



The New Sharecroppers Voice

June 2010

Southern Tenant Farmers Museum

Vol. 3 Issue 2

Isaac Ongoa Joins STFM Staff for Summer

Isaac Ongoa, a member of the Arkansas State University Heritage Studies PHD Program, has joined the staff of the Southern Tenant Farmers Museum until August 13. Isaac is a native of Kitale, Kenya and has been studying at ASU for the past five years.



Isaac was quickly acquainted with museum visitors when the East Poinsett County kindergarten class came for a visit on his second day. The students enjoyed hearing Isaac speak about Africa and learned how to say "hello," "goodbye," and "thank you" in Swahili.

The following week, Isaac was invited to give the Rotary program at Marked Tree. Isaac spoke about the culture shock he experienced in coming to the United States but says he believes too often we miss out on all that life has to offer because we are afraid to get out of our comfort zone. He told the audience that his years in the United States has also changed his perceptions of Americans because in Africa, Americans are perceived as everyone being rich and living in big homes. Now he understands that most people must stay within a budget and do not live the lifestyles of the rich and famous.

Isaac works every Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. Please drop by the museum and meet Isaac. He is a pleasure to work with and we are proud to welcome him as a member of our staff.

STFM Structural Repairs

The Southern Tenant Farmers Museum is currently in the process of repairing the brick on the outside of the Mitchell-East building. For the safety of our visitors, the outside areas of these buildings have been roped off from pedestrian traffic. The museum is still open and accessible.

We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause any of our visitors.

Old Photos Need Identifications



An old video title "Buckner Farm" was donated to the museum by Patty Barger after it was found in the attic of her home in Tyronza. The video was left in the attic by the previous owner of the home.

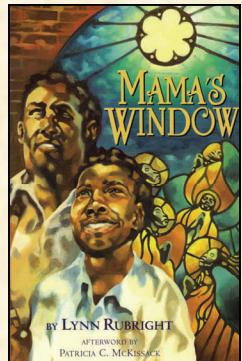
The film was transferred to a DVD and photos have been captured of people on the Buckner Farm. The DVD also included a short footage of people on Main Street in Tyronza. The year is uncertain but we are guessing late 40's or early 50's.

If you think you may be able to help us identify people in the photos, please contact Linda Hinton or any staff member at the museum. The phone number is 870-487-2909 or you may email us at stfm@ritternet.com.

A Peek in our Gift Shop

Mama's Window

By Lynn Rubright

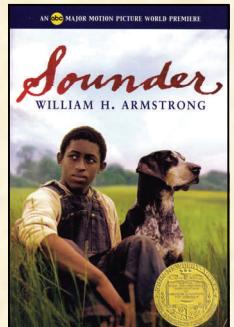


Mama's Window is a book for our younger readers based on a true story of Owen Whitfield, who is featured in our museum. The story details a young boy's commitment to a project that his mother had devoted much of her efforts to before her death—a stained glass window for their church.

\$9.95

Sounder

By William H. Armstrong



Sounder is another children's book that looks at the hardships associated with growing up in a poor sharecropper home and a father's struggle to feed his family. This book won the John Newberry Medal for the most distinguished contribution to American literature for children.

\$5.99



Southern Tenant Farmers Museum

117 S Main Street

PO Box 195

Tyronza, Arkansas 72386

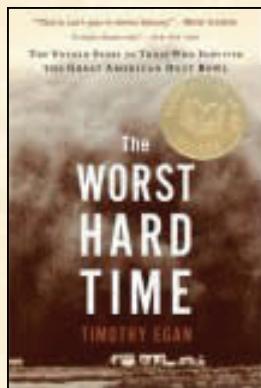
Telephone: 870-487-2909

Fax: 870-487-2910

<http://stfm.astate.edu>

New Book Club at STFM

STFM will launch a book club beginning Saturday, July 17 at 1:00 p.m. The book that has been chosen for the first reading is titled, *The Worst Hard Time* by Timothy Eagan.



The Worst Hard Time is a somber, heart wrenching portrayal of life in the great Plains during the Great Depression in an area that became known to history as the "Dust Bowl." The book chronicles the hardships and steadfastness of a resilient people fighting wind, drought, and poor agricultural practices.

Individual cost for book club membership is \$8.00 per year or you may elect to purchase a \$10.00 annual membership in the museum which includes participation in the book club as well as 10% off all purchases in the museum store, the quarterly newsletter, and a special invitation to member's only events. You may bring your own copy of the book or purchase a copy at the museum store for \$14.95. Prices will vary with each book that is used for the club.

The club will continue throughout the year if it proves successful. The initial meeting on July 17 will be to discuss how each book will be read, either weekly with a few chapters per week or monthly with members reading the entire book and then meeting for discussion. The date for the first discussion will be announced after the initial meeting's decisions. Check our web site or contact any staff member for further information.

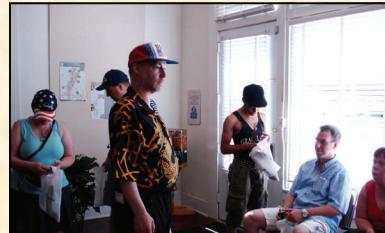
Tyronza's Founding Mother Introduced to Little Rock

STFM employee Cindy Grisham, a graduate assistant from the Heritage Studies PhD program at Arkansas State University, gave a presentation on May 27 at the old State House in Little Rock. Cindy's topic, *Searching for Martha Stalker: Uncovering the Lives of Women in History*, gave an account of Stalker and her place in the founding of the small town of Tyronza in northeastern Arkansas. Stalker, in spite of being widowed three times, persevered and become a prominent leader in the community. While the railroad created a depot at Tyronza, she ran a boarding house for the railroad workers and eventually deeded land to the town's church and school.

Cindy also detailed in her presentation how available records may be used to recreate the lives of other women in history.



Recent visitors to STFM included a group of teachers from throughout the state taking a tour of the Sunken Lands and a group of visitors from the Netherlands.

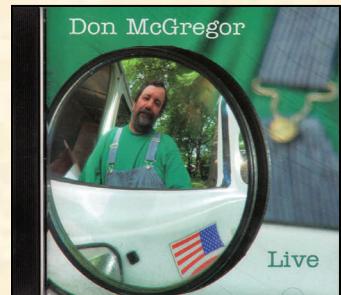


Come Visit Us!

Hours:

Monday-Friday 9 am—3 pm

Saturday: 12:00 pm—3 pm

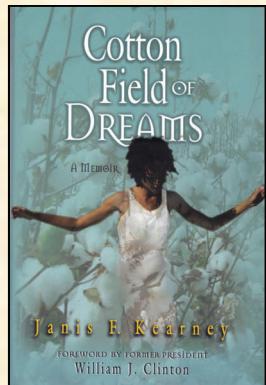


Don McGregor is a local musician from Jonesboro, Arkansas. This CD is filled with whimsical songs like "Before the Trash Truck Runs" and "Alligator Down in My Mind." Don wrote most of the songs on the CD.

\$14.00

Cotton Field of Dreams

By Janis F. Kearney



This book is a memoir of a poor Arkansas family's struggle to survive while pushing their children to achieve academically and finally being able to see them reach amazing pinnacles of success. The book's Foreword is written by former President William J. Clinton.

\$15.95

2nd Quarter Visitors

April	227
May	244
June	206