

About the Museum

The Harlin Museum is a non-profit, volunteer-run cultural center in the heart of the Missouri Ozarks. The museum was once the home of Mr. and Mrs. James P. Harlin, former Mayor of West Plains, Missouri.



James P. Harlin, former city mayor of West Plains, Missouri, and the patriarchal family namesake of the Harlin Museum.

The original two-story house was built in 1889, and, once purchased by the Harlin family, was affectionately named "Shadow Lawn". A more modern addition to the house—now turned museum—includes a large upstairs gallery and a downstairs exhibit space. In 2005, the gallery was named the "Hathcock Gallery" after the late Roy Hathcock, who served on the Harlin Museum Board for 25 years; many of them as board president.

The museum is home to the artwork of Lennis L. Broadfoot, who was a Shannon County native that is best known for his book "Pioneers of the Ozarks," a portrait of early Ozark life.

Published in 1944, this book includes Broadfoot's charcoal drawings of the earliest settlers along with a short description of their lives as told to Broadfoot. In 2005, Dane Broadfoot—the artist's son—donated his father's art collection to the museum.

The museum exhibits include items donated by famous West Plains natives Preacher Roe, Porter Wagoner, Jan Howard, and others. There are early farm tools on display as well as an entire wagon that was originally purchased from Aid's Hardware Store, located on the downtown Court Square of West Plains. Also on view is a rare display of Native American Artifacts from the collection of Roy Hathcock, an expert on Early Mississippian culture.

A vintage hat collection donated by late area resident Lida Bozman can be found downstairs, along with other vintage textiles. The collections also include a walnut table from the Kansas frontier, primitive tools, intricately built model ships donated by the late Louis Bozman, and many paintings.

The Harlin Museum is run by a volunteer Board of Directors that plans, executes, and assists with events. People interested in becoming involved with the museum should contact staff by email at info@harlinmuseum.com RE: interested in the museum.