

# The Clay County MOsaic

“Fitting the Pieces Together”

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT PRO TEM

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In this fourth episode of the “President pro tem” President’s Message, Tony Meyers expounds on our effort to provide access to our records via 21<sup>st</sup> century tools. We love having the original documents, but we also want to leverage new technology to make them more available to our modern audience.

~ Stuart Elliott  
President

I’ve always enjoyed studying our local history and working with others, so volunteering at the Archives has proven to be a great fit for my interests. I started at the Archives in 2011 after retiring from a 40 year career in Information Technology. My first project involved working with other volunteers to research and publish our book *Divided Loyalties*, which focuses on the stories of Civil War soldiers buried in Clay County. Since then I’ve completed several other book related projects in-

cluding publication of *Discovering Historic Clay County* and recently



*Frontier Faith* by Kevin Fisher which documents the first 100 years of the Methodist Church in Liberty. Along the way I’ve also worked with our newspaper, photo and map collections. In recent months I’ve been involved with coordination of our digital imaging project.

Since the Archives’ founding in 1979, volunteers have been working to preserve the rich history of Clay County. Over the years we have organized thousands of original source documents, some dating as far back as 1822. Each week our volunteers complete research requests and assist patrons who are seek-

ing information about the people and places of Clay County. In addition to source documents, our volunteers have also worked to build an extensive collection of other historical materials including photographs. The Archives’ photo collection has grown to include more than 13,000 individual images. Each photo has been scanned to our computer system and indexed so that it can be located and retrieved in a timely manner. Additional photos are being added to the collection each week.

Based on the success of our photo collection, our volunteers are now working to expand our digital collection to include other formats. The initial efforts of our “imaging project” focusing on some of the most important and most frequently used content at the Archives. Maps, newspapers, real estate title abstracts, family research papers, obituaries, books, and various other documents are being

(Continued on page 3)

Ideas for articles?  
Please let us know!

**2018 Executive Board**

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Clay County Parks	Beth Beckett
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**Newsletter Staff**

Keenan Glidewell Barker  
 Stuart Elliott  
 Shirley Fansher  
 Jo-Jean Chamas

**General Information**

**Hours of Operation**

Monday through Wednesday—9 a.m. to 4 p.m.  
 First Wednesday of Month—6:30 p.m. to 9 p.m.  
 Closed on National Holidays

**Membership for Calendar Year**

Individual & Family (one address) - \$15.00  
 (Memberships paid after October first will apply to next calendar year.)

**Benefits of Membership**

Unlimited *On-Site* Research  
 Subscription to *The Clay County MOsaic*, our quarterly newsletter

**Research Policy & Fees**

Non-members pay \$5.00 per day for on-site research.  
 Member and non-member research requests by mail are accepted. Each request must be accompanied by a self-addressed stamped envelope and an initial research fee of \$10.00 per surname for one hour of research. Additional hours are \$10.00 per hour.

**Copy Prices**

Original records (such as probate material)	\$1/page
Other published material	15 cents per page
Microfilm printouts	25 cents per page
Computer print-outs	5 cents per page
Oversize copies	50 cents per page
Photographs	
Standard Quality	50 cents
Archival Quality	\$5.00

~ Personal imaging will be charged at the above rates ~

**MOsaic by Internet**

If you would like to receive your future newsletters via email, please forward your email address to: [MOsaic@claycountyarchives.org](mailto:MOsaic@claycountyarchives.org)

## P R E S I D E N T P R O T E M M E S S A G E

*(Continued from page 1)*

scanned. Vintage film footage, video programs, audio recordings and microfilm based documents are also being converted from analog to digital format. These digital files are being organized and stored on our computer system to enable quick and easy access. This also helps us to preserve historical materials by reducing the need to handle the original documents. Electronic backup files are being created to help ensure that important documents will not be lost due to fire or other catastrophe.

Although we've just gotten started, we have made good progress. A major portion of our historical map collection has already been scanned. Sixty years of the Liberty Tribune have been converted from microfilm to digital format. Thousands of pages of official city and county records have been scanned. More than fifty hours of audio and video programs have been digitized.

As with the many other projects that are active at the Archives, we are looking for volunteers to help with our scanning and conversion activities. If you have an interest, a few available hours and some basic computer skills, we would welcome your involvement. If you would like to help please call 816-781-3611 or drop us an email ([info@claycountyarchives.org](mailto:info@claycountyarchives.org)) and mention "the imaging project."

~Tony Meyers  
Archives Member  
& Volunteer  
President, pro tem

## W A L K I N G T O U R S

All tours begin at 10:00 am, and are free.

For more information contact Liberty's Community Development Office at 816-439-4537 or the following link:

<https://www.libertymissouri.gov/2656/Guided-Walking-Tours-2019>

Wear comfortable walking shoes!



### July 13

Main Street & Garrison School

Tour meet as the corner of Mississippi and Main Streets

### September 7

Jewell & Lightburne Districts

Tour meets at the corner of Kansas and Leonard Streets

### August 3

Downtown Murals

Tour meets at the corner of Kansas and Leonard Streets

### October 5

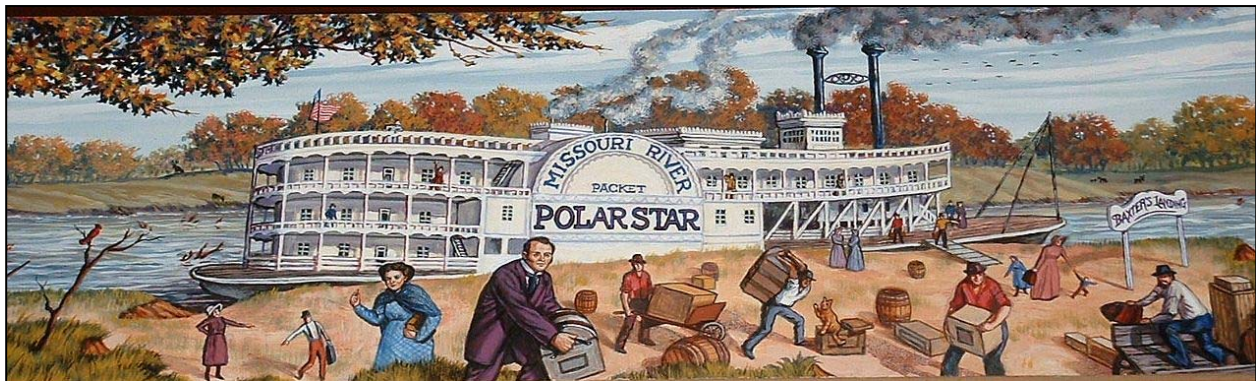
Fairview Cemetery

Tour meets at the rock arch on West Schrader Street

## BAXTER'S LANDING

Riverboat landings played an important role in the early development of Liberty and Clay County, Missouri. Landings, which were located four miles south of town on the "Liberty Bend" of the Missouri River, began operating in the early 1820s. Shubael Allen and John Thornton established Gallatin Landing circa 1822. By 1829, Allen's Landing was operating at the confluence of Shoal Creek and the Missouri River. In 1840 Joel Turnham established a new landing about 1/4 mile downstream. Goods and materials were offloaded at these landings and then transferred overland to Liberty and Fort Leavenworth. An increasing number of pioneer settlers arrived via these landings. A "rope walk" was established along the river to process hemp for export. Ox drawn carts were used to carry military equipment up the steep hill for storage at the Liberty Arsenal which was located on the bluff overlooking the river.

In 1854 John Baxter purchased Turnham's Landing. Baxter's Landing was synonymously known as Liberty Landing. Baxter and his family operated the landing and related businesses in the area for more than twenty years. Included below is a portion of a mural that depicts how Baxter's Landing might have looked during that time.



*This mural, which was painted by David McClain, can be viewed on the second floor of the Clay County Administration Building on the Courthouse square in downtown Liberty.*

An article in the July 18, 1940 edition of *The Liberty Tribune* included excerpts from a letter written by Mrs. Alice Baxter Bane to Miss Juliette Bird of Liberty. Ms. Bane was John Baxter's daughter and had lived with her family at Baxter's Landing for many years. Her letter provides wonderful insights regarding the people, businesses and activities that occurred at the landing during those interesting times. A partial transcription of the letter follows.

*"Having lived nearly 90 years I well remember those days of long ago when Liberty Landing which he and so many others term it, Baxter's Landing, belonging exclusively to my father, John Baxter. (A rope) factory was built at the landing near our home, a hotel for passenger accommodations waiting for a steamboat to carry them up or down the river. The factory was built of brick by Messrs. Michael Arthur, a farmer, Mr. Ewing, a farmer, Mr. William Wymore, uncle to my oldest sister's husband, and Mr. Madison Miller, whose wife was an Authur and your uncle by marriage. Arthur Miller carried the title of both families. Mr. Greenup Bird, your grand-father a banker was another partner in the factory. Mr. Luke Burris, wife and their son, Willie, boarded with us for years while Mr. Burris superintended the work being done at the factory by foreigners who came from St. Louis expressly for the purpose. Your Tom's father was one, Mr. Weyler, his oldest girl married Frank Everett. Lawrence Zuerker, John's father, who had a vineyard and sold fine wine, two families of Zuerker, and Hallisy, all had homes on the hills back of us. Good honest people and fine workers.*

**BAXTER'S LANDING**  
(CONTINUED)

*The hemp was raised in Clay County, principally hauled by oxen over the road, back of our house, uphill it being hard to pull, the teams were often doubled up. The hemp was unloaded, carried into the second story of the factory which was level with the road, then hackled. The men were so dusty it was hard to see their features. The rope was spun—made in coils on the first floor, then carried to the steamboats for shipment to St. Louis. My father ran two hacks for passengers to and from Liberty. Two wagons hauling the freight, making two trips a day. Two barns were necessary to house so many strong mule teams. There were two warehouses to store freight, a grocery, those who work must eat, and a house where hemp was baled for shipping. All these buildings (were located) up and down the river and (there was) still room for the Wash (rail) road on the bank in later years."*

The article concludes with the following commentary.

*Mrs. Bane (Miss Alice Baxter) spent many years of her long life here in Liberty. After her first marriage to Mr. Charley Rohman, they boarded for years at the old Arthur House, the principal hotel in Liberty then. She was a fine musician, and had her own Knabe piano in the parlor of the hotel. Many were the pleasant evenings spent listening to Miss Alice play, and dancing in the long halls, adjoining, to the entrancing strains of "The Blue Alsatian Mountains," and the "Mocking Bird," which she arranged herself as waltzes. She taught music here, also Mrs. Bane is an aunt of ex-Governor Guy B. Park of Platte City, Mo. Her pleasant home now is in the King's Daughters Home, in Mexico, Mo. She frequently visits old friends here, and can talk for hours of her old home at Baxter's Landing. The old lady, "Justice," which was on top of the old court house, was shipped up the river from St. Louis in a big long wooden box, to Baxter's Landing, and was brought from there by mule team.*

As railroads came to Clay County in the late 1860s, steamboat traffic diminished rapidly. Over the years, evidence of the once thriving riverboat landings on the "Liberty Bend" of the Missouri River has been wiped away by floods, by expansion of the railroad right-of-way and by other development. In 1949, even the river itself was rechanneled and moved two miles south, in order to reduce flooding in the area. We are certainly fortunate that Alice Baxter left us with her memories of life on the river at Baxter's Landing.

Please drop by to see us at the Clay County Archives if you would like to learn more about the Liberty Bend river landings or the Baxter family. We will be happy to assist you with your research.

~Tony Meyers  
Archives Member  
& Volunteer

Thank you to Carol Olson, Archives Member & Volunteer, for this recipe: *Library Paste*

1/2 c. sugar      1/2 c. flour  
1/2 t. Alum        2 c. water

Mix all together in pan. Cook until thick over a low fire, stirring. Remove from fire and add 15 drops of Oil of Cloves—keeps the paste from spoiling and gives a pleasant odor.

Aren't you glad we can buy bottled glue?

## YOU KNOW WHO...?

### ARCHIVES PHOTO COLLECTION INCLUDES MYSTERIES WAITING TO BE SOLVED

The Archives photograph collection contains many photos that are not yet identified.

Contact the Archives by email ([info@claycountyarchives.org](mailto:info@claycountyarchives.org)) with any information that might put a name or family connection to the women in the photo to the right.



The file shows the photo is from the Jacob T. Hicks Glass Plate Collection.



## AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN OF MISSOURI

“The Liberty Branch was organized in 1938 with 15 charter members and a few associate members. One of those original women, Christine Pugh, remains active in the branch today. While only an associate member at the founding because William Jewell College, her Alma Mater, was not an approved school until 1942, Christine has been the backbone of the branch through these past 57 years, and in fact, just completed a 4-year term as President of the Branch.”

Note: Not related to above mystery picture.

Source: The History of the American Association of University Women of Missouri, 1976-1996, edited by Bonnie Knauss, Missouri State Historian

## ARCHIVES IN THE COURIER TRIBUNE SPOTLIGHT

The 2019 “Explore Liberty” issue includes a three-page spread with photos featuring the Clay County Archives. Amanda Lubinski of the Courier Tribune visited the Archives in March. Providing a tour of the Frank Hughes Memorial Library, Archives’ President Stuart Elliott offered the reporter access to some of the lesser known aspects of the ever-growing collection. This encouragement to explore the Clay County Archives & Historical Library is much appreciated.

An electronic copy is available at this link: [http://www.mycouriertribune.com/special\\_sections/explore\\_liberty/](http://www.mycouriertribune.com/special_sections/explore_liberty/)  
See “On Record” at page 34!

**ARCHIVES  
GIFT SHOP**

**ATLASES**

Reprint of the 1865 Clay County Historical Atlas, with features in color, just like the original!  
Includes an index. \$22  
1877 Historical Atlas of Clay County \$15  
Every-Name Index to 1877 Atlas \$13

***THE STORY OF LIBERTY***...from settlement to suburb, a movie available in two formats:  
DVD—\$17 each  
S-VHS—\$12 each  
(add \$2 for shipping and handling)  
The VHS version is available in two formats, for older model players and for the current model players. Specify which of the formats you desire.

**GREETING CARDS**

Note Cards—10 \$7.50

***IKNEWFRANK...IWISHIHADKNOWNJESSE***

Family, Friends and Neighbors in the Life and Times of the James Boys \$30

***GUERRILLAS AND OTHER CURIOSITIES***

Bud, Donnie and Me \$25

**MISCELLANEOUS / BOOKS**

Civil War Monuments & Memorials  
In Western Missouri \$22  
Clay County Births, 1883-84 \$9  
Clay County Deaths, 1883-84 \$9  
Clay County Historic Map \$15  
(not available to be mailed)  
Clay Co. Sesquicentennial Souvenir \$30  
Doctor on the Western Frontier \$17  
Early Days in the West \$18  
Lost Voices on the Missouri \$64.95

***DIVIDED LOYALTIES - Civil War Soldiers Buried in Clay County*** \$35

Biographical narratives and genealogical information for more than 800 soldiers and family members. Published to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the Civil War.

***DISCOVERING HISTORIC CLAY COUNTY, MISSOURI*** \$30

Information on more than 1,100 historic sites and points of interest throughout Clay County. Includes photos, descriptions and maps.

***HISTORY OF CLAY COUNTY, MISSOURI—NATIONAL HISTORICAL COMPANY, 1885*** \$30

Indexed and Reprinted by the Clay County Archives and Historical Library

***PORTRAITS OF A FRONTIER COMMUNITY*** \$25

The Jacob T. Hicks Glass Plate Photo Collection

Please make your check payable to:

Clay County Archives

And mail to:

P.O. Box 99

Liberty, MO 64069

All prices include mailing fees. If you wish to pick up in person, please contact us for pricing and to ensure availability.

Jan—March 2019

WE'RE ON THE WEB  
WWW.CLAYCOUNTYARCHIVES.ORG



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**Mailing Address**

PO Box 99, Liberty, MO 64069

**Phone**

816-781-3611

Our Mission

To procure, preserve, restore, maintain, study, and promote manuscripts, instruments, records, charters, evidence, and documents of a public or private nature which may have statistical, legal or historical significance to Clay County, Missouri, its government or residents, or such documents as might be desirable to the association and to encourage public interest therein.

Clay County Archives & Historical Library, Inc.  
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Liberty, MO 64069