

Shiloh Scrapbook

SHILOH MUSEUM OF OZARK HISTORY NEWSLETTER

Vol. 27, No. 1 May 2008

Following the Crop



Migrant laborer Omer Bynum holds his granddaughter outside a cabin at Springdale's Farm Workers Center in 1957. *Caroline Clark Collection/Howard Clark, photographer*

Marie Demeroukas

Archivist

Weather, insects, soil fertility, crop prices—these are some of the worries farmers face each day. Success can have its downside too, as when in 1942 Northwest Arkansas enjoyed bumper crops of strawberries and green beans. A huge labor force was needed to pick and process the season's 24,000 acres of crops in Washington, Benton, and Madison Counties.

Farmers couldn't provide much in the way of adequate housing and health care for their hired help. Migrant laborers either camped by their cars or lived on the farmer's property in poultry houses or sheds. Host communities were concerned that diseases like tuberculosis might be brought to the area by folks without regular access to medical care. Since agriculture was the major economic force of Northwest Arkansas of the time, local business leaders and politicians were determined to provide for the workers' needs.

The Springdale Chamber of Commerce, working with U.S. Representative Clyde T. Ellis, approached the government for help. In 1941 the U.S. Farm Security Administration (FSA) agreed to place a migratory labor camp in the area. The camp would provide inexpensive housing for the workers who picked such crops as berries, green beans, tomatoes, peaches, grapes, and apples and who worked in the packing sheds and canning plants. The FSA operated between 75 and 100 camps nationwide, with Texas hosting the camps nearest to Arkansas.

Springdale was chosen as the site for the \$80,000, 40-acre labor camp, to be built in the southwest part of town near Powell, Caudle, and Park Streets. Facilities included a community building, a medical clinic, a nursery, offices, a home for the camp's manager, latrine and laundry buildings, a playground and picnic area, and 200 clapboard cabins with canvas roofs (permanent roofs were added later). Each 14-by-14-foot cabin could hold up to five people, for a maximum total of 1,000 migrant workers. A fence topped with barbed wire surrounded the camp.

With fanfare, speeches, and music provided by the Rogers High School band, the Farm Workers Center opened its doors on April 27, 1942. Organizers predicted that the camp would bring a "better class of labor." An on-site placement office helped workers find jobs.

Throughout World War II the camp housed the many laborers needed to help feed the nation and its fighting forces. By the end of the 1943 season 1,302 people (including 328 families) had registered at the camp; the average stay was

see LABOR CENTER, page 6

DIRECTOR'S COLUMN

Allyn Lord



The 2001 “No Child Left Behind” (NCLB) legislation requires public schools to show progress in reading and math skills through annual testing. NCLB’s emphasis on testing

those skills has squeezed out art, science, and history education from the K-12 curriculum, according to the latest report from the Center on Education Policy. Additionally, the number of school field trips has reportedly declined markedly.

Some of the numbers are striking. Over one-third of school districts nationwide have cut elementary social studies instruction by an average of 76 minutes a week. According to a Feb. 11 *Newsweek* article, “class trips have plummeted at some of the country’s traditional hot spots for brown-bag learning,” such as the Chicago Children’s Museum (down a tenth since 2005) and the New England Aquarium in Boston (down a quarter since 2003).

According to a February report by Common Core, NCLB is one factor in perpetuating American ignorance about history. For example, of more than 1,200 17-year-olds surveyed, only 43% could place the American Civil War in the correct half-century and nearly a quarter failed to identify Hitler.

These are all disappointing and worrisome statistics. Here at the Shiloh Museum, as is the case at other local museums and field-trip venues, we’ve seen a major drop in the number of class field trips and in-class visits each year in March and April due solely to NCLB testing. The good news, however, is that – as opposed to the national trends cited above – not only is the number of children we serve annually on the increase, but so is the number of children coming to visit the museum. Much of that is due to the dedicated work of education coordinator Pody Gay, assistants Hope Amason (through last August) and Alma Lyle (since September), and many volunteers, as well as the support of many fine teachers in Northwest Arkansas. We’re able to offer schoolchildren curriculum-based history lessons as well as lessons with integrated curriculum (writing, math, etc.), many including hands-on activities and visits to our historic buildings. The total number of children served has increased 124% from 2003; the number of children served on-site has increased 88% from 2003.

Museums can only do so much to counter the effects of “No Child Left Behind,” but we do provide an important addition to the formal education system. Our work must be ongoing, however, and we may have to work even harder if Congress reauthorizes NCLB later this year.

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MISSION STATEMENT

The Shiloh Museum of Ozark History serves the public by providing resources for finding meaning, enjoyment, and inspiration in the exploration of the Arkansas Ozarks.

Adopted by the Shiloh Museum Board of Trustees on July 13, 2006

SHILOH MUSEUM OF OZARK HISTORY

118 W. Johnson Avenue • Springdale, AR 72764 • 479-750-8165
www.springdaleark.org • shiloh@springdaleark.org

Open Monday-Saturday, 10 a.m. -5 p.m. • Free Admission

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DONATIONS

October 2007 – March 2008

Christine Bell: Badges, medals, and records of Salem Grange 839, Washington County

Pat Brown: Tea set given to Ulys Lovell of Springdale by Japanese family in Arkansas internment camp during World War II; Arkansas Industrial University commencement program, 1880; University of Arkansas inauguration program for John Tillman, 1905

Denele Campbell and Verna Pitts: Butter churn; grain scoop; quilts; apron; towels; pillowcases; doily; photo negatives; all from the West/Pitts families, Washington County, early to mid-1900s

Lila Campbell: Patchwork quilt made by mother of Clara Parker, Winslow, 1920s

Bob Cary: Rodeo Stadium Speedway flier, Springdale, 1947

Tom Duggan: Photos of Bentonville's Tourist Hotel and Stroud family with watermelons, ca. 1900

Har-Ber High School EAST LAB/Debbie Lamb: "The Game of Northwest Arkansas," 2007

Elaine M. Jones: Handi Hostess Kit patty shell molds which belonged to Bertie Bird, Springdale, ca. 1945

John H. Morris: Photos of Bellview School, Washington County, 1928

Joe Roberts: Wood panel from Springdale High School; tin can chairs made by Merl Creger; Boy Scout books; Benton and Washington County plat books, 1982; Little Blue Books; *Northwest Arkansas Times* maps, 1942; Springdale High School handbook, 1962-63; photos of Boy Scouts, Roberts family, and Springdale

Rogers Historical Museum: Photo postcards: Springdale orchards, ca. 1900; Razorback Stadium, ca. 1960; Western Methodist Assembly, Fayetteville, ca. 1950; Central Methodist Church, Fayetteville, ca. 1950; Sulphur Springs, Benton County, ca. 1910

Ada Lee Shook: Trunk handmade by Joseph Bevers, Madison County; telephone chair from the Carl Smith family, Fayetteville, ca. 1930

Mary and Bruce Vaughan: Handmade camera stand; stationery and business cards from Image One Studios, Springdale; Bruce's Radio and TV advertising ruler; *Esquire's Date Book G. I. Edition*, 1945; Argus LC3 light meter; photos of Springdale High School Class of 1939 reunion

John C. Weller: First State Bank of Springdale Wilkinson Esso Service Station check, 1969

Thank you for lending photographs for copying: *Kenn Bradley, Rose Sabatini Cavender, Marion Doss, Earlene Henry, Curtis Horner, Dorothy Bersi Kever, Beatrice Taldo Mussino, Ruth Patrick, Deloris Taldo Peacy, Roger Pianalto, Janet Stockton Taylor, Billie (Mrs. Jess) Tune, Edna Zulpo*

WISH LIST

For collections:

- Wood platform dollies 16 x 24 and 18 x 30 (\$50 each)
- 5-tier wire steel shelves on wheels (\$90 each)
- Bulk shelving (contact Carolyn Reno for details)

For our podcast program:

- Panasonic SDR-H18 (\$500) or Sony DCR-SR82 (\$600) digital video camera
- Pinnacle Dazzle USB 2.0 video capture device (\$100)
- Adobe Premiere Elements (\$100)

For exhibits:

- Portable table saw, Dewalt, Bosch, or Delta (\$500)
- Small table-top drill press (\$150)
- 14" band saw (\$150)
- Battery charger (\$50)

For our research library:

- Vol. 1, Nos.1-4 (1942), *Arkansas Historical Quarterly*

- Subscription to the *Northwest Arkansas Times/Arkansas Democrat-Gazette* (\$109)

Thank you for these donations:

- Washington County Arkansas Genealogical Society: *The Silent White City: Bluff Cemetery, 1841-2005 Burials*
- Mike Cordell: Madison County census transcriptions, 1840-1930
- Jim Liles: *Old Folks Talking: A Place of Special Value in the Ozarks of Arkansas*
- Michael Shannon: *Col. A.M. Shannon: A Personal History*
- Rusty Turner, editor, & Tom Stallbaumer, publisher, *The Morning News of Northwest Arkansas: Springdale News sports negatives from 1974-1982*
- Madison County Genealogical and Historical Society: *Master Index for Tombstones in all Madison County, Arkansas, Cemeteries; Clifty Arkansas—And the Two Hillbilly Kids Growin' Old (Freddie and Ethel Todd)*

Summer Fun at Shiloh

History Camp, June 23-27

10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Featuring a different fun history topic each day!

Ages 6-12

\$75; \$67.50 for Shiloh Museum members. Childcare available before and after camp from 7:00-10:00 a.m. and from 5:00-6:00 p.m. for an extra \$5 per hour per child.

Monday, Technology Day

Learn about telegraphs, telephones, cameras, and photographs. Create sun prints, make pinhole scopes, and compose a secret message in Morse code! Make your own tintype with artist Liz Mathews.

Tuesday, Civil War Day

Become part of the infantry and practice musket and cannon drills with re-enactors from Pea Ridge Battlefield National Military Park. See and learn about real Civil War artifacts with collector C. W. Webb. Make hardtack and homemade butter.

Wednesday, Ozark Arts Day

Listen to folktales by storyteller Oda Mulloy. Make lace with the Dogwood Lace Guild. Create theorem painting with artist Liz Mathews. Learn about tombstones and make your own mini-tombstone with cemetery explorer Susan Young.

Thursday, Natural History Day

Meet some creepy crawly critters with Michael Warner, field ecologist with the Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission. Learn about birds in a program by Rebekah Spurlock, interpreter at Devils Den State Park. Make a spiderweb frame, a birdhouse, and animal tracks to take home. Inspect an owl pellet to see what they eat, and play the Food Chain Game!

Friday, Ozark Chores Day

Watch blacksmith Stephen McGehee at work. Make a batch of lye soap with Lenora Bowlin. Learn how to care for livestock with Jacci Perry and her farm animal friends. Visit a hunter/trapper from the early 1800s. Wash clothes the old-timey way, before washing machines were invented. Make beeswax candles and a scarecrow for the museum garden.

Spinning and Weaving Camp

August 11-13

10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Ages 11-16

\$45; \$40.50 for Shiloh Museum members

Learn about carding, spinning, plying, and dyeing. Weave a small scarf to take home.

Shiloh Summer Saturdays

10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

All Saturday activities are free, with lots of hands-on activities for the whole family!

June 7. Rails and Tails

- * Bunky and Connie Boger's Petting Zoo
- * Model train displays by the Boston Mountain Chapter, National Railway Historical Society
- * Music
- * Kids crafts
- * Refreshments

July 26. The Civil War in Shiloh

- * The life of a Civil War surgeon portrayed by Doug Kidd
- * Cannon display and musket drills by Pea Ridge Battlefield National Military Park
- * Northern Cavalry will be looking for recruits
- * Log cabin cooking by the Sons of Confederate Veterans
- * Lacemaking by the Dogwood Lace Guild
- * Civil War stories by Tellers of Tales

August 23. Quit Lollygaggin' and Do Your Chores!

- * Soapmaking
- * Washing clothes
- * Gardening
- * Churning butter
- * Quilting
- * Candlemaking
- * Spinning and weaving
- * Music
- * Storytelling
- * Hunting, trapping, and blacksmithing demonstrations

To sign up for the summer camps, or for more information about any of our summer activities, call 750-8165.

Labor Center

From page 1

44 days. Cabins were available for as little as 10 cents a day or up to \$2.50 a week, depending on whether the unit was outfitted with electricity and a small gas stove. The camp was open from April to October.

After the war the Federal government decided to sell a number of labor centers in Texas and the camp in Springdale. In 1948 the City of Springdale bought the camp, promising to keep it open for the next 20 years.

At dawn farmers picked up their workers, from young children to elderly grandparents, and delivered them to the fields or packing sheds where they labored long, hot hours. Early afternoon saw the workers back at camp, cooking and cleaning. The cabins were tiny; some were without gas or electricity. None had plumbing so water was fetched from pumps. Toilet, bathing, and laundry facilities were centralized and shared by many.

Following the crop took its toll on the laborers and their families. Because they were constantly on the move, children missed school and fell behind in their grade levels. Field work didn't pay much so many families scraped by, relying on donations of food, clothing, and medical care. Health problems for some folks came about because they didn't realize the importance of, or have access to, good nutrition and hygiene.

There were many business, civic, and religious organizations which helped meet the needs of the migrant laborers over the years. Among those lending a hand were the Springdale Chamber of Commerce, the non-denominational Home Missions Council of North America, the Home Mission Service of the Baptist Church, the United Church Women of Springdale and Fayetteville, and the Northwest Arkansas Area Migrant Committee, along with others, all lent a hand. Volunteers and paid staff provided health care, nursery programs, education, recreation, relief, and religious services.

Most people were glad to see the laborers return each year. Farmers needed their crops harvested. Merchants had goods and services for sale. Churches were glad to provide aid and religious outreach. Yet as welcome as the laborers were, there was often an economic, class, and educational gulf between them and the local citizenry.

The number of laborers staying at the camp rose and fell both during the summer and over the years. Bumper crops might bring loads of workers, but crop failures or a slow-down in jobs often forced families to move down the road to the next opportunity. By the 1960s a new threat was on the horizon—automated bean pickers. Increased mechanization meant that some crops could be picked more cheaply and effectively by machines rather than people. Camp attendance began to drop.

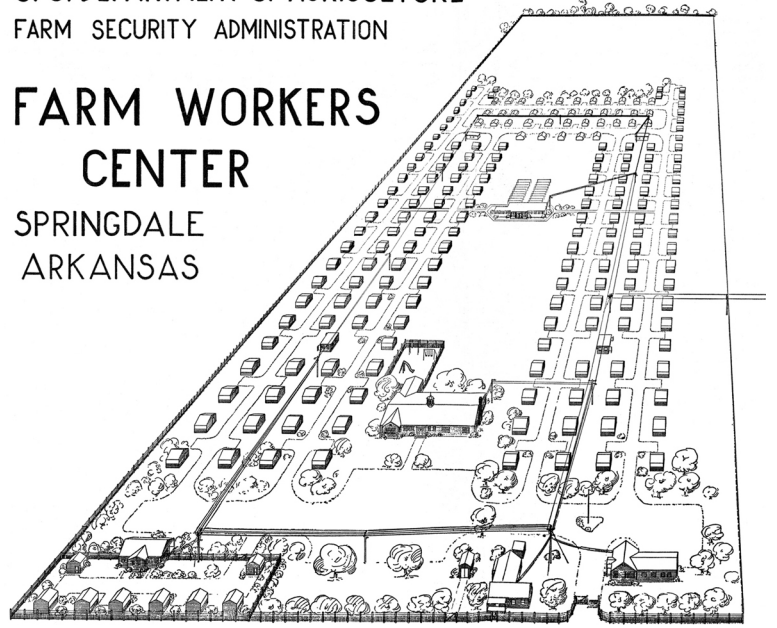
The City of Springdale honored its commitment to run the labor camp for 20 years. In July 1968 the decision was made to close the camp at the end of the summer and sell the remaining 160 cabins, 40 of which were still occupied. The local housing authority wanted to build a 170-unit low-income housing development on the camp's land, using Federal funds to secure the 40-year loan. Groundbreaking on Phillips Plaza, named after Springdale mayor Park Phillips, began in the fall of 1969. By May 1971 the first renters had moved into the \$2-million-dollar project.

Today much of the camp only exists in memories and photographs. But a few of the old cabins may yet stand in Springdale as outbuildings. And the camp's old community building, which once held the nursery school for the migrant laborers, was moved to the southern part of the property. It now serves as a Head Start school, continuing the building's long tradition of sheltering youngsters in need. 🌱

Note: Following the Crop, our photo exhibit exploring the history of Springdale's migrant labor camp, is on display through August 23.

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FARM SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

FARM WORKERS
CENTER
SPRINGDALE
ARKANSAS



From *The Springdale News*, April 23, 1942

CALENDAR

Through June 7. *Tech-Knowledge-Gee!*, a hands-on exhibit about communication.

Through July 26. *Play Ball!*, an exhibit about the history of baseball in Northwest Arkansas.

Through August 23. *Following the Crop*, a photo exhibit of life at Springdale's migrant labor camp in the 1940s-1960s, from the workers' cabins to the schools, clinics, and social activities provided by aid groups.

May 21, noon. A program on butterflies by Lori Spencer, author of *Arkansas Butterflies and Moths*.

June 14, 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Photo Identification Group meeting. Come help us identify the who, what, when, where, and why of photos in the museum collection.

June 18, noon. "Quilts: 1850 to the Present," a show-and-tell program by Terri Leins, professor of developmental mathematics at the University of Arkansas-Fort Smith.

June 24-January 17, 2009. *Ozark Voices: Personal Stories From Northwest Arkansas*, an exhibit featuring interviews with area residents recorded by the StoryCorps® project.

June 28. Field Day, sponsored by local members of the American Radio Relay League. Ham radio operators will set up and operate their equipment on the museum grounds throughout the day. Special program at 1:00 p.m. on "The Golden Age of Radio" by ham radio operator Bruce Vaughan.

July 16, noon. "Early Madison County, 1830-1865," a program by Joy Russell, president of the Madison County Historical Society.

***August 12-February 21, 2009.** *First Things First*, an exhibit featuring collections from the early years of the Shiloh Museum.

****August 20, noon.** "From Sumac Trees to Superhighway: The Butterfield Stage Route Through Northwest Arkansas," a program by John McLarty, assistant director of the Northwest Arkansas Regional Planning Commission, and Susan Young, Shiloh Museum outreach coordinator.

***August 26-December 13.** *Happy Birthday, Shiloh!*, a photo exhibit celebrating 40 years of preserving Northwest Arkansas history at the Shiloh Museum.

September 6, 10:00 a.m.-noon. Shiloh Museum's 40th birthday party. Come help us celebrate with birthday cake and special festivities.

September 13, 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. 32nd Ozark Quilt Fair, with new and antique quilts for show and sale. Musical entertainment by old-time string band *Shout Lulu*.

* opening dates tentative due to possible roof repairs on the main museum building.

** program to be held at the First United Methodist Church next door to the museum.

Join the Shiloh Museum Association

- Satisfaction of knowing you are supporting an important cultural institution and helping preserve our Arkansas Ozark heritage, *and*
- 10% discount on Shiloh Store purchases
- Reduced fees for children's and adult workshops
- Invitations to exhibit openings and special events

Consider a Gift to the Shiloh Museum Endowment Fund

☐ Check here if you would like more information about the endowment fund.

☐ Check here if you would like to receive your newsletter by email.

Email address _____

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- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual - \$15 | <input type="checkbox"/> Patron - \$50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> School class - \$12.50 | <input type="checkbox"/> Sponsor - \$100 |
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A MOUTHWATERING WAGONLOAD. Identified only as “some of the Stroud family of rural Huntsville, Arkansas,” these two fellows were probably headed to town to sell some fine-looking watermelons. *Courtesy Tom Duggan*



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