

Friends of Rocheport

Meeting Notice and Quarterly Newsletter

LAST MINUTE NOTICE: Due to scheduling problems, the general meeting originally planned for November 24 has been cancelled. Please disregard any contrary information that may be found on the back of this newsletter. The printing process saw most of the second pages printed before the decision was made. Sorry for any confusion!

Lost and Found.... Please help us stay connected to members. Last quarter's newsletter brought several notices back to us, because the post office addresses we had were no longer correct. Here is a list of the people (with city where we thought they were located) we have lost, and want to find. If you know any of these, please provide an address (call Patrick Cronan at 573-698-3074, or e-mail to wpcronan@aol.com). Marti Kardinal & Jan Parenteau (Tarpon Springs, FL); Maurine R. Long (Nevada, MO); Datra Herzog (Jefferson City, MO); Kathy & Bill Daniels (Columbia, MO); Amelia Hogan Graaves (Falls Church, VA); Ann Dorsey Clapp (Walpole, MA); Kristin Heitkamp (Columbia, MO); Sherry Logue Limpus (Lees Summit, MO); Jill McClintic (Eldon, MO); Lois M. Graham (Columbia, MO); and Helen & Hall Trice (Columbia, MO). Thank you for any help you can provide.

TENTATIVE Calendar for 2014.... These dates are subject to revision. General Membership meetings are planned for March 23, May 18, August 24, and October 26. These meetings will be held at the Community Hall beginning at 5 p.m. Executive Committee meetings will be January 27, February 24, March 24, April 28, May 19, June 23, July 28, August 25, September 22, October 22, and November 24 – at City Hall, from 7 p.m. Our Museum will open May 3, and continue operation on Saturday and Sunday afternoons 1-4 p.m., until October 27. Memorial Day remembrance will be May 26 at 2 p.m. We still need a volunteer to plan and lead this event. Flower sales: Pansy Days will be April 18-20; Chrysanthemum Days is scheduled for September 5-7. Both sales will be held at the Community Hall. Chili Supper and Bake Sale will be November 8. This will be at the Fire Station. Christmas Tree Lighting will be early in December. New Year Eve party will be (of course) on December 31. Fun Day on the second Wednesday of each month, at Yates House B&B, from 11:30.

Thank You.... Thank you VERY MUCH to all who helped staff our museum during this past summer. Without your contribution of your time we would have been unable to continue to encourage appreciation for our area's history.

Also, thanks to all who helped with our Chili Fundraiser this past Saturday. This includes thanks to the cooks and workers – but also thanks to those who had lunch or dinner at the event. This activity is a major source of money for our group.

Model Farm and John W. Harris.... Our museum has a photograph of John Harris on the south wall, with a notation that he operated the "Model Farm of Missouri." A recent visitor to the museum asked for more details, which I was unable to provide. So, I did some research, which is summarized below:

"On December 9, 1870, the Missouri state board of agriculture recommended that the legislature offer a premium for the best kept farm in the state." When the legislature took no action, the state board nonetheless offered \$100. "After a lively contest, the premium was awarded to the farm of Hon. John W. Harris, of Boone County, the farm of Major William Gentry, of Pettis county, being second. The friends of Gentry then claimed that he had not sufficient time to get his farm in perfect condition for the contest, so on April 28, 1871, a premium of \$100 was again offered. The result of the second contest was the same" as the first, and the money again went to Harris. "The records of the University Curators show that on May 8, 1872, Prof. George C. Swallow, of the Agricultural college, announced that 'Hon. John W. Harris, of Boone county, owner of the model farm, offered a prize of Fifty dollars for the best essay on dairy cattle or Indian corn, by a member of the senior class.'"

"The Model farm...consisted of 1200 acres of land, situated twelve miles Northwest of Columbia, on what was known as 'Thrall's Prairie'...named for an early settler, Augustus Thrall.... [Thrall's Prairie is the area around Woodlandville.] Mr. Harris also owned some 600 acres of land several miles to the Northeast of the Model farm."

(SOURCE: *The Writing of North Todd Gentry*, Dalton & James editors, 2011, p. 239-40. This book is an excellent history resource, and can be purchased from the Boone County Historical Society for \$35.00. Gentry was president of the Boone County Historical Society in 1931).

PLEASE JOIN FRIENDS OF ROCEHPORT.... This newsletter is sent to you because you are on our mailing list, not necessarily because you are a "member." If you have not paid your \$20 dues recently, please do so now! (Even if you are a lifetime member, we would appreciate an additional donation to help with the society's work.) The form below may be returned with your money, to make certain we credit you with this year's dues. Dues are based on calendar years, but if you join in November or December we will credit you with payment for 2014! PLEASE MAIL TO PO Box 122, Rocheport, MO 65279 (or bring it to our General Membership meeting!) There has been some talk of sending future newsletters only to our members. For that reason you should consider formally joining our group if you value this mailing.

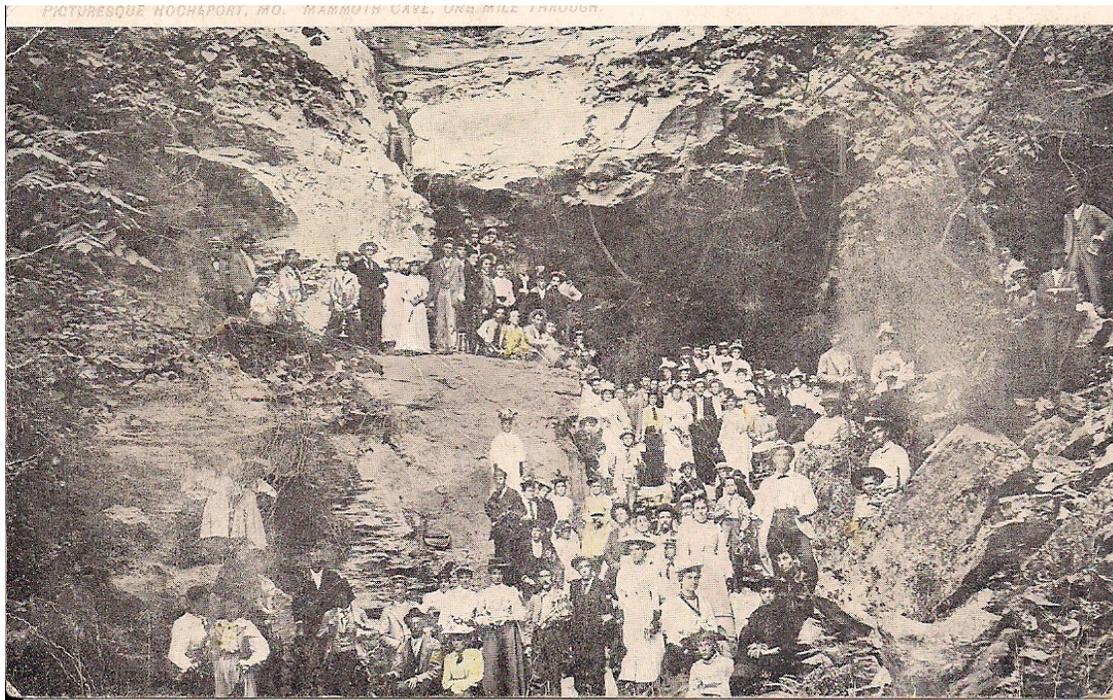
Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone number(s): _____

E-mail address: _____

Mammoth Cave.... This photograph comes from a post card display at the Rocheport Museum. The cave has gone by several names over the years. It is now called Boone Cave, and is owned by the state conservation commission and closed to the public (because the cave is a habitat for an endangered species, the *Indiana Grey Bat*). From the dress of the people, I would guess this photograph comes from about the end of the 19th Century. In that century, the cave was located within the plantation of Moses Payne, a Methodist lay minister and slave owner. His plantation was often used as a meeting place (most famously as the site of the 1840 Whig state convention, but also a place for Christian camp meetings, and for Chitaqua lectures.



This group of people most likely were attending one such event (although certainly not the Whig convention, because photography had only just been invented when it was held). (By the way, I read an interesting article somewhere

e suggesting that Abraham Lincoln attended our Whig convention, perhaps more drawn by the presence of Mary Todd visiting relatives in Columbia than from overwhelming interest in Whig politics. But in conversation with local historian Bill Clark, he says that the myth has been thoroughly debunked. Lincoln was on duty at the Illinois State Legislature in Springfield during the time of our Whig state convention. So it goes! *And it was such a romantic story, too!!* (In another aside, our Museum has in its collection a program from the "Linden Lake Chataqua" held in three days of August, 1925 on the former plantation grounds. So the meetings continued well into the 20th Century. **(Comment: our museum committee has decided that it absolutely will not allow further reproductions of items from the museum collection in this newsletter. So this is the last illustration that will be available from that source. The committee's chair siezed the illustration I was planning for the March 2014 newsletter, and did "insist" that you not know of it.)**

NEXT GENERAL MEETING OF FRIENDS OF ROCHEPORT SOCIETY (originally scheduled for November 24) HAS BEEN CANCELLED DUE TO SCHEDULING PROBLEMS