

The ROCKY RIDGE REVIEW

October 1994

Laura Ingalls Wilder - Rose Wilder Lane Home Association, Mansfield, Missouri 65704

ROCKY RIDGE DAY - OCTOBER 15, 1994 ORDER OF EVENTS

*The Museum and Historic Home and the Little House Bookstore
will be open for regular tours and business from 9 - 2 and 3 - 5 p.m.*

AUTOGRAPH SESSION OF HARPER COLLINS AUTHORS

10 - 11:30 a.m.

Roger MacBride, William Anderson, Leslie Kelly
and Renee Graef will sign books on the Administration
Building Terrace.

FIDDLE MUSIC PRELUDE

10:00 a.m.

FOLK MUSIC BY CATHY BARTON AND DAVE PARA

10:30 - 11:00 a.m.

*This and all other performances will be held on the
North Lawn near the Wilder Home.*

STORY TELLING FROM THE LITTLE HOUSE BOOKS

11 - 11:30 A.M.

Actress Judith Helton will share stories for children
of all ages.

"HAND ME DOWN MUSIC FROM MISSOURI AND THE OZARKS"

11:30 - NOON

Traditional ballads and folk songs by Barton & Para.

FIDDLE MUSIC

NOON

GINGERBREAD AND BEVERAGE

1:00 p.m.

Served compliments of Harper Collins, Publishers

VIGNETTES BY THE OZARK MOUNTAIN PLAYERS

1:00 p.m.

Favorite scenes from the popular summer pageant "Little
House Memories"

CENTENNIAL OBSERVANCE

2:00 P.M.

*Please gather on the North Lawn for a Fiddle Prelude.
Pa Ingalls' original violin will be played.*

• Welcome

Jean Coday, President of the
LIW-RWL Home Association

• Introduction of Board Members

• Dedication of Historic Marker

Jane Decker and Missouri Schoolchildren

• Presentation of Original Laura Ingalls Wilder Documents

Daryl Oldvater, CEO, Farm Credit Services,
Springfield, MO

• Introduction of Roger MacBride Abigail MacBride

• "Little Farm in the Ozarks" Roger MacBride

• "Laura Ingalls Wilder of Rocky Ridge Farm" Judith Helton

The first performance of this one-woman
retrospect, with assistance of Cathy Barton
on the fiddle.

AUTOGRAPHING SESSION

3 - 4:00 p.m.

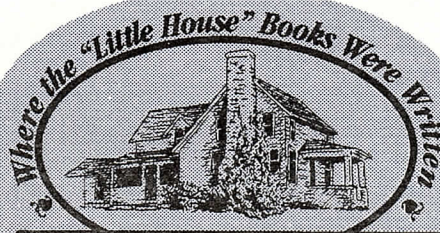
Administration Building Terrace

MORE MUSIC BY BARTON AND PARA

3:30 - 4:30 p.m.

North Lawn Stage

❧ *Thank you for joining us on this special day!* ❧



THE WILDER HOME

CENTENNIAL WELCOME

It is my pleasure to welcome each reader of the "Rocky Ridge Review" to Rocky Ridge Farm and the celebration of the 100th Anniversary of the Wilders' arrival in Mansfield.

The Board of Directors and members of the Laura Ingalls Wilder/Rose Wilder Lane Home Association invite each one of you to join us in our efforts to maintain and improve the home site and to preserve the artifacts associated with the Wilder and Lane lives.

Each year seems to result in noticeable improvements to the home, museum, and facilities, and a greater number of interested members. Join us so you can not only enjoy being a guest at Rocky Ridge, but can point with pride to these wonderful projects and your personal contributions to their success.

Jean Coday,
President

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Check pattern on front page streamer is duplicated from
styleafs of original Harper & Brothers editions of the
Wilder books and favored by Laura.
Special thanks to Larry Dennis
for photography assistance.

HISTORIC MARKER TO BE DEDICATED ON OCTOBER 15

A project started by the Missouri State Council of the International Reading Association in June 1988 will culminate during the Wilder Centennial recognition day here on Rocky Ridge Farm. The Council's goal of providing an historic marker for the grounds of the historic home and museum was a dream of many years that has now been achieved. The handsome gold-lettered marker was cast this summer at Sewah Studios in Ohio and arrived in Mansfield in September.

Jane Decker, Association board member and IRA member spearheaded the marker project. She made numerous visits to Missouri schools sharing Wilder lore and encouraging donations to the project. Almost 300 schools, organizations and individuals contributed to the fund.

The marker, when placed, will provide another point of interest on our grounds and incoming visitors may read a quick synopsis of the Wilder lives on this farm.

Unveiling of the marker today will be with the help of Missouri school children. What better way to recognize both the goals of the Association and the International Reading Association?

"It is with this marker that we honor Laura Ingalls Wilder for sharing with us all her wonderful stories of pioneer life," says Jane Decker.

ROCKY RIDGE FARM HOME OF LAURA INGALLS WILDER

Laura Ingalls Wilder, one of America's best known authors, was born in 1867 near Pepin, Wisconsin. Her "Little House" books were written here on Rocky Ridge Farm, her home for over sixty years.

On July 17, 1894, Laura, her husband Almanzo Wilder, and their seven-year old daughter Rose, left DeSmet, South Dakota, in search of a new home. Traveling by covered wagon they arrived in Mansfield on August 30.

On September 24, the Wilders purchased forty acres of land, including the site on which you stand. Here they established Rocky Ridge, a dairy, fruit, and poultry farm. A new house was built and the farm enlarged to nearly two hundred acres.

In 1911, Laura started a career as a journalist, writing about rural life. Between 1932 and 1943, she published the "Little House" books from her memories of pioneer life.

Almanzo died at Rocky Ridge in 1949, at the age of 92. Laura lived here until her death at 90, in 1957.

In 1915, Laura and Almanzo's daughter Rose Wilder Lane, began her writing career on "The San Francisco Bulletin". She served as a reporter in Europe after World War I. Rose became famous for her short stories, biographies, and novels.

During the 1920's and 1930's, she again made Rocky Ridge her home. Her novel *Old Home Town* described turn-of-the-century Mansfield. In 1932 she wrote her most famous novel, *Let the Hurricane Roar*, while living here in the white farmhouse.

That same year Laura Ingalls Wilder published *Little House in the Big Woods*, the first book of her pioneer series. *Farmer Boy*, published in 1933, told of Almanzo's boyhood. Seven more "Little House" books followed. All are international classics.

Laura Ingalls Wilder and Rose Wilder Lane are revered for writings which stress independence, courage, and American ideals.

*This marker is the gift of the Missouri State Council of the International Reading Association,
the school children of Missouri, their parents and teachers.*

1994

Text of new marker for Rocky Ridge Farm.

ROCKY RIDGE COOKBOOK IN PROGRESS



Company's coming...
the table in the Wilder home dining
room set with Allerton Blue Willow,
once owned by the Wilders.



From a homemade cookbook compiled by Laura Ingalls Wilder here on the farm in the 1920s-1930s-1940s, a new book is being prepared for publication in fall, 1995 by Harper Collins Publishers. The recipes included show the Wilders to have enjoyed a variety of foods, some of them quite a contrast to the country farmhouse fare that Laura would have prepared on the wood stove.

To illustrate the book, a collection of stunning color photographs taken recently by Leslie A. Kelly, has been assembled. These will include detailed shots of many of the artifacts in the house and museum, and settings of the Wilder home interior specially arranged to recreate the aura of the house as one of Mansfield's social centers.

Keep watching for news about this unusual book. First edition copies will of course be available from the Little House Bookstore.



ROSE WILDER LANE WROTE ON ROCKY RIDGE

In addition to growing up on Rocky Ridge, Rose Wilder Lane made periodic returns to live on the family farm throughout her long career as a writer. Most notably, she resided at the farmhouse from 1928-1936, while her parents occupied the rock house nearby. During this period, Rose wrote for popular magazines and completed her most famous book, *Let the Hurricane Roar*, first published as a serial in *The Saturday Evening Post* in 1932.



REMEMBER THE LITTLE HOUSE BOOKSTORE FOR HOLIDAY BUYING

As the holiday season approaches, don't forget that the Wilder Association's bookstore has a number of good gift ideas. A series of three "Little House" Christmas ornaments is now available and it is expected that yearly additions will be forthcoming. Harper Collins' beautiful 1995 "Little House" calendar, featuring Garth Williams artwork is a great buy at \$7.95. A new book titled *A Little House Christmas*, which features favorite holiday tales from the books is a recent publication from Harper Collins. A complete selection of all Wilder-related books and publications is stocked by the shop, with some autographed items available. A price list is available on request. Phone or fax orders are possible with credit cards. (Phone: 417-924-3626; FAX 417-924-8580.)

Autograph Sessions

Roger MacBride

Author of
*Little House on
Rocky Ridge*,
*Little Farm in the
Ozarks*, etc.



William Anderson

Author of *Laura
Ingalls Wilder: A
Biography*, *Laura
Ingalls Wilder
Country*, etc.



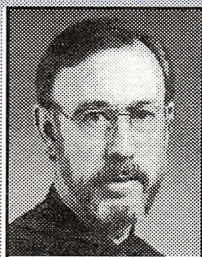
Renee Graef

Illustrator of the
new "My First
Little House
Books" series,
including *Dance
at Grandpa's*,
and *Winter Days
in the Big Woods*.



Leslie Kelly

Photographer of
*Laura Ingalls
Wilder Country* and
the upcoming *Rocky
Ridge Cookbook*.



HarperCollins Publishers

10 - 11:30 a.m. and 3 - 4:00 p.m.
Books available at the
Little House Bookstore

FOLK MUSIC ARTISTS TO ENTERTAIN AT ROCKY RIDGE

As part of the festivities to note the Wilder Centennial, two well-known Missouri folk singers and musicians will be performing their special brand of rare and historic musical selections. Cathy Barton and Dave Para, veterans of countless performances in the United States and Europe, are currently participating in the Missouri Arts Council Touring program. Their presence here at Rocky Ridge will be a reminder of the musical era in which the Wilder family lived.

A versatile duo, Barton and Para perform and conduct workshops with hammered dulcimers, banjo, guitars, autoharp and a surprising variety of "found" instruments, including spoons, bone, mouthbow and leaf!

Their repertoire ranges from Civil War era music and rarely heard treasures from deep in the Ozark Hills. Their spirited folk music recalls the pioneer era

during which the Ingalls and Wilders found and set up homes on the frontier. A recent recording of the duo, "Johnny Whistletrigger: Civil War Songs from the Western Border" won high praise from the American Library Association's children's services's division.

The vocals and instrumentals of Barton and Para will add to the festivities of "Rocky Ridge Day" in an authentic way.



Cathy Barton and Dave Para will add to the festivities of "Rocky Ridge Day".



In the Ravine...

Laura Ingalls Wilder is seen in this circa turn-of-the-century photograph in the steep ravine behind the Wilder home. A spring fed creek circled around the hill on which the farm was located. This site is described in On the Way Home, in the setting by Rose Wilder Lane.

Wilder CELEB

*Summ
visitors were greeted by the*

CENTENNIAL Y

Our Centennial season opened March 15, 1994 with a dinner meeting and orientation at the Little House Buffet, with Jean Coday presiding.

Tour guides for the season were Kathleen Forte, Jean White, Vi Wood, Kay Skyles, Rosemary Cook, Christie Blaine, Stephanie Joseph, Melissa Porter, Hazel Freeman and Terry Spyres.

The employees enjoyed several break-fast meetings, one of which was a back to school party for Christie Blaine, Stephanie Joseph and Carrie Gray who were going to college and Melissa Porter returning to high school.

Scott Hesterley, tour guide '88-'89, graduated from Missouri Southern, Joplin, with a degree in Marketing. He is now employed with Montgomery Ward in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. He was married August 27, 1994 to Mindy Coiner.

Laura Ingalls Wilder Day was celebrated September 17 with 1,237 visitors. They enjoyed touring the Home and Museum and listening to Pa's fiddle being played by Mr. Silas Johnson and Dorothy Mitchell playing the organ.

Improvements made this season include new signage with a uniform design, a new case for Pa's fiddle, improvement of the window treatments in the historic house and colorful flower beds thanks to Juanita Parker.

Centennial RATTON 1994

1994
Banner on Rocky Ridge Farm.

EAR A SUCCESS

Activities for visitors on the grounds included demonstrations of quilting, crocheting, old-time crafts and the reading of Laura's favored Bible verses. Games and square dancing on the lawn were televised by Springfield, Missouri's Channel 3. A special treat was periodic playing of the 1890 organ in the historic house. It still has a beautiful tone.

Office and Bookstore staff served complimentary gingerbread and lemonade to hundreds of visitors on both August 27 and September 17.

This centennial year has been a successful one. We have had excellent tour guides and interesting visitors. About 40,000 people from all fifty states and many foreign countries have visited so far.

Galerd Miller, maintenance and grounds supervisor completed a restoration-reconstruction job on the Wilder home kitchen porch this summer. A \$10,000 matching grant from the National Park Service has been promised and is expected to be used for the Rock House.

It is expected that a professional quality video will be produced of Centennial Day, so if you are interested, write the Association or watch for reports in this newsletter.

Compiled from reports by Elva Bogart, Jo Ann Gray and Jean Coday.

RE-ACQUISITION OF WILDER PROPERTIES CULMINATED IN CENTENNIAL YEAR

The charter of the Laura Ingalls Wilder Home Association states that a goal of the organization is to preserve the home and artifacts associated with the Wilder family. What more important artifact is there than the land and buildings connected with the family through the years? This summer another goal was achieved with the purchase of acreage across the road from the Home and Museum which was part of the original 1894 purchase. On this ground is the stone house built by the Wilders in 1928 for use as a home for Bruce Prock, who was hired to assist in farm operations. The Procks became good friends of the Wilders and entertained them in the small but comfortable house across the road.

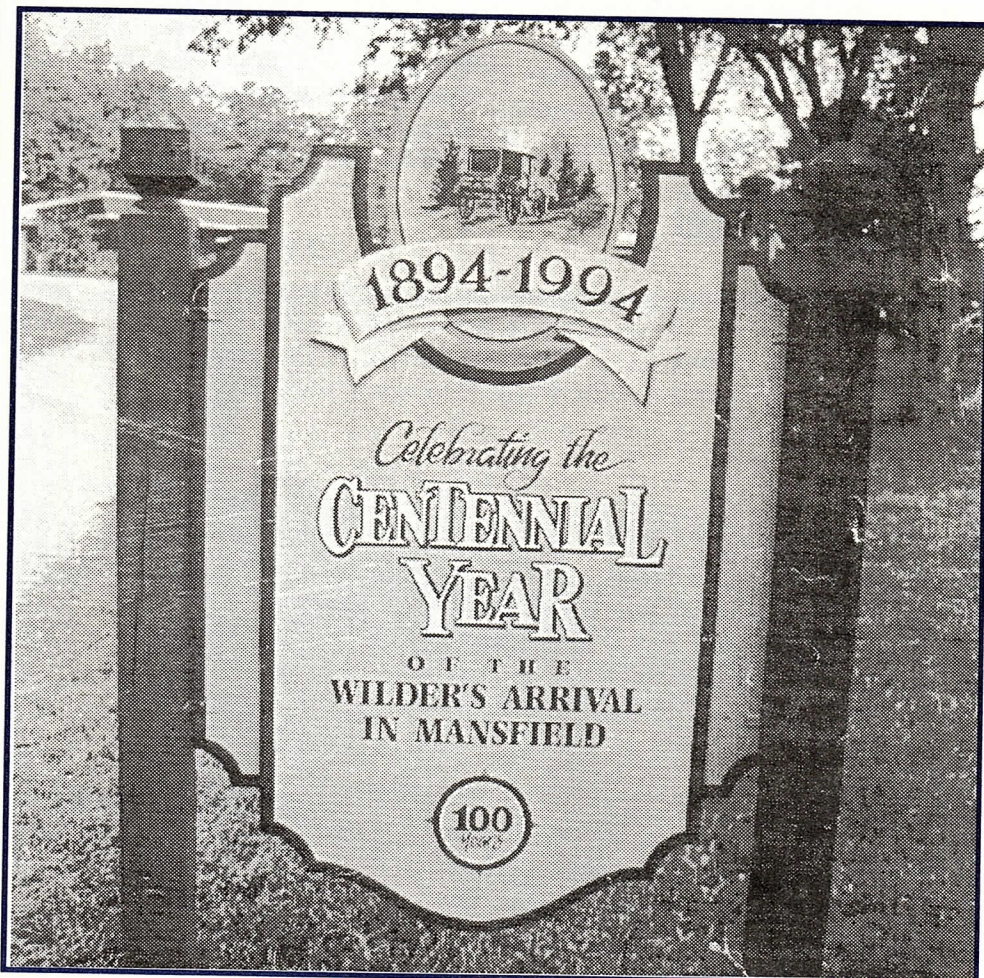
With the purchase of the tenant house property, the Association now owns full frontage across Highway A, and will be able to maintain and

enhance the historic landscape vista so necessary at any site of the type. At present, no decision has been made on use for the house, which has been well-maintained and comes complete with a large storage building.

The 1928 Rock House property, built by Rose for her parents, has been cared for, but funds have not yet been forthcoming for restoration and site development necessary for opening this to visitors.

At present, the Association is responsible for the following structures: The Historic Home, the Museum, Bookstore, Administration Building, the 1928 Rock House and the 1928 Tenant House.

In the Centennial Year, the Board is pleased to note that some sixty acres, "more or less", of the original Wilder land have been reacquired for future development and preservation.



MANSFIELD WILDER ELEMENTARY STUDENTS CELEBRATE WILDER CENTENNIAL

Students at the local Laura Ingalls Wilder Elementary School spent Friday, October 14 focusing on the past of the Wilder family in their community.

Mansfield students spent the day with assemblies and class visits all geared to the centennial theme. Board member Roger MacBride discussed his new "Rocky Ridge" series. Illustrator Renee Graef discussed and demonstrated her illustrating style for the new series of "My First Little House Books". All students heard actress Judith Helton portray the school's namesake, Laura Ingalls Wilder.

While Mansfield students heard about the Wilders, the Children's Literature Festival of the Ozarks, held at Springfield's Drury College, also focused on the Wilder Centennial. Board member William Anderson discussed the event with six sessions

of students from all over southwest Missouri in attendance on October 14 at the annual conference.



BOY SCOUTS HIKE WILDER TRAVEL ROUTE

A century ago, the Wilder family traveled to their destination of Mansfield by following "The Ozark Trail".



Boy Scouts
from Mansfield Troop 271 on the
1880 bridge. Photo courtesy of Joyce

"O.T." was painted on trees to help mark the way. A century later, Boy Scouts from Mansfield Troop 271 recreated the last leg of the journey that brought the Wilders from DeSmet, South Dakota to Mansfield, Missouri.

The first part of the trek was through the Erb Fruit Farm near Cedar Gap, which Laura mentioned in her writings about Mansfield area agriculture and fruit farming. As the hike proceeded, a

high point was the discovery of a stone bridge with a cornerstone date of 1880. Another find was a spring

known to have been a place where Almanzo watered his teams.

The August 7 hike took seven hours to make and officially ended when the boys reached the bust of Laura Ingalls Wilder on the City Square in Mansfield. The boys earned a Historic Trails Award for finding and hiking an original trail.



At the end of their twelve mile trek, Boy Scouts stand at the Wilder Bust in Mansfield's Square.

Photo courtesy of Joyce Keeling.



The team in this picture

are the horses which pulled the hack from DeSmet to Mansfield in 1894.

Almanzo is seen in the buggy wearing his Dakota buffalo coat. The corner of the log building is the 1894 cabin described in *On the Way Home*, the only building on the farm when the Wilders arrived. The small frame house in the background may well be the start of the frame house, a part of the present-day Wilder Home.

ACTRESS TO PORTRAY WILDER

"Rocky Ridge Day" will feature the presence of California actress Judith Helton who will appear several times as Laura Ingalls Wilder. Helton's theatrical career has included one-woman historical programs throughout the United States, and for six years, her most popular character has been Laura Wilder.



Judith Helton
as Laura Ingalls Wilder

Helton's performances are first-person presentations of Laura's words, stories and thoughts about pioneer life. She has done extensive research through

thousands of printed pages and on-site at Wilder locales to perfect her technique. Authentic costuming is included in the portrayals.

The premiere of Judith Helton's special program presenting Laura's life here in Mansfield will occur at 2 p.m. October 15 on the grounds at Rocky Ridge Farm.

Students at the Mansfield Laura Ingalls Wilder School attended Helton's presentation on October 14.

HOOVER LIBRARY TO HOST WILDER EXHIBIT

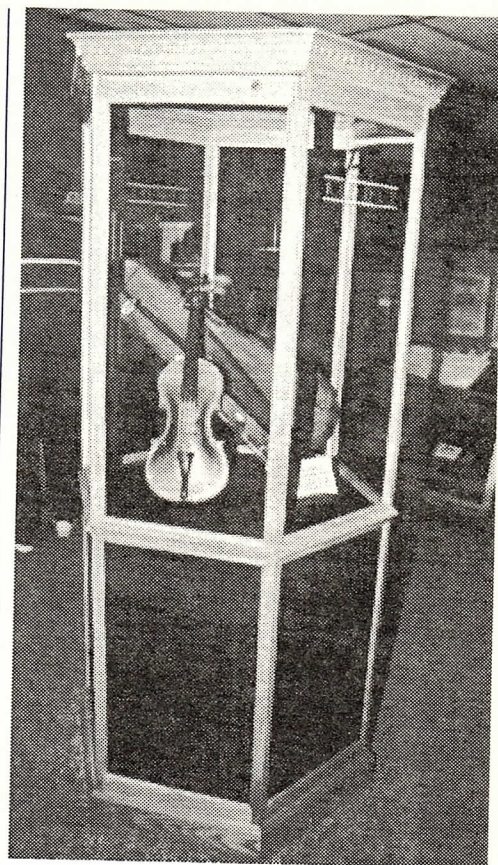
The Herbert Hoover Presidential Library in West Branch, Iowa will be hosting a special exhibit with artifacts, furnishings and other items from the collections of the Laura Ingalls Wilder Home and Museum in Mansfield. Titled "Little House Legacy: The World of Laura Ingalls Wilder", the exhibit will run from January 21 through March 20, 1995.

Christine Mouw of the Hoover Library staff says that "The exhibit will focus on the writing of the books...and

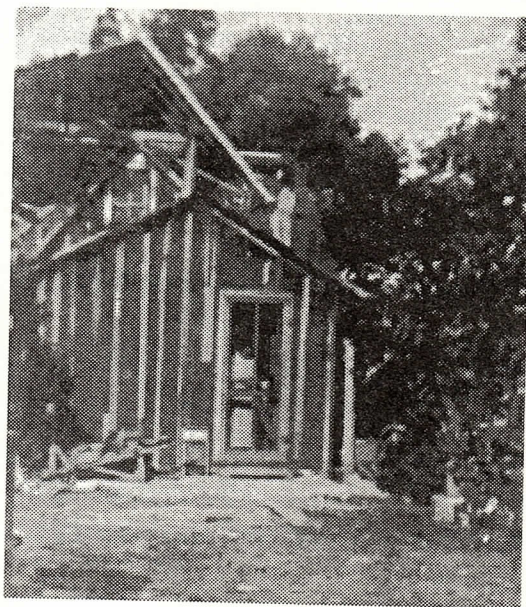
will include two areas. The first will tell the story of the writing of the Little House books. In the second we would like to give visitors a glimpse of Laura's home in Mansfield."

Artifacts from the home and museum will be loaned after closing so that visitors will miss nothing in the current displayed collection.

The Hoover exhibition marks the third such traveling display authorized by the Home Association. The previous two exhibits were sent to Japan.



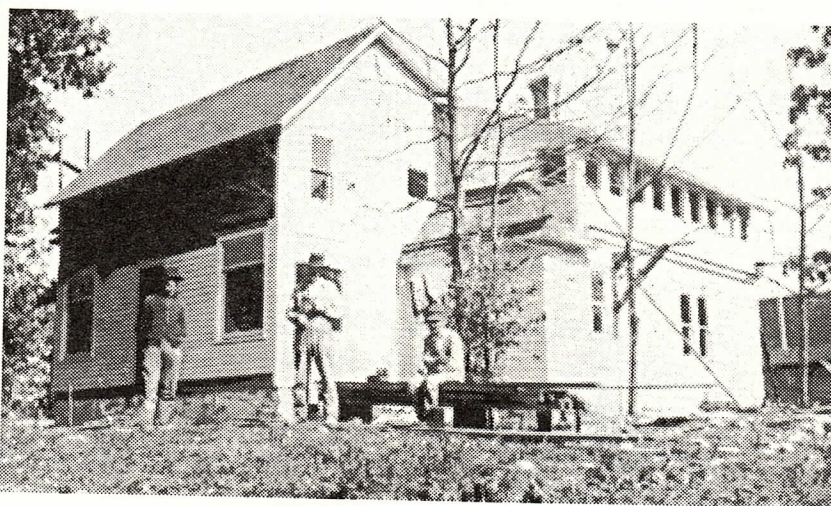
Pa's Fiddle,
on display here since 1962,
now has a new home in the museum.
The case was designed by Farley
Lewis, who has done much of the
design work for the Museum recently.



THE WAY IT WAS . . .

Under construction...

The east end of the Wilder home as it appeared during a renovation, perhaps in 1912 - 1913. Laura appears at the door, the present-day kitchen entrance.



Mansfield's Ezra Dennis
served as chief carpenter during the
completion of the Wilder home in 1913.

BBC TO PRODUCE WILDER DOCUMENTARY

The British Broadcasting Company, based in London, is in the process of producing a documentary show on the Wilder books and their sites for broadcast on the radio division of the English system.

In September, producer Sarah Jane Hull and other BBC staff arrived in Mansfield to be present at Wilder Days on September 17. The group recorded interviews with local persons who knew the Wilders or have been active in memorializing them. They joined a wagon train which entered Mansfield to commemorate the arrival of the family in town a century ago.

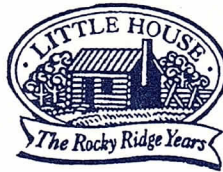
After research and interviews in Mansfield the BBC reporters went on to DeSmet, South Dakota to gather material there.

MACBRIDE ON TOUR

Roger MacBride will be appearing in the following cities to promote his new book, *Little Farm in the Ozarks*:

10-17 Border's, Minneapolis
10-19 Books and Co., Dayton, Ohio
10-22 Prairie Lights, Iowa City

10-27 Davis-Kidd, Nashville
11-6 Border's, Miami



The rough, stony soil of Rocky Ridge Farm is seen in this early photo showing Almanzo in a mule-drawn wagon.

BECOME A MEMBER!

What better way to support the work of the Wilder Home Association than to become a member? Your membership will entitle you to a subscription to this newsletter and updates on projects and events held at Rocky Ridge Farm, the home of the Wilders. A membership table will be set up today, October 15, for your convenience, or memberships can be arranged by mail. Join the Association and become a part of the work of preserving this American landmark.

MINI-TRAVELING EXHIBIT AVAILABLE NOW

Schools and libraries planning Wilder events may be interested to know that the Home Association has prepared a mini-exhibit which can be scheduled for use and features several original artifacts from the Wilder Home. The exhibit has been constructed to include display units, all labeling and instructions for assembly. Wooden packing crates and safe packing supplies are provided. This exhibit has already been requested and used in several states by schools and libraries and has been well-received.

The only requirements are that the organization sponsoring the event have a secure locked storage showcase and be willing to pay a shipping and processing fee.

Contact the Museum for additional details.

Laura Ingalls Wilder - Rose Wilder Lane

Home & Museum

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Mansfield, MO 65704

