



Dennis Strayer, acting president of the Kerbyville Museum board of directors, with the historic Stith-Naucke house (left) and the entrance to the museum (right). (Photo by Christina Hill)

Kerbyville Museum provides historical perspective of valley, surroundings

By CHRISTINA HILL
Correspondent

It's not uncommon to hear people say, "Time is flying by" after they've had a busy week.

However, instead of having time pass them by, visitors to Kerbyville Museum History Center are taken back in time.

Since inception in the late 1950s, the collection of historical artifacts at the museum has grown immensely.

Toys, cameras, clothing, sewing machines, musical instruments and mining, logging and transportation equipment are among the various items displayed.

"We also have a wildlife display diorama that contains a lot of native animals in the area, such as black bear, gray fox and geese," said Dennis Strayer, president of the museum board for the past two years.

"A local taxidermist prepared many of the animal donations, and several groups volunteered skills and donated materials to complete the project from 1999 to 2000," said Strayer.

The museum also features a military exhibit.

"Because I'm a Vietnam veteran, I took on the task of arranging the military exhibit," said Strayer. "The collection spans from the Revolutionary War to the first Gulf War. I donated my combat jacket, and another Vietnam veteran donated her nurse outfit," Strayer said.

In addition, there is an old barn and a blacksmith's shop behind the museum. And, next door to the museum is the historic Naucke House.

"The Nauckes were locals," said Strayer, "and now their house is part of the museum, and it's filled with a lot of things relating to that time period; kitchen items, furniture, an old organ and piano, a doll collection. It's fully furnished with items from that era," Strayer explained.

During 2003, the museum board partnered with the Sourdough Chapter of the Horsemen's Club of America. This group then took on a year-long task of renovating the barn and blacksmith's shop.

Said Strayer, "Now people can see how the blacksmith's shop would have looked back then. There's also an old buggy in the barn and old saddles."

Now one of the bigger projects coming up is restoration of the one-room log-built Grimmitt Schoolhouse on the museum grounds.

According to Strayer, the schoolhouse used to sit on the Grimmitt Family Farm and was used from about 1890 to 1910. A school teacher would live

with one of the farm families and would get to school early to stoke up the stove and prepare for the day.

"What we're hoping to do by the reconstruction is to give children today that experience to attend school, where everyone's together in a single room regardless of age," said Strayer. "It's more of a historical learning experience that not too many places are providing anymore."

"Two summers ago, we had a lady visit who was writing a book documenting one-room school houses remaining, and she told us that ours is one of only four or six remaining in the Western United States."

Strayer said that permits are pending to get started on the reconstruction. Money, of course, is also an issue.

"We've had several matching grant donations from Grimmitt Family members, but there's still a lot more that needs to be raised," said Strayer. "We are going to try and get the schoolhouse as much finished by the end of the summer, and what we don't finish, we'll weatherize and finish by next spring or summer," he said.

While the museum holds a lot of history inside and out, it also has quite a history of its own.

"Clear back in 1958 or '59, the Illinois Valley Federated Women's Club started the museum," said Strayer. "Originally, it was just the Naucke House, which they operated as the museum for a few years."

"Then in the early '60s, they were able to get the current building built. They then moved the Grimmitt School there in the '60s, and the miner's cabin was found on national forest land, so that was moved by the Navy Construction Battalion people in the 1980s," Strayer explained.

The museum remained under the operation of the Women's Club until the early '90's when the county took over and ran it for about half a decade. In 1998, Strayer and other locals formed a 501 c3 non-profit group to run the museum and have been running it every since.

And, according to Strayer, visitation has been on the rise.

"I don't have the stats for last year," he said, "but I know that 2003 was a good year. We had between 2,000 and 3,000 adults stop by and several hundred children. We also have an even mix of local and out-of-state travelers," Strayer said.

Museum hours are Mondays, Tuesdays and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., and Sundays from noon to 3 p.m.

"We aren't open very many hours, Strayer said, "because we don't have enough people to fill in. We're always looking for volunteers."

Strayer, who works full-time at the Illinois Valley Visitor Center, spends his weekends volunteering his time at the museum.

The cost of visiting the museum is \$5 for adults, \$1 for children ages 6 through 12. Children 5 and younger are free. An annual family membership, which includes unlimited visitations, is available for \$20.

For more information, phone 592-5252.



SMOKEJUMPER BASE REVISITED -- Roger Brandt, an Illinois Valley history buff interested in the background and historical value of the former Siskiyou Smokejumper Base at the Illinois Valley Airport, led a tour Saturday, July 2. Brandt is working with the I.V. Airport Advisory Board. The parachute loft, (rear) is said to be the oldest such structure remaining in the Western United States. (Photo by Dale Sandberg)

Glenn Morrison Unit 70 Auxiliary earns top awards

By TINA HAEMMERLEIN

For Glenn Morrison Unit 70 American Legion Auxiliary the 2004-2005 year has come to an end with many wonderful memories, and the start of a new 2005-2006 year has begun with big plans ahead.

June was busy with installation of new officers for our unit. Our young women from Illinois Valley went to Girls State for a week in Salem. All had a grand time and learned much.

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FREE!
Concerts in the Park
Thursday, July 7, 6:30 p.m.
Jubilee Park

Bennett & Carter
Thursday, July 14
'Jefferson'

Sponsored by
Illinois Valley Chamber of Commerce

CAVE JUNCTION ART WALK

FRIDAY, JULY 8TH • 5 - 8 P.M.

Explore the visual, Literary, Performing & Epicurean Arts of the Illinois Valley
Exhibits showing through July

<p>April's Aroma Home 219 S Redwood Hwy - 592-2889 Featuring Carol Crawford Myers Mixed Media Refreshments</p>	<p>Taylor's Country Store 202 S. Redwood Hwy 592-5358 Parmesan & Dill Crusted Salmon Mushroom & Broccoli Stir Fry Romaine & Daikon Radish Salad Jasmine Rice Featuring from Happy Camp The Klamath Knot Artisans Music: State of Jefferson Reggae to Jazz</p>	<p>Rising Suns 146 S. Redwood Hwy - 592-2430 Featuring Kaye Kinton Custom Glass Etching</p>
<p>A Creative Space 119 1/2 Redwood Hwy - 592-6484 Featuring George Richards & Cassandra Newton-Miller Oils, Sculpture Scratchboard Art Music: Around the Hearth Celtic Harp 6-7:30 pm</p>	<p>Blue Moon Cafe 119 S. Redwood Hwy - 592-2266 Featuring Johnnie Walker Multi Media Artist Pottery & Paintings Music: Patrick Dodd "Music for Social Justice"</p>	<p>Time Capsule 144 S. Redwood Hwy - 592-3883 Retro & Vintage Clothing & Collectibles Featuring Surprise Guest Artist</p>
<p>Out Horsin' Around 315 S. Redwood Hwy. 592-2212 Featuring Jacksonville Artist Pamela Doris Lumley "Chinese Brush Stroke" Demonstration Horse Gifts & Horse Stuff</p>	<p>Bagel Junction 202 N. Redwood Hwy - 415-0072 Soup . Salad . Sandwiches Featuring Dorthea Hover-Kramer "Celebrating Our Landscapes" Music: Uncle Fluster 6pm Old Timey Traditional Tunes</p>	<p>Jefferson State Financial Group 221-B S. Redwood Hwy - 592-6262 Featuring Sparrow Fine Handcrafted Jewelry & Playing French Accordion, 6pm</p>
<p>Special Productions 103 S. Redwood Hwy. 592-2034 Victorian Lamps Collectibles . Rhinestone Jewelry Next to SOFCU Featuring Marian Chavez Woodburning</p>	<p>Pizza Pit 316 S. Redwood Hwy 592-6111 "A Summer of Fun" Boys & Girls Club Youth Art Mention this ad and receive a discount on any extra large pizza **</p>	<p>Changes Art & Energy Gallery & Studio 200 W. Lister #C - 592-6431 Across from the Post Office Featuring Local Artist Linda Stevenson Nature Scenes & Portraits in Oil</p>

Stop by the "Free Thirst Aid Station" Under the tree in front of Changes

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