Heritage Development Plan for West Bemis Rosenwald School
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INTRODUCTION

The West Bemis Rosenwald School first came to the attention of the MTSU Center for Historic Preservation (CHP) through Dr. Mary Hoffschwelle of the MTSU Department of History, a Rosenwald School expert, whom Ida “Lucy” Wilbourn called to speak about the school. Mrs. Wilbourn, director of the Bemis-Brewer Community Center, then contacted Dr. Carroll Van West, CHP director, and Anne-Leslie Owens, CHP manager, and invited them to participate in a planning meeting for the Walter Brewer-Bemis Community Center, Inc., on January 25, 2013. At this meeting, the CHP agreed to be involved in the project by producing a heritage development plan, starting in Fall 2013.

Mrs. Wilbourn invited CHP staff members and graduate students to a community meeting on September 24, 2013. The agenda centered on use planning for the Brewer-Bemis Community Center within the historic West Bemis Rosenwald School. Staff and students in attendance included Katie Randall, fieldwork coordinator; Kira Duke, educational specialist; Dr. Stacey Graham, research professor; Jessica French, CHP graduate research assistant and Ph.D. student in the MTSU Public History program; and Ashley Armstrong and Michelle Gauthier, both M.A. Public History students and students in Dr. West’s Essentials in Historic Preservation class. Community members in attendance were representatives from local businesses, museums, historical societies, and churches, and included Dennis Thomas, Chaplain of the BBCC; Anne Henning-Rowan, president of the BBCC; Billy King, president of Big Black Creek Historical Society; Rosalee Gibbons, an independent artist from Jackson; and Joel Jackson, curator of Bemis Mill Village Museum.

The CHP envisioned a heritage development for the BBCC that would include a history of the school, recommendations for funding and partnership resources, best practices in museum planning, and public and educational programming. The purposes of this plan are multiple: to help the BBCC identify and apply for grant monies for building rehabilitation and programming; to offer suggestions on best practices in the realms of programming to make the most of the BBCC’s resources; and to provide a roadmap, so to speak, to help the BBCC organize and prioritize the next steps at each point in the process of establishing a community center in a historic school building. Because many of these goals are contingent on receiving grants, Dr. Graham has also been in regular communication with Katherine Carey, Rosenwald Schools Field Project Manager at the National Trust for Historic Preservation, concerning the best grants available to the BBCC and the materials needed for applications.

Jessica French researched and wrote the history of the school, including a bibliography. Ashley Armstrong compiled the museum programming chapter and best practices in museums policy. Michelle Gauthier compiled the public and educational programming pieces, while the included lesson plan on Rosenwald Schools was written by Katie Randall for Teaching with Primary
Sources - MTSU. Kira Duke compiled the partnerships chapter. Dr. Graham completed the other portions of the plan and is responsible for overall organization and project management.

*CHP staff and students took the following photographs on September 24, 2013:*
WHY THIS BUILDING MATTERS: A STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Built in 1916, the West Bemis Rosenwald School is thought to be the oldest Rosenwald School building still standing in Tennessee. Its construction was funded by a combination of sources from the Madison County School Board, the Bemis Bag Brothers Company, and Julius Rosenwald, a progressive philanthropist and co-founder of the Sears & Roebuck Company. The earliest Rosenwald Schools in Tennessee were established in 1914, but none dating from 1914 or 1915 are known to remain. For a Rosenwald school built in 1916 to survive with much of its original architectural integrity is an achievement currently unmatched in the state.

In addition to its age and integrity, the Bemis Rosenwald School is also unique for its association with an industrial mill village. While the black community living and working in West Bemis most likely lobbied for a new school building for its children (after the first black school, Cane Creek, burned to the ground in 1916), about half of the necessary funding came from the Bemis Bag Brothers Company which owned and operated the mill and surrounding village. Most Rosenwald Schools in the South were established in rural areas whose black communities raised funds that were matched by the Julius Rosenwald Fund. Because Bemis was a company town, the Bemis Bag Brothers management controlled the establishment and location of schools in Bemis, partly as a way to train future mill workers and to keep workers with families attached to the town. The progressive town planning that created Bemis fit in well with the mission of Julius Rosenwald to help communities help themselves through the establishment of quality schools for black students. The progressive principles that guided the building of Rosenwald Schools conceived of these buildings as community centers where education and community uplift went hand in hand.

The creation of the Brewer-Bemis Community Center in this Rosenwald School building is therefore keeping in the spirit of its original foundation by furthering the mission of community improvement through programming for young people and for the community as a whole. The Bemis-Brewer Community Center (BBCC) seeks to provide a safe, culturally stimulating place for young people and seniors in the community, while also serving as a cultural center for the community as a whole through educational, cultural, and recreational programming. The BBCC will be fulfilling its community-enriching vision in a building that itself connects past to present and enhances a sense of community and history in a local as well as statewide context.

The West Bemis Rosenwald School is listed on the National Register of Historic Places as a contributing structure within the Bemis Historic District nomination, which was accepted to the National Register in 1991. A historic mill town designed according to principles of progressive town planning in the early twentieth century, Bemis was also designed according to the societal norms of segregation in the South. The African American workers’ village was located along Butler Street in the southwestern corner of town, and today remains a cohesive and vibrant black community. The school building, located at the corner of Butler Street and Second Street, marks the physical beginning of the African American village; travelers from the rest of town will pass by this prominent landmark to enter this corner of town.
The extent to which black community members were involved in the establishment of the West Bemis Rosenwald School is difficult to ascertain, due to the control of records and funds by the Bemis Bag Brothers Company throughout the history of the mill village. However, these community members’ involvement in the subsequent life of the school is unquestionably significant. For the past 53 years, this building has been operated and maintained by various members of this community, from different church groups to the current 501(c)3, and its longevity attests to the success of their caretaking efforts and the community-focused mission for the building.

The BBCC are emphasizing the educational importance and legacy of the building by envisioning uses for it that will directly serve the educational needs of African American youth in the community. Such uses will also have the desired effect of preserving the historic building itself for future generations. More broadly, the BBCC will seek to offer cultural enhancement for the entire community of Bemis and Jackson through programming that will involve message of tolerance and diversity, bringing people together for a common good, much in the spirit of Rosenwald himself.
ROADMAP TO ACHIEVING YOUR VISION

➢ FUNDRAISE FOR PURCHASE OF BUILDING (first half of 2014)
The most important immediate focus for the BBCC is to establish ownership over the West Bemis Rosenwald School building. The BBCC needs to continue its partnership with the City of Jackson for the purchase of the building. Fundraising events can be both private and public, and for the time being will need to be held in locations other than the school building (though a trip to the school might be a component of these events). Consider creating a portable exhibit that you can take to churches, libraries and other venues to raise awareness. Also, work to expand the BBCC’s Web presence beyond Facebook to reach out to different audiences.

➢ GET BUILDING PHYSICALLY STABILIZED AND SAFE FOR HUMAN ACTIVITY (second half of 2014)
Now that an initial building assessment has been completed, hire a building contractor - one who specializes in historic properties - to meet the most pressing rehabilitation needs. Make sure a professional supervises the process of removing the lead-based paint and asbestos, for safety purposes and to properly meet building codes. Once initial rehabilitation has been completed, apply for a historical marker from the Tennessee Historical Commission or design and purchase a marker to commemorate the building.

➢ THINK ABOUT HOW YOU WANT TO USE SPACE (2014-2015)
Apply for a grant to hire an architectural planner to assist in the redesign of the interior space. Designate rooms for specific activities, and ask for donations for furniture and supplies. Develop a building use policy so that you can use the space for rental income.

➢ HOLD GRAND OPENING EVENT TO CELEBRATE BUILDING (late 2014/early 2015)
Once the building is purchased and stabilized, the BBCC will surely want to hold a grand opening event, with invited speakers, performers and alumni. Invite local businesspeople, town organizers and politicians, and use the event for further fundraising. Develop a rack card (one-page brochure) to distribute, and debut the BBCC’s website.

➢ SET UP MUSEUM/EDUCATIONAL SPACE (first half of 2015)
Once space has been allocated for educational activities, the BBCC can partner to develop programming for local teachers and students. (See Partnerships piece below.) Also, communicate with area district coordinators about field trip possibilities. Recruit and train volunteers to help with students and visitors. Tie into Bemis Heritage Days.

➢ WRITE GRANTS FOR PROGRAMMING (2015)
To support programming for youth engagement, look to funding sources for grants for educational programming, community enhancement, or outreach to at-risk youth. Write grants for computers and other equipment, as well as for website creation. Get the youth involved in pursuing various social media platforms. Cultivate partnerships and networks - in particular, make sure the Bemis Rosenwald School is included in the driving brochure of
African American schools (currently in development) as well as the Cotton and Walking Tall Trails (talk with the Mill Village Museum about these).

- **HOLD ORAL HISTORY WORKSHOP** (second half of 2015)
  For the short term, start contacting people with memories of and connections to West Bemis Rosenwald School and inviting them to share their stories. Hold an oral history workshop, with the assistance of Dr. Rachel Martin, assistant director of the Center for Historic Preservation, to document these stories. Upload your stories to Bemis’s portal on the Community Oral History Collection currently being developed by the Southern Places partnership of MTSU’s Walker Library and Center for Historic Preservation. Also, apply for grants to hold a symposium to share and discuss the findings from the oral history database.

- **EVALUATE AND REVISIT PLANS FOR SUSTAINABILITY** (early 2016)
  Hold a strategic meeting of all BBCC members and community stakeholders to see what has worked and what hasn’t over the past two years, and discuss and plan for new opportunities, upcoming budgetary concerns, and building maintenance.
HISTORY OF WEST BEMIS ROSENWALD SCHOOL

Located at the corner of Second Avenue and Butler Street in Bemis, the Brewer-Bemis Community Center originally served as the only school for African American students in the Bemis mill village. Southeast of the main mill complex in Bemis, just south of Cane Creek, the school is located within the segregated section of mill housing in Bemis. The school operated from 1916 through 1960 as a segregated school in cooperation between the Bemis Bag Bros. Company and the Madison County School District. After 1960, the school was purchased by the congregation of the West Bemis Baptist Church who worshipped at the church until 2001, when they moved in a new building. Several other churches used the building for worship until 2008.

In 1900 the Bemis Bag Brothers Company, operated by Judson Moss Bemis and Stephen A. Bemis chose Madison County for the site of a new manufacturing plant. The company produced cotton bags for the packaging of a variety of consumer items. The company was looking for a site that fulfilled three criteria to increase production of the bags and decrease the costs associated with manufacturing. First, the new mill needed to be close to sources of cotton so the company could acquire its raw material directly; second, the mill needed to be near existing rail lines that would ease the transportation of the finished product to the company’s major customers; and third, the mill needed to be able to draw on an adequate supply of white laborers in the surrounding area.¹

In cooperation with Madison County officials, the Bemis Bag Brothers Company acquired 300 acres in Madison County, near Jackson, Tennessee for the site of the new mill, called the Jackson Fibre Company, and a company village. Judson Bemis’s son, Albert F. Bemis, a graduate of MIT’s civil engineering program, was primarily responsible for the nature of the company village. Interested in affordable housing, A. F. Bemis wanted the village to include a range of housing types and layouts to give the village the look of a town that had grown organically, as well as provide families of varying sizes comfortable accommodations at reasonable rents. In addition to company housing, the younger Bemis advocated for a variety of amenities for workers including schools, a church, recreational facilities, and a company store.²

The 300-acre site for the mill was on property known as the former H. E. Jackson plantation. Howell Edmunds Jackson was a prominent politician and judge in Tennessee. From 1881-1886 he was a United States Senator, served on the Sixth Circuit Court from 1886-1892; served on the Six Circuit Court of Appeals from 1892-1893, and was an associate justice of the U.S. Supreme Court from 1893-1895. Jackson practiced law in Memphis before selection as a


² For more information about A. F. Bemis’s significance in the early twentieth century affordable housing movement see the "Bemis Historic District" National Register of Historic Places Nomination, 1991.
Senator and after 1873 resided in Nashville with his wife Mary Harding, but continued to own a plantation near Jackson, Tennessee. When Jackson died in 1895, the land passed to his sons, Howell E. Jackson Jr and William H. Jackson. They sold the land, which was in turn sold for $6,000 to Madison County and donated to the Bemis Bag Brothers.

Although it is not entirely clear what was located on the land when the Bemis company started construction on the mill in 1900, there were likely several tenant houses from when sharecroppers worked on the Jackson property. Historian Steven L. Baker described the property as consisting of “almost entirely open cotton fields dotted with an occasional sharecropper's shack.” A *Jackson Sun* article about mill manager J. B. Young, suggests Young was generous for building a house for Ellen Miller, referred to in the story as “Aunt Ellen,” after her home was torn down to make way for the mill housing. Historian Nancy Parris indicates that several log structures existed on the property in 1900, but states that it is unclear exactly when these structures were torn down. Ellen Mills and her husband Ashley Mills lived in one of these structures until they moved into the segregated section of mill village housing built for African Americans during 1903-1905. According to Parris, Ellen Mills was known as a midwife. She was also listed as a laundress on the 1910 US Census.

Along with segregated worker housing, like other textiles mills at the time, jobs at the Jackson Fibre Company were also segregated. When looking for a mill location, Bemis was specifically looking for availability of white laborers. In a story about the founding of the mill in the *Illinois Central Magazine*, Stephen Greene, of Lockwood, Greene, & Co, the architectural firm that designed the mill, thought that the available workforce in Madison County could not be replicated elsewhere: “he [Greene] pointed out to Mr. Bemis, here was a continual supply of dependable employes [sic] – descendants of pure Anglo-Saxon stock, with intervening, the hardy pioneer backwoodsmen strain.” Inside the mill, white men worked in nearly every job, while white women were restricted to the spinning or weaving rooms or to clerical positions in

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6 “First Manager J. B. Young Carried Out Instructions” *Jackson Sun*, May 19, 1950.

7 Nancy Parris, interview with author.

8 Ibid.

9 United States Census, 1910.

the mill offices. In contrast, African Americans could only work in the mill warehouses and also maintained village grounds, farmed the town fields, and cared for livestock. Many African American women worked as domestic laborers in white homes, particularly caring for children.\footnote{Memories of Bemis” Box 1, Folder 15, Bemis Collection, Union University Archives; Nancy Parris Interview.}

For the first several years at the mill, the company had difficulty with worker turnover as many of the people initially hired to work at the mill returned to farming seasonally. To decrease the rate of turnover, the Bemis Bag Bros. Company enlisted Malcom Stone to study the problem. Stone suggested several solutions, including recruiting newly arrived immigrants to the mill and recruiting workers from other Southern mill towns. Baker suggests that Bemis pursued a third option instead, increasing the amenities provided for workers in the mill village.\footnote{Baker, “Jackson Fibre Co.”, 48-49.} Many new amenities to the village, including a public bathhouse, YMCA, and the union church building excluded African Americans, but remained important to building the Bemis community.

Richard Butler a long time African American resident of Bemis, who was 10 when the mill was built, suggested that slowly workers sold their farms as they began to make a better living at the mill.\footnote{“The Man Who Knew Judson Moss Bemis” Box 6, Folder 11, Bemis Collection, Union University Archives, \textit{Bemistory Today} June-July 1980, 11.} Butler’s father took care of the wagons and livestock that transported cotton and other goods around the mill site, a job Butler eventually took over. \textit{Bemistory}, the mill’s newsletter related one a story Butler told about the transition from farming to working at the mill: “But one of the funny things I remember is the time it rained real hard. Many of the farmers didn’t show up for work. You know, when the weather’s bad, farmers go into the house and sit. They thought the weather too bad for working. The mill had to send a man to each of their houses to tell them that we’re depending on them to run the mill.”\footnote{Ibid.}

Prior to the opening of the Bemis Colored School on the mill grounds, African American children living in or near Bemis likely attended the Cane Creek School, located down the street from the Cane Creek Baptist Church. See figure x for a diagram that shows the layout of the school. Built in 1900, the Cane Creek School was a two-room schoolhouse that accommodated two teachers. Sometime prior to 1916, the school burned, moving classes to the Cane Creek Church.\footnote{“Negro Grade School Was Originally One-Room School” \textit{Jackson Sun}, May 19, 1950.} The school was under the control of the Madison County Board of Education. During the July 1915 school board meeting, J. D. Williams and Gertrude Green were appointed teachers at the Cane Creek School. The board minutes note that all teachers from the previous year were appointed to their same posts and that the salary for colored teachers remained the same as 1914. The minimum salary for a teacher in a colored school was $20/month and the
maximum salary was $25/month. The teachers at Cane Creek likely made closer to the $20/month figure.

Following the destruction of the school, mill manager J. B. Young helped to secure a site for a new colored school within Bemis proper. The new school was to be located on the corner of Second Avenue and Butler (Congo) Street, adjacent to the section of African American housing in Bemis. Young made a proposal to the Madison County Board of education in June 1916, where a motion was passed giving $1500 to the new school at a rate of $300/year for five years. As in the Bemis Company’s agreement with the white schools, the company was responsible for the building and its upkeep, but the county board of education elected teachers and decided the curriculum. Only one high school for African Americans students existed in Madison County. It is unclear exactly how many students from Bemis continued their education at that school.

Like most Southern school systems operating segregated schools in the early twentieth century, Madison County invested less money in its African American schools than its white schools. White teachers were paid higher salaries than their African American counterparts. For example in the 1917 board minutes announcing the election of white teachers for the following school year, the salaries for the teachers ranged from $36/month to $60/month, with one teacher, probably a principal, earning $100/month. In contrast, that same year, African American teachers received between $25/month and $35/month with a majority of teachers receiving $25. Generally, the term for African American schools was shorter than for white schools. Some reports suggest that in its early years the Bemis school was only in operation for 3-4 months out of the year.

In addition to differentiation in teacher salaries and length of operations, African American communities often received less money for school buildings and their upkeep. Although the buildings in Bemis were not under direct control of Madison County, the general attitude of the county toward African American education was evident when there was no plan to rebuild the Cane Creek School until J. B. Young proposed one on the mill property. Yet, Young and the Bemis Co. administrators were also not immune to this thinking. A school for the white residents of Bemis was provided well before the colored school was built on the mill property. White children were provided with both an elementary and a secondary school and the mill added a separate vocation school that also had night classes for white workers.

16 Madison County School Board Minutes, July 3, 1915, Madison County Records, Tennessee State Library and Archives.
17 Madison County School Board Minutes, June 3, 1916, Madison County Records, Tennessee State Library and Archives.
18 Madison County School Board Minutes June 3, 1916, Madison County Records, Tennessee State Library and Archives.
Along with the funds dedicated to the Bemis Colored School from Madison County and from the Bemis Bros. Co., the school received $400 from the Julius Rosenwald school building program. Created by Sears, Roebuck, & Co. businessman Julius Rosenwald, the Rosenwald program helped addressed the disparity between funding for white and African American schools. The program initially started in 1912 when Booker T. Washington solicited a donation from Rosenwald for school-construction projects the Tuskegee Institute initiated in Alabama. This partnership blossomed into a full-scale philanthropic fund housed at the Tuskegee Institute from 1912-20. The Rosenwald Fund continued the school building program after 1920 from new headquarters in Nashville, Tennessee.

Built in 1916, the Bemis School is likely one of the oldest remaining Rosenwald schools in Tennessee. Although schools were built using Rosenwald school funds in the state starting in 1914, no schools from 1914 or 1915 remain extant. The Bemis school was built while the program was housed at Tuskegee Institute. Much like the model housing A. F. Bemis strove to build in Bemis, Washington’s vision for the school building program was to create model school buildings for rural communities. Progressive reformers believed that the school environment was crucial to student learning. Rosenwald school designs included strategic positioning of windows to create enough light, air circulation, and heat to create the proper interior environment for students. Even schools designed for one teacher were not merely single-room structures. Their designs included cloak-rooms, secondary classroom space, libraries, and other amenities: “Their strategy was to construct small, yet well-designed and better equipped rural schools. These unadorned structures augmented the work already being done in southern black education by uniting the interests of educational reformers, sympathetic state and local officials, and African American school patrons.”

In 1915 the Tuskegee Institute published the pamphlet The Negro School and Its Relation to the Community that laid out the design principles of Rosenwald schools and discussed schools as community centers where education and community uplift went hand in hand. To receive assistance from the Rosenwald fund, communities had to raise the same amount of money as the grant awarded and also had to furnish the building. Community contributions could include building material, labor, or land in lieu of cash. Plans included in the pamphlet the Negro School could be used by communities to build the school, or communities could use their own plans as long as the conformed to the basic design principles espoused by the Tuskegee and the Rosenwald fund. Typically, African American communities came together to do the fundraising and to lobby for Rosenwald schools to be built in their community.

The Bemis School is unique because of its association with the Bemis mill village. The total cost to build the school was $3900. The Rosenwald fund contributed $300 to the school, while the

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school district contributed $1500. The Bemis Bag Bros. Company contributed the rest of the money to build the school.\textsuperscript{21} It is unlikely that the African American community in Bemis was not at least part of the planning of building a new school on the mill property, but because the company controlled both the building process and community life in the mill village, no record has been left of the extent to which the black community in Bemis lobbied for and contributed to the building of the school. Bemis mill manager J.B. Young seems to have personally managed the relationship between the Madison County Board of Education and the schools in the mill village. Young visited the school board in 1916 to ask for the county’s funds for the new school building. Later, in 1925, J. B. Young attended a Board of Education meeting to renew the contract between the Board of Education and Bemis: “J. B. Young representing the Bemis Bros. Bag Co. came before the Board on request and made a report on the investments of the Company in the Public School Buildings at Bemis. He explained the contract recently made with the County Board of Education as to the school plant; after which the contract was signed in triplicate by the Board members.”\textsuperscript{22}

The employment by Bemis Bag Brothers of H.C. Givens as supervisor of education from 1929-1931 provides further evidence of the difference in treatment of white and black education in Bemis. Givens gave most of his attention to vocational education for white students in the mill village. Working with A. F. Bemis, Young, and Madison County school officials, Givens created a curriculum for white students that included training in areas beneficial to the mill, although the county fought to keep classical academic subjects in schools and a more well-rounded vocational education. But Givens succeeded in adding a Bemis textile course to the 16 credits required for high school graduation in Bemis. Givens did not believe in vocational education for African Americans, after a previous experiment with African American education in Arkansas proved unsuccessful from his point of view. But, eventually Bemis and his brother-in-law Richard B. Gregg forced Givens to work with African American education while he served as supervisor, even though it was reportedly “a task which he did not enjoy.”\textsuperscript{23} It is unclear exactly what curricular innovations Givens added to the Bemis School before his position ended in 1931.\textsuperscript{24}

Applications to become an approved rural school filed by the head teacher at the Bemis school and statistical analyses submitted by the Madison County School Board to the state in the 1930s-1950s time period provide invaluable information about the number of pupils who attended Bemis, the length of the school year, and the names of the school’s teachers.


\textsuperscript{22} Madison County School Board Minutes, May 28, 1925, Madison County Records, Tennessee State Library and Archives.

\textsuperscript{23} Todd E. Brady, “The Influence of the Bemis Cotton Mill on Early Education from 1928-1931,” 1991, Box 1, Folder 15, Bemis Collection, Union University Archives, 9-10.

\textsuperscript{24} Ibid.
Applications for approved rural schools included questions about suitability of school facilities including light, sanitation, and playground equipment as well as access to books, school library, and classroom instruction. From this information, it appears that the Bemis school had a peak enrollment of close to 200 students in the early 1930s divided among three teachers. In the years immediately following World War II, enrollment was at a low of 114 students.

By 1931, the Bemis Rosenwald school enrolled 180 students, employed three teachers, and had a 100 day long term. The school housed grades 1-8. According to a 1927 census of the inhabitants of the mill property, about 37 African American families lived on or near mill property for a total of 151 people. Of those 151 people, about 25 were school-aged. Since the number of houses in the mill village for African American families remained steady in Bemis, most likely African American students living near, but outside the mill village limits also attended the school. In 1931, Eulalah Brooks, Anna Tyson, and Mary Shannon were teachers at the school, each making $55/month. By 1939, the school year lengthened to 160 days. Teachers Ressie Loretta Rice, Edna White and Bernice Conley taught grades 1-8. After the 1953-1954 annual report submitted by the Madison County Board of Education to the state of Tennessee, information about the Bemis’s schools enrollment is more difficult to ascertain.

More research is needed on the last decade of the Bemis School's operation. Two forces shaped this period of the school’s history. First, desegregation played an important role in the school’s closing. After school systems in Tennessee began desegregating in the wake of the Brown v. Board of Education Supreme Court decision in 1954, Madison County initially refused to create a unitary school system. Instead, the county embarked on a period of consolidation of the county’s rural schools. Construction on the Spann-Rosenwald school on Medon-Malesus Road in Madison began in 1959 on the site of another Madison County Rosenwald School. This new elementary school building was part of a campaign to show that the black and white school systems in the county were not entirely unequal. Students who attended Bemis started to attend Spann-Rosenwald in the 1960-1961 school year along with students from Rosenwald, Marshall Spann, Bemis, Liberty, Moore’s, and Pinson. By 1964, a lawsuit was filed against Madison


26 “1927 Census,” Census Records Folder, Bemis Collection, Union University Archives.


28 See: “Annual Report, 1945-1946” where 114 students enrolled for a 160 day school year with teachers, Annie Bond, Dixie Clark, Helen Whitesett; “Annual report 1953-1954” where 133 students were enrolled for 175 day school year. Eight grades were taught by four teachers this school year.

County and the school district began slowly consolidating white and black elementary schools. But, it was not until 1969 that the district became fully desegregated by a court order.

At the same time, the decline of the Bemis mill village influenced the community and its institutions. By the end of the 1950s, the Bemis mill and the mill village system was no longer profitable. Like many other mill villages at the time, Bemis began to privatize in 1965.\textsuperscript{30} Mill housing was sold to workers on the basis of seniority. Community institutions were also repurposed or destroyed. For example, the YMCA building, along with a small section of housing was demolished to make way for a new cotton warehouse. After the Bemis School closed in 1960, the West Bemis Baptist Church that had worshipped in the school on weekends since the 1920s took over use of the building full time. The period of mill privatization, coupled with school desegregation allowed the church to gain ownership of the building.

Like all aspects of life in the Bemis mill village, the Bemis Twenty Year Club was segregated. Pictured are workers joining the club circa 1949, Jackson Business History Project Collection, Jackson-Madison County Public Library, Courtesy of the Volunteer Voices Collection.
Known as Camp Beulah, temporary quarters for workers were built when Bemis expanded operations ca. 1920. Bemis Collection, Union University, Courtesy of the Volunteer Voices Collection.

A family picking cotton near the Bemis Mill ca. 1900. Bemis Collection, Union University, Courtesy of the Volunteer Voices Collection.
These 1916 drawings show the plans for all four elevations of Bemis Rosenwald School. (From Dr. Mary Hoffschwelle, MTSU Department of History)
Floor plans of the Cane Creek School ca. 1916. (From Dr. Hoffshwelle)

(From Dr. Hoffschwelle)
An excerpt from the June 3, 1916, Madison County School Board Minutes passing a resolution for the Bemis Bag Bros. Company and Madison County School Board to cooperate in opening a school for African American children in the Bemis mill village. Courtesy of the Tennessee State Library and Archives.
FUNDING SOURCES

The Brewer-Bemis Community Center (BBCC), as a registered 501(c)3 non-profit organization, is eligible for a wide variety of grants at the local, state, and federal levels. While some grants are applicable towards bricks-and-mortar projects, many, if not most, will be targeted towards the development of planning or programming documents and/or events. A strong grant application is necessary, due to the competitive nature of most grants. You must convince the granting institutions that your site is significant to the history of the town/city as well as to the cultural improvement/well-being of all local citizens. The BBCC is fortunate to reside in a building that is clearly significant on a statewide level, which is a “selling” point that ought to be emphasized in each grant application. You must also show granting institutions that you have researched a particular grant/grantor. Tailor each proposal to reflect the nature of the specific grant; avoid sending the same proposal to every granting institution. If a local college offers grant writing workshops, your core leadership team should make a point to attend.

When writing a grant application, be as descriptive and specific as possible. If a question has a word limit, try to write as many words as you can without exceeding the limit. You can do this without repeating yourself by explaining in detail the significance of your site, your plans for an event, the outcomes you’re expecting from a proposed project, or whatever else the question may be asking. If you have specific partners or contractors that you’ll be working with, be sure to name them in your answers and indicate their positions and organizations or companies. Also be sure to answer each question completely.

Some grants require matching funds - often up to 50% - from the grantee organization. This match may be cash, in-kind, or a mixture of both. In-kind matches can usually encompass all staff and volunteer hours, as well as donated materials, services, and facility spaces. Cash matches can include all personal donations to the BBCC, local business sponsorships, and potentially city funds as well. Cash matches must not include any part of the grant for which you are applying. See Appendix C for applications that show matching funds.

The BBCC has already achieved a major step towards grant readiness in that it has already begun articulating its vision, mission statement, and organizational goals. It should plan on revising these statements on a regular basis over future months and years to ensure that the vision, mission, and goals always reflect the most up-to-date needs and plans of the BBCC and the Bemis community as a whole. Also make sure that the vision, mission, and goals always support each other, and convey what the BBCC is as an organization and its purpose in the community.

While grants will most likely provide the largest share of the planning and programming budget, keep in mind that small donations from local community members form your bedrock. Organizations usually look to their local communities first for grants as well. Discussing the needs of the BBCC’s Rosenwald School building with the mayor of the City of Jackson, for instance, is an excellent first step in the process of reaching out to funding sources. Once you
have secured funds at the local level, it is easier to leverage funds from granting institutions at the county, state, and federal levels.

The funding sources listed below are some of the best current suggestions for the BBCC to pursue, based on the nature of the organization and that of the granting institutions. This list is not intended to represent a comprehensive list of all available grants.

**National Trust for Historic Preservation**

The National Trust for Historic Preservation (NTHP) offers grants from the National Trust Preservation Fund to nonprofit organizations that are members of the NTHP at the Forum or Main Street level. Forum membership is $250 per year for organizations and gives members access to publications, networking, discounts, and training, as well as eligibility for National Trust Grants. Main Street membership is geared towards organizations working to revitalize downtowns or neighborhoods and is also $250 per year.

The NTHP has a special division concerned with the preservation of Rosenwald Schools; there are grants specifically for these types of projects. The NTHP also published a booklet about Rosenwald School preservation, which you can download at [http://www.tennesseepreservationtrust.org/file_download/2/NTHP+Preserving+Rosenwald+Schools.pdf](http://www.tennesseepreservationtrust.org/file_download/2/NTHP+Preserving+Rosenwald+Schools.pdf).

**Contact:** Your primary contacts are Katherine Carey (KCarey@savingplaces.org) and Tracy Hayes (THayes@savingplaces.org), who manage the Rosenwald Schools Project. Their office address is

Charleston Field Office  
National Trust for Historic Preservation  
456 King Street, 3rd Floor  
Charleston, South Carolina  29403  
(843) 722-8552

The National Trust also has a field office located in Nashville, at

National Trust Regional Office  
1416 Holly Street  
Nashville, Tennessee  37206  
(615) 226-4078

- The **Richard E. Deutsch Memorial Fund for Rosenwald Schools** is for preservation planning, with an award amount of up to $5000, with a dollar-for-dollar match. This grant targets Rosenwald Schools in Tennessee, and is therefore highly recommended.
  - **Eligible projects:** According to the NTHP, eligible projects include “preservation planning, engineering studies, architectural plans, archeology, and research that advance the preservation of Rosenwald School buildings.”
  - **Deadlines:** There is no deadline for applications.
  - **For more information:** [http://www.preservationnation.org/resources/find-funding/rosenwald-grants/richard-e-deutsch-memorial.html#.Uof8ldLkuVo](http://www.preservationnation.org/resources/find-funding/rosenwald-grants/richard-e-deutsch-memorial.html#.Uof8ldLkuVo)
The **Rosenwald School Centennial Fund** is a bricks-and-mortar grant that can be used for “restoration, rehabilitation, and preservation” of Rosenwald school buildings. An award of around $20,000 (typically) must include a 50% dollar-for-dollar match.

- **Eligible projects:** This grant, as stated above, is strictly for bricks-and-mortar projects, which can include restoration, rehabilitation, preservation, repair, cost of materials and labor, and (up to 20% of the total grant) professional services from consultants such as architects, engineers, and historic preservationists.
- **Deadlines:** Please continue to check website for new application deadlines.
- **For more information:** [http://www.preservationnation.org/resources/find-funding/rosenwald-grants/rosenwald-school-centennial.html#.Uof-ttLkuVo](http://www.preservationnation.org/resources/find-funding/rosenwald-grants/rosenwald-school-centennial.html#.Uof-ttLkuVo).

The **Alice Rosenwald Flexible Fund** is flexible in that it can be applied to either planning or preservation activities for Rosenwald schools. Grant amounts between $500 and $5000 can be requested, with a required 50% dollar-for-dollar match. This grant is recommended especially for some of the educational and/or cultural programming that the BBCC envisions in its mission statement.

- **Eligible projects:** According to the NTHP, these include “preservation planning, engineering studies, architectural plans, rehabilitation, workshops and conferences, publications, films, oral history, surveys, photography, archaeology, and research that advance the preservation of Rosenwald School buildings.”
- **Deadlines:** There is no deadline for applications.
- **For more information:** [http://www.preservationnation.org/resources/find-funding/rosenwald-grants/alice-rosenwald-flexible.html#.Up5YV9JDuRM](http://www.preservationnation.org/resources/find-funding/rosenwald-grants/alice-rosenwald-flexible.html#.Up5YV9JDuRM).

The **National Trust Preservation Fund** provides two types of assistance to nonprofit organizations and public agencies: matching grants from $500 to $5,000 for preservation planning and educational efforts, and intervention funds for preservation emergencies. Applicants must meet specified preservation criteria, which for the BBCC will include either “Building sustainable communities” or “Promoting diversity and place.”

- **Eligible projects:** Matching grant funds may be used to obtain professional expertise in areas such as architecture, archaeology, engineering, preservation planning, land-use planning, fund raising, organizational development and law, as well as to provide preservation education activities to educate the public.
- **Deadlines:** “Application deadlines are February 1, June 1, and October 1. If the first of the month falls on a weekend, applications will be due on the following Monday.”
- **For more information:** [http://www.preservationnation.org/resources/find-funding/preservation-funds-guidelines-eligibility.html#.Up5bdtJDuRM](http://www.preservationnation.org/resources/find-funding/preservation-funds-guidelines-eligibility.html#.Up5bdtJDuRM).

The **Johanna Favrot Fund for Historic Preservation** provides nonprofit organizations and public agencies grants ranging from $2,500 to $10,000 for projects that contribute to the preservation or the recapture of an authentic sense of place. This grant requires a dollar-for-dollar match.

- **Eligible projects:** Funds may be used for professional advice, conferences, workshops and education programs.
- **Deadlines:** The next application deadline is spring 2014.
Tennessee Historical Commission (THC)
The THC accepts grant applications for historic preservation projects, especially architectural, archaeological, and historic site survey projects. The THC also funds planning projects, especially those that are a precursor to rehabilitation efforts. “Priorities for grants include areas experiencing rapid growth and development, other threats to cultural resources, areas where there are gaps in knowledge regarding cultural resources and communities that participate in the Certified Local Government program.”

- **Federal Preservation Grants** are potentially available for the “rehabilitation of historic buildings that are listed in the National Register and have a public use,” such as the Bemis school. The grants are matching grants and will pay for up to 60% of the costs of approved project work. The remaining 40% must be provided by the grantee as matching funds.
  - *Eligible projects:* Funds may be used for rehabilitation, restoration, and prior planning associated with those projects.
  - *Deadline:* Applications will be due around January 2015.
  - *For more information:* [http://www.tn.gov/environment/history/history_preservation-grants.shtml](http://www.tn.gov/environment/history/history_preservation-grants.shtml)

**Contact:** E. Patrick McIntyre, Jr., Executive Director
Tennessee Historical Commission
2941 Lebanon Road
Nashville, TN 37243
(615) 532-1550

Humanities Tennessee
Humanities Tennessee is a state-based program of the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH).

- The **Partnership for Public Humanities** (PPH, formerly called the Community History Development Fund) provides member organizations with funds to help achieve long-term goals like sustainability and growth. It assists non-profit organizations with community-focused projects of a wide variety that relate to public humanities. Grants are awarded up to $2500.
  - *Eligible projects:* Broadly speaking, eligible projects are “those that engage the audience’s skills of inquiry, analysis, and reflection, and provide the historical and social contexts with which to do so.” Eligible partners are “Tennessee non-profits with a committed interest in using public humanities projects to further their missions, and that have an annual budget of $200,000 or less,” and are also members of Humanities Tennessee.
  - *Deadline:* none
Preservation Assistance Grants for Smaller Institutions are geared towards small and mid-sized organizations that house collections, and are technically granted by the NEH, not Humanities Tennessee. Grants are up to $6000.

- Eligible projects: Projects must work to preserve existing collections, and can include the purchasing of preservation equipment, training of staff in preservation techniques, and assessments and best practices training in the digitization of collections.
- Deadline: May 1, 2014
- For more information: http://www.neh.gov/grants/preservation/preservation-assistance-grants-smaller-institutions

Tennessee Department of Community and Economic Development
“Funding is available to communities in Tennessee from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) through the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development (TNECD). The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds are used to promote economic and community development in small cities across the state. The projects must align with one of three national objectives: principally benefit low and/or moderate income people; eliminate or prevent slums and/or blight; and address imminent health and/or safety problems.”

- The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program includes grants for water and wastewater treatment facilities, housing rehabilitation and projects aimed at improving community livability. The grant is for communities with population of less than 50,000. Contact: Brooxie Carlton, (615) 741-8806.
  - Eligible Projects: The grants (maximum: $300,000) are for projects that focus on “quality of life” projects rather than economic development. There are four categories of eligible projects, but the only relevant category for the BBCC is Community Livability. Community livability projects can include projects that look at health and safety conditions for a community. Local governments only may apply. The BBCC would need to partner with the City of Jackson to write a grant that would fall under the parameters of the program and the City would need to administer the grant.
  - Deadline: once a year, usually February.
  - For More Information: www.tn.gov/ecd/CDBG/#3

U.S. Department of Agriculture
The USDA Office of Rural Development improves quality of life and economic conditions for rural America.
Community Facility Grants

Eligible Projects: “Grant funds can be used to construct, enlarge, or improve community facilities for health care, public safety, and community and public services.” The grant is available to non-profit groups as well as local governments. The funds can be used to improve facilities for community and public services. Grants are for facilities located in rural areas with a population of less than 20,000. Applicants from small communities with low incomes will receive a higher proportion of grant money. You must apply for this grant through the local Rural Development Office. In Madison County, this office is located at Jackson Service Center - RD, West Town Commons, 85 G Stonebrook Place, Jackson, TN 38305, (731) 668-2091.

For more information: [http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/had-cf_grants.html](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/had-cf_grants.html)

Contact: Arlisa Armstrong, RD Manager
(731) 668-2091
(731) 668-6911 (fax)
marlisa.armstrong@tn.usda.gov

Delta Regional Authority (DRA)
The DRA was established by Congress in 2000 to act as an economic development agency for 252 Delta counties in an eight state area, including Madison County, TN. The DRA works to create jobs and to better the lives of the 10 million people who live in the region. The DRA offers a number of grants and initiatives for which the BBCC may qualify.

For more information: [http://www.dra.gov](http://www.dra.gov)

Contact: Delta Regional Authority
236 Sharkey Avenue, Suite 400
Clarksdale, MS 38614
(888) GO-TO-DRA
(662) 624-8600
Fax: (662) 624-8537
Email: reply@dra.gov

Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT)
The Transportation Enhancement Program of TDOT has distributed more than $287 million in grants since the program began providing funds to local communities in 1991. The Federal government will cover 80% of the project’s cost provided there is a 20% local match. Officials have used the funds to build sidewalks, bike and pedestrian trails, and to renovate historic train depots and other transportation-related structures. To view a comprehensive overview of the Transportation Enhancement program nationwide, and/or to access databases of state-specific Transportation Enhancement information, including project lists, examples and contacts, visit the National Transportation Clearinghouse at [http://www.enhancements.org/](http://www.enhancements.org/).

Eligibility: Applications must be submitted by local government agencies, so the BBCC will need to partner with the city and/or county in order to submit a project.
for consideration. Eligible projects for the West Bemis Rosenwald School could include public pedestrian walkways around the building or connection to a larger community walking tour.

- **Deadline:** Applications for 2014 are no longer being accepted; stay tuned to the website for future deadlines.
- **For more information:** [www.tdot.state.tn.us/local/grants.htm](http://www.tdot.state.tn.us/local/grants.htm)

**Contact:** Neil Hansen, Transportation Alternatives Coordinator
Tennessee Department of Transportation
James K. Polk Building, Suite 700
505 Deaderick Street
Nashville, TN 37243-0349
(615) 741-4850
neil.hansen@tn.gov

**Tennessee Preservation Trust (TPT)**
The Tennessee Preservation Trust promotes the preservation of our state’s diverse historic resources. TPT advocates for preservation issues across the state, while helping unify the diverse constituencies that make up the preservation movement in Tennessee. Their annual “most endangered” list gets media attention and can be used to leverage funding and other support for preservation.

TPT has also been actively involved in the preservation of Rosenwald Schools. (Read about this involvement at [http://www.tennesseepreservationtrust.org/rosenwald-schools/](http://www.tennesseepreservationtrust.org/rosenwald-schools/).) The two highlighted projects, The Cairo School and Durham’s Chapel Rosenwald School (both in Sumner County), were completed in partnership with the MTSU Center for Historic Preservation and Lowe’s grants.

**Contact:** Tennessee Preservation Trust
P.O. Box 24373
Nashville, TN 37202
(615) 963-1255
www.tennesseepreservationtrust.org

**Additional organizations from which to seek funding, partnerships, or advice include but are not limited to:**
- Tennessee Department of Tourist Development
- Tennessee Department of Environment & Conservation
- Southwest Tennessee Development District
- Madison County Commission
• Madison County Parks and Recreation Department
• Jackson, TN
  o http://jacksontn.com
    ▪ Chamber of Commerce: http://jacksontn.com/chamber/
    ▪ Economic Development: http://jacksontn.com/economic/
POTENTIAL PARTNERS AND RESOURCES

Building partnerships with different organizations will allow you to reach new audiences, expand programming, recruit volunteers, and achieve goals that otherwise might be unattainable. Partnerships with business and tourism development offices can expand your presence in the community, region, and state. Partnering with local organizations might include joint advertising or planning for community events. Reaching out to your local institutions of higher learning might provide opportunities to engage with students in fields such as education, nonprofit management, and history as interns and volunteers. Other small museums especially those that document the history of education in communities will be a valuable resource for ideas and feedback on the development of educational programming. You might also consider how you can join forces to develop exhibits or work in tandem to build stronger relationships with area schools and youth programs.

LOCAL

Tourism Association of Southwest Tennessee
P.O. Box 10543
Jackson, TN 38308
(731) 616-7474
http://www.visitswtenn.com/

Jackson Area Chamber of Commerce
197 Auditorium Street
P.O. Box 1904
Jackson, TN 38302-1904
(731) 423-2200
Email: chamber@jacksontn.com
http://jacksontn.com/

Jackson Convention and Visitors Bureau
197 Auditorium Street
P.O. Box 1904
Jackson, TN 38302-1904
(731) 425-8333
Email: lnunnery@jacksontn.com
http://jacksontn.com/tourism/

Big Black Creek Historical Association
P.O. Box 50
Denmark, TN 38391
http://bigblackcreekhistorical.com/

Bemis Mill Village Museum
2 N. Missouri Street
Jackson, TN 38301
(731) 423-9140
http://www.bemishistory.org/

Union University –Department of Education
1050 Union University Drive
Jackson, TN 38305
(731) 668-1818
Email: trosebro@uu.edu
http://www.uu.edu/programs/education/

University of Memphis, Lambuth
Nonprofit Management Program
Department of Instruction and Curriculum Leadership
705 Lambuth Boulevard
Jackson, TN 38301
(731) 427-4725 (Jackson)
(901) 678-5087 (Memphis)
(731) 422-2169 (fax)
Email: lambuth@memphis.edu

Lane College
Student Affairs
545 Lane College
Jackson, TN 38301
(731) 426-7522
Email: sbscott@lanecollege.edu

REGIONAL

West Tennessee Delta Heritage Center
121 Sunny Hill Cove
Brownsville, TN 38012
(731) 779-9000
Email: Info@westtnheritage.com
http://www.westtnheritage.com
Dunbar Carver Alumni Museum  
P.O. Box 1049  
Brownsville, TN 38012  
(731) 277-9352  
http://www.dunbarcarvermuseum.org/Home.html

Historic Doe Creek School and Cemetery  
2330 Doe Creek Road  
Sardis, TN 38371  
(731) 549-3175

Polk-Clark School Alumni Association  
Attn: Joyce Vonner  
1041 S. Harris Street  
Milan, TN 38358  
Email: mpcce@bellsouth.net

Bradley Academy  
415 S. Academy Street  
Murfreesboro, TN 37130  
(615) 867-2633  
(615) 439-1063 (fax)  
http://bradleymuseum.com

STATE

Tennessee Department of Tourist Development  
William Snodgrass/Tennessee Tower  
312 Rosa L. Parks Avenue  
Nashville, TN 37243  
(615) 741-2159  
Email: tourdev@tn.gov  
http://www.tn.gov/tourdev/

Tennessee Association of Museums  
P.O. Box 330984  
Nashville, TN 37203  
615-495-3354  
Email: tnmuseums@gmail.com  
http://www.tnmuseums.org/
PLANNING A HERITAGE ROOM

WHY A HERITAGE ROOM?

The West Bemis Rosenwald School already has the beginnings of a Heritage Room located in a small space off the auditorium. This section is intended to provide ideas and best practices suggestions for the expansion, organization, and conceptualization of such a space. A Heritage Room will preserve and interpret the history of West Bemis Rosenwald School as well as the larger themes of local African American history and education. The Heritage Room will also serve as a focus for community education events and programming. Though not intended to serve as a formal museum, it will offer a space to gather, protect, store and allow for the viewing of historical materials. It will also serve as a space to host travelling, temporary, and eventually permanent exhibits.

There are many stories embedded in the history of the West Bemis community. All are valuable and deserve to be told. However, it is important that any museum have a specific mission statement, which will serve to guide decision-making on all its aspects. While the BBCC already has an overarching mission statement, a separate mission statement for the Heritage Room will make its particular tasks clear within the larger vision of the community center. To create a mission statement for the Heritage Room, the planning group should answer these questions: Whose stories do we want to tell? Who is our audience for these stories? The final mission statement should align with the BBCC’s mission statement and reflect its focus on community history and betterment.

Suggested basic mission statement:
The Brewer-Bemis Community Center’s Heritage Room engages visitors and community members with the stories of the historic West Bemis Rosenwald School and its impact on the people of the community.

STORIES TO TELL

The following potential interpretive themes offer some suggestions for the stories the new Heritage Room may be best suited to tell. Other themes may be added later, or these may be altered to fit the needs of the community. However, for the present they may serve as a guide.

- The Families of West Bemis Rosenwald School: Who were the teachers, students, and parents of West Bemis Rosenwald School over the years that it was an elementary school for the African American community?
• **The Bemis Bag Bros. Company and the Mill Village:** How does West Bemis Rosenwald School fit into the larger Bemis story?

• **African American Education in Madison County:** How did African American education and schools develop in the area around West Bemis?

• **A Rosenwald School for West Bemis:** What are Rosenwald Schools, and how did West Bemis come to get one?

• **Second Life—West Bemis Baptist Church:** What happened during the transition of this building from a school to a church?

• **Saving a Historic School:** How did the community save this building and create a community center?

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**Gathering Memories**

Limitations of space and the current state of the building largely preclude collecting valuable artifacts or documents at this time. However, community members are this project’s greatest asset. Memories should not be lost, and the Heritage Room can provide a place to help preserve them. The establishment of the preservation effort and eventually the community center are likely to attract those who remember the school and have stories to tell. If at all possible, these stories should be captured.

**The Basics of a Small Museum**

See Appendix D: Basic Considerations for a Community Museum and Appendix E: Links to Free Museum Resources.

**Some Possible Collection Methods by Interpretive Theme:**

• **The Families of West Bemis Rosenwald School:**
  - **Short-Term:**
    - Contact alumni of the school and ask for their memories of people and experiences at the school. Contact Dr. Rachel Martin, CHP assistant director, and invite her to conduct an oral history workshop to train community members in the proper collecting and cataloging of stories and memories. Ask alumni to bring in any photographs or memorabilia and take digital pictures for documentation.
  - **Long-term:**
    - Make a small exhibit highlighting a person or family’s story about the school, and rotate it out periodically with other people’s stories. This can
be done small-scale with stiff display boards or more technologically sophisticated via a computer-created documentary.

- **The Bemis Bag Bros. Company and the Mill Village:**
  - Short-Term:
    - Consider partnering with the Bemis Mill Village Museum. Are there any exhibits that might easily be moved temporarily to the Heritage Room? Ask for contact information for any teachers/schools planning a visit to the Mill Village Museum. Suggest that the school and Heritage Room would make a great second stop on their field trip.
  - Long-Term:
    - Work with the Mill Village Museum to develop an exhibit which complements theirs. Do they have any sources/objects/photographs directly related to the school? Aim for the exhibit to focus on the African American community as part of the Bemis Village, and to answer the question: How does the school fit into the larger history of the Bemis company and village?

- **African-American Education in Madison County:**
  - Short-Term:
    - Search for alumni of other historic African American schools. What do they remember? Do pictures of these other schools exist? Create a simple timeline using pictures to illustrate the history of these schools. Lane College in Jackson might be a good option for a partner in this project. Ask if a student might be interested in doing research or even creating an exhibit.
  - Long-Term:
    - Aim to turn the timeline into a larger exhibit. Collect more photographs and stories, even memorabilia. Invite a local teacher or teachers to assign students to write short histories to go with each school’s photograph.

- **A Rosenwald School for Bemis:**
  - Short-Term:
    - The school building’s main significance, from a preservation point of view, is that it is thought to be the oldest intact Rosenwald School still standing in the state of Tennessee. Sharing the story of these types of schools with the community and visitors will enhance the overall appreciation for this rare resource. Make a small exhibit based around the historic 1916 floor plans of the school and use the information from the History chapter above to start telling the story of Rosenwald schools.
  - Long-Term:
    - Become part of the network of Rosenwald Schools in Tennessee; start by contacting the Polk-Clark School in Gibson County (see Potential Partnerships) and sharing ideas for exhibits and programming.
• Second Life--West Bemis Baptist Church
  o Short-Term:
    ▪ Gather photographs from church members of activities held in the school building while it was used by the West Bemis Baptist Church congregation. Make a scrapbook or small display that can be rotated between the school and the current church building.
  o Long-Term:
    ▪ Talk with elders at the church about holding special services or music performances inside the school building on a period basis throughout the year, so that congregants can see how the building looks as a rehabilitated community center.

• Saving a Historic School:
  o Short-Term:
    ▪ The story of how West Bemis Rosenwald School becomes the Brewer-Bemis Community Center is one of the most important elements of its history. Without the community’s efforts to preserve the building, the rest of its history might be lost. Members of the project can begin now collecting newspaper clippings, meeting agendas, letters, and stories related to this project.
  o Long-Term:
    ▪ The preservation efforts to save the historic Rosenwald School building will be ongoing, so be sure to take photographs and save information pertaining to the building’s upkeep and community activities that take place there. If the mission statement evolves, keep a copy of older versions of the mission statement so the BBCC can reflect on its change of purpose and/or function.

African American History and Genealogy Library

As the BBCC begins collecting and documenting stories and artifacts associated with the school, it will find itself quickly growing into a library for local African American history and genealogical research. The following suggestions will help organize this process:
• This type of collection can begin with a few supplies:
  o A small bookcase
  o A file box with hanging folders
  o 4x6 index cards and a storage box (eventually this may be replaced with digital entry and a digital record such as a spreadsheet)
  o An wish-list of desired books, dvds, and other materials from Amazon.com.
• Let community members know the Heritage Room is developing a library. Invite them to donate books and photocopies and/or digital copies of their genealogy research. If
books are suggested, added them to the Amazon wish-list and let people know where to find it.

- As donations come in,
  - Record the donor, and the donor’s contact information, the title, publication data and a short description of the subject of each book, or the family names covered in the research, on a 4x6 card and file alphabetically (to begin, photocopy or scan each card to keep separately). Use a divider to separate book records from genealogy records. Add books to the shelves alphabetically by author (as the collection grows, books may be rearranged by subject). For genealogy files, label a hanging folder with the donor name and file alphabetically.

- Eventually, the BBCC may want to invest in a subscription to a service like Ancestry.com or Fold3.com, either of which would supplement the collection and draw in more visitors intent on research.
- The National Endowment for the Humanities has grants available to small organizations who wish to preserve their archival collections. See Funding Sources for details.

**Sharing History**

History is best shared when you can combine the stories you tell with visual artifacts to observe. Many people are visual learners, and they expect to see something when they visit a museum. The Heritage Room should always have some interesting visual elements such as photographs with some explanatory text, though artifacts like memorabilia items, books, or trophies will attract visitors’ attention to a greater degree. The BBCC does not have to invest a great amount of money right away in order to reap the benefits of having an exhibit in its Heritage Room. Cost-saving opportunities include scheduling traveling exhibits or creating small D.I.Y. displays.

**Traveling Exhibits**

In the short-term, traveling exhibits can serve to draw visitors. Contact museums and heritage organizations or examine their websites to see if they have traveling exhibits available to schedule for your space. You may have to pay some shipping costs or handle some delivery yourself, but most should be free or of minimal cost. In the future, the Heritage Room can offer an attractive space and audience for such exhibits.
Example:

**“Free at Last!” Traveling Exhibition Available to Tennessee Communities**

An educational exhibition created by the Tennessee Civil War National Heritage Area is available to communities in Tennessee free of charge. Entitled “Free at Last!,” the 4-panel exhibition emphasizes the significance of emancipation as a result of the Civil War.

The bannerstands (33 7/16” W x 78 ¾“ H) come with lights if necessary. The two sets of bannerstands (“Free at Last! Emancipation and Reconstruction in Tennessee” and “Free at Last! The Fight for Freedom in West Tennessee”) can be reserved together or separately. An accompanying scavenger hunt for students is also available.

For more information about the exhibition or to schedule it for your community, please contact Dr. Antoinette van Zelm at (615) 494-8869 or at antoinette.vanzelm@mtsu.edu.

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**Tri-fold Displays or Posters**

The Heritage Room’s earliest exhibits can be as simple as photographs or documents (use prints of scanned images to protect the originals!) arranged on posters or foam board, with short labels describing each image printed out and attached below. This type of simple display of what has already been collected can inspire visitors and bring forth memories, and may elicit donations or stories that can help form the basis for a more permanent exhibit. Such exhibits can also be portable, and used at fundraising events. Keep photographs of these displays as
they are created and added to, both for the Heritage Room’s records and for the design of future panels.

Exhibits at Bradley Academy Museum in Murfreesboro, TN:

Displaying Objects

Refer to Appendices D and E for guidelines on protecting and displaying objects such as trophies or other memorabilia. Arrange objects chronologically or in related groups. Think about what a visitor will see and learn from these objects. Aim to tell a story. Again, use photographs to record how exhibits develop over time.

A trophy display at the Polk-Clark School in Milan, TN:
Interpretive Panels and/or Digital Exhibits

Eventually, when money or partnerships make expertise available, provide a designer with the photographic record of poster and object displays. The photographs document and provide insight into how community members want their Heritage Room to look and what they want the Heritage Room to convey to visitors.

*Examples of Interpretive Panels in School Heritage Rooms:*

*Left:* Ruby W. Thompson Classroom Schoolhouse Museum in Smithfield, VA.  
*Right:* Cave Springs Welcome Center and Museum, Cave Springs, GA.

*Keep in Mind:*

Though creating a Heritage Room is a long-term project, it can begin now, with a minimum of money and expertise, building a foundation as a valuable asset to the community.
PUBLIC PROGRAMMING

The programming suggestions given below will help the Brewer-Bemis Community Center offer achievable, low-cost options that can be accomplished in the short term as well as ideal options that can be accomplished in the long term. The following programs are organized by into three sections: those geared towards children, others towards adults, and the rest for families and people of all ages. The sections will describe what age level(s) the program targets, what goals the program will meet, what the program will accomplish, the steps to follow for it to be carried out, and what materials and cost it will require. The most achievable programs will be given first, followed by programs that will require pooling resources and longer commitment to be accomplished.

PROGRAMMING FOR CHILDREN

Lesson Plans

- **Age group:** Students in grades K-12
- **Goals met:** To provide opportunities for primary and secondary education, and to engage younger community members in the history of the West Bemis Elementary School.
- **What it accomplishes:** Lesson plans are a great way to get children and schools involved and invested in their community and this building. Lesson plans should be made available for grades Kindergarten through 12th and focus on key local history topics, such as the history of African American education in Madison County, the creation of West Bemis School, the school's history as a church, and saving West Bemis; or locate the community in a wider historical context, such as what a Rosenwald School is and the history and purpose of the program.
- **Instructions:** The Community Center should reach out to local teachers and college students in the community to find those interested in volunteering their time to create lessons plans for the Community Center. Try contacting district curriculum coordinators for Jackson City and Madison County Schools Systems, as well as principals of individual schools. Ask teachers to write lesson plans or to consult on what standards need to be met and how the community center could help them meet those standards. Education departments at local colleges will make ideal partners in this regard. Lesson plans can be developed as part of class projects. Social Studies would be the most applicable academic area for lesson plans, though English/Language Arts is also a good fit. The Tennessee Department of Education lists the curriculum standards for K-12 Social Studies on its website at http://www.tn.gov/education/curriculum.shtml. Appendix E is a lesson plan created by the Teaching with Primary Sources program at Middle Tennessee State University, entitled “Education Reform During the Progressive Era and
the Rosenwald Schools of the American South.” (You will need to view it online to access all the linked resources: [http://library.mtsu.edu/tps/lessonplans&ideas/Lesson_Plan--Education_Reform.pdf](http://library.mtsu.edu/tps/lessonplans&ideas/Lesson_Plan--Education_Reform.pdf)). This particular lesson plan is geared towards high school students, and has them examine historic photographs of Rosenwald Schools and develop research questions. Lesson plans will be most effective when used in conjunction with field trips, which could include a pre-visit lesson plan given to the teacher before the scheduled trip as well as a lesson plan they can use after their visit.

- **Cost:** None

**Field Trips**

- **Age Group:** Students in grades K-12
- **Goals Met:** To provide opportunities for primary and secondary education, provide space for individuals and groups to meet and learn, and provide information about community issues, people, and events.
- **What is accomplished:** Field trips are a great opportunity for children to learn not only the story of the West Bemis School, but also its place within the history of the town’s development. By partnering with the local Mill Museum, it would be possible for school groups to take a walking tour and see a well-preserved early company town on their way to and from the buildings.
- **Instructions:** For large school groups, it will be necessary to partner with the Mill Museum and split the students into groups and rotate them between the buildings, giving a walking tour along the way. After talking with the Mill Museum, both it and the BBCC need to determine what each will discuss and do with school groups. If the Mill Museum focuses on the development of the town, then the center can focus on telling its own story and situating it within the Mill Museum’s framework so as to complement each other and to promote a partnership between the two organizations that share the same goal of bringing attention to and preserving Bemis’ story. At the West Bemis School, students can survey the architectural features of the building from the outside. Inside, students can visit the Heritage Room to learn about the school’s history, and then discuss what they found and learned in one of the building’s larger spaces, such as the auditorium. The BBCC can also develop a scavenger hunt that would require the students’ close observation of the building and any of the exhibits or displays in the building at the time. It can also invite former students of West Bemis School to speak to the schoolchildren about what going to school was like in their day.
- **Cost:** Cost of photocopying of scavenger hunt worksheets. Possibly a small honorarium for invited speakers.
**Free Tutoring**

- **Age group:** Students grades 6-12  
- **Goals met:** Provide opportunities for education and organize and offer volunteer opportunities.  
- **What is accomplished:** Offering a free tutoring program once a week or more allows local college or university students to teach or assist younger kids with general education subjects such as Math, English, and Social Studies.  
- **Instructions:** There are many local colleges and universities near Jackson. Talk with Jackson State Community College, Lane College, Bethel University, and Union University and see if any students are willing to volunteer to tutor younger kids. Perhaps these schools have volunteer/service-based programs for their students that this initiative could qualify for. Then, promote your free tutoring program to schools in the neighborhood and immediate surrounding neighborhoods. Hold a kick-off event that celebrates education and community and ask local businesses to donate food and drink. Depending on the number of volunteers and students, it may be necessary to set time limits for sessions. A tutoring session can last anywhere from 15 minutes to an hour depending on the needs of the individual student.  
- **Cost:** None

**ADULT PROGRAMMING**

**Book Clubs/Writing Groups**

- **Age Group:** Adults  
- **Goals met:** Organize and sponsor community events for education, socializing and celebration; and provide space for individuals and groups to meet, learn and celebrate.  
- **What is accomplished:** Book clubs and writing groups are great opportunities to encourage reading and writing in an era that is increasingly dominated by digital media on screens. It is interesting to discuss and hear many opinions, likes, and dislikes of a book and to guess the author’s intentions. As for writing clubs, it is always good to gain feedback in regard to one’s strengths and weaknesses with the written word. Participants can even contribute to a publication that promotes the mission of the BBCC.  
- **Instructions:** Those that express an interest in either a book club or a writing group should send out flyers to advertise their clubs and gain members. Partner with the Jackson/Madison County Library to reach a larger audience and gain advice on book selections. Book club members should decide what books to read for the year, one for every month. Some book clubs focus on a particular genre, some on old books, some on new, and some focus on a little bit of everything. In some book clubs every member reads the same book, while in others they do not. Every member is responsible for
obtaining a copy of the book, whether borrowing it from a library (partnering with a library can help with this), buying it at a bookstore, or buying an ebook version. Most book clubs and writing groups meet once a month. Food and drink, if offered, should be brought by members, on a voluntary and rotating basis.

- **Cost:** None

**Yoga Classes**

- **Age Group:** Adults
- **Goals met:** Promote health awareness guidance; provide space for individuals and groups to meet, learn and celebrate; and provide opportunities for social activities, education, and social development for older adults.
- **What is accomplished:** Yoga class is a great stress-free exercise for both the well-being of adults and the historic building.
- **Instructions:** Ask local yoga or fitness instructors (such as Tai Chi, which is great for seniors) if they are willing to donate their time to teach a yoga class once a week or month. Perhaps you can find an instructor looking for a new place to hold classes, in which case you can discuss with him/her how to split fees between the instructor and the BBCC. Promote each class or series of classes via flyers and Facebook and require that people bring their own yoga mats. A class usually lasts 75 minutes. A small fee could be charged for admission.
- **Cost:** None

**Health Fair**

- **Age Group:** Adults
- **Goals Met:** Organize and sponsor community events for education and socializing and provide direction to those requesting assistance to appropriate individuals and agencies.
- **What it accomplishes:** Health fairs are a great opportunity to invite community members to a learning session that will provide education on a particular topic. Local doctors, nurses, and fitness experts could be invited to speak and provide information about what foods and exercises could be done to promote health and wellness. For example, if diabetes were the topic, food samples that are sugar-free and low in calories could be handed out in addition to information about prevention and treatment. Other topics could include heart disease, obesity, food allergies, and women’s health. It would also be a good opportunity for members of the community to ask questions on the chosen topic and be provided pamphlets, Internet links, and contact information if they wished to inquire further. A small fee could be charged for admission.
- **Instructions:** Personal doctors or fitness instructors could be invited as expert speakers. Look into the possibility of partnering with the local hospital, clinics, or public health
department for speakers and/or other resources. Contact local doctors’ offices and gyms such as Anytime Fitness, LIFT Wellness Center, or SNAP Fitness for possible speakers. There are many ways the fair could be arranged. If many speakers decide to come, multiple tables could be set up against the walls in the former sanctuary room, similar to a job fair, and in the smaller rooms if necessary. Then, the speakers will bring their own pamphlets and displays that they can set up on their tables. Tables could be borrowed from local residents, churches, and schools if the center does not have any or enough. Or, if only one or two speakers accept the invitation, chairs could be lined up in rows lecture-style for the speaker to stand in front of or on the stage. Similarly to the tables, chairs could be borrowed from local churches, schools, and/or residents. To make sure word gets out, press releases and articles should be written and sent out to local newspapers, while the BBCC’s Facebook page should also announce the event.

- **Cost:** None

**PROGRAMMING FOR BOTH ADULTS AND CHILDREN**

**Musical/Theatre Performance**

- **Age group:** All
- **Goals Met:** Help build a sense of community among neighborhood residents and provide opportunities for social activities, education, and social development for children and adults.
- **What is accomplished:** Music is a wonderful opportunity to bring multiple generations together. Providing space for a local theatre group to hold rehearsals and performances is a good way to encourage and promote the Arts in the community. It is important to remind any theatre group that no prop or act can be done that could potentially damage the building. (Your building use policy will come in handy here.)
- **Instructions:** For a musical performance, ask a local band or church choir to perform and send out flyers to promote the event. For a theatre performance, try partnering with a local theatre group, whether it’s a school group or the Jackson Theatre Guild, and ask if they’d be willing to perform at the center. Borrow chairs from local churches and residents and either ask a local business to donate food or have spectators pay a small fee to pay for food during intermission.
- **Cost:** Free, with possible small expense for drinks and snacks.

**Volunteer Day/Neighborhood Clean-up**

- **Age group:** All
• **Goals met:** Help build a sense of community among neighborhood residents; organize and sponsor community events for education, socializing and celebration; organize and offer volunteer opportunities; provide opportunities for social activities, education, and social development for children and adults; and provide short-term emergency food relief.

• **What is accomplished:** Once or twice a year send out requests for projects that need help, such as cleaning trash from a business or church parking lot or providing yard maintenance for the elderly. Then, have volunteers make, print, and post flyers in local businesses and post on Facebook to advertise the event and invite community members to lend their time to the project. To bring the focus back to the school, either combine nearby clean-up events with a culminating clean-up at the school, or rotate school grounds clean-up with other neighborhood projects. You can also have volunteers meet at the school after a clean-up for refreshments. Neighborhood clean-ups are a great opportunity that benefits the community and allows group members to work together. It encourages a cleaner neighborhood and teaches children be good stewards of the environment. It also teaches them pride and responsibility in taking care of a building. If people are involved in maintaining it, they will become more invested in its future.

• **Instructions:** First, research the needs of the people in the community by asking the city council, town hall, local businesses, churches, and other nonprofits to get their opinions on what the area needs. Then, meet with volunteers to pick one or two projects that suit the number of volunteers and the time they are willing to commit. For a neighborhood cleaning, plan the event for a Saturday or Sunday to clean the interior and exterior of the community center. For the exterior, have the children pick up the trash and ask a neighbor to bring a lawnmower to do the lawn. For the interior, adults could wash the floors, clean the windows, or any other odd job that needs to be done. Volunteers would bring their own cleaners and equipment if necessary. Take pictures during and after any project in order to document the process and the final product. They will be useful to enlist future support from the local community, nonprofit organizations, and government as well as to document the work accomplished by the community center.

• **Cost:** Paper to print flyers ($7.99 for 500 sheets at Staples); possible small expense for drinks and snacks

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**Movie Night**

• **Age Group:** All

• **Goals met:** Provide opportunities for social activities for children and older adults and provide space for individuals and groups to meet, learn, and celebrate.

• **What is accomplished:** Hosting a free movie night during the summer is a great way to do something fun but also to encourage people to discuss what they thought of the film afterwards. Both movies and documentaries could be played. The films could be
borrowed from a library or a local resident. If it is hosted outside, see if you can borrow
or rent an extending projector screen from a local school or library.

- **Instructions:** First, find out if a person or business would be willing to let you borrow a
  DVD projector. If that fails, then try to buy one used locally or online; there is also the
  option of renting a projector. Someone with a little tech know-how would need to set it
  up. It would be worth asking around the neighborhood ahead of time to vote on what
  movie will be shown and to have people R.S.V.P., so that you know how many are likely
  to come that night. Borrow folding chairs from local churches, schools, businesses, and
  residents and set them up in rows facing the wall the movie will be projected on. Lastly,
  send out flyers and update the Facebook page to let the community know which movie
  will be shown and when. Spectators can bring their own food and drinks or you can ask
  a local theater to donate popcorn for the event. A small fee could be charged for
  popcorn.

- **Cost:** A used DVD projector on Amazon costs from $40 to $80; new from anywhere
  between $75 and $330; rent from ATS Rentals (order online and shipped to site) for the
  weekend (Friday to Monday) for $58 to $84 or rent from Tech Travel Agent (order online
  and ship to site) for $80 for ten days or $180 for a month.¹

### Street Fair

- **Age Group:** All
- **Goals Met:** Help build a sense of community among neighborhood residents; organize
  and sponsor community events for education, socializing and celebration; provide
  information about community issues, people, and events; and organize and offer
  volunteer opportunities.
- **What is accomplished:** A Street Fair would be a great opportunity to celebrate the
  opening of the Brewer-Bemis Community Center in the historic school building. Invite
  local businesses and organizations to donate to the event and allow them to set up
  booths in and around the community center to showcase the good that they do for the
  community. Invite local artisans to sell their crafts and local farmers to sell their
  products. Local restaurants could sell food at the event to generate money for
  community-based projects. Games and music could also be available to attract more
  people. The fair would be effective at involving members of the community from young
  to old because it can be a fun, informal way to get people together. It would also
  generate money for the community center to use for future events.
- **Instructions:** First, the residents in the neighborhood need to give their consent before a
  fair is thrown on their streets. Then, check with your local city or town hall to learn if you
  need a permit and to ask about the regulations to block off access to your street. Trash
  cans need to be provided to discourage littering. Tables and chairs could be borrowed

from churches, schools, or local businesses. Information on the fair (where and when) should be promoted by press releases, articles, Facebook, and flyers. Party planning duties should be assigned to volunteers: writing press releases and/or invitations, asking local businesses to donate to the event in exchange for a sign or booth or asking restaurants to sell food, bringing yard chairs and tables, staying after to clean up, etc…. Each family should donate a set amount to offset any costs such as prizes for kids and entertainment; if a restaurant is not going to sell food, each family should bring a dish. It is also important to ensure safety; let everyone on the street know about the fair whether or not they are attending so they can take precautions not to park on the street or leave out potentially hazardous items like tools or garden equipment. Fun activities for young and old alike should be offered; buy small prizes at a store such as Dollar Tree. The local fire department could also be there to instruct kids on fire precautions and let them have fun honking the truck horn.

- **Cost:** Paper to print flyers ($7.99 for 500 sheets at Staples); games and prizes bought at Dollar Tree ($1.00 each)
### APPENDIX A: TEACHERS AT WEST BEMIS ROSENWALD SCHOOL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Year</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Grades</th>
<th>Salary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1915-1916*</td>
<td>J. D. Williams</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gertrude Green</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1918-1919</td>
<td>Mora Young</td>
<td></td>
<td>$25/month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rosa Roberson</td>
<td></td>
<td>$25/month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1919-1920</td>
<td>Mora Young</td>
<td></td>
<td>$50/month(^1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930-1931</td>
<td>Eulah Brooks</td>
<td>5-8</td>
<td>$55/month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Anna Tyson</td>
<td>3-4</td>
<td>$55/month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mary Shannon</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>$55/month(^2)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1938-1939</td>
<td>Ressie Loretta Rice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(principal)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Edna White</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bernice Conley</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1939-1940</td>
<td>Ressie Loretta Rice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(principal)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Edna White</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bernice Conley(^3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940-1941</td>
<td>Edna White</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dixie Clark</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Millard F. Bond</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(principal)(^5)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945-1946</td>
<td>Annie Bond</td>
<td></td>
<td>$145/month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dixie Clark</td>
<td></td>
<td>$139/month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Helen Whitesett</td>
<td></td>
<td>$133/month(^6)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Cane Creek teachers

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\(^1\) 1915-1920 information found in the Madison County School Board Minutes.


\(^3\) “Application for Classification of Approved Rural Elementary School” Report. 1939, Tennessee Department of Education Records, 1874-1984, Box 96, Folder 20, Tennessee State Library and Archives.


APPENDIX B: BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR THE HISTORY OF WEST BEMIS ROSENWALD SCHOOL

“1927 Census,” Census Records Folder, Bemis Collection, Union University Archives.


“Bemis – A Model Industrial City” Illinois Central Magazine August 1927, p. 4.


“First Manager J. B. Young Carried Out Instructions” Jackson Sun, May 19, 1950.


“Interview with James L. Walker, County Superintendent of schools,” undated, Madison County Schools History, Tennessee Room, Jackson-Madison County Public Library

Madison County School Board Minutes, Madison County Records, Tennessee State
Library and Archives.

“Memories of Bemis” Box 1, Folder 15, Bemis Collection, Union University Archives.


Nancy Parris, interview with author.

“Negro Grade School Was Originally One-Room School” Jackson Sun, May 19, 1950.

“The Man Who Knew Judson Moss Bemis” Bemistory Today June-July 1980, Box 6, Folder 11, Bemis Collection, Union University Archives.


United States Census, 1910.
APPENDIX C: SAMPLE GRANT APPLICATIONS

This appendix contains copies of two separate grant applications that were made to the Tennessee Civil War National Heritage Area. The first grantee (pp. 51-57), Matt Gardner Homestead Museum, is a small organization located in Giles County in a historic house owned by Matt Gardner, a Reconstruction-era African American farmer, landowner, and community organizer. The museum requested funds from the Heritage Area for the production of a rack card, which is a one-page brochure, with no folding, about nine inches by four. The second grantee (pp. 58-63) is the Doe Creek Restoration Board, requesting funding for a permanent exhibit at the Doe Creek School in Henderson County. The historic school is an antebellum log building beside a cemetery; both of these structures are the site of Civil War activity significant to the community.

These applications are meant to serve as models for the Brewer-Bemis Community Center, in that the two organizations are small, volunteer-based groups, attached to historic buildings, with modest financial resources and limited experience writing grants. The small requested amounts show that much can be achieved with an organized plan, an energetic base, and an in-kind match.
Collaborative Partnership Evaluation Form: Tennessee Civil War National Heritage Area

Title of Proposal: Matt Gardner Homestead Museum rack card

Name of Collaborative Partner and Past Relationship with TCWNHA, if any:
Matt Gardner Homestead Museum – previous professional services and collaborative partnerships

Level of Priority:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Medium</th>
<th>Low</th>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Need for Project
Comments:
The rack card will expand the museum’s audience by introducing it to potential partners and visitors in preparation for its grand opening in September 2009.

2. Relation to Heritage Area Goals/Objectives
Comments:
The project supports the Heritage Area’s goals to advance heritage tourism, education and interpretation. The museum is a resource that helps tell the stories of Reconstruction and Legacies of the Civil War.

3. Quality of Project and Partner
Comments:
The Matt Gardner Museum has developed a website, and is working to create media packets and opportunities to partner with schools in Giles and surrounding counties. It has great potential to develop strong partnerships, educational programs, and promote Matt Gardner’s powerful Reconstruction-era story.

4. Potential for Long-Term Partnership
Comments:
Continued opportunities to partner in educational and heritage tourism initiatives.

5. Provides Necessary Match (Cash/In-Kind)
Comments:
Cash match

RECOMMENDATION: ___ x ___ ACCEPT (AMOUNT $275 )
___ RETURN FOR REVISION
___ REJECT
1. **Project Summary** (10 points)

1. **Project title:** The Matt Gardner Homestead Museum Intermediate Rack Card

2. **Project objective:** To design an informational rack card.

3. **Project description:** The task is to design and print 250 intermediate professional informational rack cards to introduce potential partners and visitors to the museum in preparation for its grand opening in September 2009. The project’s goal is to expose the Gardner Museum to a broader audience. The museum would like to have the rack cards designed and printed by December 31, 2008.

4. **List and quantify the final products(s) that will result from this project.**

   The final result and products from the project include:
   - Informational rack cards in the Chamber of Commerce sites in Southern Tennessee and Northern Alabama.
   - Informational rack cards to be used in multiple version media packets the different versions of the media packets include:
     i. Educational
     ii. Agricultural
     iii. Religious
     iv. Tourism
     v. General

5. **Expected audience to be reached.** The expected audience that the museum would like for this information to reach:

   - Tourists
   - 4H Groups
   - Churches
   - Church Associations
   - Family Reunion Groups
   - Southern College Tour Groups
   - Educational Institutions
   - Tennessee Outdoor Groups/Associations
   - (BRAC) families
     The government’s Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) initiative is in full effect from now until 2011. BRAC is the closing and relocation of 5,400 military positions from around the United States and centralizing them in a few specific military bases in designated states. There will be 2,200 military positions moving to the Red Stone Arsenal army post in Huntsville, Alabama. Many of these families will be settling in Elkton and other communities of Giles County.
   - Other Like-Interest Museums
II. Project Description (20 points)

The Matt Gardner Homestead Museum falls into the Tennessee Civil War National Heritage Area’s Reconstruction (1865-1875) and Legacies (1870-1930) themes. In adhering to our three-year strategic plan that was developed this year with the help of consultant David Currey, the organization realizes in order to maintain a stable and secure future for the historical museum we must broaden our partnerships and raise awareness of our existence. The rack card will complement the museum’s new website, launched last spring with the support of the Heritage Area. Both projects are intended to educate potential visitors and supporters about the museum. The museum will use the rack card as information to be included in multiple version media packets to introduce multiple venues to the Gardner Museum. These media packets will be sent to corporations, businesses, media outlets and educational institutions. The rack cards within the media packets will give an overview of the history and heritage of the Matt Gardner Homestead Museum and what the museum will have to offer when opened to the public. The proposed rack card will be designed so as to be easily revised after the museum has been open for several months and more programs are in place. Some of the other items in the media packet will included: preliminary site plan, photos, grand opening information, contact information, brief history of museum and house, grants already received, letters of support, non profit and incorporation information, press release information and what site will have to offer in the way of education, agriculture etc.

We believe that sending these media packets throughout Tennessee and Northern Alabama and readily into the hands of the many business or corporations will be very instrumental as we move forward in creating new corporate partnerships and introducing the museum to educational, agricultural, and religious institutions.

Elkton’s elementary school would like to incorporate the Gardner Museum into their student curriculum at a particular grade level. We would like to get more schools in the Giles County area to do the same. Having a professional informational rack card allows the museum to use it in an educational version of a media packet, that will be sent to local and surrounding educational intuitions showing them what the museum has to offer in the way of local Tennessee history and heritage education.

Several other versions of the media packet using the informational rack card will be developed for specific groups, such as 4Hers, highlighting the agricultural practices and the operations of an early 1900s farm. A media packet will be created for local churches in the area and church associations in the northeastern states that come back south for church association weeks. These packets will highlight the origins of Primitive and Southern Baptist faiths, practices, and principles. Another packet will be developed for the many black college bus tour groups from churches and schools in the North traveling Interstate 65 South to Tennessee, Alabama, and Florida universities; this packet will give college students a perspective of how blacks learned and received their education during the years of slavery, Reconstruction, and Jim Crow segregation. The last media packet would be for general business, nonprofit, and corporate partnerships. The museum would in particular like to partner possibly with the Tennessee Scenic Rivers Association or the Team Green outdoor recreation members of Nashville to create some type of outdoor recreation or scenic walking trail promoting the history of the area around the farmstead, such as the Native Americans on the Elk river and the Civil War fought on US Highway 31.
Last all areas around northern Alabama are promoting their entertainment and recreational resources through several different means. Giles County, Tennessee, is one of the areas gearing up for this influx of families through (BRAC). The Chamber of Commerce is highlighting what Giles County has to offer these potential new families with informational magazines, brochures, and rack card information created yearly for the next five years. Currently the Matt Gardner Homestead Museum is featured in all the Chamber’s magazines and brochures, and currently the Gardner museum has a brochure, though not professional it is serving its purpose for now, but we have no informational rack card.

Rack cards are one of the best ways of letting people know about your venue and getting your story across in a concise manner in a format that can easily be carried away by a visitor. The rack cards can also be placed at the Chamber of Commerce of many counties surrounding Giles for residents and visitors in these communities and to let chamber visitors know what is coming in the near future to the area. As the museum moves closer in preparing for a grand opening and eventually becomes a spotlighted feature in the Chamber’s multiple sources of information going out to the masses over the next five years, we would like the information on the museum presented to the public to be informative, appealing, and of professional quality.

We hope the rack card will encourage all to visit the farmstead to see, explore, and hear the inspiring story of Matt Gardner, his family, and other blacks who shaped Elkton and created the Dixontown community during the century between the Civil War and the Civil Rights Movement.

The project director for this project is the president, Carla Jones, and the content, assembling, and distribution of all media packets and rack cards will be by the board of directors as a group. The museum has created partnerships with the following: Citizens Press, Giles County Tourism Department, the Giles County Chamber of Commerce, Elkton Historical Society, Southern Middle Tennessee Quilt Trail, Humanities Tennessee, Wal-Mart, and Home Depot, all to help share and promote the Matt Gardner story.

III. Applicant Qualifications (5 points)

1. The organization has been in existence since October 5, 2001. The Matt Gardner Homestead Museum, located on U.S. Highway 31 in Elkton, Giles County, Tennessee, will preserve and contribute to the understanding of the region’s late 19th and 20th-century rural African American history by sharing Gardner’s personal past as represented in the homestead. This organization highlights the property’s significance in local African American heritage, agriculture, commerce, and architecture during the period 1870 to 1970, through interpretive tours of the grounds. The Gardner Homestead is a non-profit historic house museum operated for the enhancement of the community and open to the public.
2. Describe the applicant organization’s qualifications for managing this type of project.

The organization has the matching funds to support the grant application. Also all the board of directors are on board and approve of this project and will participate in the assembling and distribution of all media packets to various venues as well as rack cards through Tennessee and Northern Alabama Chamber of Commerce. In 2008-2009 the Gardner Museum successfully organized and completed a website project with support from the Heritage Area.

3. Describe the project manager qualifications or experience for handling the type of project. Note any similar projects he/she has managed.

The applicant for this grant is the family genealogist and historian and has done over 15 years of extensive research on the family, Giles County, and the Dixontown community. She currently holds all Gardner family oral history interview documents, pictures, all historical paper documents, the family Bible, and museum artifacts. She is also a member of Indiana African American Genealogy Group and currently President of The Matt Gardner Homestead Museum. She has been instrumental in the overall presentation of the Gardner family history exhibits and the operational and maintenance of the museum. Ms. Jones sought out MTSU for their help to nominate the Gardner house to the National Register of Historic Places in 1995. She incorporated the museum in the state of Tennessee and gained 501 3c non-profit status in 2001.

The project manager, Carla Jones, applied and has received from Humanities Tennessee consultant grants for an organizational assessment, strategic planning, and creating partnerships. She has also been successful in receiving funding from the Tennessee Civil Wars Commission, the Tennessee Arts Commission, and the Tennessee Civil War National Heritage Area. She was the leader on our web site design project; the website was launched in May. She has and continues to work closely under the direction and leadership of independent consultant David Currey of Nashville. Recently she was instrumental in creating new community business partnerships with Wal-Mart and Home Depot. Carla Jones has led the way and is in the forefront of everything that has been accomplished with the museum thus far.

Attach a one-page resume for the project manager and other primary project personnel. (See attached)
IV. SUPPORT AND PARTICIPATION (10 points)

You have named in Section II the primary partners that are involved in and affected by this project. Attach letters from them stating their support. Partners should address one-page letters of support to the applicant. Possible supporters include:

a. Organizations/agencies that are partners in, or are offering matching share to, the project (e.g., local historical societies, patriotic organizations, land trusts, chambers of commerce).

b. Project area land owners whose property may be impacted by the project.

c. Federal, state, or local government entities.

IV. BUDGET (20 points)

In the space below, provide a summary of your budget. In no more than two additional pages, detail the budget you have summarized below, clearly stating and describing the use of funds, funds requested, matching funds committed, and total cost of the project. The dollar-for-dollar match may come from cash and in-kind contributions. In-kind contributions used as a match must be expended during the funding cycle. In-kind contributions donated prior to the starting date of the funding award may not be used. No federal funds may be used as a match. The authorized signature on this application will confirm the applicant's commitment to the dollar-for-dollar match from non-federal sources.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>TCWNHA</th>
<th>Match/Cost Share</th>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
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</table>

*Equipment, such as computers, software, cameras, materials for exhibit fabrication, and the like, that is essential to the project will be considered and determined on an individual project basis.

The highest point total possible is 70.

Mail one copy of the application packet, being sure it is postmarked by the designated deadline, to:

Manager, Tennessee Civil War National Heritage Area
Box 80
MTSU
Murfreesboro, TN 37132
IV. Budget (20 points)

The design of the rack card will include three to four small pictures. The information on the cards will include brief summaries on the history and heritage of Matt Gardner and the house/farmstead. Other information that will be highlighted education; agriculture and the Gardner quilt collection. Last it will give the specific location of the museum and contact information. The proposed rack card is being considered as intermediate as it will be designed so it may be easily revised, for the museum's grand opening and then again after the museum has been open for several months and we have more programs and exhibits in place. The total cost for design, setup and printing of the 250 rack cards is $550.00. The Matt Gardner Homestead Museum has the matching funds of $275.00 in cash from donations and fund raising.
Partnership Project Funding Application
"Telling the Whole Story of America's Greatest Challenge, 1860-1875"
October 2010

Prior to completing this application, please refer to the "Partnership Project Funding Guidelines." You may access electronic versions of the "Guidelines" and this application at www.tncivilwar.org under "Who We Are." This 4-page application is a saveable, printable PDF form.

To submit an application, print and sign this completed form, gather all attachments and supporting materials, and mail one complete hard copy application to the address listed on page 4. Required attachments are the project description, brief resume(s), and letters of support. Pertinent supporting materials, such as an informational brochure on your organization or the project, may be included. The entire application packet should not exceed 10 pages (excluding attachments and supporting material).

COVER PAGE

TITLE OF PROJECT: The Brother's War
NAME OF ORGANIZATION: Doe Creek Restoration Board
NAME OF CONTACT PERSON: Betty G. Hughes
ADDRESS: 394 old Hickory Blvd.; Jackson, TN 38305
PHONE: 731-267-0463
E-MAIL: bandbhughes@webtv.net
TAX EXEMPT NUMBER: 626163472
COUNTY: Henderson
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: Seventh

PROPOSED PROJECT START DATE: May 1, 2011
PROPOSED PROJECT END DATE: Permanent display to be assembled by Aug. 1, 2011
TOTAL AMOUNT REQUESTED FROM HERITAGE AREA: $2000
TOTAL PROJECT MATCH: $2000
(Must be non-federal funds and be equal or greater to the amount requested from the Heritage Area)

AUTHORIZATION

To the best of my knowledge and belief, all information in this application is true and correct. I understand that if this project proposal is approved, any funds my organization receives from the Heritage Area are federal funds.

Typed name of Authorized Representative of Applicant: Betty G. Hughes

Title: Project Manager

Signature: [Signature]
Date: Jan 31, 2011
I. PROJECT SUMMARY

1. Project title: The Brother's War

2. Briefly describe the final product(s) that will result from this project. (e.g. We will research, develop and fabricate a permanent Civil War exhibit that presents the home front experiences of residents in Best County. This interactive exhibit will consist of six freestanding panels and several interactive displays, and we will develop educational worksheets and a teachers guide for school visits to accompany the exhibit.)

We will research, develop, and fabricate a permanent exhibit dealing with problems produced by conflicting community and family allegiances during the War. Problems of this sort were common in West Tennessee Counties like Henderson County where the secession referendum was a close vote. There was mixed sentiment in the Doe Creek Community, and the Kennedy Brothers were a classic example of divided family loyalties. We want to tell this side of the home front story. The exhibit will consist of two, freestanding panels and an interactive display.

3. Project objective (e.g., Our goals are to present a less well-known aspect of the Civil War in Best County to residents, visitors, and school children; to provide educational resources to teachers; and use this exhibit to develop additional programs in preparation for the Civil War Sesquicentennial).

In keeping with the experiences of the citizens of the Doe Creek Community and the families of the two Kennedy Brothers, our goal is to tell how diametrically opposed allegiances during the War led to divided communities and families, the effects of which lasted through Reconstruction and some times longer. It is our goal to present an exhibit that will tell this part of the Civil War story in the Doe Creek Community, Henderson County and other parts of West Tennessee. We want to provide a resource for teachers and anyone with an interest in local history, and to further interest in and research of local history.

4. Expected audience to be reached (e.g., "We anticipate reaching 4000 visitors and local residents in Best County with this project," or "We anticipate reaching 1200 K-12 students and teachers in Best and Better counties with this project"):  

We anticipate reaching 5000 visitors, local and non-local, on an annual basis as well as 3000 K-12 students from Henderson County. Due to the fact that the site is located near most Decatur County schools, we anticipate reaching an additional 2500 K-12 students from Decatur County, making for a projected audience of 10,500.
II. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The primary purposes of the Tennessee Civil War National Heritage Area are to preserve, enhance, and interpret the state's rich Civil War and Reconstruction-era heritage through partnerships and cooperation between local property owners; local, state, and federal government entities; and the private sector.

Goals of the National Heritage Area include advancing resource interpretation; educational opportunities; resource conservation and preservation; heritage tourism; and economic development.

Projects should fall under one or more of the following topics:
(1) War Clouds on the Horizon, 1850-1861
(2) Battles and Leaders, 1861-1865
(3) Occupation and Home Front, 1861-1865
(4) Reconstruction, 1865-1875
(5) Legacies, 1870-1930

Attach up to three pages to fully describe the proposed project. Your narrative should:
- Summarize the project description (including size, scope, and other pertinent details), tasks, and time frame for completion
- How this project fits into the primary purposes, goals and topics of the Heritage Area as stated above
- How it will promote the telling of the collective and "whole story" of the Civil War and Reconstruction and their legacy in Tennessee
- How the project will ensure historically accurate information

III. APPLICANT QUALIFICATIONS

The applicant organization's qualifications are evaluated according to its experience with similar projects and according to the applicant's ability to complete this application accurately and concisely. Please answer these questions in the space provided.

1. How long has the applicant organization been in existence? What is its main goal or mission?

   The Doe Creek Restoration Board has been in existence since 2005. The organization evolved from the Doe Creek Restoration Committee which was formed prior to the restoration of the school/church building. Our goal is to preserve Doe Creek School and to promote an interest in local history.

2. Describe the applicant organization's qualifications for managing this type of project.

   The Doe Creek Restoration Board meets monthly. The group raised the necessary funds and initiated the restoration of the building. We planned the dedication programs for the Tennessee Historical Commission and Civil War Trails markers. The Board owns the land on which the Doe Creek School/Church is located.

3. Describe the project manager's (the individual responsible for coordinating or directing the project) qualifications or experience for handling this type of project. Note any similar projects he/she has managed.

   The project manager has been a member of the Doe Creek Restoration Committee and the resulting Board of the same name since both were formed. She completed successful applications for Tennessee Historical Commission marker, Civil War Trails marker, and National Register of Historic Places for Doe Creek School/Church. She has operated own business. Freddie Kennedy, Board Chairman, Joe White, and Paul Clenney will provide on site assistance. See attached resumes for further information

Attach a brief resume for the project manager and other primary project personnel.
IV. BUDGET

Heritage Area funds must be matched dollar-for-dollar with non-federal monies. The dollar-for-dollar match may come from cash and in-kind contributions from private, local, or state contributors. Examples of in-kind (non-monetary) matches include staff time, materials/supplies, equipment usage, and travel. All in-kind contributions used as a match must be received and used during the funding cycle. The authorized signature on this application will confirm the applicant's commitment to the dollar-for-dollar match from non-federal sources.

In the space below, provide a specific summary of your budget. Describe the amount of funds requested and how the funds will be used.

The requested funds will be used for research and assembling the display. The Doe Creek Restoration Board will provide the supplies and equipment and construct the display panels.

Please list the funding sources and the amounts from each source (for example, matching funds from the organization, local government organization, private donation, etc). Include a separate, specific description and value for all in-kind contributions.

$2000 will be provided by the Doe Creek Restoration Board. This will include materials and labor for constructing the display. The Board is requesting matching funds of $2000 from the Tennessee Civil War Heritage Area.

Specify the project budget in the table below:

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<td>$4000</td>
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</table>

V. SUPPORT AND PARTICIPATION

Attach letters of support from up to 3 primary partners stating their support for this project. Partners should address letters of support to the applicant. Possible supporters include:

- Organizations/agencies that are partners in, or are offering matching share to, the project (e.g., local historical societies and organizations, patriotic organizations, land trusts, chambers of commerce);
- Project area land owners whose property may be impacted by the project;
- Federal, state, or local government entities.

Mail one copy of the application packet by the application deadline to: Manager, TCWNHA
MTSU, Box 80
Murfreesboro, TN 37132

Application deadlines: January 31 and August 31
II. “The Brother’s War,” Narrative Description

The Doe Creek Restoration Board will develop a two-panel, permanent Civil War exhibit entitled, “The Brother’s War.” The exhibit will present the lasting, divisive effects in communities and families of loyalties split between the Confederacy and the Union. This social casualty of animosity and ill feelings lasted well into the Reconstruction Era and in some cases, into the early 1900’s. The effects of divided loyalties in the local community and in the Kennedy Family will be depicted as well as examples from other communities and families in Henderson County, West Tennessee, and the remainder of the state. Our goal is to preserve and promote an interest in local and statewide Civil War history. The exhibit will be primarily informative in nature with some interaction, in the form of a short quiz, at the conclusion of the exhibit.

The Doe Creek School/Church is located in Henderson County, in that section where Henderson, Decatur, and Hardin Counties join. The County was deeply divided by the issue of secession, and it was one of the five counties in West Tennessee that voted against the June, 1861 referendum for secession and joining the Confederacy. The vote was close; and as the War ensued, feelings grew stronger and tempers flared among the citizens of the Doe Creek Community and all of Henderson County.

Divided community loyalties led to divided families. Brothers, Robert and Hugh Kennedy were classic examples. They had been residents of the area since the early 1820’s. On the War issue, the brothers opposed each other, and there was division within Hugh’s immediate family. Robert’s family was solidly Confederate; five of his sons and two sons-in-law enlisted in the Confederate States Army. Hugh’s family was split; two sons joined the Union forces while one son enlisted in the CSA. This resulted in animosity within Hugh’s family as well as between the families of the two brothers.

In the Doe Creek Community, conflicting allegiance led to much guerilla warfare and terrorism both during the War and Reconstruction years. In fact, this condition marked the beginning of the Doe Creek Cemetery and later, the Doe Creek School/Church. When the fighting was officially over during the spring of 1865, Confederate Privates, James David Kennedy and his brother-in-law, Bill Nails, (Robert’s family), returned home despite the fact that when they left for the War, they had been warned never to return to the area. Immediately upon their return, they fought with local Unionists, and they were killed. Robert Kennedy found their bodies, and he buried them on his land, a site that later became Doe Creek Cemetery. Robert later gave the land and the logs for the construction of Doe Creek Church, which became a one-room school. The Kennedy Family division continued into the early 1900’s resulting in one more known death. Any “telling” of the complete Civil War story, especially in West Tennessee must include an account of such community and family tragedies.

The Doe Creek Church/School was restored in 2006. The interior maintains the integrity of the one-room school it was for so many years. The Doe Creek Restoration Board, which meets monthly and manages the operation of the site maintains it. Since the completion of the restoration, a Tennessee Historical Commission marker has been erected, as has a Civil War Trails marker. The Civil War Trails marker denotes the tragedy of the Kennedy Brothers, and the proposed exhibit, “The Brother’s War,” will tell the story of additional families and communities tragically divided by the Civil War.
The building is open to the public seven days a week. Visitor registration logs indicate local as well as out of state patronage. The addition of a nearby pavilion has made it a popular site for class picnics for the local schools.

Local research sources available include books by local historians: Gordon Turner’s, *A History of Scotts Hill*; Zelma O’Neal’s, *History of Scotts Hill*; and Austin Powers’ *History and Genealogy of Henderson County*. 
APPENDIX C: BASIC CONSIDERATIONS FOR A COMMUNITY MUSEUM

DEVELOPED BY THE MTSU CENTER FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Definition of “Museum”

Any community which hopes to establish a community museum should first understand the nature of a “museum” and the associated obligations which must be assumed by the community if its museum is to succeed.

The American Association of Museums defines a museum as “an organized and permanent nonprofit institution, essentially educational or aesthetic in purpose, with professional staff, which owns and utilizes tangible objects, cares for them, and exhibits them to the public on some regular schedule.”


Organization and Support

**Legal Entity:** In order to acquire and utilize its collection, a museum must exist as a legal entity. Usually a museum is established as a separate non-profit corporation, complete with a charter, Board of Trustees, staff, and other aspects typical of the corporate form of organization. Some museums are departments, divisions, or agencies of larger (usually governmental) organizations; such a museum often maintains an internal organization distinct from the parent body. The establishment of any museum requires professional legal services to minimize future challenges to the museum’s right to own and manage its collections.

**Statement of Purpose:** Every museum must clearly define its basic purpose in a formal document. The most important aspect of the statement of purpose is an explanation of the museum’s area of interest in collecting, since the nature of the collection largely determines the museum’s future research, exhibition, and educational programs.

**Policies:** All museum activities should be guided by formally established policies. As with any organization, general administrative policies should cover purchasing, hiring, and the like. Museums additionally require policies covering uniquely museological activities; collection acquisition, collection de-accessioning, and loan policies are essential even in the smallest museums.
Acquisition and de-accession policy guidelines might include the following:

1. The museum shall acquire only those objects which fall within the museum’s area of interest as defined in the statement of purpose.
2. The museum shall not acquire an object without proper muniment (proof of ownership, i.e., a transfer of title for a gift or a bill of sale for a purchase)
3. The museum shall attempt to uncover the provenance (documented ownership history / origins) of items under consideration for accession in order to more fully ensure their legal transfer and to provide for more effective interpretation.
4. The museum shall not acquire an object with any restrictions on its use.
5. No acquisition shall be appraised by a trustee, staff member, or any person associated with the museum.
6. The Board of Trustees shall appoint a collections committee charged with oversight of the collections policy; the committee shall recommend all potential museum acquisitions and de-accessions to the Board for final approval.
7. Acquisitions shall be promptly and completely registered following the procedures in the museum’s collection management manual.
8. The Board of Trustees shall develop a de-accession procedure so that superfluous objects can be removed from the collection legally (especially with regard to tax regulations).

Loan policy guidelines might include the following:

1. Objects from the museum’s collections shall only be loaned to qualified borrowers, i.e., another museum or other non-profit organization committed to furthering the purposes of the museum. Loans shall not be made to private individuals.
2. The borrower shall submit a formal proposal describing the purpose of the requested loan and demonstrating the borrower’s ability to provide proper, safe transportation as well as their ability to provide protection for the object(s) while on display.
3. The museum may elect to conduct a site visit before and/or after the loaned object(s) are transported to the borrower in order to ensure proper care and display.
4. If the loan is approved by the Director, the Curator/Registrar shall execute a written agreement with the borrower specifying the conditions and period of the loan.
5. The Registrar/Curator shall maintain a loan register, including the loan number, the accession number(s) of the loaned object(s), the condition of the loaned objects, the name and address of the borrower/lender, the loan beginning date, the period of the loan, and loan termination date.
6. The borrower shall not alter the loaned object in any way, and any damage which may occur while in transit or on the borrower’s premises shall be reported immediately to the museum.
7. Loaned objects shall be properly identified and credited to the museum while on exhibition or reproduced for publication.
(8) The museum may elect to require the borrower to provide insurance for the object while on loan.

The museum should also consider developing policies covering conservation, research, exhibition and educational programs.

**Staffing:** The minimum staff for a community museum is a Museum Director. If possible, the directorship should be a full-time paid position, and the Director should be familiar with professional museum standards (or willing to study the professional literature earnestly). As the museum grows, additional staff will be needed: a Curator responsible for managing the museum’s collection, is the obvious first choice, and subsequent hiring might add a Receptionist / Front Desk Personnel, Housekeeper / Maintenance, and Director of Education. Depending on the needs and growth of the museum, other future positions might include a Registrar, Membership / Development Director, Office Manager or Marketing Director.

**Financing:** Communities frequently underestimate the investment required to establish a museum and the ongoing financial support needed to keep it operating year after year. There are a number of possible funding sources: annual appropriations (for museums which are divisions of governmental bodies), private and government grants, admission receipts, museum store sales, memberships in a “friends of the museum” organization, etc.). If possible, the museum’s Board of Trustees should avoid saddling the Director (especially as a one-person staff) with the task of raising funds; if paid fundraisers are needed, consider separately contracting with a professional fundraiser.

**Planning:** Probably the single most important prerequisite for developing an excellent community museum is a thorough planning process. While the planning process occurs on many levels and deals with many subjects, a similar format can be followed in each case: articulation of needs and objectives, followed by the creation of several scenarios designed to meet those needs and objectives, and finally selection of the scenario which best meets the criteria of cost effectiveness, available time frame, available museum expertise, etc. The results of all planning activities should be formally documented; a single master plan document may be adequate for the smaller community museum.

Overall responsibility for planning usually rests with the Director, who will need to call on special expertise for various aspects of the planning process. For planning collection acquisition and conservation, the Director may consult the Curator and perhaps a professional conservator. For planning the physical plant, the Director needs an architect familiar with the programmatic requirements of a museum. For planning any major permanent exhibition installations, the Director needs a Curator and an exhibition designer (in rare cases, this may be the same person). For planning educational programs, the Director may need a museum educator. Obviously, the Director must exercise great ingenuity to successfully integrate such a variety of considerations into a coherent master plan.
Physical Plant

The community museum’s physical plant must provide a variety of spaces dedicated to the museum’s various activities; moreover, the museum’s special obligation to protect its collection dictates that special environmental conditions be constantly maintained. The requirements must be met whether the physical plant is a new building, designed specifically for museum use, or a historic building, which is adaptively restored for museum use.

Public spaces suitable for the community museum include the following: lobby, gift shop area, restrooms, large permanent exhibition space, smaller temporary exhibition space, and perhaps a multi-purpose meeting room. Of these, the permanent and temporary exhibition spaces require good security and special environmental conditions – constant temperature (in the human comfort zone), constant relative humidity (usually 50%), and a low light level (as little as 10 foot-candles for paper or textile artifacts).

Staff spaces might include a security/information station (with visual control of all public spaces), offices, curatorial workshop (for registration and simple conservation activities), exhibition workshop(s) (for basic woodworking with a dust collection system and/or a separate space for working with graphics and framing/mounting), collection storage (for collection objects only, with constant temperature and humidity levels and very low light levels), general storage, mechanical room, and janitorial room.

Both public and staff spaces should be compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. In general, this includes access into and through the museum for people with disabilities including, but not limited to, blindness, deafness, learning disabilities, and physical disabilities sometimes requiring the use of a wheelchair, walker, or crutches. Accessibility requirements are directed towards both staff and visitors and also include requirements for video presentations (accessibility for the deaf such as closed captions) and for telecommunications devices for the deaf for public telephones, among others. Historic properties often have different requirements than new construction. Museums should contact an attorney or an ADA representative to ensure that they are in compliance.

The physical plant should provide reasonable security against theft and vandalism, as should the exhibitions themselves, using techniques such as security screws or locks on exhibition cases and security hangers for hanging artifacts and paintings. Additionally, the fire suppression system should produce minimal damage to the collection if activated.
As concerns pest control, there are many different theories as to the best method to manage this on-going responsibility. Integrated pest management (IPM) is presently considered one of the best methods. Successful IPM includes regular scheduled inspections of all items on display, a bi-annual inspection of collections storage, and the use of sticky traps throughout the facility which are checked regularly, with trapped pests identified and recorded. When pests and their seasonal patterns are identified, the museum must proceed carefully, as many treatments may cause as much damage as the pests; ideally, the museum should avoid chemical treatments. For further details on IPM, the National Park Service provides an on-line manual at no charge www.nature.nps.gov/biology/ipm/manual/ipmmanual.pdf. For infested collection items, the museum should immediately isolate them from other collection items and consult a conservator. Some basic advice is available from National Park Service conservation articles found at http://www.cr.nps.gov/museum/publications/.

**Collection Management: Overview, Accessions, Loans**

The museum’s collection management procedures should be codified in a collection management manual, which should present in detail the guidelines outlined below. Responsibility for managing the collection is usually delegated by the Director to the Curator, who may be assisted by a Registrar.

The museum’s collection consists of museum objects. A “museum object” is a physical entity plus the data associated with that physical entity; note that entities without adequate documentation lack research and interpretive value and are practically worthless to the museum. “Museum object” denotes any object collected by a museum, whether natural or manmade. “Specimen” is generally synonymous with museum object, but includes the connotation of an example or sample. “Artifact” connotes human origination, thus an artifact is a manmade museum object.


Acquisition is the process by which the museum obtains the museum objects in its collection. Generally, when an object or group of related objects is brought to the museum, a temporary receipt is provided to the potential donor by the Curator, pending a determination (by staff or by a Board acquisition committee) of the relevance of the object(s) to the museum’s collection. Objects should never be accepted by the front desk without prior permission by the Curator and some form of documentation concerning the temporary transaction. If the object(s) is accepted,
the Curator then executes a certificate of gift, or other muniment, with the donor or seller to legally transfer the right of ownership of this acquisition, or accession, to the museum. (An “acquisition” or “accession” is an object or group of objects acquired by the museum through gift, purchase, or transfer from a single source at a particular time.)

Registration is the process of creating, acquiring, and keeping records on the museum’s collection. This process can be quite complex, and (except for the three-part number) registration systems tend to vary radically from one museum to another. The approach suggested below might apply to a small community museum with a simple registration system using an off-the-shelf computer database software package (such as Microsoft Excel or Corel Quattro Pro):

**Registration Number**
Each object within an incoming accession is permanently assigned a three-part registration number, with each part having two digits: the first part indicates the year of the accession within the given year, the second part indicates the number of the accession within the given year, and the third part indicates an individual object within the given accession. If the museum’s collection includes items documented to have been received in the twentieth century, then an exception should be created to add a third digit, a “0”, in front of the two digits for the given year in the 21st century. For example, “006.15.7” would signify the seventh object in the fifteenth accession in 2006, while “96.15.7” would signify the seventh object in the fifteenth accession from 1996.

The registration number should be marked on the associated object in a reasonably permanent manner that avoids damaging the object. Most museums opt to use Acryloid B-72 white lacquer as a base for inking in the registration number on the item with a clear Acryloid lacquer to seal it. This process is reversible using acetone, and the materials are generally available from archival supply companies. This process should not be used on books (soft lead pencil is preferred), textiles (sewing cloth tape with the number on it in a stable place inside the garment is preferred), photographs, leather, plastic, or painted surfaces. Some items may require writing the registration number on acid-free tags attached to the item with a cotton string, on archival-quality plastic envelopes/bags (Melinex® polyester, polypropylene, or polyethylene), or just on the archival quality box it is stored in. However, tags, bags and boxes have the danger of being separated from the item, presenting challenges in relocating its records and in positively identifying the item in the event of theft; applying the number directly to the item is preferable whenever possible.

**Accession Documents**
All documents associated with each accession should be stored in a fire-resistant file cabinet; they should be filed in acid-free envelopes (with the registration number penciled on the outside) in registration number order.
Accession Register
A ledger, with accessions entered in registration number order, containing minimal information (registration number, name of object, source and date of accession), to help the registrar keep track of accessions, registration numbers, and sources. This can also be easily done as a spreadsheet document with software such as Excel, keeping a hard copy in a notebook as a backup (in addition, computer information should be routinely backed up with one backup tape or disk kept off site and one onsite in a fireproof safe in regular rotation).

Accession File
Traditionally a card file that was preferably secured in a drawer with a rod through holes in the cards, this information can also be captured on computer by creating a form in a word processing document. Each accession should be saved as an individual file on the computer (named by its registration number) and should also be printed out and stored in individual acid-free file folders, in order by registration number. This document, or card, contains detailed permanent information about each accession including: registration number, donor/source name and address, object name (using a standardized nomenclature – see the cataloging section), description (material(s), style, measurements, etc.), condition, provenance (history of the ownership of the object), and other relevant information. Volatile information may also be included, such as value and location in storage or exhibition, if recorded in pencil or created as a computer document to allow for ease of changes. A photograph of the item should be included as well; this is particularly easy to do with digital cameras. In addition, the accession file serves as the proper place to file newspaper articles, oral history transcripts and other such materials that serve to help interpret the item. If a scanner is available, a scanned image of these items should be included in the computer file created for the accession.

Donor / Source File
Traditionally a card file, the purpose of this file was to sort accessions alphabetically by donor or source name in order to easily access all items donated or purchased from a given individual or business. The card contained the donor/source name and address, along with a simple listing of all accessions from that source (including each one’s registration number, object name and date received). With computers, this information can be saved as a word processing document with printouts kept in a series of acid-free folders.

Catalog File
This file was also traditionally a card file, arranged systematically by object name in order to provide a means for retrieving objects by object type or function. Each card contained at least the registration number and object name; many museums also include additional descriptive data from the accession file as well as a photograph. A computer document can be created for each object type or function and named as such for a similar file that can also be routinely printed out and kept in a bound book or acid-free files.
Concerning nomenclature for object types or functions:
The systematic use of a standard nomenclature (naming) system is strongly recommended. The best system for historical artifacts is James R. Blackaby, Patricia Greeno, and The Nomenclature Committee, *The Revised Nomenclature for Museum Cataloging: A Revised and Expanded Version of Robert G. Chenhall’s System for Classifying Man-Made Objects* (Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press, 1995). Natural objects can be cataloged using the standard nomenclature of the applicable science (e.g. the Linnean system for biological or paleontological specimens).

Computer Software
Today, there are many registration software packages available to all sizes of museums. These come with standardized forms for not only accessions but also for loans, with tools that allow for easy querying of collections data for a variety of information. A sample listing of websites and telephone numbers for reputable collections management software vendors follows, although this is by no means intended as a complete list.

- **Argus**
  [http://www.questorsys.com/index.htm](http://www.questorsys.com/index.htm); 310-783-1450
- **KE Software**
- **Past Perfect**
- **RE:discovery**
- **The Museum System (see TMS Light version for small museums)**

Typically, vendors offer a downloadable sample version of their software (or can mail one), as well as a sample list of current clients which can be helpful in considering which program is right for your museum. Prices range from $800 up to several thousand, so it is important to look at more than one option and to ask about annual maintenance / upgrade fees as well as technical support and training opportunities. Some companies also offer discounts for museums that are members of such organizations as the American Association for State and Local History.

**Loan Documents**
Loans of museum objects should be controlled through a loan policy and require careful monitoring by the Curator and/or Registrar. Outgoing loans should be allowed only to borrowers qualified to provide adequate protection for the objects (usually other museums; loans to individuals should be discouraged), and there should be a definite loan period with a specific termination date. For incoming loans, which may be needed for temporary exhibitions, the terms will generally be dictated by the lender but should be consistent with the museum’s policies and procedures.
A loan register should be maintained for both outgoing and incoming loans, including the loan number, the registration number(s) of the loaned objects, the name and address of the borrower/lender, the loan beginning date, the period of the loan, loan termination date, whether or not the public may photograph the loaned object(s) on display, and whether or not images of the loan are permitted for use by the borrower with details on such use (e.g. permission to use images for press releases, brochures, and gallery guides). Signed loan papers from the lender should also include a statement to the effect that the lender has ownership and the express legal right to loan object(s) being borrowed and/or reproduced by the museum. This is particularly important for loans from individual collectors.

Collections Management: Collections Care

Conservation or preservation of the museum’s collection is a primary responsibility of the Curator, guided by the museum’s conservation policy. The single most important action the Curator can take is to establish the proper environment, for both exhibition and storage of the objects, which will ensure the longest possible survival of the various museum objects in the collection. In general, the best environment for museum objects will include the following conditions:

- Constant temperature in the human comfort zone (perhaps 70°F Fahrenheit)
- Constant relative humidity at 50%
- Low light level, not to exceed 10 foot-candles for paper and textiles (preferably no light for items in storage)
- Absence of ultraviolet radiation (use only incandescent lamps or use UV filters on fluorescent lamps and/or windows; another option, particularly useful for lighting individual items, is the use of fiber optic lights which do not contain heat, UV or IR radiation)
- Absence of harmful biological agents, i.e., fungi, insects, rodents, mold, etc.
- Absence of air pollution, both particulates and gases which might condense as acids
- Storage materials and furniture which are chemically neutral, support the item well, and provide dust-free environments when possible (e.g., acid-free boxes; metal shelves with doors for closed storage; acid-free tissue)
- Isolation of museum objects which may harbor biological or chemical agents harmful to the rest of the collection (especially nitrate film which is subject to spontaneous combustion)
- Padded hangers or mounts for stable costumes (historic clothing), with care not to over-extend into the shoulders (wire hangers bent into shape, covered with batting and a final cover of muslin sewn into the appropriate shape work well to support most garments); textiles and fragile garments should be placed in acid-free boxes with as few folds as possible, using acid-free tissue to pad out all necessary folds
- Removal of staples, metal paperclips and metal pins from objects, especially papers, costumes and textiles, and photographs (use instead acid-free folders
or boxes, plastic coated paperclips, archival-quality plastic sleeves such as polypropylene, polyethylene and Melinex® etc.

- Removal of any inappropriate framing techniques that did not employ acid-free materials (framed items should have acid-free backboards and mats with reversible V- or T-hinge mounts using an acid-free tape; glass should ideally be UV-filtered or acrylic, though acrylic should not be used with watercolor, chalk or charcoal prints); framed items and paintings should be hung in storage to prevent damage, if possible.

Even when the Curator provides a suitable environment, some museum objects will continue to noticeably deteriorate. When this occurs, positive conservation actions should be taken either by the Curator (in simple cases) or by a professional conservator (for complex cases and for any object of high value). The Curator should be familiar with the appropriate conservation treatments for the following types of materials:

- Paper
- Wood
- Skin and leather
- Metal (iron, copper, tin, lead, gold, silver)
- Textile (wool, silk, cotton, linen)
- Ceramics (vitreous and high-fired earthenware)
- Glass
- Bone, ivory, teeth
- Stone
- Photographs

The Curator is ethically and legally obligated to respect the integrity of the museum object. For example, any conservation procedure should be reversible if at all possible. Likewise, the Curator should strongly discourage any use of a museum object which might alter it – specifically, do not alter an object for exhibition purposes, and do not subject valuable, irreplaceable artifacts to the wear and tear of “hands-on” educational programs. Items to be used in “hands-on” educational programs should be part of a separate Education Collection under the purview of the Education Director, with the express understanding that these items will eventually be destroyed as the result of such use; such items are typically reproductions.

An excellent guide to conservation for the Curator of a small museum can be found in Per E. Guldbeck and A. Bruce MacLeish, *The Care of Antiques and Historical Collections*, second edition (Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press, 1995); see also, Simon Knell, *Care of Collections* (London: Routledge, 1994).

**Collections Management: Collection Use**
Research is often assumed to be the exclusive province of the large museum, but even the smallest community museum needs to conduct research for both documentation and interpretive purposes. The Curator, as part of the registration and cataloging process, undertakes research to identify and describe objects in the museum’s collection. Frequently, this involves the traditional documentary work associated with the local historian, but it may also require the Curator to “read” the object itself as primary evidence.

Additional research is usually needed for developing exhibition storylines and educational programs. The museum’s major permanent exhibition(s) and related interpretive programming usually require a major research effort.

**Public Access**
Some community museums hold collections of significance to outside researchers. The museum has an obligation to make its collection available for study by qualified researchers, although close monitoring of the research activity by a staff member is necessary for the protection of the studied object. A museum which receives many requests for research access to its collection should establish a research policy.

**Exhibitions**
Exhibition is usually the primary use of the collection in a small museum. A community museum might provide two kinds of exhibition programs: permanent and temporary.

Permanent exhibitions might constitute the core of the museum’s interpretation of the community. Such exhibitions should reflect a high level of design sophistication, if they expect to be taken seriously by visitors from outside the community. This would require development of a comprehensive storyline document which integrates artifacts, labels and graphics, as well as reasonably professional exhibition design, construction, and installation. Due to the obvious time and expense involved, such exhibitions would be stable (i.e., change rarely) and only donated or purchased objects (not loans) can be practically included. Thought should be given ahead of time to any object(s) on display that are especially light-sensitive (such as costume and textile items) so that it may be changed out after being on display for no longer than a year with another item, or be thoughtfully excluded from the permanent exhibition. Note that graphically sophisticated permanent exhibitions can be very effective in serving the outside visitor (tourist).

Temporary exhibitions tend to serve local visitors, who tend to return to the museum after viewing the permanent exhibitions only if there is something new and different to enjoy. Temporary or rotating exhibitions provide novelty through the display of “canned” traveling exhibitions or staff-developed special-interest exhibitions. Staff-developed temporary exhibitions still require systematic interpretive methods, but generally avoid the development complexities which arise in large (permanent) exhibitions. Temporary exhibitions allow the staff to explore specific subjects in more detail than would be appropriate in the permanent exhibition(s) and to use loaned objects effectively.
In both types of exhibitions, it is important to keep ADA requirements in mind, particularly as regards pathways, artifact and label placement, and font sizes for labels. Museums that are able to offer increased accessibility beyond basic requirements may discover new, appreciative audiences. For example, exhibitions and tours might include audio components, written scripts of audio components and tours, scripts and/or recordings in other languages, labels or brochures in Braille, or include reproduction artifacts that may be touched.


**Educational Programs**

Educational programs for youth and adults might constitute another major interpretive approach for the community museum. A Director of Education can develop programs for grades K through 12 which interpret the material culture held in the museum’s collection. Obviously, these programs are most meaningful when carefully tied to the museum’s exhibitions and other heritage-related assets in the community. Community museums which develop and publicize quality educational programs often find that demand for this service increases rapidly; school field trips may become so numerous that elaborate scheduling and additional staff are needed, and students may actually constitute the bulk of the museum’s annual visitation (and help with museum store sales). Developing a teacher advisory committee is highly recommended to assist the museum with supporting curriculum guidelines, creating teacher and student handouts, developing evaluation techniques, and promoting the program to fellow teachers.

Other educational programs that might be developed include: guided tours, lectures / guest speakers, workshops (e.g. genealogy methods, archival care for photographs), summer camps, after-school programs, Boy Scouts or Girl Scouts programming, and youth and family programs (e.g. storyteller, living history demonstrations). Museums often develop their most successful programs when collaborating with other community groups, from the local garden clubs to the Boys and Girls Club. Creating one or two annual larger events is another way to maintain local awareness (e.g. holiday open house, heritage festival, concert series). The ideas are endless, so start small and see what works best, drawing on what makes the museum and community unique and creating ways to evaluate the successes and pitfalls.

As mentioned in the section on exhibitions, programs should also take ADA requirements into consideration and should consider ways to improve accessibility whenever possible.
Among the many excellent books related to museum education is William T. Alderson and Shirley Payne Low, *Interpretation of Historic Sites*, second edition (Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press, 1985) and Bonnie Sachatello-Sawyer, et. al., *Adult Museum Programs: Designing Meaningful Experiences* (Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press, 2002).
APPENDIX D: LINKS TO FREE MUSEUM RESOURCES

  - This manual provides guidelines, worksheets, and other tools for museum cataloguing without museum management software.

  http://www.iowahistory.org/education/assets/the_field_guide_for_museums.pdf

- “Small Museums.” American Association for State and Local History (AASLH), 2013.
  http://feed.aaslh.org/browse?18
  - AASLH provides links to a wealth of resources for small museums through its website. Use the above link as a menu to select the need you wish to pursue. AASLH also manages the StEP program, which, for a one-time fee of only $175, enrolls your organization in a network that will allow it access to “sample policies, job descriptions and other valuable resources plus free webinar recordings and networking groups” (http://tools.aaslh.org/steps/).

  http://www.smallmuseum.org/resources-and-events.html
  - This website, though encouraging membership in the Small Museum Association, also offers free information and links to grant opportunities and other resources geared towards small museums.

  - The blog of the *Small Museum Toolkit* contains many useful posts (see “popular posts” in the right-hand column) for development of a small museum. Purchasing an actual hard copy of the Toolkit costs $150-$300.


  - While the two books by Arminta Neal are not free, nor are they available online, they are included on this list nevertheless for their practicality and usefulness. Used editions can be obtained cheaply through online booksellers.
Teaching with Primary Sources—MTSU
Lesson Plan:
Education Reform During the Progressive Era and
the Rosenwald Schools of the American South

Grades: 9-12
Subjects: U.S. History
Time Required: 1 Class Period (50-60 minutes)
Author: Katie Sutton Randall, Teaching with Primary Sources—MTSU

OVERVIEW
In this lesson, students will learn about the Julius Rosenwald Fund and study images and drawings of the Cadentown Rosenwald School in Lexington, Kentucky. The school was constructed in 1922-23, and the images were created after 1933 as part of the Library of Congress’s Historic American Building Survey. Students will analyze these sources to identify defining physical features of Rosenwald schools, develop historical research questions, and learn about the private-public partnerships that funded many Progressive Era reform efforts.

UNDERSTANDING GOALS
Students will analyze photographs and drawings of a Rosenwald school in addition to secondary source material to gain a better understanding of reform efforts made in education during the Progressive Era.

OBJECTIVES
Students will learn to evaluate primary source materials as artifacts, develop an understanding of the importance of historical inquiry based on primary sources, gain a better understanding that political, economic, and social history are connected, and recognize that private-public partnerships often funded reform efforts during the Progressive Era.

INVESTIGATIVE QUESTIONS
How can buildings be used as primary sources? What kind of relationship model did the Rosenwald initiative create for Progressive reform efforts?

MATERIALS USED
- Primary Source Analysis Tool
- Analyzing Photographs and Prints Teachers Guide
- Rosenwald Schools videos, courtesy of the University of Alabama Center for Public Television
- Video Discussion Questions Handout (page 5)

Curriculum Standards

High School African American History
AAH.21 Describe the development of African American institutions such as religion, education, and benevolent organizations.

Common Core Standards
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.7 Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.9 Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.
RESOURCES USED:

Library of Congress Primary Sources:

- [School house in Kirkland. Been used for several years and actually falling to pieces. Many rural schools in Georgia are in this condition.] Location: [Kirkland, Georgia], [http://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/nclc.02986/](http://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/nclc.02986/)
- Newspaper article in the Salt Lake City, Utah, Broad Ax [http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84024055/1922-08-05/ed-1/seq-3/?words=schools+School+Rosenwald+school?date1=1836&rows=20&searchType=advanced&proxdistance=5&date2=1922&ortext=&proxtxt=&phrasetxt=%22Rosenwald+school%22&andtext=&dateFilterType=yearRange&index=1](http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84024055/1922-08-05/ed-1/seq-3/?words=schools+School+Rosenwald+school?date1=1836&rows=20&searchType=advanced&proxdistance=5&date2=1922&ortext=&proxtxt=&phrasetxt=%22Rosenwald+school%22&andtext=&dateFilterType=yearRange&index=1)

Secondary Sources:

Encyclopedia of Alabama

- “Rosenwald Schools,” a two-part video series produced by the University of Alabama Center for Public Television on the Julius Rosenwald fund and the philanthropic building program that began in the South in 1913 to provide better educational facilities and opportunities for African Americans
  - Video 1 [http://www.encyclopediaofalabama.org/face/Multimedia.jsp?id=m-4126](http://www.encyclopediaofalabama.org/face/Multimedia.jsp?id=m-4126)
  - Video 2 [http://www.encyclopediaofalabama.org/face/Multimedia.jsp?id=m-4127](http://www.encyclopediaofalabama.org/face/Multimedia.jsp?id=m-4127)

Tennessee Encyclopedia of History and Culture

- “Julius Rosenwald Fund,” an article by Mary S. Hoffschwelle summarizing the history of the program [http://tennesseeencyclopedia.net/entry.php?rec=728](http://tennesseeencyclopedia.net/entry.php?rec=728)

Step 1 Connect Before beginning the lesson, students should have some contextual knowledge of the Progressive Movement and reform efforts of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Have students research these topics in the school library or on the Internet. What factors led to the Progressive Movement? (i.e. industrialization, urbanization, and influx of immigrant workers) Give examples of Progressive reform efforts.

Step 2 Connect Have students read the [Tennessee Encyclopedia of History and Culture](http://tennesseeencyclopedia.net/entry.php?rec=728) article on the Julius Rosenwald Fund, a philanthropic building fund for African American schools across the South between 1913 and 1920. Allow students time to ask questions about the article.

Step 3 Connect Hand out the discussion questions that correspond with the University of Alabama Center for Public Television Rosenwald Schools video series. Play Video 1 of 2 and ask students to follow along, answering the questions as they watch the video. At the end of Video 1, take time to discuss answers to Video 1, answering any additional questions the students might have.

Step 4 Connect Play Video 2 of the University of Alabama Center for Public Television Rosenwald Schools video series and ask students to follow along, answering the questions as they watch the video. At the end of Video 2, take time to discuss answers to Video 2, answering any additional questions the students might have.
Step 5  Connect

Have students search the *Historic American Buildings Survey/Historic American Engineering Record (HABS/HAER) collection* (keyword: Cadentown Rosenwald) for the file documenting the Cadentown Rosenwald School in Lexington, Kentucky. Have each student fill out the *Primary Source Analysis Tool* to help them analyze the set of images. Teachers should refer to the *Teacher’s Guide, Analyzing Photographs and Prints* to prompt discussion and help students critically examine the source material.

Step 6  Wonder

An article from an African American Salt Lake City, Utah, newspaper, *The Broad Ax*, published August 5, 1922, refers to Rosenwald schools as “modern rural schools for Negroes.” Have students compare the images they saw in the videos and the images and drawings they studied in the *HABS/HAER collection* with the image of an early twentieth-century rural schoolhouse found on the Library’s website ([http://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/nclc.02986/](http://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/nclc.02986/)). Have them note differences in construction and building materials used.

Step 7  Wonder

Divide students into groups and have each group develop a list of three possible research questions that do more than prompt simple “yes” or “no” answers based on this set of images. (i.e. What character defining features distinguish a Rosenwald School? How did building plans for Rosenwald schools use natural light? What do these buildings convey about the era in which they were built? Were Rosenwald schools truly “modern” for their day?)

Step 8  Investigate

Have students explore possible answers to their group’s set of research questions.

Step 9  Express

Have the groups present their questions and possible answers to the class.

Step 10  Reflect

For homework, have students write an essay answering the following questions: How did the Rosenwald school building program change the lives of southern African American students? Considering all that you have learned today and previously about the Progressive Era and reform movements of the early twentieth century, how did Rosenwald schools fit the goals of Progressives? Use the rubric at the end of this lesson to evaluate the students’ essays.
EXTENSIONS

- Have students conduct additional research using the Fisk University Rosenwald Fund Card File Database to see if there was at one time or is at present an existing Rosenwald school in their community, http://rosenwald.fisk.edu/
- Have students research and map out Rosenwald Schools across their county or state
- Have students learn more about historic preservation efforts to save and restore Rosenwald schools by going online at http://www.preservationnation.org/travel-and-sites/sites/southern-region/rosenwald-schools/
- Have students research Rosenwald school floorplans further at http://www.historysouth.org/ rosenwaldhome.html

EVALUATION

Use the following rubric to evaluate student essays:

90-100 Essay has 5 to 6 paragraphs, uses descriptive language and details from class discussion and correct grammar.

80-89 Essay has 4 to 5 paragraphs, uses some descriptive language and some details from class discussion and mostly correct grammar.

70-79 Essay has 3 to 4 paragraphs, uses little descriptive language or few details from class discussion and incorrect grammar.
Student Name: _____________________________________________

Directions: Watch the videos and follow along, answering questions along the way.

Video 1:
1. Describe rural schoolhouses for African Americans in the early twentieth century.
   ___________________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________________

2. What U.S. city was Julius Rosenwald from?
   ___________________________________________________________________________

3. What company was Rosenwald president of?
   ___________________________________________________________________________

4. Who did Rosenwald form a partnership with in Alabama?
   ___________________________________________________________________________

5. How much money was needed to construct the typical Rosenwald school?
   ___________________________________________________________________________

Video 2:
1. Who was Jim Crow?
   ___________________________________________________________________________

2. What was the Great Migration?
   ___________________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________________

3. How were Rosenwald schools funded?
   ___________________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________________

4. Based on the images in the video, how would you describe Rosenwald schools?
   ___________________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________________