

# Baxter County History



The Wolf House is the most historical building in Baxter County.

Photo courtesy of Ray Grass

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PROGRESS OF THE BAXTER COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

By - Hazen Bonow, Historian

September 5, 1978 - Our speaker Thurman Wood has lived here 20 years. He grew up in Marion County where he spent all his childhood. He talked on his "Early Farming Days".

Their 10 room home was built in 1888 on 400 acres of land which his great grandfather got squatters rights from the Shawnee Indians in 1850 for one pony, one gun and \$50. The family still owns the home and now have 2,000 acres of land. His father bought the home in 1918. They had 11 boys and one girl. Two boys died in infancy but 7 boys and the girl are still living.

They had 10 to 15 teams of mules and 400 to 500 head of cattle. His father branded and labeled the cattle before turning them out on the open range, in the spring, about the first of April. His voice when calling the cattle for their salt could be heard in a range of about 3 miles. The last part of October to December he would get them in for the winter.

Their day began at 4 a.m. and chores would be done while his mother prepared breakfast and they usually started their work before daylight. Rain or shine there was work to be done. About 11:30 their dinner bell would ring but they were back to work by 1 p.m. until sundown.

On Sunday afternoon his father would go out in the field and lay out the work plans for the following week.

About the middle of March to the first of April was time to plant corn, it was planted when the oak leaves were the size of a squirrel's ear. It was usually planted in straight rows which was quite an art.

They raised some cotton and used the cash for clothes. They planted a lot of alfalfa and clover and also grew 30 or 40 acres of oats and wheat. August was thrashing time and it was lots of hard work but also lots of fun. Wheat was taken to Valley Springs Mill to make their flour. They also raised 5 to 10 acres of tomatoes as there were four canning factories in the county.

In the winter there was wood to be cut for their fire wood, also some to sell and post and ties to make. There was corn to be shucked and cattle to feed.

They had three months of school in the summer and three months in the winter. They walked  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles to their school. When it snowed his father would drag a cedar tree behind his wagon to make a path for them to walk to school.

Sunday was the only recreation day. In summers there was swimming in the creek in the mornings and ball games or marbles in the afternoons. Any get-togethers were Saturday nights. The men would play cards and the children would play such games as "Blind Man's Buff" and "Please or Displease". Popcorn was a favorite party food.

Thurwood also showed a film he called "Sun Change" which had some beautiful country scenes.

October 3, 1978 - Our Vice President Quinby Smith introduced our program which consisted of Bob Carson, fiddler, and his friends Marvin Stafford, John Dutton, playing guitars and his son Jim Carson with his electric guitar.

Their first number was a request for the old tune "Maidens Prayer", then the "Tennessee Wagon" a ballad sung by Marvin Stafford. The beautiful "Tennessee Waltz" followed.

John Dutton did an excellent job singing Hank Williams song "Cheatin Heart".

Bob talked about his "fiddle" - each one has its own tone and feel and he always plays by ear. He shook his fiddle and it rattled as it had eight rattle snake rattles inside!

There is country music and Cajun fiddling. He did one Cajun tune for us but he prefers country style.

Bob okated "Orange Blossom Special" in his own style which was surely special! Then "Soldiers Joy" and "Down Yonder" followed.

Bob changed to his banjo playing the old tune of "Flint Hill Special", "Beverly Hillbilly Song" and "Cripple Creek". Then back with his fiddle they played "Faded Lane" and then ended their program with "Arkansas Traveler".

The music was enjoyed so very much the program seemed short! We all loved it! Bob prefers his violin be called a fiddle!

OCTOBER 21 & 22, 1978 - The Third Annual Heritage and Antique Show was held Saturday the 21st and Sunday afternoon the 22nd at the National Guard Armory.

A featured exhibit was a recently purchased replica of a part of the old Buford community by Arthur Knight of Flippen. He constructed all the model buildings which included his family's log home, a blacksmith shop, the cotton gin, a canning factory and the store and postoffice. He also had a sorghum making mill. All the small equipment which were excellent were all hand carved by Mr. Knight.

We hope a a permanent place can be found to display these models sometime in the future.

NOVEMBER 14, 1978 - Quinby Smith introduced Alice Bean, daughter of the late Dr. Jim Tipton, who reviewed John Wesley's book on Primitive Remedies. It was very interesting and some were amusing but as Quinby said there were no doctors and the people did the best they could to try and help the ill.

Some of the advice was that walking and work were good exercises and speaking loud helped the lungs. Eat plain whole-

some food with no pickling, drink no coffee or tea and alcohol was slow poison. Cold water bathing was beneficial and to shave frequently and wash the feet. He advised 8 oz. of meat and 12 oz. of vegetables in 12 hours and drink water or milk. Don't bathe on a full stomach.

Many remedies included honey, onions, vinegar, tar water and various herbs. Tar water was made by boiling one quart of Norway tar in spring water and let stand for three days.

These are just a few of his advised remedies:

Cough - 1 tablespoon sugar, pour in kerosene and burn out. chew the mixture left.

Dry cough - chew pepper corn.

Cold - orange rind, roll and place in the nose.

Noise in the ear - put juice of onion in ear.

Poor sight - put 2 or 3 drops of rotten apple juice in ear.

Weak eyes - wash head daily in cold water.

Sore throat - drink pint of cold water lying in bed. Snuff honey up nose.

Bleeding - put on ashes of linen rag or puff ball powder.

Fits - drink glass of vinegar. Put molasses and soot on wrists.

Vomiting blood - sage juice with a little honey

Scurvy - live on turnips one month.

Consumption - butter and white bread, drink water. Dig hole in ground and breath into it for a quarter of an hour.

Asthma - one pint of water with licorice four to twenty hours. Live a fort night on boiled carrots.

Night sweats - drink warm milk lying down.

Scalding - black varnish applied with a feather.

Sunburn - sage tea.

Baldness - rub head with onion juice then apply honey.

Clean teeth - ashes of burned bread or rub on tobacco ashes.

Weaning children - at seven month. Let them lie in cradle one year.

Then from a book on folk medicine:

Sore throat - gargle with vinegar then swallow it.

Colic - catnip tea.

Mental fatigue and drowsiness show lack of potassium.

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GENEALOGICAL INFORMATION  
BAXTER COUNTY ARKANSAS

By- Joseph and Irma Bloom Route 6, Box 352,  
Mountain Home, Ark. 72653

BAXTER COUNTY MARRIAGES

Oct. 19, 1892 to Mar. 15, 1893

J. W. Whitfield to Liza J. Galloway	Oct. 3, 1892
William Pettyjohn to Mary J. Graves	23,
R. E. Crownover to Ella Stone	30,
W. S. Parks to Mouncy Henderson	Nov. 6,
J. H. Carter to Ann Brixey	6,
J. M. McFarland to Mary E. Southard	20,
Lee Lyles to Celia Eddings	20,
George White to Ella M. Poppins	30,
John W. Chappelle, Jr. to Bulah Perkins	30,
A. F. Pate to Mollie Blevins	Dec. 4,
M. Sorrells to Laura Webber	8,
J. A. Sewell to Rebecca Lafarlett	11,
J. D. Anglin to Clara Reed	14,
T. J. Loman to Jessie Whitfield	22,
G. W. Cowart to Mary Holstine	22,
N. L. Darman to Jane Taylor	23,
L. B. Chapman to Abagile Horn	26,
J. M. Wren to Paralee Eubanks	29,
J. A. Kasinger to Isabelle Taylor	30,
B. M. Marler to Letha A. Barnett	Jan. 1, 1893
J. T. Combs to Lillie Roper	1,
J. J. Morrow to Hattie I. Curlee	5,
F. C. Mitchell to Annie Arnn	5,
W. S. Morgan to Martha A. Martin	
Affidavit for marriage license	8,
S. B. Suggs to Emma Mooney	8,
Geol T. Hammock to Sarah Boaz	11,
J. H. Cathcart to Mrs. M. A. Coldwell	15,
W. T. Taylor to Mary E. Kimberling	15,
J. E. Hamilton to Annie Sevall	19,
J. H. Adams to Dora Barton	29,
James T. Cypert to Ida S. Stewart	Feb. 2,
James Jackson to Julia Rorie	5,
R. E. Meed to Minnie E. Moore	5,
James H. Clark to Margaret Linn	19,
E. W. Roderick to Matilda Crownover	26,
J. H. Fullerton to Martha S. Raymond	26,
Nathan Simms to Melvina Pernell	
Affidavit for marriage license	Mar. 3,
C. A. McCormack to Bettie Caldwell	5,
T. S. Dry to Nina Lewis	10,
John W. Loman to Nancy Newton	15,

R.I.P.

Ninth in a series of articles on cemeteries in Baxter County, Arkansas - By D. Garvin Carroll.

CEMETERY ON GENE WELL'S FARM

This cemetery is locate on the old Jackson Port Road just off Buford Road.

HUDSON, Robert E. (Son of H.W. & Frances E.)	<u>BORN</u>	<u>DIED</u>
9yrs. 9 mos. 28 days	Oct. 22, 1860	Aug. 20, 1870
THOMPSON, Ann Eliza (Dau of John H. & Emily Thompson)	Born at Pikeville, Tenn.	
	Apr. 1, 1852	??? 1867
(BLURRED) James Allen	???	???

LOWER OAKLAND CEMETERY

This cemetery is located one half mile south of the East Oakland Cemetery on US Highway 62 East of Mountain Home. Take the first road to the right past Oakland Cemetery. Lower Oakland is to the right of this road on top of the hill.

BODENHAMER, Mrs. Anne	No date	No date
BROOKS, Allie Anna	Dec. 10, 1893	Sep. 12, 1895
HUTCESON, Martha	Jun. 3, 1832	Nov. 28, 1895
LANCE, Benjamin F.	1823	1888
LANCE, H.M.B.	Feb. 8, 1833	Mar. 29, 1889
LANCE, Missouri	1868	1947
LANCE, Thomas A.	1856	1938
LANCE, Sara (Wife of Bert Lance)	Aged 52 tears	Jul. 20, 1897
MERRIMAN, J. W.	Sep. 24, 1857	Oct. 26, 1896
PARTON, Alemay (Dau of J. C. & Bertha Parton)	Mar. 6, 1919	Mar. 9, 1920
PARTON, John Calvin (Pvt 15 Co 162 Dept Brigade WWI)	Jul. 26, 1892	Oct. 9, 1958
PAYNE, (Infant Babe of Elbert & Cora Payne)	Aug. 21, 1919	Aug. 24, 1919
WELLS, Cora L. (Wife of Poland F. Wells)	Nov. 25, 1895	???
WIEGAND, Edwin C. (Ark. PVT. US Army WWI)	Oct. 22, 1895	Jun. 30, 1964
WUDTKE, W.	1861	1919

An album containing many letters of correspondence of the Leonard family has been loaned to me by Mr. & Mrs. Hal Bodenhamer for the purpose of printing them in our journal. The following is one of these letters written during the Civil War while J. L. Leonard was serving in the Confederate Army. It is written to Miss. Caroline Coffee. I will try to bring them to you in sequence that will ultimately bring them to-gether in marriage.---Editor

Washington, N. C.  
Oct 12th, 1861

Miss. Caroline Coffee

Madam

I hope you will pardon me while I take the responsibility to write you a line. I thought that I would ask permission to do so when I saw you last but as I was somewhat confused I forgot it when in your company last. Though I can assure you that it was my intention to have that permission by your consent I therefore take the present to ask permission to correspond with you. There is nothing that would be more pleasure to me than to have a line from you. This Saturday evening I would give any thing in my power were I where I could go stay the morrow with you. But it cannot be so at the present. Therefore I resort to means of conversing with you in writing.

I must confess that the greatest objection I have to camp life is that it makes it utterly impossible to have any hours with those we love.

It is no use for me to say that I am as I was when I saw you and express myself. I think I will come home on a visit this winter. I shall await an answer with great anxiety.

Yours Forever

/s/ J. L. Leonard



## LOST AND DIED IN THE DEEP SNOW

By - S. C. Turnbc

Here is an account of the death of a little boy. Though He was not shot accidentally through mistake yet it was worse than being shot and should have a place in history and we give it here. J. L. (Jake) Hetherly was born on Hunters Creek a tributary Branch of Bryant Fork of Big North Fork on the 9th of September 1890 (?) in what is now Douglas County, Mo. Mr. Hetherly is my authority for this account. Mr. Hetherly said that Buck McIntosh son of Steve McIntosh age 9 years started out on the morning of the 23rd of January with a yellow cur dog named "Catch" to kill rabbits and squirrels. The weather on that morning was cloudy, cool with light mist of rain and during the day the memorable snow fall of that winter began falling. The child had went into the woods with the dogs many times previously to this and the family rested very easy about him until late in the afternoon when they become alarmed at his prolonged absence. The neighborhood was aroused and a few men made a search for him and continued to hunt for him during the night but were not able to discover his whereabouts. Late in the night the dog come back home and at break of day on the following morning more men joined the search. Some of the men attempted to follow the back track of the dog. But the snow storm had not abated and all trace of the dogs tracks were obliterated by the falling snow.

All most every one reached the conclusion that the boy was dead and that his body was covered over with snow. The night following that day the searchers returned back home to renew the search the next day. They were all very tired for those on foot had been dragging themselves through the snow all day and those that rode their horses were jaded and themselves cold and wearied. Mr. Steve Marlor remained over night with us. Though I was less than 6 years old yet I remember distinctly what Marlor told my father when he rose from his bed next morning. He said that he dreamed that the little boy was dead and part of his body was lying under a low ledge of shelving rock and that one of his legs was resting on a small bush that stood just on the outside of the rock. Mr. Marlor told every particular of his dream and described it so plain that I remember everything he said about it. He ended by saying, Buck is dead on Rippys Creek. My mother hurried breakfast and father and Mr. Marlor started out immediately fater breakfast and found the dead body of the boy 4 miles from home on Rippys Creek as told by Mr. Marlor. It appeared that the little boy while in agony of suffering had tried to crawl under the rock but there was only room enough for part of his body and just before death overtook the poor boy he had laid one leg on a bush and was discovered lying in that position. My father and Marlor had taken a home spun woolen blanket with them and they wrapped the dead boy in it and carried him home on a horse and tender hearts placed him to rest in the Hooper Grave Yard.

Editor's Note - This is the last in a series of stories by Mr. Turnbow, Many before have been amusing and some exciting hunting stories. This story shows that his writing are very diversified. I hope that you have enjoyed them.

The following was submitted by Phyllis A. Morse, former editor of the Craighead County Historical Quarterly. It is based on the dig of our Society at Mooney's Landing. We are deeply indebted to her for her in depth analysis of the artifacts recovered.

AN ANALYSIS OF THE ARTIFACTS FROM MOONEY'S LANDING  
By - Phyllis A. Morse

Members of Baxter County Historical Society and the Mountain Home Chapter of the Arkansas Archeological Society excavated a collection of historical material at the Mooney's Landing site, 3BA67, in April 1976. Hazen Bonow in the Baxter County History reported briefly on the excavation in the October 1976 Field Notes. The site was accidentally discovered when a trench was dug to put in an underground electrical cable. The entire area facing the White River has been subdivided and a private airport put in behind two projected rows of houses.

Mooney's Landing was named after Jacob Mooney, who arrived in Baxter County the same year as Jacob Wolf did, in 1810. He and a partner came prepared to establish a trading post, bringing with them on a flatboat slaves, pigs, cows, chickens, a liquor still, black powder, 20 kinds of seeds, an anvil and forge, 10 pounds of flint, 100 bolts of cloth, one gross of needles and sewing thread and a demijohn of live beer seed (Messick 1973). A commercial complex developed around this initial trading post including a ferry, cotton gin, store, saloon, numerous houses and a steamboat berth.

Artifacts recovered from the preliminary excavation reflect the great variety of items available to the early settlers of Arkansas. The ideal of the completely self-sufficient pioneer, living off the land with little contact with the outside world is not supported by the archeological data. English ceramics made in the early 19th century were the most common artifact found in the excavation. These were often shipped to New Orleans or St. Louis and then distributed outward from there. Traders usually went to their source of supply and selected new merchandise, bringing items traded such as skins with them. Permanent trading posts such as Mooney's Landing attracted other settlers around them and often became a focus of settlement. Another alternative source of trade were keelboats or flatboats, which ran regular routes up the rivers to trade goods for furs and skins.

#### Pearlware

Pearlware was reputedly developed by Wedgwood about 1779. By 1810, it was the dominant class of ceramics exported to America from England (Hune 1973). Its main attribute is a blue glaze rather recognizable on footrims or impressed parts of the artifacts. On small sherds it is often impossible to designate whether it is pearlware or not. Pearlware was most commonly decorated with a blue or green shell edge, but was often transfer printed or handpainted.

## Blue Shell Edge Pearlware

Five sherds of tureen top were found, about one fourth of the artifact. (Figure 1) Three rows of cobalt blue edging are present, two rectangular and the central one scalloped. The 2 outer rows are painted in a straight line instead of following the shell edge impressions. The scallops surround a break which had been a finial which served as the handle. These finials are typically stylized flowers, strawberries or even animals. The body is very light and quite thin (2.5mm). The blue glaze gather is very apparent in the shell edge impressions beyond the cobalt painting. One small sherd of a shell edge plate is definitely pearlware. Brush strokes go inward from the rim, defining the impressed shell edge decoration.

## Mulberry Transfer Print Pearlware

Eight sherds of a plate or shallow soup bowl are transfer printed with a typical "willow ware" border. (Figure 2) The stylized tails of the usual two birds present in this motif are present in the center. There is a slight footrim on the base.

## Underglaze Polychrome Handpainted Pearlware

These sherds have been badly weathered, and only one is definitely pearlware. Large floral motifs in muted "earth colors" are present. (Figure 3) One base sherd has 2 dusty rose red petals. Two rim sherds of plates or bowls have a rose red border and green and red leaves and petals. One interior sherd has the same colors. Two sherds have medium blue and rose red petals. One sherd has rose red, blue and green petals.

## Historic Blue

Deep cobalt transfer printing on the exterior of a small body sherd is probably part of one of the many deep blue historic or scenic patterns widely circulated in the early part of the nineteenth century in the United States.

## Plain

Twenty one plain white sherds are present. Three rims and two bases can be definitely determined as pearlware. One plate has a narrow (21.5mm) flat rim, while another has a wider (33.8mm) up curved rim. One plain sherd is curved as though it were a tureen or bowl top.

## Other Transfer Prints

The following could not be definitely designated as pearlware, although many of them could be. By the 1820's, hard white wares often called ironstone, stone china or even pearl white china were becoming increasingly popular.

## Mulberry Transfer Print

Three small floral printed sherds are from a plate or shallow bowl. Stylized flowers, stippled background and curvilinear segments are present.

## Purple Transfer

A small body sherd has a peacock head present, with a large flower or tree to the right.

## Pink and Purple Transfer

One rim and two body sherds have a pink stippled interior rim with a purple transfer print scene. Portions of three towers in the scene indicate one of the many imaginary landscapes printed on dinner sets of the early nineteenth century. These are probably bowl sherds.

## Pink Transfer

A small body sherd has curvilinear plumes and a pink stippled background.

## Brown Transfer

A curved plate rim sherd has a brown floral border transfer print interior design.

## Black Transfer

A very small sherd has a black transfer printed design of small flowers.

## Green Transfer

Two green printed sherds with stippled leaves have this motif on both the interior and exterior. They are probably bowl sherds.

## Medium Blue Transfer

Four different patterns are present. One very thin rim sherd has a blue interior and exterior border and is probably from a tea bowl or cup. One interior sherd from a flat-bottomed plate has a naturalistic floral design. Two other very small sherds also appear to have other floral motifs.

## Banded Ware

This is also called Mocha or Annular ware and was manufactured throughout the nineteenth century. The small sherd present has a fine frown band on a white body, with a wider yellow band below. These were usually bowls, mugs and other utilitarian wares.

## Saltglazed Stoneware

Stone ware is fired at a temperature of 2200<sup>o</sup>F. It is very hard and is not porous. Glazing with salt, thrown into the kiln

to vaporize during firing, was a very common step in manufacture. Interior of stoneware vessels were often glazed with a brown Albany slip. Surface decoration of cobalt, a blue pigment which can survive the high temperatures of the stoneware kiln, is typical of the mid 19th century. At Mooney's Landing cobalt designs were applied with a slip cone technique, where a cup or cone of liquid cobalt was used instead of a brush. (Ketchum 1971:10)

#### Grey Saltglazed Stoneware

A one gallon crock has a light gray exterior, an incised line 35mm from the lip and a slip cone cobalt blue decoration beginning at the incised line. (Figure 4) An alternating leaf pattern in thick dark blue, like a corn plant or pineapple, is over 80mm long. The lip of the vessel is flat and wide (19mm). Tool marks are obvious on the interior, caused by scraping during wheel rotation.

A large four gallon gray stoneware crock is similarly decorated with a slip cone cobalt technique. A number 4 is both incised on the body and is also written in cobalt in the same area. A cobalt blue garland of leaves is present on the body underneath the number. Solid eared handles are present near the rim, with a small cobalt dot on each end of the ear. The rim is upturned rather than flat. Tool marks are very evident on the interior. Almost one third of this vessel is present.

Nineteen more sherds of gray salt-glazed stoneware are present. Two flat base sherds are present.

Two sherds have a gray saltglazed exterior and a dark brown Albany slip interior. One is the base of a small vessel.

One small stoneware crock is very similar to the one gallon decorated vessel, but is unglazed. Stoneware does not have to be glazed to become impervious to moisture, but unglazed stoneware is usually only present in the earliest days of the stoneware industry (Ketchum 1971:50).

#### Redware

A redware basal sherd of bowl has a white slipped interior and a brown slipped exterior. The foot rim is very excurvate.

The small sherds are redware rather than stoneware. They are glazed with a medium brown slip on both the exterior and interior.

Redware is manufactured from common red-burning surface clays and was manufactured during both the 18th and 19th centuries. It is fired at a lower temperature than stoneware and is not as durable.

#### Bricks

Seven brick fragments were found. These were presumably hand made at the building site. one is 10.5cm x 6cm x 17<sup>+</sup>cm long, another is 11<sup>+</sup>cm x 6 cm x 11<sup>+</sup>cm long.

## Clay Pipe Stem

A broken stem of a white clay pipe is present. The bore is irregular running through one side of the stem instead of the center.

## Glass

Eight flat glass sherds are presumably from windows. They are quite thin, measuring 1mm to 1.5mm thick. Some curved glass fragments are presumably of bottles or drinking glasses. These sherds are all clear or clear pale green. One rim of a plain drinking glass is present.

A 9.5cm thick bottle base is present with a prominent pontil mark on the base. This is of clear glass.

Seven sherds of dark brown-green glass are present. These are probably wine or other alcoholic beverage bottles. Two of these appear to have been melted in a fire.

## Metal

One thin (1mm) plate rim is of a non-ferrous metal and is probably pewter.

Two fragments of iron were present. One is a flat base of a cast item such as a skillet. The other is a portion of a metal strap of some sort.

Eight square nails are in the sample. One is a L-headed nail with a sharp point, 2 3/4" long (9 penny size). A flat point T-headed nail is 3" or a 10 penny size. Three square head nails are 2 1/2" long, one is 2 1/8", one 2", and one is broken. These all appear to be earlier than the Modern machine cut nails developed in the 1830's (Nelson 1968).

## Brass Button

A button 17.3mm in diameter with a plain surface is stamped "Best Strong" in Gothic Script on the back. (Figure 5) The eye is cast in place. This best seems to be Souths Type 18, which dates to 1800-1865 (South 1964). This may have been gilded.

-o-

This test excavation reveals only a glimpse of the information potential this site has. The building outlines could be located, trash pits dug and floated for seeds and small objects, and a lot of information gathered on trade, diet, craftsmanship, and the daily life of a pioneer in early 19th century Arkansas.

-o-

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## FIGURES

- 1 Blue shell edge pearlware tureen top and plate rim.
- 2 Mulberry transfer print pearlware soup bowl, willow pattern.
- 3 Underglaze hand painted pearlware in muted colors of rose, green and blue.
- 4 Salt glazed stoneware storage jar with slip cup cobalt decoration.
- 5 Brass button marked "Best Strong". which was once gilded on the exterior.

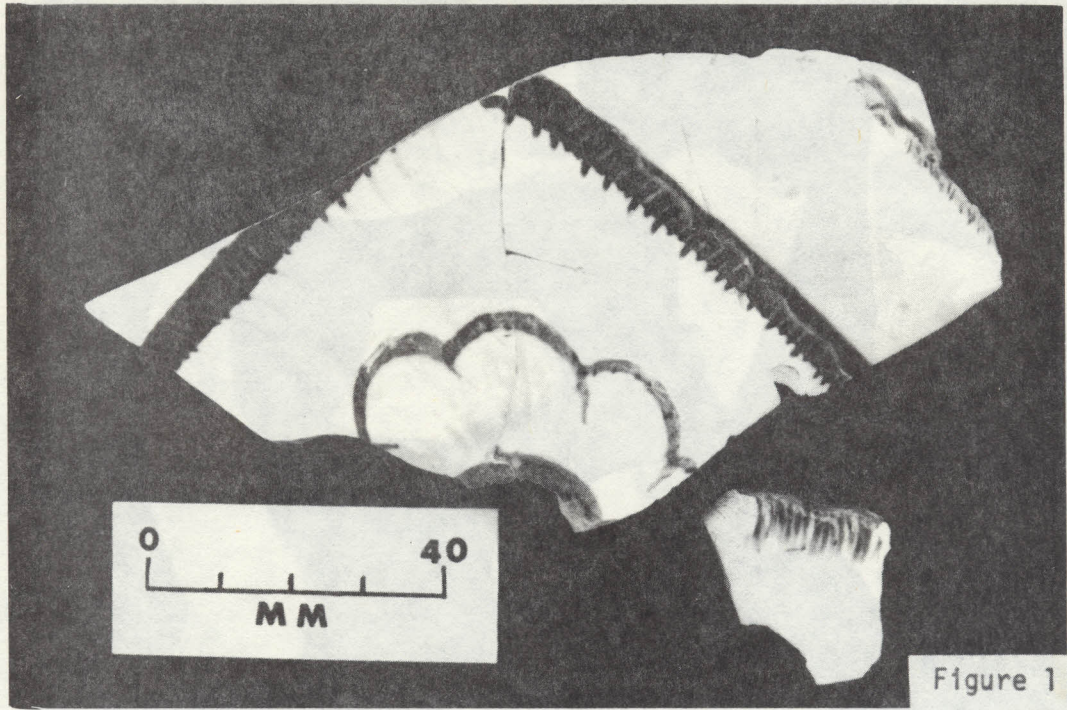


Figure 1

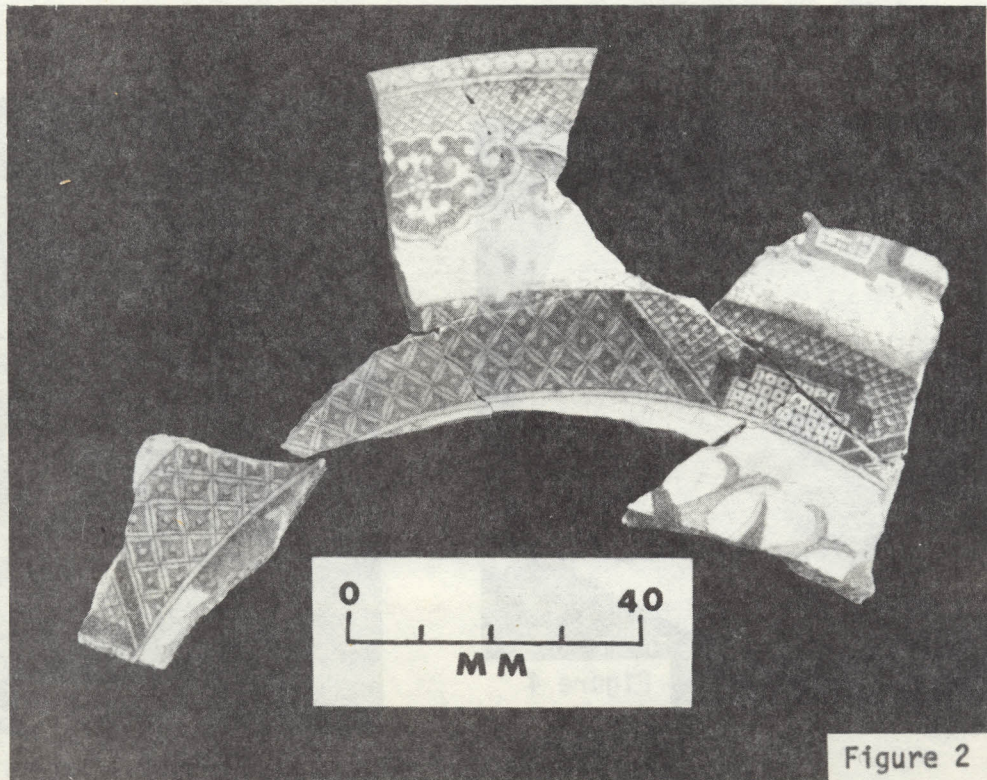


Figure 2



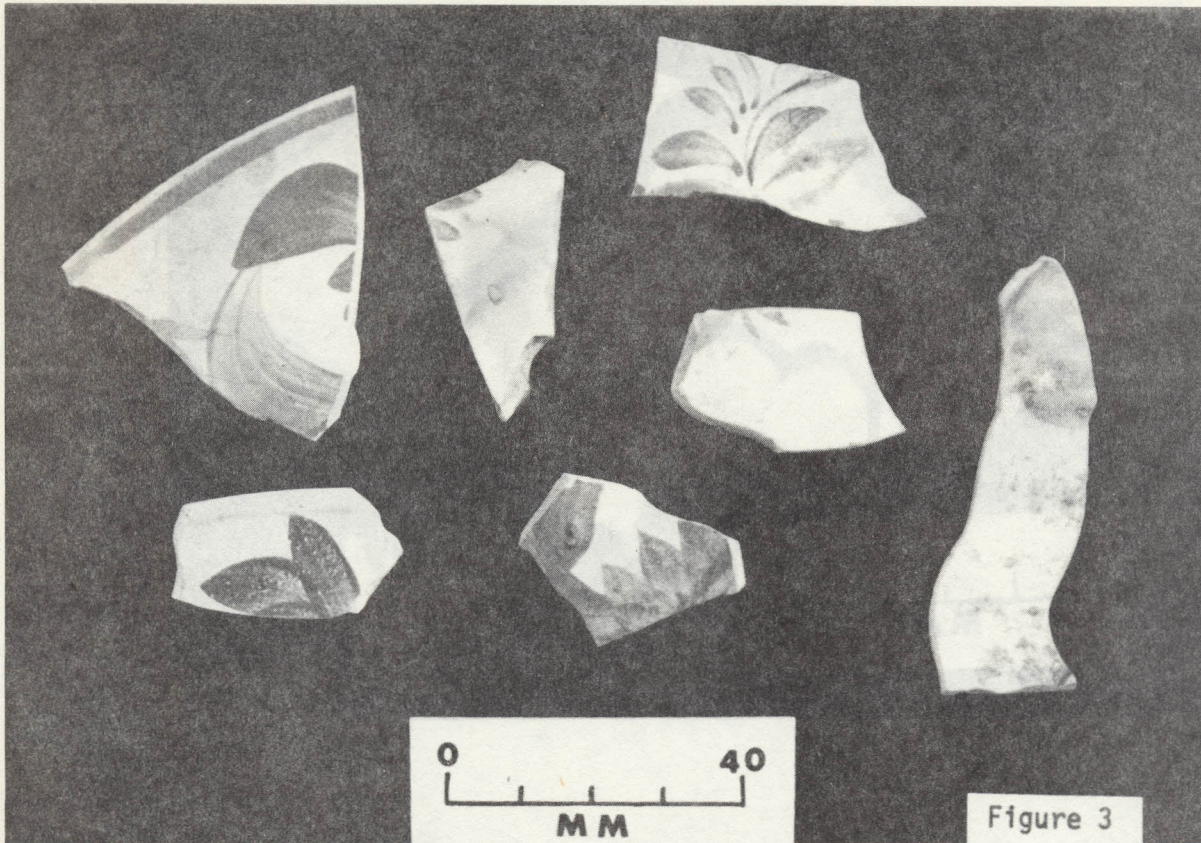


Figure 3

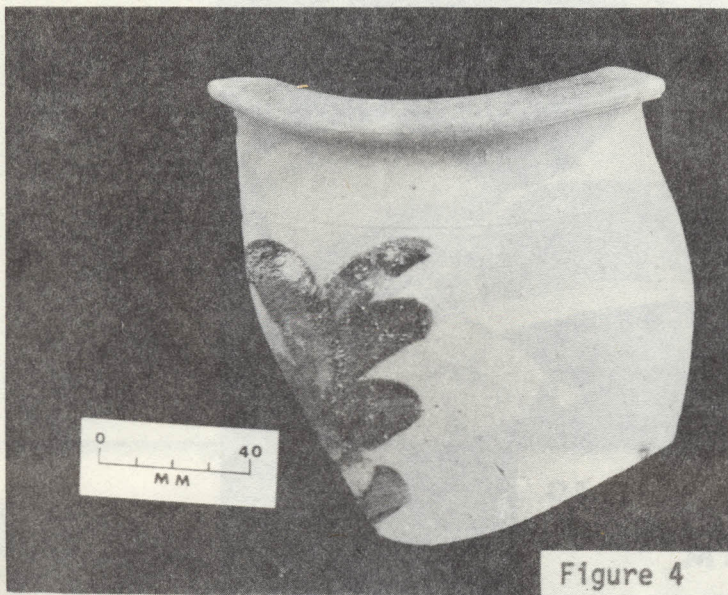


Figure 4

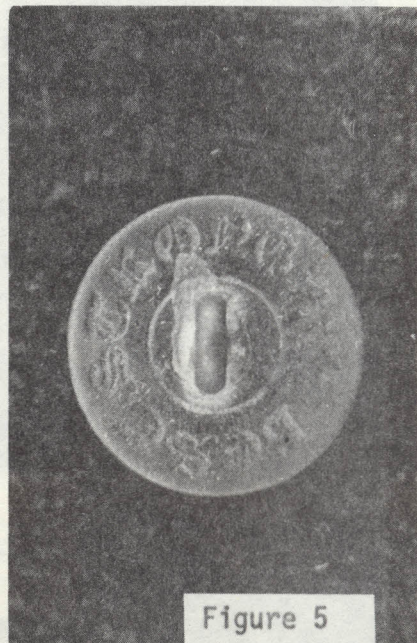


Figure 5

## CLOSING OF THE BAXTER THEATER

By - Jim Bodenhamer

For me and a number of other people a little piece of Baxter County History will pass Thursday Night (December 21) with the closing of the Baxter Theater. The following night the new Commonwealth Village Twin Cinema opens its doors to the public.

Without fanfare the old Baxter Theater will become strangely quiet, the flashing marquee lights will no longer beckon the movie go-er to escape reality, or see history as portrayed by Hollywood.

The Baxter opened its doors in 1947 in a gala opening that included large spotlights. That same year I entered the world a couple of blocks away at the old Saltzman Hospital. The Baxter Theater and I grew up together.

I can remember going to see the "Titanic" sink for only 10 cents. I can remember the Saturday afternoon matinees in which Hopalong Cassidy used to always get the bad guys along with seeing a good cartoon and a Flash Gordon serial that left you hanging for another week. One can remember wanting to get there early enough to try to get a coveted first row seat in which you looked almost straight up at the bigger than life screen.

You could get a coke and a big sucker for 10 cents and dip that sucker in the coke the whole movie and chances are you still had some of that sucker left when the show was over.

As the years passed and you got a little bigger and didn't necessarily fight for that first row seat which the "little kids" now had, you got to showing out and throwing paper cups or popcorn at other kids but it didn't take long for this big burly looking guy to put the fear in you. His stare and snapping fingers would straighten you up in a hurry.

Funny thing about those years--the only movies I really remember were Francis the talking mule shows. Guess we were too pre-occupied with talking or carrying on.

Then as several years passed the Baxter Theater became the scene of one of a young man's most memorable experiences--his first date. Mine was at the Baxter Theater and the date consisted of meeting the girl at the theater, after she had paid her way in and you could avoid heckling from the boys who didn't have dates. One never forgets that first time you awkwardly get up the nerve to put your arm around her seat while several rows behind you "the boys" are watching you and giggling. After the movie her folks would pick her up and your folks would pick you up. Later it was a memorable summer evening when you got to walk her home after the show.

Funny thing about that big burly looking man, who always seemed to be there, he became a lot less meaner looking and even smiled once in a while as I became older.

One can remember Clyde Bradley letting you listen to Razorback football games on a portable radio on a Saturday night as long as you kept the volume down.

When you didn't have a date you always sat in the right side seats with the gang. A lot of good times were had at the Baxter even if you didn't have a date.

One also remembers the talent shows and the scary Halloween shows including a man dressed up as a guerrilla as he ran down the aisles. Funny thing, you kind of took the place for granted even the last couple of years when I took my kids.

Now it is a little nostalgic to see it pass like the Ben Franklin Store. As I reminisced with Clyde Bradley the other day I told him a lot of us grew up in that place and he kind of forlornly commented he had grown old in it.

Movies and theaters have changed tremendously during the past several years, but from those of us who remember--Thanks Clyde Bradley and your family--and thank you Baxter Theater for some very fond memories.

(When I heard Jim read this on KTLO Radio the other morning I couldn't resist calling him to see if he would let us make this a part of the permanent record. He has said it all and in a way that will be remembered not only by his generation..EDITOR)

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