



The "Cat-in-the-Bag" logo is the registered property of Bemis Company, Inc. and is used with permission. Bemis Historical Society is not directly affiliated with Bemis Company, Inc.

THE BEMIS STORY

A publication of Bemis Historical Society

Bemis . . . Where Industry and Friendliness Blend Into Progress

Bemis Mill Village Museum, 2 North Missouri Street, Jackson, Tennessee

Bemis Historical Society, PO Box 9266, Jackson, TN 38314-9266

www.bemishistory.org

Spring 2021



Vintage Bemis postcard from Bessie Denson (Bemis teacher 1910s) to Minnie Norris Peebles (her aunt) in Nashville, TN. The postcard was donated to Bemis Historical Society from the estate of Edgar Brantley Peebles in 2020. Printed on back of postcard: 406180. Pub. by Bemis Bro. Bag Co., Boston, Mass. Printed in Germany.



Flag of the United States of America
in front of the Memorial Wall in Bemis Mill Memorial Park
former site of Bemis Cotton Mill
7 A Street, Jackson, Tennessee
April 15, 2021

Bemis Heritage Day – May 15, 2021

Bemis Heritage Day will be held on Saturday, May 15, 2021, at the Bemis Mill Village Museum which was built in 1921-1922 as the Bemis Auditorium. The centennial celebration will begin to honor this beautiful building located at 2 North Missouri Street in Jackson, TN (formerly Bemis, TN).

Museum doors will open at 10:00 a.m. with free admission. Browse the museum to visit with friends and to view artifacts and vintage photos. Visit the museum's Company Store to purchase our cookbook, coloring book, keepsake hand-held fan, historical ornaments, baseball caps (Historic Bemis and Chat 'N Chew), DVDs of vintage photos, and other items listed on our website. See page 4 for prices.

At 10:30 a.m., there will be a dedication ceremony at the new flagpole in memory and honor of all United States veterans at the Bemis Mill Memorial Park located at 7 A Street which is a very short walk across the street from the museum.

From 10:30 a.m. until 2:00 p.m., Bobby McAlexander will display his impressive and detailed ceramic replica of the Chat 'N Chew, a well-known hangout, that was located beside South Side High School on South Highland Avenue from 1958 until 1972. Chat 'N Chew's address was listed as 1624 Bemis Highway in the "Jackson City Directory 1960."

Lunch will be available under the tent on the front lawn of the museum from 11:00 a.m. until 12:30 p.m. (or until sold out) with delicious barbecue plates for \$8 per plate.

Memories of the Chat 'N Chew will be shared in the museum from 1:00 to 2:00 p.m. Attendees will be invited to share their memories which will be led by Sandra Morgan Williams who received a \$25 savings bond in 1958 for submitting the winning entry to name the drive-in restaurant.

Children can enjoy the splash pad at the Bemis Mill Memorial Park and the playground at the Stella Duncan Park of Bemis on South Missouri Street. Games will also be available at the museum for children and the young at heart. Get ready for a game of washers, cornhole, and other fun games.

Bemis Historical Society looks forward to sharing our Bemis heritage on May 15. Anyone interested in the history of Bemis is welcome to attend.



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Monetary Donations

Thank you to the following donors for their generous support.

Alice-Catherine Carls
Ralph & Debra Fisher
Robert Gaugh
Johnnie E. Grantham
Doris K. McKenzie

Memorials

Thank you for your kindness in remembering your loved ones with a donation to Bemis Historical Society.

In memory of Frances Lovett Maitland
Donated by Nellie Maitland Gaia

In memory of Jean Wyatt Roark
Donated by Robert & Linda Wyatt Ladd

In memory of James Frederick "Freddie" Austin
Donated by Butch & Kathy Haney Williams

Donation of Artifacts

The following artifact donation added to the historic preservation of Bemis.

Window curtains made with Bemis cloth
Donated by Teresa Cole



Thank You to Dennis Hays

Thank you to Dennis Hays for turning off the museum's water in the winter and turning it on in the spring. Dennis has provided this dedicated service for twenty years..

Annual Membership Dues

Annual membership dues are \$25 for individual or family memberships. Please mail a check to:

Bemis Historical Society
PO Box 9266
Jackson, TN 38314-9266

Bemis Parks

Tony Black, City of Jackson's Director of Recreation & Parks Department, spoke to Bemis Historical Society on March 16. He informed us that Amerigroup, an Anthem Company, donated funds for playground improvements at Stella Duncan Park of Bemis. Three playground structures will be installed within the next 2-3 months: one for ages 2-5 and two for ages 5-12. The donation is a \$87,000 project for our park.

Bridgett Parham and Christi David, staff members of the Recreation & Parks Department, will assist us with games and activities for Bemis Heritage Day. Tony offered to provide tents for our outdoor activities on May 15.

Tony agreed to install a flagpole and provide a US flag at Bemis Mill Memorial Park, and the flag is now flying beautifully. A dedication ceremony will be held at 10:30 a.m. on Bemis Heritage Day. Mayor Scott Conger has approved Tony's request for a pavilion in this park in the 2023 capital budget. Tony also reported that JEA will install a light on the walking trail in the near future.





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Awards from NSDAR to Joel Jackson & Kathy Williams

Two officers on the Bemis Historical Society's Board of Directors will be recognized by the Jackson-Madison Chapter of the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution on May 15 at Bemis Heritage Day.

Joel Jackson will receive NSDAR's National Historic Preservation Recognition Award with a certificate and a lapel pin for his outstanding work for the Bemis Mill Village Museum and for historic Bemis. Joel has preserved the history of Bemis through the preservation of the museum, the publication of *Bemis Tidbits* and other writings, numerous interviews and presentations about Bemis, museum tours, and many other historical projects.

Kathy Haney Williams will receive NSDAR's National Community Service Award with a certificate and a lapel pin for her work with the Bemis Historical Society, Mid-West Tennessee Genealogical Society, South Side High School Alumni, US Daughters of 1812, Lifeline Blood Services (donor), *The Jackson Sun* (genealogical articles), and others.

Bartley Garey, Civil War Veteran

Robert Gaugh presented a program to Bemis Historical Society in 2020 about his ancestor, Bartley Garey, who served in the Union Army during the Civil War. Mr. Garey spent his final years in Bemis, and his descendants still live in Bemis and the surrounding area.

Robert will present the program on May 18 at 6:00 p.m. to Mid-West TN Genealogical Society at the FOP Lodge at 226 Cotton Grove Road. The public is invited.

Congratulations to Anita Roark

Anita Ruth Roark is Bemis Historical Society's dedicated treasurer and a former chairman. We congratulate Anita for her recent retirement from West Tennessee Healthcare. She and her husband, Michael Montgomery, will have more free time to travel. Congratulations, Anita.

"History of Madison County" Crosstalk

Germantown High School Television interviewed Billy King, Joel Jackson, and Clark Shaw in 2018 and posted the video to YouTube.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fmb26x_Nd80

Bemis Historical Markers

New historical marker erected in 2020 – not available for sponsorship, historical marker only.
UNION CHURCH – 23 Massachusetts Street

New historical markers were erected in 2020-2021 with sponsors.

THE HOGS PENS 1903-1960 – Bemis Cemetery Road

Sponsors: Lin Holley & Steve Frye

SWIMMING POOL – A Street

Sponsors: Larry & Beverly Lowrance

HOME OF J. B. YOUNG BUILT 1900 – 101 Fifth Street, corner of S Massachusetts Street

Sponsors: Freddy & Barbara Young, Charles Young, Ginger Hurst, Jeanne Adair, & James B. Young

NEW BEMIS GIN 1953 – 1 Gin Street

In memory of Joe Roark

Sponsors: Sue, Anita & Andy Roark

COMPANY STORE DRY GOODS 1903 – S Missouri Street – Sponsor: Jane Azbill Cearley

COMPANY STORE UPSTAIRS 1903, DR. SMYTHE'S OFFICE, W.O.W. LODGE HALL, ORIGINAL MOVIE THEATER – S Missouri Street
In Memory of Frances Lovett Maitland
Sponsor: Nellie M. Gaia

FORMER SITE OF JIMMY'S PIT BARBECUE "THE BEST" 1940-1980 – HOME OF JIMMY & IRENE SANDLIN – 3 Butler Street
Sponsor: Lucy Smith

These historical markers need sponsors. Locations are assigned on a first come-first served basis with payment - \$100 per marker. Contact Joel Jackson.

BEMIS WATER TOWER

CANE CREEK

COW PASTURE

MILL POND – A Street

SIMMONS BOARDING HOUSE – Third Street

OLD BEMIS GIN - A Street & N Missouri Street

THE FALLS/THE DAM BUILT 1900 – South end of Butler Street

THE GOLF COURSE – Bemis Cemetery Road

THE GOLF COURSE – A Street at Gregg Street

Bemis Heritage Day – May 15, 2021

Bemis Historical Society's Board of Directors

If you have questions or comments, please contact the Board of Directors.

Chairman Joel Jackson 731-424-0739 home
joeljackson2@eplus.net

Vice Chair Kathy Haney Williams 731-225-6938 mobile
KatherineWilliams@charter.net

Secretary Robert Gaugh 731-499-2229 mobile
rgaugh@gmail.com

Treasurer Anita Roark 731-427-2609 home
arr285@me.com



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Museum's Company Store

There are a variety of items for sale in the Company Store with proceeds supporting maintenance of the Museum. Mail a check to the PO box or (to purchase items locally) contact the Board of Directors.

	Cost of Items	Shipping Costs
Baseball Caps – Historic Bemis ¹	\$14	\$7
Baseball Caps – Chat 'N Chew ²	\$14	\$7
Cat-in-the-Bag License Plate	\$7	\$3
100-Year Anniversary Fan ³	\$5	\$2
Historical Ornaments ⁴	\$17	\$5
Coloring Book w/Bemis History	\$10	\$2
50 th Anniversary DVD w/123 photos	\$15	\$5
Map of Bemis from 1932	\$10	\$7
Schematic of Bemis Cotton Mill	\$10	\$7

¹Baseball cap – unstructured, cotton twill, red, 6 panels

¹Baseball cap – unstructured, cotton twill, gray, 6 panels

¹Baseball cap – structured, cotton twill, blue with mesh back in charcoal, 6 panels (limited supply)

²Baseball cap – unstructured, cotton twill, black, 6 panels with a drawing of the Chat 'N Chew by Mary Spellings
2-3 caps can be shipped for \$8 postage/handling.

³Keepsake fans (1-2) can be shipped for \$2 postage.

⁴Historical Ornaments

2009 – The Bemis Auditorium (Mary Spellings)

2012 – Judson Moss Bemis Fountain (Rosalee Gibbons)

2015 – Bemis Cotton Mill (Rosalee Gibbons)

2020 – Union Church/Bemis United Methodist Church (Melanie Marcom)

2-4 ornaments can be shipped for \$6 postage/handling.

Other items are listed on our website.

<https://bemishistory.org/museums-company-store/>

Bemis Historical Society's Monthly Meetings

Bemis Historical Society meetings are held the third Tuesday at 6:00 p.m. (new time) at Bemis Mill Village Museum. Attend our meetings to learn about Bemis and the surrounding area and to preserve our history. If you would like to present a program, please contact Vice Chairman Kathy Williams.

Upcoming meetings:

April 20 – Joel Jackson – Bemis Historical Markers and An Indian Mound in Bemis

May – No meeting due to Bemis Heritage Day

June 15 – Judy Roach Dorris – Bemis Book Club (Organized April 14, 1930)

July 20 – Joel Jackson – Bemis Auditorium/Bemis Mill Village Museum – 100 Years of History

August 17 – Johnetta Wilbourn Black – Wilbourn Family from Bemis

September 21 –

October 19 –

November 16 –

December – No meeting

Bemis Heritage Day Saturday, May 15

10:00 a.m. — Museum doors open — Free admission

10:30 a.m. — Flag dedication ceremony — Bemis Mill Memorial Park

10:30 a.m. — Display of ceramic replica of the Chat 'N Chew by Bobby McAlexander until 2:00 p.m.

11:00 a.m. — BBQ plates — \$8/plate

1:00 p.m. — Memories of the Chat 'N Chew

2:00 p.m. — Thank you for visiting. We hope to see you at monthly meetings.

Chat 'N Chew

Barton Webb (Owner of Chat 'N Chew) and O D Holifield (Manager) presented a \$25 savings bond to Sandra Morgan (South Side Class of 1961) when she won the contest to name the Chat 'N Chew in 1958. This advertisement was published in *The Hawk* 1969 yearbook for South Side High School.

Bobby McAlexander (South Side Class of 1966) will display his amazing ceramic replica of the Chat 'N Chew during Bemis Heritage Day.



Bemis Historical Society's Website
<https://bemishistory.org/>



CHAT 'N CHEW

Manager: O. D. HOLIFIELD

A Variety of Sandwiches
and Frozen Custard Products

Located Near South Side

Phone 422-1990