



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

Summer 2021

Bemis Heritage Day 2021

More than 290 Bemis friends enjoyed Bemis Heritage Day on Saturday, May 15, 2021, at the Bemis Mill Village Museum which was built in 1921-1922 as the Bemis Auditorium. The centennial celebration has begun to honor this beautiful building located at 2 North Missouri Street in Jackson, TN.

The day began with Madison County Mayor Jimmy Harris, Jackson Recreation & Parks Department Director Tony Black, and Bemis Historical Society Chairman Joel Jackson leading the dedication ceremony at the new flagpole in memory and honor of all United States veterans.

Carolyn Goff greeted visitors inside the museum with sign-in sheets and name tags, and Anita Roark sold Bemis memorabilia and collected dues. Tents on the museum's front lawn were filled with Bemis friends enjoying Gaylon Cooper's delicious barbecue plates, which sold out to the hungry crowd. The busy food volunteers were Gaylon Cooper, Mayor Jimmy Harris, Jeff Haltom, Brenda Jackson, Sue Roark, Gwen Wilson, and James Wilson.

The Bemis Boogie Blues Band provided lively music performed by Bobby Cleary, Willi X Evans, Newt Hall, Tony McCaslin, and Steve Patterson. Inside the museum, Bobby McAlexander displayed his amazing ceramic replica of the Chat 'N Chew. The Jackson-Madison NSDAR Chapter recognized United States veterans. After lunch, Sandra Morgan Williams led memories of the Chat 'N Chew.

Games of washers and cornhole along with crafts were enjoyed and led by Jackson's Recreation & Parks Department. The splash pad at the Bemis Mill Memorial Park and the playground at the Stella Duncan Park of Bemis added to the fun day.

Visit our website to view photos taken throughout the day by Jenny Butler, Robert Gaugh, Jimmie Nerren Grasso, Larry Hearn, Dave Montoya, Butch Williams, Kathy Haney Williams, and Woody Woodard/*VIP Magazine*.

<https://bemishistory.org/bemis-heritage-day-2021/>

Bemis Historical Society is already planning next year's Bemis Heritage Day on May 21, 2022. We will enjoy the centennial celebration of the Bemis Mill Village Museum, and this event will be part of the bicentennial celebration for Jackson and Madison County.



Bemis Cotton Mill – Bemis, Madison County, Tennessee

Vintage Bemis Photos and Blueprints

Bemis Historical Society recently received a collection of vintage Bemis photos and blueprints from Union University's Library Archives. This collection was taken from the Bemis Office Building when the cotton mill closed. Some of the collection will be shown at the Bemis Historical Society meeting November 16.

Cotton Boll Remembrance

Cotton Boll Remembrances are honorariums and memorials at the \$500 level of giving.

In memory of Clarence & Janey Mitchell,
Linda Hunt Mitchell
Donated by Don Mitchell

Monetary Donations

Thank you to the following donors for their generous support.

Joseph Allen Webb
Anonymous
Nancy Manley Newman
Shirley Held
Joe Nip McKnight
Sue Roark
Pamela Simmons
Gloria Tapley
Sandra Morgan Williams



THE BEMIS STORY

Bemis Historical Society
Summer 2021 – Page 2

Memorials

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

In memory of James Frederick “Freddie” Austin
Donated by Deborah Latham Woods

In memory of Louise Fisher Blankenship, Daughter
of Benton & Acenah Fisher
Donated by Larry & Jenny Beeman

In memory of Vivian Crouch
Donated by Robert J. Edwards

In memory of Richard Dean Fisher
Donated by Christopher, Michael, & Nancy Fisher
Wheeler

In memory of Lowell & Virble Simmons
Donated by Richard and Marge Simmons

In memory of Marion Spencer
Donated by Sue Johnson Roark

In memory of Juanita Watson Staggs
Donated by Sadie L. Rogers

In memory of Ronald Edward Walker
Donated by Bill & Marti Boone & Lupe Mitchell
Donated by Randy & Carolyn Flanagan
Donated by Terry Wooley Hardwick
Donated by Lin & Sandra Coatney Holley
Donated by Shirley A. Johnson
Donated by David & Vicky Matthews
Donated by Neil Morris
Donated by Hugh A. “Tony” Rice
Donated by Doris Eubank Spain
Donated by Pat Norris Tucholski
Donated by Butch & Kathy Haney Williams
Donated by Wanda Young Wright
Donated by South Side High School Class of 1966

In memory of Jewell Burton Watson
Donated by Sadie L. Rogers

In memory of Rosalyn H. Wyatt
Donated by Charles F. Wyatt

In memory of Fred Young, III
Donated by Phyllis Armstrong
Donated by Melinda & Roger Cook
Donated by Charlotte Hammond
Donated by Jeanne Hanafée
Donated by Leigh & Donald Hanafée
Donated by Martha Peddy

<https://bemishistory.org/memorialshonoraria/>



Bemis Museum - May 16, 2021

Donations of Artifacts

The following artifact donations have been added to the historic preservation of Bemis Mill Village.

2 J. B. Young High Annuals, 1944 & 1946
Donated by Family of Carolyn Williams Crownover

Mill Office Visitor's Mahogany Chair, circa 1945
Donated by Inez Dyer

Bemis School library book, *The Golden Treasury* by
Palgrave, circa 1891
Donated by Carole Jackson Gordon

1939 Show Ad
Bemis Rent Control List
4 World War II Ration Books
Coal Receipt, 10/22/1945
Church of Christ Directory
Methodist Church Directory, 1966
J. B. Young School 50th Anniversary Cup
Donated by Betty Harston

8x10 Photo of Bemis Mercantile Workers in front of
the Mill, circa 1910
Bemis Founders Story from Bemistory, August 1951
Photo of four teachers who taught in white clapboard
school, 1950
Donated by Joel Jackson

“A” Seamless Bemis Bag
Donated by Wanda Mayo Jones

Cub Scouts photo, circa 1951
Photo of Don Mitchell (age 8) and man with plow who
plowed gardens in Eastport
Donated by Don Mitchell

Bemis Scout Uniform with patches, etc.
17 framed Bemis Days & Museum Sketches by
Jennie
Donated by Jim & Jennie Mitchell

Photo of St. Louis Office Crew on visit to Bemis
Donated by Sue Roark

Jerry Wallace's Boy Scout memorabilia
Asa Martin's push mower (the late Jerry Wallace's
grandfather)
Donated by Delight Wallace per Jerry's request

Bemis Park hand craft – plaster/5 fruits
Donated by Sandra Morgan Williams



THE BEMIS STORY

Bemis Historical Society
Summer 2021 – Page 3



*Bemis Mill Memorial Park - May 15, 2021
Tony Black, Joel Jackson, Mayor Jimmy Harris*



Bobby McAlexander's Chat 'N Chew - May 15, 2021

Chat 'N Chew

Bobby McAlexander's Chat 'N Chew will be on display at the Jackson-Madison County Library, 433 East Lafayette Street, September 1-30. jmclibrary.org/

Bemis Heritage Day Photos

We have photos in the June/July 2021 *VIP Jackson Magazine* on page 24.

<http://viponline.vipjackson.com/jackson/2021/5/>

Photos by individual photographers are posted to our website. If you have photos to add, please send photos in jpg format to KatherineWilliams@charter.net.

<https://bemishistory.org/bemis-heritage-day-2021/>

Museum Tunnel Tour – August 17

The tunnel tour was cancelled after the July meeting due to a fire sprinkler compressor failure which caused a flooded tunnel. Repairs are complete. The tour has been rescheduled after the August meeting.

Thank You to Volunteers

Thank you to . . .

- Gerald Cox for working on the front doors
- Jeff Haltom for wiring the new LED light in Dr. Smythe's display
- Rhonda Wilson Young for assisting with the photo and blueprint collection from Union University
- Dennis Hays for turning the fire sprinkler off when it malfunctioned in July.

Bemis Historical Markers

New historical markers were erected in 2021 with sponsors.

AERATOR – A Street at TN Street – In Honor of Onus Ray King and In memory of Shirley Belch King – By Pamela Belch Coyne

BEMIS WATER TOWER (East) – Missouri Street – In memory of Nancy Phillips – By Nancy Phillips Stephens

BEMIS WATER TOWER (West) – A Street – In memory of George E & Bettye Morris – By Alan & Martha Morris

CANE CREEK – A Street – In memory of Robert E. Belch – By Pamela Belch Coyne

CANE CREEK – Second Street – In memory of Arlie & Marie Kinchen – By Pamela Belch Coyne

COW PASTURE #2 – Second Street – In memory of Bedie & Earnest Roach – By The Roach Family

COW PASTURE #3 – A Street – By David McNatt & Don Mitchell

MILL POND – A Street – In memory of Raymond & Mary Jackson – By Al & Carole Jackson Gordon

THE FALLS/THE DAM, BUILT 1900 – South end of Butler Street – In memory of William C. "Pug" & Ruth Wadley Latham - By The Latham Family - Marelle, Dianne, Billene, Carey, & Debbie

THE GOLF COURSE, 1st Tee – A Street at Gregg Street – In memory of Wallace A. Wilson & Harry L. Wilson – By Jonathan Clay Young & Rhonda Wilson Young

THE GOLF COURSE, 3rd Hole – Bemis Cemetery Road – In memory of Kirby & Lucille McKnight - By Alan & Martha Morris

WEST DRUG STORE – S. Missouri Street – In memory of Roy Neal & Stan Mitchell, Dustin Lewis – By Delinda Mitchell

Thank you for supporting the historic preservation of Bemis Mill Village.

Annual Membership Dues

Annual membership dues are \$25 for individual or family memberships. Mail payment to:

Bemis Historical Society

PO Box 9266

Jackson, TN 38314-9266.

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



THE BEMIS STORY

Bemis Historical Society
Summer 2021 – Page 4

Museum's Company Store

There are a variety of items for sale in the Company Store. Mail a check to the PO box, attend a meeting, or contact a member of the Board of Directors to visit the museum.

	Cost of Items	Shipping Costs
Baseball Caps – Historic Bemis ¹	\$14	\$7
Baseball Caps – Chat 'N Chew ²	\$14	\$7
100-Year Anniversary Fan ³	\$5	\$2
Historical Ornaments ⁴	\$17	\$5
Cat-in-the Bag License Plate	\$7	\$3
Museum Note Cards/Envelopes (10)	\$10	\$3
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, 6 panels, choice of three colors – red, khaki, or gray

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

²Baseball cap – unstructured, cotton twill, black, 6 panels with an embroidery of the Chat 'N Chew sign
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/>

Bicentennial Celebrations

Madison County and the City of Jackson will celebrate bicentennial anniversaries respectively in 2021 and 2022. This will be a once-in-a-lifetime commemoration of 200 years of history, culture and community.

Madison County was established by the Tennessee Legislature on November 7, 1821, and was named after founding father and fourth President of the United States James Madison. The City of Jackson was formerly known as Alexandria but was renamed in honor of TN native and seventh President of the United States Andrew Jackson on August 17, 1822.

Celebrations will be held in various communities throughout Madison County and the City of Jackson from August 2021 through August 2022. Bemis Heritage Day will be a bicentennial celebration for the community on May 21, 2022.



Donations for Silent Auction

The following items were donated for silent auctions during Bemis Heritage Day.

Crocheted Bedspread made with Bemis thread

Donated by Jewel Carden – High bid Shirley Gray

Cotton Boll Quilt made by the late Mary Crocker

Donated by Mary Dagnan Crocker (daughter-in-law) – High bid Doris Williams Radcliffe

Cat-in-Bag Stuffed Toy with Bemis logo

Donated by Betty Harston – High bid Jennifer Rowan for daughter Alyvia Baxter



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.

Past meetings posted to YouTube:

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

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tFRnUsLNT0A&t=4s>

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

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=12rCNy2_-nI

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

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H9-i5wXi1b4>

Upcoming meetings:

August 17 – Johnetta Wilbourn Black – Wilbourn Family of Bemis, carrying the legacy on of Elizabeth Wilbourn's sewing skills from 59 Hunt Street in Bemis to a household name internationally

September 21 – Evelyn Keele – The Making of *Historic Madison, the Story of Jackson and Madison County, Tennessee* by Emma Inman Williams

October 19 – Joel Jackson – George R. Wadleigh's Memories of Bemis, Oct 1900 – 1931

November 16 – Vintage Bemis Photos & Blueprints
<https://bemishistory.org/monthly-meetings/>