon. I'm so proud of what has been accomplished at the museum and so appreciative of the friendship that I have experienced here.

Come visit soon and please continue to support Old Independence Regional Museum -

Program Calendar

- Sept 21 4:30 p.m.
Reception in honor of director Jo Blatti
- Oct 19 7 p.m. Farm Life Exhibit opening & annual meeting
Danny Dozier and friends perform music inspired by working the land
- Oct 21- Nov 30 NEH *Farm Life* exhibit on view in the main gallery

School tours *Farm Life* – Tuesdays & Thursdays
- Oct 27 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Family fun day activities – *Farm Life* exhibit stories, churning, cornhusks dolls, farm animals on display
- Nov 1 Noon. Brown bag lunch
Screening & discussion of *Cabin Field* with Bob Pest and Robert Stroud
- Nov 4 1:30 to 5 p.m.
Gospel music concert - *Farm Life* exhibit – Brockwell Music School, Richwoods, Shady Lawn and Happy Hollow Mennonite churches and Friendship Baptist Church
- Nov 10 Museum Madness fundraiser (TBC)
- Nov 11 4 p.m. talk – *Farm Life* - Dr. Brooks Blevins on the changing nature of agriculture in north central Arkansas.
- Dec 9 2 p.m.
Readings from Christmas Past

The Old Independence Regional Museum Newsletter is published semi-annually and distributed free of charge to friends of the museum, members, and volunteers.

President.....Tony Thompson
Executive DirectorJo Blatti
Volunteer Curator of Collections.....Twyla Wright
Docent CoordinatorAmanda Nikkel
Gift Shop ManagerFrances Mathis
Administrative AssistantApril White

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The Old Independence Regional Museum Gift Shop will soon be bursting the seams with new books and toys ordered in conjunction with the “Farm Life” exhibit in October and November.

Starting in October, the Gift Shop will be spotlighting certain authors and books each month. The first will be George E. Lankford’s newest book *Reachable Stars*. Dr. Lankford has consistently supported O.I.R.M. and we are pleased to have his works in our Gift Shop.

Our current Director, Jo Blatti, will soon be leaving her position. We wish her much success in her future.

Curator's Column

by Twyla Gill Wright

We are honored and thrilled with the McGinnis family's choice to add substantially to the large fund gathered in memory of Clyde McGinnis. This fund has allowed the museum to purchase 57 rolls of microfilm of the "Batesville Guard" newspaper (1907 – 1959). We now have them accessioned and ready for researchers to view!

This year we have already processed 125 collections, some containing many items. Several more are sitting on our "to be accessioned" shelves, waiting for volunteers to describe each piece, enter descriptions into the computer, and clean and store them. Sad to say – I can only mention a few of those 125 here!

Danny Dozier – 101 photographs of White River Lock and Dam construction 1905-1908, and an Order of Knights of Pythias belt.

Laurence & Evalene Williams – Bee Smoker and cookie bucket.

Kay Longenbach – photo albums of Pfeiffer Stone Company, photographic pages of Wolford marble and quarried stone samples (donated through her by her father Bill Wolford sr. and her mother Alice M. Wolford, along with newspaper article about him); a note spindle, handkerchiefs, quilt block, parlor gas heater, early tin can sealer.

Jim Barnett – Pioneer football programs 1945-1960

June Armstrong – photographs and documents from the Cornelius and Lawyer families during the 1930s, including Resettlement Administration business and home management plans and loans in Fulton County.

Terri Barnes – clothing from the Kathleen Barnes and Fonteen Simmons estate: fur cape and fox stole, dresses, and Confederate bills.

Doyle and Raye Rogers – 15 grade books kept by B.H.S. teacher Ella Albright dated 1917- 1934.

Mildred Arnold – shadow box containing Pfc. Alfred A. Arnold's World War II ribbons, cap, dogtags, medals and photograph.

Alfred Barnett – military artifacts memorializing two Independence County brothers, Melvin H. and John Richard Barnett, who died on the same day during the Korean War.

Earlene McMullin – photographs and maps and booklets of Fort Raymond, Seward, Alaska.

Lim Parks – artifacts from the Parks/Handford family, including photos, a BHS commencement program from 1893, programs from the 1943s.

Mary Painter – 20 ladies' hats dating from the 1920s to 1960s.

Carter Yeatman – Book: "A Picture of the Desolated States and Work of Restoration" 1868, a silk crepe and satin dress, ca 1900, worn by his grandmother, a Boy Scout medical kit, an Antebellum white cotton coverlet, a framed 1846 "Ornamental Map of the United States and Mexico."

Shirley Bishop – a summer 1890s corset, a 1910 long skirt, "tap style" nightwear, and silk wrap.

Bill and Debbie DaBoll – handkerchief, gloves, a 1930s RexAir vacuum cleaner, hand towels, and a 1960s travel coffee pot and its case.

Please know that we appreciate every item that you bring our way and look forward to being able to display them as we can.



Photo courtesy of OIRM Collection

From Left: First Community Chairman and CEO Dale Cole, President and COO Boris Dover and Vice President of Marketing Laura Cornett with Old Independence Education Endowment Campaign Co-Chair Dr. Ben Hipp, Curator Twyla Wright and Trustee Arthur Montgomery at August 16, 2007 ceremony inaugurating the First Community Bank Gallery generously underwritten as part of the Phase II expansion project.

Education Endowment in the Home Stretch

Thanks to the generosity of many friends of the museum, the NEH Education Endowment campaign, co-chaired by Dr. Ben Hipp and Neil Wilkins, continues to move well ahead of schedule. At this writing, Old Independence needs to raise only \$30,000 to receive the remaining matching funds and fully endow the education position. This part time staff position will be dedicated to work with families and schools.

Many thanks to all who have helped us to move so far toward this goal of expanded community service. With your support, your museum has raised more than \$800,000 in the past three years. This enabled Old Independence to open its entire building to public use with new galleries, exhibits, expanded program space, and collection care facilities. Join First Community Bank and many other valued supporters. Help put us over the top and fill the position that will share those resources with the 12-county service area. Contact Dr. Ben Hipp or Neil Wilkins at the museum office (870-793-2121) for more information about the Education Endowment Campaign.

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Farm Life School Tours

Attention teachers: contact the museum to reserve a time for school tours of the *Farm Life* exhibit. School tours are scheduled on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

When you call to reserve your day and time you will receive teacher support materials specifically designed for this exhibit. These include a glossary of terms, pre-visit lesson plans, post visit lesson plans and children's book lists, web site and film suggestions.

Call the museum at 870-793-2121 or e-mail April@oirm.org or Amanda@oirm.org for information about this special program. We look forward to sharing *Farm Life* with your students.

