



## Smithville MO Historical Society

Our new website:

[www.smithvillehistory.com](http://www.smithvillehistory.com)

Preserving the past for  
appreciation in the future.

*November 2025*

### Please Patronize Our Patrons

Damien Boley  
Brewer Insurance Agency  
John A. Dillingham  
Hixson Klein Funeral Home  
Jean's Flowers & Gifts  
John & Taina Weedn  
Kai's Rescue & Rehab Ranch  
Zuma's Mobile Pet Grooming

### Let's Talk History

West room, American Legion at 3:00 pm

**Sun. Nov. 2** – Willard Pence will discuss the history of his family's appliance business

**Sun. Nov. 16** – Fred Barber will discuss the historical context of Humphrey Smith's life from 1802 to 1822.

**Sun. Nov. 30** – Dewayne Knott will discuss the Lewis & Clark Expedition.

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**Smithville MO Historical Society**  
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Check out our YouTube Channel:  
<https://youtube.com/@smithvillemohistory>  
Be sure to hit "subscribe"

## SPIRITS OF SMITHVILLE

The Smithville MO Historical Society held a Halloween costume contest on the downtown square October 31, 2025. The spooks were out in full form!



Judges Bonnie & Shirley,  
Arlene Smith  
Dewayne Knott & a stranger,  
Some costume winners:  
Felix and Teddy



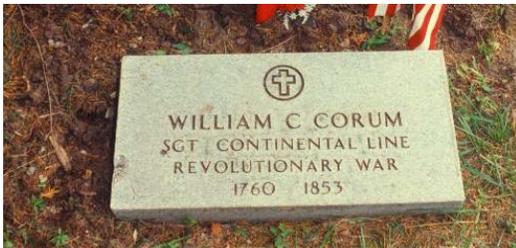
Marty and Carol

## 250 Patriot Celebration

We are featuring patriot ancestors of Smithville residents and society members for the 250 anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. If you have one, let us know at kbnewnotions@gmail.com.

### Guard for Gen. Washington

In a quiet family burial plot behind a home on NE 132<sup>nd</sup> Street lay the remains of Sgt. William Cookson Corum (1760-1853), a member of Capt. Gibb's Infantry of the Commander-in-chief's Guard of the Continental Army (also known as Washington's Life Guard) between 1778 and 1783. He fought in the battles of Brandywine, Germantown, Connecticut Farms, King's Bridge Skirmish and the final battle at Yorktown where British General Cornwallis made the final surrender to the American colonies.



*SAR grave marker in Corum-Judy cemetery*

William Corum served in the Fourth Virginia Regiment during the War of 1812. He received several land grants which he used to obtain 480 acres of land, including the plot where he is buried. The family's log house was located there. He moved to this area by 1827 with his wife, Virginia Bloyd Corum and six children. Two daughters married into the Boggess and Estes families. A son, Milton Corum, was gifted 80 acres beside the family home when he married Margaret Young. He lived and farmed there until his death in 1896. Among his descendants are several notables: Clay County Circuit Judge R. Kenneth Elliott, Sheriff Jac Corum, and Congressman Ike Skelton Jr. Many other Corum descendants continue to live in this area.

### Short History of Road Trips

As the time for holiday visits with friends and family approaches, let's recall the short history of road trips by automobile. The flexibility of going places in a car is a modern marvel. Ford put his first affordable Model T on the market in 1906, but it was another 20 years before the construction of roads would start making travel by car comfortable.

In 1922 Smithville residents were thrilled with completion of the first hard-surfaced road from Nashua to town. More would follow, but it took time. Col. C. F. Kindred recalled that most streets in Smithville were dirt (mud when it rained) until 1935. His father and other city leaders petitioned the Public Works Administration for financial help to improve city streets. Northland residents were Thrilled when the State Highway Department took

over the A.S.B. Bridge, which carried both railroad and vehicular traffic and discontinued the bridge tolls.

The 1929 state highway map indicated that the ability to easily navigate around the area was still in the future. While the Jefferson Highway project provided a pretty direct route to St. Joseph through Trimble and Grayson and south to North Kansas City, other routes were not. To travel to Platte City on a hard surface road required driving south to Nashua then west through Linkville to Platte City. The Highway 92 route we travel today was listed as "not state improved, nor all-weather" on the 1929 map. Driving to Liberty on a hard surfaced road required traveling south to North Kansas City, then north to Liberty. Gen X and Gen Y folks will be surprised that the Interstate Highway System authorized in the Eisenhower Administration in 1956 was still under construction in multiple places in the 1970s and not finally completed until 1992!.