

Jul-Sept 2011
Volume 6, Issue 1

MATT GARDNER
HOMESTEAD MUSEUM

Newsletter

Officers

Carla J. Jones, President
Indianapolis, Indiana

Donielle R. Neal, Secretary
Indianapolis, Indiana

Jewel D. Bailey, Chairman
Indianapolis, Indiana

Board Members

Gary D. Gardner, Owner-Operator
Gardner's Lawn & Cleaning Services
Elkton, Tennessee

Malcomb Gardner,
Consultant
360 Media
Austin, Texas

Rev. Stephen E. Gardner,
CEO
Crown of Hope International
Phoenix, Arizona

Stanley R. Garrett, Pastor
Temple of Praise Baptist Church
Pulaski, Tennessee

Agustin Gonzales, Manager
Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.
Pulaski, Tennessee

Jesse W. Lowery,
Sales/Marketing
Indianapolis, Indiana

Melinda Boutwell, Historical
Interpreter
Belle Meade Plantation
Nashville, Tennessee

Rev. Elmore Miller,
Educator Retired, Giles
County Schools
Detroit, Michigan

Diana Steelman, Former
Tourism Coordinator
Giles County Tourism
Foundation
Pulaski, Tennessee

Karen Russell, Historian
Elkton Historical Society
Elkton, Tennessee

Carolyn S. Thompson,
President
Elkton Historical Society
Elkton, Tennessee

Roosevelt Whitfield, City
Council & Historian
City of Elkton
Elkton, Tennessee

Eddie Woodard, Supervisor
Holley's Printing, Pulaski, TN
Pastor, Sunrise Chapel
Elkton, Tennessee

Matt Gardner Homestead Museum Welcomes Our First Tour Bus Visitors



Visitors learn about Matt and his home during our first bus tour.
Photo: Andrea Northcutt

In the spring the MGHM prepared for our first tour bus of visitors to the museum on the Southern Middle Tennessee Quilt Trail. The tour was hosted by the Southern Middle TN RC&D. There were 41 people on the tour. The guided tour through the museum was given by board member Diana Steelman and Gardner family member Eunice Gardner. One visitor commented, "We loved the Matt Gardner Home place. It is a beautiful farm with a rich history, and I think we were all inspired by his (Matt's) story. The quilts are amazing too."

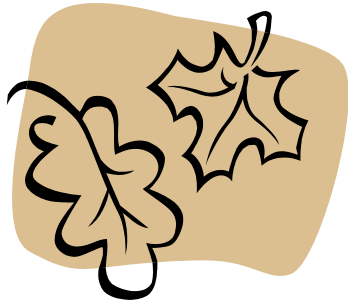
The Pine Burr quilt of Matt's wife Henrietta (Jenkins) Gardner was the first quilt block painted and displaced on the Southern Middle Tennessee Quilt Trail. Their mission is to promote and celebrate the unique agricultural, historical, and cultural experience of our nine counties. The quilt trail is a visual combination of century farms, historic sites, and places of interest, all of which are a vital part of economic well-being. The quilt blocks represent the love, comfort, and warmth of centuries, along with the beauty and artistic expression of their makers. (Quilt is pictured on page 2)

**We're Planning
New Events
check our
website for
updates:**

[www.mattgardner
homestead.org](http://www.mattgardnerhomestead.org)

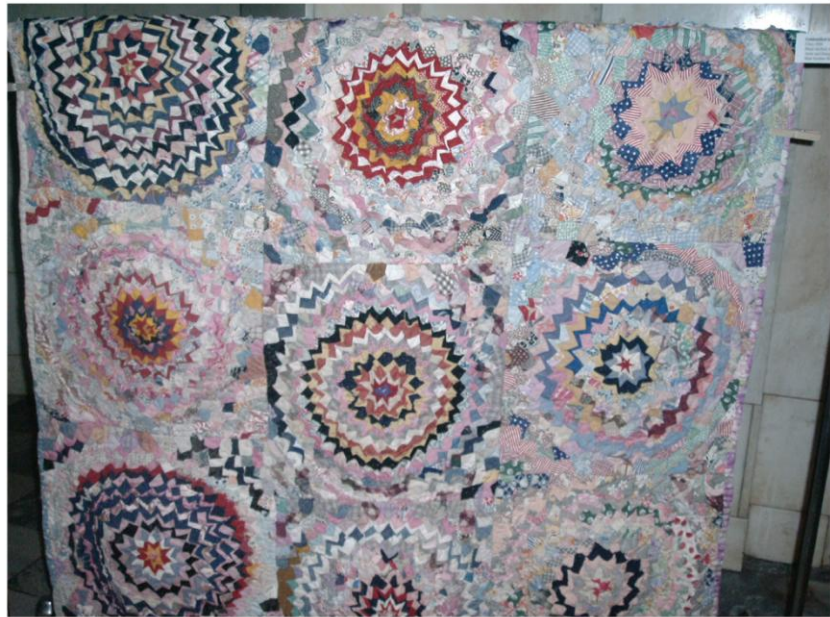
**Welcome New
Member**

Frank Casey
Murphy, TX



*The Matt Gardner
Homestead Museum
is a good place to
visit for heritage
education. To
schedule a visit
contact Carla Jones
at
carlajones@sbcglobal.net*

Matt Gardner Homestead Museum Welcomes Our First Tour Bus Visitors, cont.



The Pine Burr quilt of Matt's wife, Henrietta (Jenkins) Gardner.



Museum interpreter, Diana Steelman, relays to visitors what life was like on the Matt Gardner farm at the turn of the century.

Sharing the African American History of Giles County



Carla Jones speaking to student scholars, historians, professors, and visitors at the The Cemetery Community Public Workshop. Photo: John Lynch

In May, Bradley Academy, MTSU's Public History Program, and Stones River National Battlefield, all of Murfreesboro, Tennessee, sponsored a field school community workshop designed to discuss African-American community building in the post-Civil War South. The event, formally titled "The Cemetery Community Public Workshop," was hosted and held at Bradley Academy Museum. Scholars from across the nation brought their perspectives to the making of the national cemetery and the aftermath of the Civil War in Rutherford County among freedmen and women.

Visiting scholars and featured speakers in the day-long workshop included Allison Dorsey, a professor of history at Swarthmore College in Philadelphia, Penn., who has researched post-emancipation African American communities in Georgia; and Susan Eva O'Donovan, University of Memphis, who has compiled a documentary history of emancipation for the Freedmen and Southern Society Project and written about former slaves in the "cotton South;" Carla Jones, president of the Matt Gardner Homestead in Elkton, Tenn., who restored and transformed her homestead into a public museum; and Robert Sutton, chief historian of the National Park Service. Carla used a time line to tell the story of the history and heritage of Matt, the Gardner family, Giles County, Elkton, the Dixontown community, and the homestead museum. She was very excited and grateful for the opportunity to share all information with student scholars, historians, professors, and visitors at the workshop.

**The Matt Gardner Homestead Museum in partnership with
Martin Methodist College is pleased and proud to present:**

We Shall Not Be Moved:

The 50th Anniversary of Tennessee's Civil Rights Sit-ins

A Traveling Exhibition from the Tennessee State Museum



Image: Sit-in at Walgreens, downtown Nashville, February 20, 1960.
Photographer Jimmy Ellis—Courtesy of *The Tennessean*

Please Join Us As We Celebrate This Memorable Event In History.
The Exhibit Will Be on Display in Martin Methodist College's

Gault Fine Arts Center

423 Madison Street Pulaski, Tennessee.

Dates: Friday October, 28, 2011 through Monday December 5, 2011

Time: 9:00am until 9:00pm daily (admission is free)

Items Carved from 100 Year Old Cherry Tree Will Be Incorporated in Matt Gardner Museum Exhibit

This past spring on the farmstead a cherry tree a little over 100 years old and believed to have been planted by Matt himself was cut down before it fell and destroyed fragile out-buildings. The tree was then given to Alan Aymett of Five Points, Tennessee, whose hobby is making wooden bowls. Alan volunteered his services and within a few months had carved out six beautiful cherry wood bowls, with more bowls to come. A couple of the bowls will be kept at the museum and incorporated into exhibits while the rest will be auctioned off at events throughout the coming year, as well as at future Gardner family reunions. Along with the bowl, the purchaser will receive a certificate of authentication from the MGHM. Thanks, Alan, great job!



Let's All Go Back to the Old Land Mark



In keeping with the spirit and tradition of the Reverend Matt Gardner and his son the Reverend Raymond Gardner, the museum thought it only fitting to have our first annual big tent revival. Preparation for the event started with the history that shows when blacks had no place to worship they would erect four poles and intertwine branches and brush as a covering to protect themselves from sunlight and rain as they worshiped.

This structure was called a brush arbor. Brush arbors were also used for revival meetings and until church congregations could save enough money to purchase land and build a church. So the museum decided to have preaching under the brush arbor as they did back in Matt's early preaching days.



Other preparations included a tree that floated onto the property from the Elk River. Eight feet of the tree log was split in half and four legs attached to make an altar. The log was also used to make the top of the podium from which the speakers rested their Bible and preached.

The revival was a two-night event and featured preaching, singing, and fellowship, all things the Gardner minister duo loved.



Preaching under the brush arbor on Friday night was Pastor Mario Ford from St. Minor Primitive Baptist Church, in Guntersville, Alabama. St. Minor is a church where Matt had preached numerous times, and Raymond was the pastor there for several years. Saturday night's speaker was Brother Alan Dixon of Williams Chapel, in Byrdstown, Tennessee. What a "good ole time" we all had, and what a blessing the revival was for all.

The Matt Gardner Homestead Museum provides wonderful learning opportunities for adults and children of all ages. To schedule a visit contact Carla Jones at carlajones@sbcglobal.net