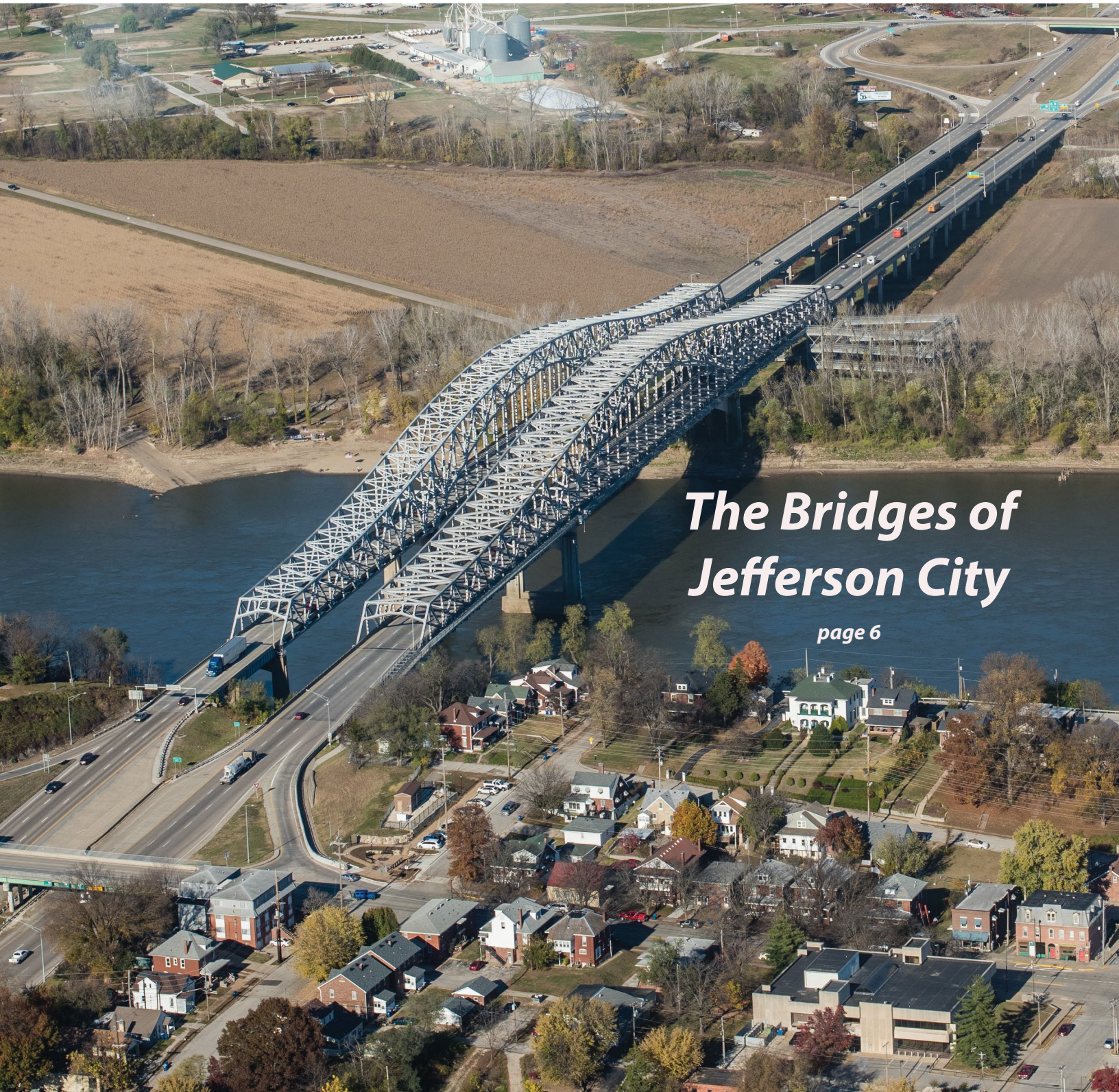


Fall 2016

# THE MISSOURI STATE ARCHIVES . . .

*Where History Begins*



## *The Bridges of Jefferson City*

*page 6*



## Contents

- 3** From the State Archivist
- 4** Archives Afield: On to Greater Glory
- 5** Records of the Missouri Veterans Home in St. James
- 6** Picture This: The Bridges of Jefferson City
- 8** Calendar of Events
- 10** Then & Now: Brookfield, Mo.
- 11** Donations  
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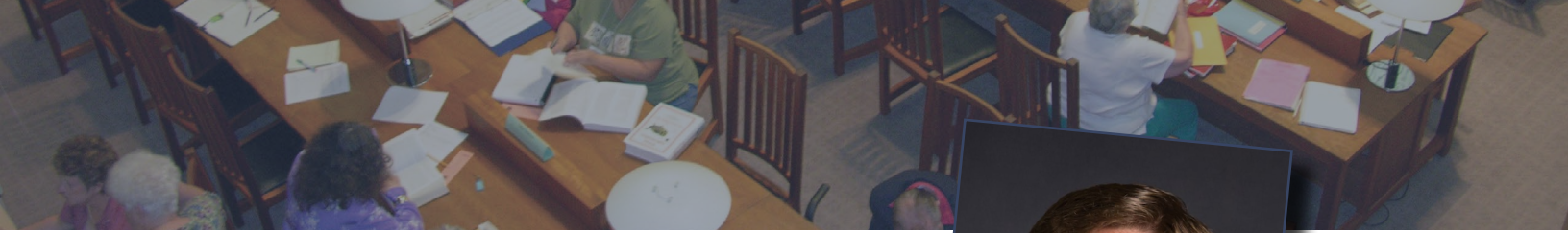
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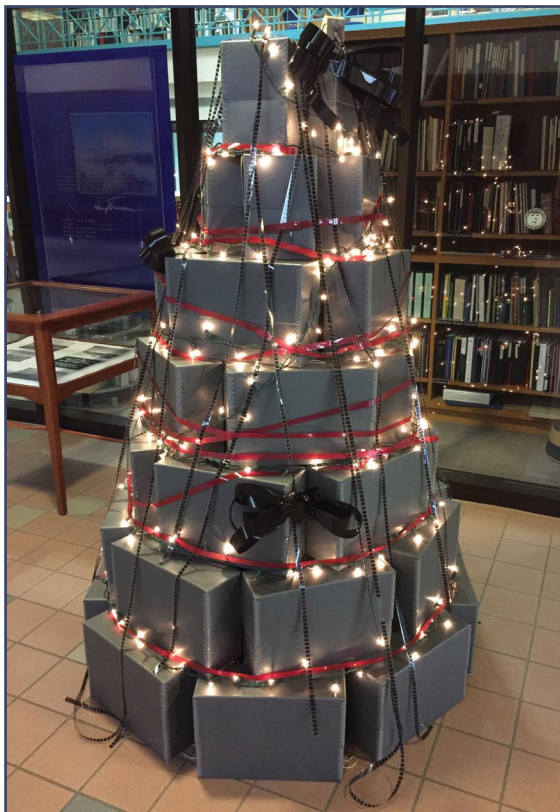
Aerial of Missouri River bridges at Jefferson City,  
November 10, 2015. Courtesy of the Missouri Department of  
Transportation via Flickr.



# From the State Archivist

*By John Dougan*

The holiday season is once again upon us, filled with shopping, empty calories and sharing time with family and friends. And though we should enjoy these simple pleasures, this time of year also presents a wonderful opportunity to remember and learn about those who came before us. Consider sneaking in some family history research while home for the holidays. Ask a few questions of elder relatives, dig through those shoeboxes full of old photos and mementos or even visit the family farm while the poison ivy is dormant for the winter. Memories are made every day, but are most commonly shared during the holidays—so make the most of them!



The 2016 Missouri State Archives holiday tree is made of archival storage boxes and decorated with discarded microfilm.

This is also traditionally the time of year for annual gift requests (if you haven't yet received such a letter from the Friends of the Missouri State Archives, you soon will). As you are prioritizing which organizations and charities to support, I hope you will consider joining or renewing your membership with the Friends. Generous gifts from history enthusiasts such as yourself play such a vital role in supporting the public outreach efforts of the Archives, with everything from the *Thursday Evening Speaker Series* to the publication of this newsletter.

These activities truly could not happen without the Friends, so on behalf of the Missouri State Archives, thank you for support. We look forward to making new memories in the years to come, and, with your help, sharing many from the past. Happy Holidays!



Probate records document the disposition of a person's estate after death. They provide information about possessions, extended families, income and expenditures, including funeral expenses. Examining the latter reflects how Ozarks burial practices changed over time as the region modernized, just as burial practices changed within the larger American context. This reflected, at least in part, an economy evolving from predominantly rural to one increasingly urban and cash-based. The following is based on examples from Howell County Probate Court case files, prepared for preservation microfilming and indexed by the Local Records Program.

At the turn of the 20th century in rural Missouri, family members performed most burial preparations—washing and dressing the deceased, sitting with the body until burial, receiving friends and neighbors who came to pay last respects, building the coffin, digging the grave and burial. Over the years, however, the increasingly professionalized mortuary industry performed more and more of those tasks: undertakers prepared the body, sold commercial-made coffins, held formal funeral services and arranged for burial. Sending off the dearly departed, traditionally done by family or friends, was handed off to business.

Coffins, one of the first commercially available items, were sold in the local mercantile store. Some merchants offered undertaking services, usually conducted in a separate area of the store—frequently an upper floor. There they washed and dressed the deceased and placed them in a manufactured coffin. Hired laborers dug the graves, often in local cemeteries rather than on family farms.

The job of early mercantile undertakers, considered tradesmen, morphed over time into full-service mortuaries that embalmed the dead and made all arrangements for interment. Howell County probate records demonstrate this gradual shift from do-it-yourself toward professional services; in West Plains, the county seat, tradesmen's undertaker services existed side by side with professional mortuaries. In the mid-1910s, McFarland Undertaking, E. M. Rollins Furniture and Undertaking and Davis-Langston Hardware Company all served the community.

Thirty-five-year-old realtor Thomas A. Snelling died October 1914 in an automobile accident. His burial included a new suit and underwear, as well as services by McFarland Undertaking Company that included shaving, embalming, a casket and vault. In addition to

McFarland's charge of \$231.25, there were expenses for transporting the body by train to Kingman County, Kansas, for burial, and the cost of a plot in Upchurch Cemetery. By comparison, these charges are the equivalent of around \$5,630 today. Just two months later, 61-year-old widow Dicie J. Roberds died of pneumonia. Her total burial expense was a \$30 coffin purchased from E. M. Rollins Furniture and Undertaking. Family members undoubtedly provided the remainder of services—care of her body, clothing, digging the grave and burial.

When farmer David Surritte died in 1915, his inexpensive send-off did not include undertaking, but utilized commercially-made items. A new suit, shirt, necktie and socks were purchased for \$8.20. His coffin, although homemade, was outfitted with purchased satin, cotton padding, black cloth, lace and manufactured coffin handles. All told, his interment cost \$14.10. The burial of Warren Bucklew, a

railroad engineer who died in 1918, stood in stark contrast regarding both cost and tradition. His bronze-finished casket alone was \$750, added to \$100 for a steel vault, \$25 for embalming, \$31.60 for new clothing, payment for a hearse, to the minister and the cemetery sexton. The charge from T. R. Burns Furniture and Undertaking for complete services totaled \$935.60.

Colonel Jay L. Torrey, a nationally prominent man who originated the idea of "Rough Rider" regiments for the Spanish American War, amassed a 1920 funeral bill commensurate

with his wealth—his \$1,000 casket rested inside a \$150 steel vault. Other costs raised the final total to \$1,175, a sum most people of the area had never seen. In 1928, 82-year-old pensioner Smith H. Belt was laid to rest for the sum of \$1,044, an amount that included embalming and burial in an air-sealed metal casket with a full-length oval glass. The trend of costly, professional services continued during the Great Depression for those of means; when jeweler Thomas C. Sillito died in December 1935, his funeral came to \$1,189. Fortunately for the average person, though—especially during the Depression—the dead could still be buried frugally. William P. Sears, who died the same month as Belt, was buried for \$20 in a homemade coffin outfitted with purchased hardware.

Probate files, and court records in general, offer valuable insights to the past, beyond their recognized value to family historians. Often information-rich, these files provide details not just about the individual and their family, but on the economy and social connections within the county, the region and beyond.



Burial of Dr. Robert W. Conaway at Stone Hill Cemetery, Dent County, Mo., February 1925.  
Photograph by Charles Elliott Gill, Missouri State Archives.

# Records of the Missouri Veterans Home in St. James

By Mary Mitchell, Research Analyst

The Missouri Veterans Home in St. James, or the Federal Soldiers Home as it was originally called, was established in 1896 by the Women's Relief Corps and the Grand Army of the Republic as a home for Union veterans of the Civil War, as well as their spouses and widows. Just one year after opening, in 1897, the state of Missouri purchased the property for \$1.00 and expanded its mission to include veterans of all wars. Although the conflicts in which the residents served have changed, the home remains in use to this day.

The records of the home are frequently overlooked, despite the treasure trove of relevant information for genealogists and other researchers. Applications typically include the individual's name, last residence, date and location of birth, length of Missouri citizenship, conflict(s) in which they served, date and place of enlistment, company(s) served, and rank, date, place and cause of discharge. Also listed are any disabilities, whether they were able to gain admission to any federally funded homes, pension status and amount, value of property owned, occupation and marital status. Those submitted by spouses and widows also include the name of their husband/wife and date and place of marriage (applications from widows further provide their spouse's date of death).

In addition to applications, "Inmate," or resident, Registers are also available. These provide much of the same information, but also include the names and addresses of close friends or near kin, whether an individual could read or write, any church or lodge memberships and date of discharge from the home.

Approved applications from 1896 to 1911 are available online through the Missouri Digital Heritage website, along with the first three volumes of the original "Inmate" Registers, spanning June 25, 1897, to February 15, 1929. In addition to the records available online, the Missouri State Archives makes accessible onsite applications from those that resided at the home between 1912 and 1994, with many of the more recent forms including applicant photographs! Also available in person are later volumes of the resident registers spanning 1929 to 1973. Progressively less information is provided on each resident as the years go on, however, and the records, in some instances, may be redacted to protect the residents' privacy.

If you are a genealogist with a Missouri veteran ancestor or a military history buff, consider including the Missouri Veterans Home records in your research—the results

may pleasantly surprise you! To view the records available online, visit <http://cdm16795.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/landingpage/collection/vetstj>, or, for a search of those records not yet digitally accessible, contact the Missouri State Archives reference staff today at [archives@sos.mo.gov](mailto:archives@sos.mo.gov).



Above: The Missouri Veterans Home administration building in the 1950s. *Missouri State Archives.*

Below: William James originally built the Dunmoor Mansion (below) as a home in 1866. The mansion became the Federal Soldiers Home on October 25, 1896. *Missouri State Archives.*





# Picture This

By Erika Woehlk, Visual Materials Archivist

## The Bridges of Jefferson City

For the better part of 2016, southbound traffic entering Jefferson City on Route 54/63 was redirected across the bridge typically carrying northbound traffic, leading to confusion in the best of circumstances and extreme delays in the worst. Although trying, these difficulties pale in comparison to those experienced by 18th and 19th century travelers to the area.

Until 1896, Jefferson City was cut off from the north by the lack of a bridge over the Missouri River. Visitors from that direction had to use other bridges, either up- or downriver, or water transportation, making it a cumbersome trip. Thus, in 1895, construction of a drawbridge began.

Spanning 1,745 feet and constructed of steel with a two-inch-thick wooden deck, the City of Jefferson built this toll bridge for \$250,000. It took almost exactly one year to complete and was dedicated on May 22, 1896, before a crowd of 20,000, including 2,000 school children who formed a parade along its length. Judge James B. Gantt presided as the master of ceremonies.

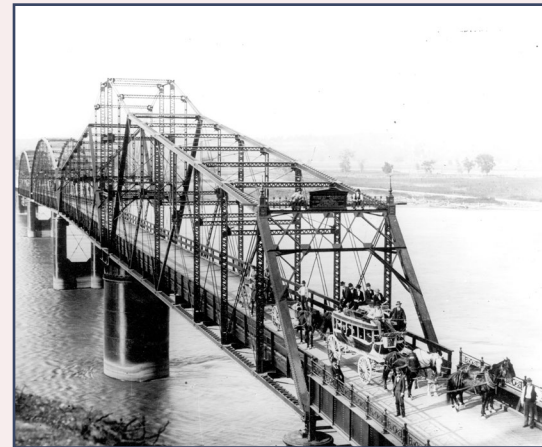
In 1932, the state of Missouri's Highway Commission purchased the bridge for \$50,000 from the City of Jefferson. The last toll was collected October 15, 1932, from John H. Nolen, who was also the first man to pay it back in 1896. Roughly 3,500 people came out to watch the final paid crossing.

By the 1950s, the original 1896 bridge was in disrepair and in need of replacement. Construction of a longer, taller, wider and generally more suitable structure for automobile traffic began in 1953. The bridge was built for a cost of \$6.5 million and formally dedicated in August 1955. For a few months, both bridges were visible above the river, but the old bridge was soon demolished in sections. The steel fell into the Missouri River where crews worked to salvage the metal and clear away the debris. Jefferson City's Rotary Centennial Park now marks the site where this historic bridge's south entrance once stood.

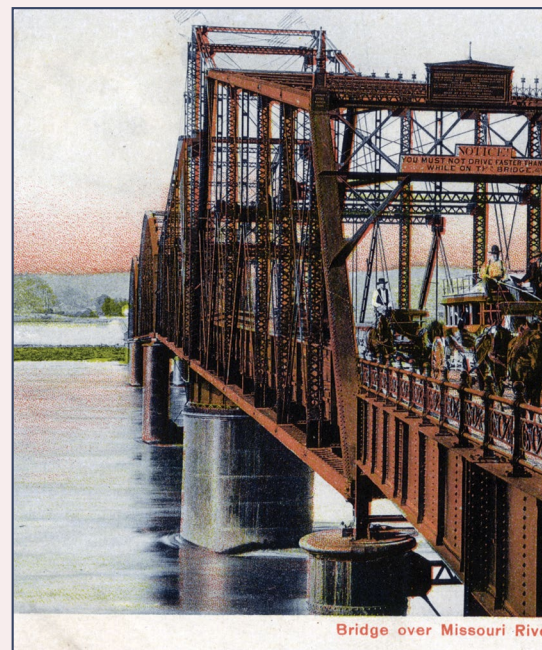
Traffic on the new bridge steadily increased as the population of mid-Missouri grew, eventually necessitating a second bridge to handle just northbound traffic. This northbound bridge opened September 22, 1991, while southbound traffic remained on the bridge built in 1955. A pedestrian/bicycle walkway was later added to the northbound bridge in 2011.

By early 2016, the 1955 bridge was in need of repairs. The Missouri Department of Transportation began work on the southbound bridge in May, draping the steel in Kevlar prior to sandblasting and painting. Seventy-two laborers worked shifts around the clock enabling the bridge to re-open on November 14, 2016, after six and a half months. Although the repairs led to traffic delays, they will extend the life of the bridge another 30 years.

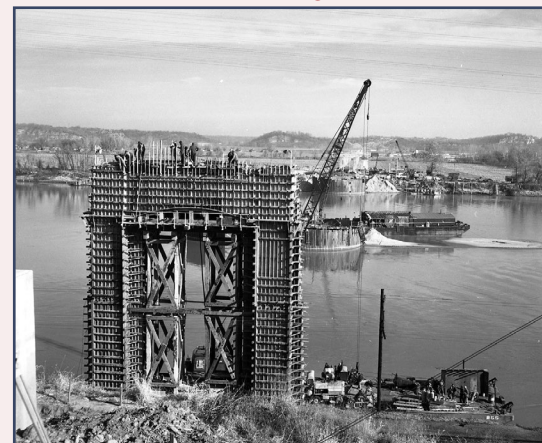
To view more images from the construction of the 1955 bridge, visit the Missouri State Archives' Flickr page today at [www.flickr.com/photos/missouristatearchives/albums/72157646325313429](http://www.flickr.com/photos/missouristatearchives/albums/72157646325313429).



The newly-operating bridge, c.1896. All photographs are from the Missouri State Archives unless otherwise noted.



Pier construction for the new bridge, November 28, 1953.







Last toll crossing on the 1896 bridge, October 15, 1932.



Demolition of the 1896 bridge, October 19, 1955.



Jefferson City, Mo.

The bridge over the Missouri River at Jefferson City, c. 1910. The larger sign on the bridge reads, "Notice! You must not drive faster than a walk while on the bridge."



Above: One of the Kevlar "tents," June 13, 2016. Photo courtesy of Greg Olson.

Below: A view under the tent, July 5, 2016. Photo courtesy of the Missouri Department of Transportation.

Grand opening of the new bridge, August 20, 1955.





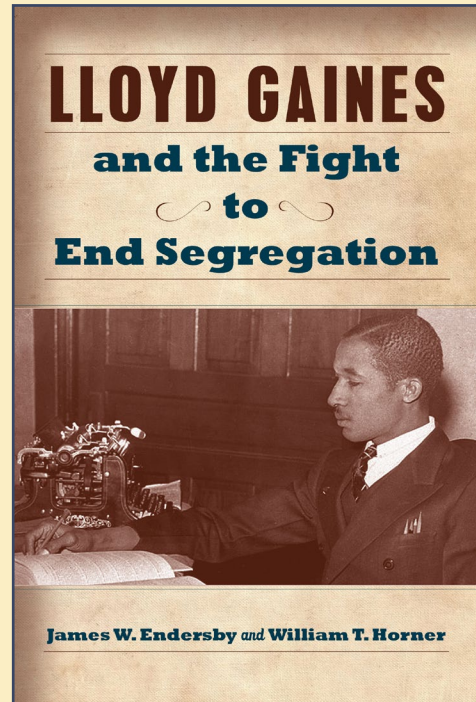
# Winter 2017 Program Calendar

## **Southside Sketches:**

### **Essays on Jefferson City's Old Munichburg**

**Thursday, January 12, 2017, 7 p.m.**

Immigrants from Bavarian Munchberg began settling the south side of Jefferson City in the 1840s, giving the area its original name, "Munichburg." By 1890, it was a vigorous, self-contained ethnic community within Jefferson City, with inhabitants originating from across modern day Germany. After the turn of the 20th century, however, German influence waned, and the neighborhood eventually became known as the "Southside." Former resident Walter Schroeder recently released *Southside Sketches*, a collection of 50 short essays on the neighborhood's past. Based largely on oral histories and personal memories, topics include businesses, the environment, notable individuals, religion and holidays. Join us as Schroeder provides context to the standard history of the neighborhood by revealing forgotten events and unusual experiences of living in Jefferson City's German-settled Southside.

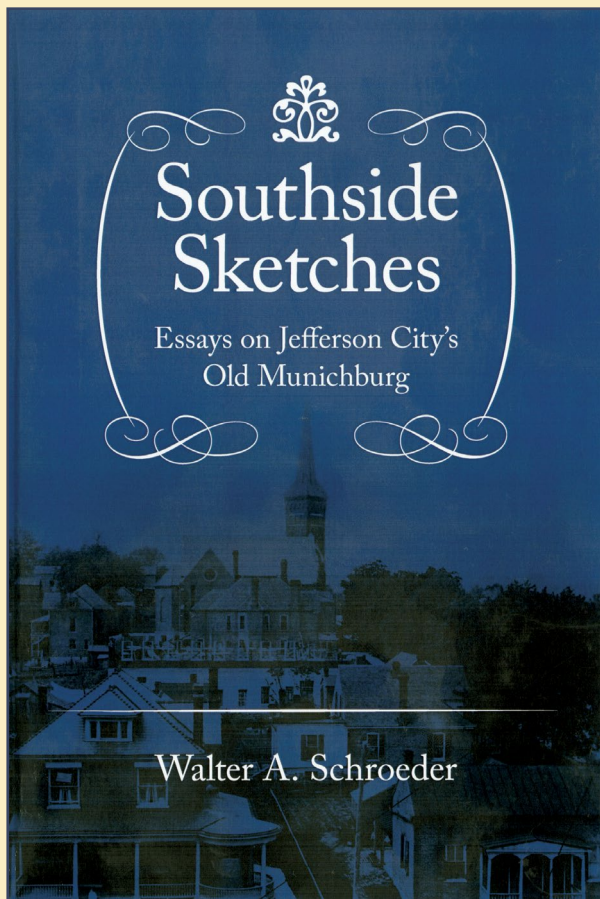


## **Lloyd Gaines and the Fight to End Segregation**

**Thursday, February 16, 2017, 7 p.m.**

**In Recognition of African American History Month**

In 1935, the University of Missouri School of Law denied African-American Lloyd Gaines' application for admission based on race. With the assistance of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), Gaines brought suit against the school in *Missouri ex rel. Gaines v. Canada* (1938). The case eventually reached the U.S. Supreme Court where the decision in Gaines favor was the first from that body to question the separate but equal principle upheld by *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896). The court found that students of all races were eligible for admission if only one state school offered the desired education. The case drew national headlines, and public enmity towards the decision resulted in the NAACP moving Gaines to Chicago after he received several death threats. He later mysteriously vanished before enrolling. In their new book, *Lloyd Gaines and the Fight to End Segregation*, authors James W. Endersby and William T. Horner focus on the vital role played by the NAACP and its lawyers in advancing a concerted strategy to produce political change. Their work sheds light on this important step toward the broad acceptance of segregation as inherently unequal.





# Winter 2017 Program Calendar

## *Virginia Minor and Her Major Role in Women's Rights* Thursday, March 16, 2017, 7 p.m. *In Recognition of Women's History Month*

In 1872, cofounder of the Woman Suffrage Association of Missouri, Virginia Minor, marched to the office of her St. Louis city ward registrar demanding she be registered to vote. Unswayed by her argument that the Fourteenth Amendment granted women this right, the registrar turned her away. Virginia and her lawyer husband sued, eventually taking her case all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court. Although her argument ultimately failed to persuade the justices, and woman suffrage did not become a reality in Missouri until the passage of the 19th Amendment in 1920, Minor continued to fight for women's rights until the end of her life in 1894. Historian Diane Eickhoff and her husband Aaron Barnhart, former writer for the *Kansas City Star*, will share Virginia Minor's inspiring story, recounting how it fits into the larger narrative surrounding woman suffrage in Missouri.



Authors Diane Eickhoff and Aaron Barnhart.

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## **Upcoming 2017 Thursday Evening Speaker Series Programs:**

*The Boat-Burners and the Secret War for  
Missouri*  
Thursday, April 20, 2017

*Missouri Law and the American Conscience:  
Historic Rights and Wrongs*  
Thursday, May 18, 2017

*Bushwhacker Belles*  
Thursday, June 15, 2017

*Buck O'Neil: Baseball's Ambassador*  
Thursday, July 13, 2017

*Fremont's Hundred Days in Missouri*  
Thursday, August 17, 2017

*Andrew Taylor Still: Father of Osteopathic  
Medicine*  
Thursday, September 14, 2017

*Missouri's Mad Doctor McDowell: Confederates,  
Cadavers and Macabre Medicine*  
Thursday, October 12, 2017

*The Resurgence of Osage Culture and Language*  
Thursday, November 9, 2017  
*In Recognition of American Indian Heritage  
Month*

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# Brookfield, Mo.



*W. Park Ave + Main St  
Brookfield, Mo.  
© 1936 by Gress Studio.*

Twin Parks, looking south from West Park Avenue and North Main Street, Brookfield, Mo.  
Above: 1930, photograph by Gress Studio. Missouri State Archives. Below: April 2013, photograph by Greg Olson.





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<http://cdm16795.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/landingpage/collection/p16795coll12>

Dobbelare Studio Photograph Collection (Perry County Historical Society)

<http://cdm16795.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/landingpage/collection/p16795coll11>

Harry L. George Collection (St. Joseph Museums, Inc.)

<http://harrylgeorgecollection.omeka.net/>

Lexington Wharfage Register Collection (Battle of Lexington State Historic Site)

<http://cdm16795.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/landingpage/collection/p16795coll13>



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