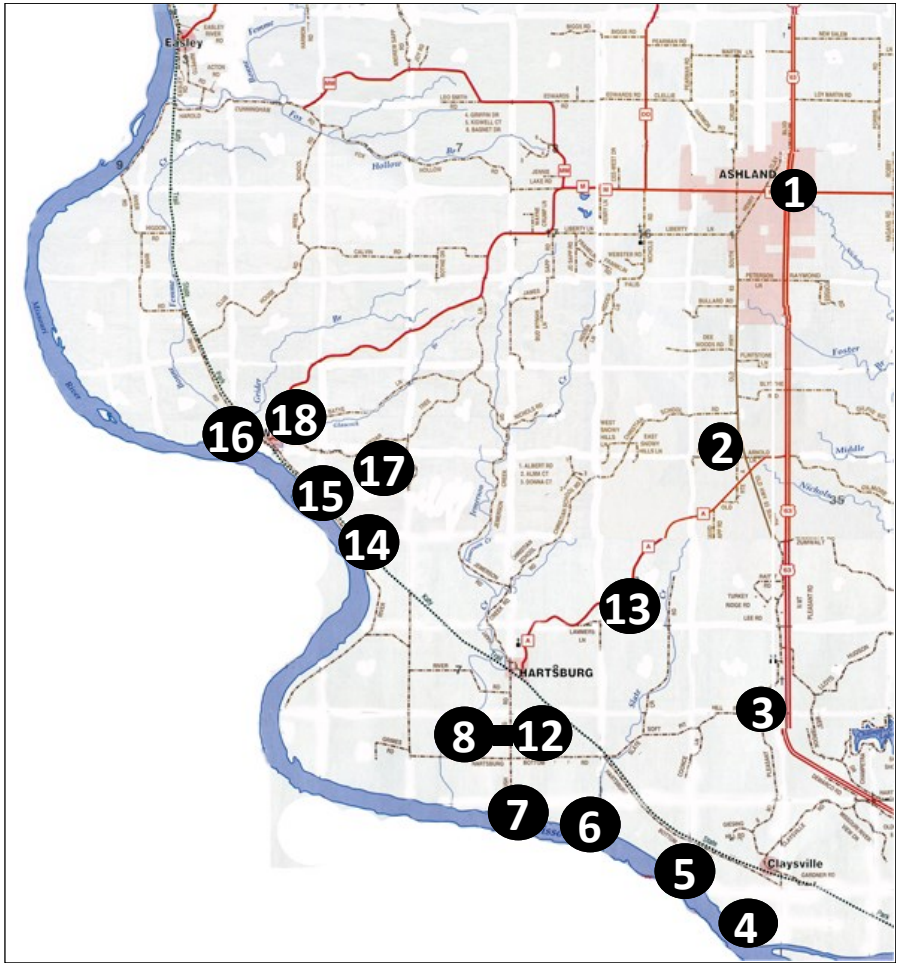
Tour #5

Southwest Boone County map



Historic sites numbered for the tour route.
See page 3 for list.

A Driving Tour of
Southwest Boone County

TOUR #5
See back cover for detailed map of this tour

BOONE COUNTY History & Culture CENTER

Boone County Historical Society

Historic Sites Committee

The Historic Sites Program of the Boone County Historical Society

Inaugurated in 1994, the Boone County Historical Society's Historic Sites program identifies and recognizes historic sites in Boone County. The program also attempts to compile information on all historic sites in Boone County.

Sites are nominated by the general public and by members of the Boone County Historical Society's Historic Sites Committee. The Committee then selects, from these nominations, sites to be included on the *Register of Boone County Historic Sites.* Sites are selected for one, several, or all of the following reasons:

Associative significance: The site is associated with events or with the lives of persons significant to the history of Boone County.

Intrinsic significance: The site embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction; or represents the work of a master; or possesses high aesthetic value.

Informational significance: The site yields or may likely yield information important to the history or prehistory of Boone County.

BOONE COUNTY History & Culture CENTER

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18 Perry Spencer Home site

BCHS Historic Site, designated 1999

Perry Spencer, originally from Maryland, arrived in this part of Missouri around 1824. He soon met Eliza Jane, the daughter of James B. Wiseman, a resident of Ashland, and married her the following year. Spencer joined the Little Bonne Femme Church, located just south of Columbia. In 1828, he left Little Bonne Femme, and helped found the New Salem Baptist Church, north of Ashland. In 1832, he helped found the Goshen Primitive Baptist Church and served as its clerk for twenty-one years. From 1824 through the 1830s, Spencer acquired land. His farmstead, known as Cedar Hill Farm, grew to about 600 acres, and included bottomland, bluffs, and creek bottom along Little Bonne Femme Creek.

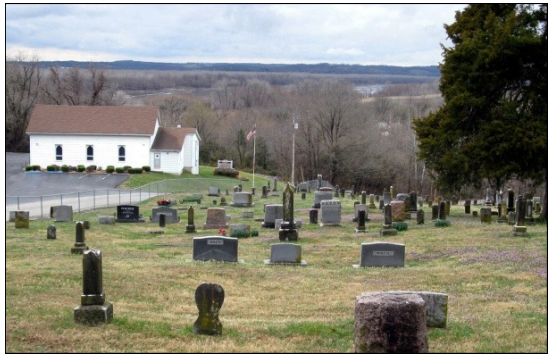
In 1839, on a ridge above Wilton, Spencer built one of the first brick homes in Cedar Township. In 1862, Perry Spencer died. His home passed to his son, Gilpin, who continued to manage the farm. Gilpin raised stock and grain, mostly wheat. His family attended the Methodist Church in Burlington, a church he had helped build.

The Boone County Historical Society designated the Perry Spencer home a Boone County Historic Site in 1999, but the home no longer exists.

To return to Ashland, go east on Route M and go 2.9 miles. Continue on Broadway until you reach Highway 63. Going north on 63 will return you to Columbia.

17 Goshen Primitive Baptist Church

GPS: 38.73411, -92.35492



On August 9, 1832, Berryman Wren and fifteen other local residents met to form the Goshen Church of Christ in Wilton. Berryman Wren served as the first minister until his death in 1867. Under his leadership, the congregation grew from twelve to eighty-two, with meetings held once a month.

When the building burned in 1875, they built the current chapel, adding several additions through the years. In 1890, the church almost dissolved due to disagreements between two separate groups of members. Each claimed the church as their own, and attempted to lock the other group out. The dispute lasted more than five years, even calling in the power of the court, but the congregation eventually settled their differences. By 1919, the church had 220 members, one of the strongest Primitive Baptist Churches in the country.

In the cemetery, visitors may find the graves of Captain Armstead L. Vandiver and Private William T. Nevins, previously mentioned, and the grave of Leasel Littlebury Lindsey, a local miller and church member of the Civil War era.

Head back northwest on Cedar Tree Lane to Route M. The land on the north side of Route M belonged to Perry Spencer, his home was on the ridge to the east.

Sites on the Tour

See map on back cover

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Welcome to Your Tour

We live in a beautiful and historic part of a wonderful country. What better way to explore both than a historic driving tour? The Historic Sites Committee of the Boone County Historical Society urges all—the native, the newly-arrived, and the visitor—to take time to enjoy the legacy left by so many who have preceded us. Feel free to pick and choose segments of the tour and start anywhere that fits your fancy. Use the accompanying map to plan your trip.

Enjoy your trip,

BCHS Historic Sites Committee

Look for the STAR symbol. It identifies properties recognized by the BCHS Historic Sites Committee, and the year of designation.

Don't forget to tag us in your social media posts when you share about your tour!

BOONE COUNTY History & Culture CENTER

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16 Wilton

GPS: 38.734472, -92.360200

Wilton Hotel, built by Jesse Tom Nichols circa 1895

Topographic maps show Indian mounds on the hills around Wilton. Captain Willis Feely, a former Confederate officer wounded at the Battle of Lone Jack, served as the first postmaster. In the early 1880s, he was shipping 25,000 railroad ties out of Wilton each year.

Around 1882, Robin Parker found gold in the area. Speculators discovered lead ore two miles north of town. By 1890, the town had a population of about 50, and businesses included a drugstore, gristmill, and a general store. By 1895, Jesse Tom Nichols had built the Wilton hotel, a plain two-story structure clad in brown shingles, still standing off Route M near the center of town. Nichols held a partnership in a steamboat; he owned an icehouse and several houses in town.

In 1903, floodwaters damaged the recently built railroad. Around this time, the hotel closed. The post office closed Sept. 15, 1925. In 1935, Route M gave the residents a new route to Ashland. Passenger service on the railroad ceased in 1958 and freight service ended in 1986. In the 1993 flood, water topped the permanent levees and ten feet of water covered the nearby Katy Trail.

Turn right on Route M and turn right again on Cedar Tree Lane. Stop at the church .3 of a mile on the right.

15 The River Road

On the way north to Wilton, the River Road skirts the bank of Missouri River. For the Fox Indians, *Missouri* referred to the tribe that lived at the mouth of the river where it joins the Mississippi. The word may mean the "People with Big Canoes."

At certain times of the year, snags fill the river. In the winter, floating islands of ice surge along the surface from bank to bank. The ice floes and spring snags kept steamboats docked at various ports, waiting for conditions to improve. At least ten steamboats have foundered or sunk in the stretch of river between Jefferson City and Rocheport. The *Emilie La Barge*, captained by George Keith, snagged on its trip downstream from Lexington. It sunk along this stretch of the river in June of 1874.

Just before the town of Wilton, the road crosses a stream called the Glascock Branch. In the early 1900s, at the mouth of the creek, riverboats sometimes stopped and entertained residents at the river's edge.

The road now enters the town of Wilton.

An introduction to Southwest Boone County

Settlers from the east had been moving into this region of the Missouri River as early as 1808, but the War of 1812 hampered permanent settlement. With the cessation of the war and the opening of the land office at Franklin in 1818, family members who had stayed behind started on the long journey, some in wagons or horseback on the Boone's Lick Road and others by boat up the Missouri River.

In November of 1820, the Missouri legislature organized Boone County out of Howard County, a territory that included Boonville and Old Franklin and lands to the north. At that time, Cedar Township included the entire county below Columbia, from Cedar Creek on the east to the Missouri River on the west. The township now encompasses the land south of Ashland bounded by Cedar Creek on the east and the Missouri River on the west.

From Highway 63, exit at Ashland. Our first stop will be the corner of S. Main Street and W. Broadway in Ashland.. .

1 Ashland

GPS: 38.774383, -92.253303

Around 1818, James Wiseman, William Tuttle, and their families came to this region of Missouri from Kentucky. The trip took seven months, traveling by water along the Ohio, Mississippi, and Missouri rivers. The women and children rode in a keelboat and the men walked the riverbanks, pulling the boats upstream. In 1827, they founded the town of Wiseman. In 1853, the citizens renamed the town Ashland, after Henry Clay's home, Ashland, in Lexington, Kentucky.

Around 1875, Lawrence Bass and J.T.M. Johnston set up the Bass-Johnston Trade Center, which, by 1915, had grown to be considered the largest country store in Missouri, before being destroyed by fire. It originally stood on the north side of Broadway. The building on the southeast corner of Main and Broadway housed the Crump & Dunn shoe store.

This 1907 ad from *The Ashland Bugle*, was typical of the frequent announcements placed by the company.

Continue on Main St. for .5 miles. Continue on Henry Clay Boulevard, which turns into Old U.S. 63, and then follow Old U.S. 63 for 2 miles to the junction of Christian School Road.

14 Burlington

GPS: 38.710416, -92.339544

Reportedly, Colonel Thad Hickman of Kentucky founded the town of Burlington about 1856. Its original location sits either on the far side or under the current riverbed. The town soon grew to a hundred people and served as a shipping point for tobacco.

In 1862, Federal cavalry from Jefferson City raided the lower portion of Cedar Township, looking for Confederate sympathizers. Near Burlington, they captured Private William T. Nevins, a former Confederate soldier, along with his father and several neighbors. The Union soldiers accused Nevins of bushwhacking and ordered his execution. At noon, on September 24, 1862, they shot Nevins and burned his house down, along with the homes of John Wiggins and Peter Tighe. They also burned the half-finished home of a Mr. Vandiver, possibly Captain Armstead L. Vandiver, a Union loyalist.

In 1867, Hickman opened a store in Burlington and served as postmaster. He sold the store in 1887 and moved north of Ashland. He bought the Tyre Martin farm across from the New Salem Baptist Church, and built a herd of fine shorthorn cattle. That year, the town had a blacksmith shop, a schoolhouse, and two churches, but the river washed the town away.

Return to River Road and turn left.

13 Bond's Chapel Methodist Episcopal Church

National Register of Historic Places GPS: 38.709356, -92.285555

In 1993, the National Register of Historic Places recognized Bond's Chapel Methodist Episcopal Church, as a simple, late nineteenth-century rural church. The founders of the chapel included William Butler, William Sappington, Samuel V. Allen, John H. Sapp, Noah A. Sapp, David Hilburn, and Squire Sappington. Bond's Chapel took its name from Henry Pope Bond, D.D., an itinerant Methodist preacher, who served as pastor of the congregation in 1884 and 1885. Brother Bond, a circuit rider, served the Missouri Conference of the Methodist Church from 1867 until his retirement in 1905.

Constructed around 1884, Bond's Chapel is a simple rectangular building set on corner piers. The use of native materials and the conscious rejection of elaborate ornamentation reflect the values of the early Methodists. The double front door and transom window remain intact, with a vestibule added after 1940 to protect the entranceway. Most of the pews are original, with the exception of pews damaged by wind and replaced in the 1940s. The wooden altar is original. A metal stove and an upright piano remain from when the church had an active congregation. Descendants of the original builders continue to maintain the church and cemetery.

Return to Hartsburg via State Highway A, turn right on Main Street, and go .1 mile. Turn left on First Street. Continue on Bush Landing Road., and go .2 miles. Turn right on the River Road and continue on about 2 miles to the Missouri Department of Conservation Hartsburg River Access, a good place to stop and view the present river channel.

2 Christian School

GPS: 38.737967, -92.263288

On the northwest corner of the crossroad, stands the abandoned Christian School, named after T. T. Christian, a local resident. The land originally was donated by David Christian, and the first log house was built by citizens about 1846. The frame building was built about 1880 for $700.

A 1911 Ashland newspaper article reported:

“More than 20 years ago, at Christian school house, flourished one of the largest Sunday schools in the county. Rev. W. T. Maupin was the superintendent. Annually now, a reunion is held. At the last reunion (Sunday Oct. 15) it is estimated that 600 people were present. A basket dinner was a feature. Rev. W. T. Maupin preached in the forenoon and Rev. J. H. Roddy in the afternoon.”

Continue on Old U.S. 63 for 2.1 miles. Continue on Mt. Pleasant Road for 1.3 miles to Mt. Pleasant Cemetery on the left.

3 Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church Cemetery

GPS: 38.708414, -92.255103

Organized in 1858 as the Claysville Church, church members changed the name to Mount Pleasant United Baptist Church in August of the same year. P. H. Steenbergen preached for the first nine months. Pictured is the gravestone of Elizabeth (Glenn) Jones, wife of Mosias Jones. Mosias came to Boone County in 1818 along with his brothers, Christopher and Tyre Jones, some of the earliest settlers.

A founding member of Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church, Mosias served as a member of the first grand jury held in Boone County. He had previously helped found the New Salem Baptist Church, north of Ashland. The members erected the first Mt. Pleasant chapel in 1861, and possibly built another one in 1881. Their church burned in 1956 and the members built a new one a quarter mile north of the cemetery.

Head southwest on Mt. Pleasant Road for 2.2 miles. Turn right on Claysville Road and go .2 miles. On your left should be the Claysville Store, now a family restaurant, in the town of Claysville.

12 Peace United Church of Christ

(Peace Evangelical and Reformed Church of Hartsburg)

GPS: 38.696663, -92.311715

In 1894, Hartsburg residents organized the Peace Evangelical Church. The original name in German, Friedens Evangelische Gemein, means Peace Evangelical Parish. One of the first pastors, Conrad Friedrich Stoerker, attended seminary at Missouri Valley College. He retired in 1920. His grandson, who earned his theology degree at Boston University, assumed the pastorship in March of 1942 and in 1944 expanded his ministry to the Evangelical Student Chapel in Columbia. At least in the early days, pastors held services in the German language. In 1957 the name of the church changed to the Peace United Church of Christ.

An article in the April 14, 1994 *Boone County Journal* details the 100 year anniversary of the church. It has survived despite numerous The river has touched the lives of the town and the church. At the time of its 50th anniversary, the church had seen three summers of floods. And yet the church grew physically and attendance reached a new high. Just as Rev. Bryan Crousore became resident pastor, the flood of the century occurred, in July and August of 1993. During these difficult times for the town, the church family played a significant role in directing the flood relief efforts and keeping the town's spirits afloat. Over one-hundred churches from around the country played a role in helping to rebuild the church."

Turn left onto Center Street and drive through the north part of Hartsburg and then turn left onto First Street and continue on State Highway A 1.8 miles. Bond's Chapel is on the right.

11 Hartsburg Baptist Church

GPS: 38.695664, -92.311319

Architecturally, Hartsburg Baptist Church stands as a fine example of a Side Steeple Church type, a form popular in rural areas of Missouri between 1890 and 1920, and a style most commonly found in small towns and rural crossroads. The National Register of Historic Places has recognized two churches in Boone County with side steeples, Mount Nebo in Rocheport and Mount Zion in Hallsville. At the turn of the twentieth century, Queen Anne and other Victorian styles enjoyed popularity. The details of the architecture reflect this, such as the corner tower, stained glass windows, overlapping shingles, and the decorative wood supports in the belfry.

A 2007 *Columbia Tribune* article by Bill Clark states the stained-glass window came from the Burlington Baptist Church, established in 1873, possibly another victim of the frequent floods, such as the one in 1887 that washed away the town of Burlington (further up river).

Head north on 1st Street two blocks to the church on the left.

4 Claysville

GPS: 38.661329, -92.259312

Steamboats plied the upper reaches of the Missouri River sporadically before the 1840s. The *Independence,* one of the first steamboats to attempt an ascent, passed this stretch of the river in 1819.

Captain William Ramsey arrived in the region around 1817. A Revolutionary War soldier, he had witnessed the surrender of Cornwallis after the Battle of Yorktown. In 1825, he purchased 144 acres, known as Ramsey's Bluff. Residents renamed the town Claysville after Henry Clay.

Claysville served as a shipping point for farm products. Patrick Henry Mellon built the first store and probably served as the first postmaster. Hise stone house sat a half mile south of Claysville.

In 1850, Edwin Bass, son of Lawrence Bass, partnered with Richard Spencer (to be discussed later) to run a store here. During the Civil War, September 1862, Maj. Frank White's troops seized a hundred bags of salt from the steamboat Mill Boy intended for the Spencer and Bass store. White suspected them of being rebel sympathizers. Spencer had to retrieve the shipment at Jefferson City. In 1864 Edwin sold the business to Richard and moved to Henry County.

Continue past the Claysville Store to the next road on your right.

5 Katy Trail

Around 1893, the Missouri-Kansas-Texas (MKT) Railroad laid its tracks through the river bottom from Claysville to Hartsburg, following the river course towards Rocheport. The line traced the path of an earlier state road and offered an alternative to the steamboats for those needing to travel or ship goods to and from St. Louis or Kansas City. In 1957, as more and more families owned their own car, passenger service ended. After the flood of 1986, the company shut down the entire line.

To maintain the corridor and provide new recreational opportunities for hikers and bikers, a campaign to establish the Katy Trail State Park began. The flood of 1993 damaged about 75 miles of the completed surface and delayed the opening of the trail. The trail, one of the longest rails-to-trails corridors in the United States, stretches from the Mississippi River north of St. Louis to Clinton, Missouri, a distance of about 238 miles.

Head southeast on Claysville Road for .1 miles and turn right onto Hartsburg Bottom Road. Continue on Hartsburg Bottom Road for 2.6 miles. Along this stretch of road to the left on the river was the town of Stonesport, which was washed away in the 1844 flood.

10 Samuel E. Hackman Building

GPS: 38.684858, -92.309709

National Register of Historic Places

The Samuel E. Hackman Building, also known as the Hartsburg Grand, received National Register of Historic Places designation in 1998. Samuel Hackman constructed the building in early 1897. A general store occupied the ground floor. Townspeople used the second story for dances, school plays, and movies.

The Mesker Brothers of St. Louis made the ornate iron storefront. In those days, small-town merchants could order complete storefronts through catalogs. Mesker Brothers shipped over 5,200 fronts in less than 25 years. Their factory operated in St. Louis well into the twentieth century and was still in use in 1952.

Samuel Hackman operated the store for just a few years. Armin Barner ran the hardware store from ca. 1915 until 1942. Dr. Charles C. Megee, the town's only doctor in 1921, set up his office in the smaller side wing added around 1903. He practiced in Hartsburg into the 1940s. At one time, the addition housed a drug store, and later, a local barbershop.

In 1993, when record flooding of the Missouri River engulfed much of Hartsburg, water reached several feet up the walls of the ground floor.

Continue north on 2nd Street. Turn left onto Main Street 0.1 mi to the Baptist church on the right.

9 The Globe Hotel

GPS: 38.694607, -92.309085

Around 1895, Herman Gungoll, a community leader and local businessman, built the Globe Hotel (now a bed and breakfast). He operated the hotel for about 15 years, before passing it on to new owners. Salesmen could get off the train, rent a buggy, and travel through the nearby hills to sell their wares. In 1941, the *Jefferson City Post-Tribune* claimed the hotel was "popular with railroad officials" and the "best hotel between New Franklin and St. Charles."

A public restroom is located in the Katy Trail parking lot to west of the hotel.

Continuing north, the next building on the right is the…

6 Stonesport

GPS: 38.680503, -92.292532

As early as 1822, settlers established a river port near here on the Missouri River. At that time, those assigned to finding a site for the new state capital considered this location. Mat West, the first merchant, had a store here in 1830. In 1836, Asa Stone, the town namesake, and William Ramsey, previously mentioned, (or possibly his sons Josiah Ramsey and George Washington Ramsey) laid out the town lots. When the flood of 1844 formed a sandbar that prevented boats from landing at Stonesport, residents moved to higher ground at Claysville.

The town may not have completely disappeared, as chroniclers mention it during the Civil War period. In the late evening of May 22, 1862, Col. Odon Guitar, a Union officer encamped with his men near Claysville, heard that a party of Confederates was crossing the river north near the mouth of Bonne Femme Creek at Stonesport. The Union troops surprised the Confederate camp at daybreak and captured eight men and nine horses, among them the Reverend David B. Cunningham, a large landowner in the vicinity. Cunningham spent the rest of 1862 in prison in St. Louis.

Turn left and stay on Hartsburg Bottom Road for 1.1 miles.

❼ Campsite of the Lewis and Clark Expedition

GPS: 38.680436, -92.311501

Before turning north on the road to Hartsburg, it is worth noting that, on the far side of the river, the Lewis and Clark expedition camped on June 4, 1804. In 1803, Thomas Jefferson had asked Congress for money to fund an expedition up the Missouri River to explore the Louisiana Territory, which the government would soon acquire by treaty from France. Jefferson chose Captain Meriwether Lewis to head the expedition. Lewis in turn selected his friend, William Clark, to serve as co-leader. On May 21, 1804, the expedition left St. Charles and began their journey up the Missouri River. While at the campsite June 4, they jerked deer meat brought in by the hunters, before heading further up river.

In 1813, President Madison appointed William Clark as governor of the Missouri Territory. He served in that position until 1820, when Missouri became a state and citizens voted him out of office.

Turn right onto S. Bush Landing Road and go less than a mile to the outskirts of Hartsburg.

❽ Hartsburg

GPS: 38.694103—92.311758

Almond B. Hart came to Missouri around 1845. His sons, Luther Douglas Hart and Orelius Brown Hart bought farmland in the Hartsburg area in the 1870s. In 1891 surveyors for the Missouri, Kansas, and Texas railroad visited Luther Hart, seeking a route through his farm. Hart gave the right-of-way and railroad crews completed the line in 1893. H. J. Wintermeyer set up a brickyard that same year. A two-story brick store went up in 1894.

In 1895, the Harts laid out lots for sale. *The Hartsburg Enterprise*, a weekly newspaper, began publication. In 1896, a lumberyard aided the building boom. By 1899, rail service had completely replaced steamboat service. By that time, the town boasted of a drug store, a hotel, a livery, a blacksmith, and two general stores. In 1901, the townspeople incorporated the town.

Although floods menaced the town regularly, farmers benefited from the soil deposited as the waters receded. Hartsburg flourished until, in 1921, completion of Highway 63 sidelined Hartsburg as an important business center.

In October 1991, the town held its first annual pumpkin fest, which now attracts crowds of 30,000 or more each year.

You may notice several houses raised off their original foundations, modified after the 1993 flood.

Continuing into Hartsburg, turn right on S. 2nd Street and go .2 miles to the Globe Hotel on your right.