

**The Old Stagecoach Stop Foundation** was formed in April of 1983 and bought the condemned building for \$40,000. A matching grant of \$13,200 was obtained from the Department of Natural Resources. With the grant, the exterior of the building was stabilized and restored to its 19th-century appearance.

The original debt was retired in 1992 and interior restoration began. The rest of the historic property, along with a small brick building, was acquired in 2003. Maintenance of the 170-year-old building and continuing improvements consume most of the Foundation's resources.

The Old Stagecoach Stop is the oldest publicly accessible building in Pulaski County. The rooms are restored to different periods and/or use, ranging from 1850 to 1950. The ten rooms reflect the history of the building. The house museum is open Saturdays, April through October, from 10 AM to 4 PM.

### Museum Beginning

For ten years after the condemned Old Stagecoach Stop was saved from demolition and the Foundation was formed, the building sat vacant while the Foundation carried on a series of fundraisers to retire the more than \$50,000 debt. The building had been accessible for a few special events, such as the Lion's Club Christmas Parade, but tours for visitors were on an ad hoc basis.

The Old Stagecoach Stop opened with a regular and publicized schedule for the first time on July 2, 1994. It was open each Saturday morning thereafter and closed for the season on September 24.

There wasn't much to see yet in the embryonic house museum. The first and only room restored at that time was the Dentist's Office. That work was done by volunteers Gordon Scott and Warren Carney. Encouraged by the number of visitors who stopped by for that short trial tour season, the Old Stagecoach Stop

*The Old Stagecoach Stop Foundation* wishes to thank the following Lifetime and Sponsoring members whose generosity has made possible our continuing progress toward meeting our goal "to preserve, restore, protect and maintain the historic structure in Waynesville, Missouri, known as the Old Stagecoach Stop, in order to permit its educational value to be appreciated by future generations."

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These and the many annual memberships and generous donations have made our progress possible.

*If you would like to become a member, please visit us at the OSS and pick up an application or on our website: [www.oldstagecoachstop.org](http://www.oldstagecoachstop.org)*

Foundation Board voted to be open for visitors the next year from April through September. The 1995 tour season, during which the building was open from 10:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. for 30 Saturdays, logged 423 visitors in the guest book.

With the increased traffic, further stabilization of the building was necessary, particularly the sagging

floor of the dogtrot and the north log cabin floor above the partial cellar. The shaky second story floor was reinforced with additional floor joists. To the relief of everyone, water and restroom facilities were restored to the building after an absence of nearly 30 years.

Restoration began in earnest with a plan to restore each room to a dif-

ferent period and/or use that would reflect both the history of the building and significant county events. Progress was steady but it took a decade to restore the ten rooms.

Tours continued during the restoration process. Interpretive tours conducted by Learning Enrichment and Acceleration (LEAP) students in period dress for 450 area fourth grade students began in 1995 and continued into 2004.

Guides and guests sweated through summer tours the first four years. In 1998-1999, six window air conditioners were installed. Although cooler, tour guides then had to talk over the noise of the window units. It took until 2009 to accrue enough funds to install two central HVAC units, one in the cellar and one in the attic.

The number of visitors has continued to increase. Hours were extended in 1998 from 10:00 a.m. to 4 p.m. In 2022, the tour season was extended through October.



The first gift shop was organized by Board Member Marge Scott and located just inside the door of the North Log Cabin. Souvenir items such as the Old Stagecoach Stop Cookbook and t-shirts were for sale.





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