

## 2010 Spring History Tour Meade State Lake - CCC Camp - WPA Projects

The Meade County Historical Society spring history tour was held Saturday, April 24. We gathered at the Meade City Park at 9:30 am, sporting sturdy shoes and packing our sack lunches.

Suddenly there seems to be a renewed interest in the depression era, perhaps because the country is going through tough economic times, or perhaps because we are quickly losing folks who lived through it and we want to capture all the first-hand stories we can before it's too late. Whatever the reason,



it was the inspiration for our history tour this spring.

Meade County was the recipient of several WPA (Work Progress Administration) and NYA (National Youth Administration) projects in the late 1930's and early 1940's. We started our tour viewing some of them in Meade. We learned that the stone for the shelter and walls in the park came from an old railroad well that was dismantled. Rock Island Railroad had hauled this stone from somewhere in the 1880's when the track was first built through Meade County. It has a much darker color and different appearance than the native stone used elsewhere in the county for the WPA projects.







Next stop was the Dalton Gang Hideout where NYA crews rebuilt the tunnel and did the rock work on the barn, and WPA crews did the landscaping. We learned that when city leaders first applied to Washington D.C. for the Hideout project they were turned down because the government "wasn't about to fund work on a project that glorified ruthless outlaws." The application was promptly reworked and submitted to Topeka as "Meade Historical Park" and was then approved.



After touring the WPA projects we headed for Meade State Lake. The story of the lake and how it came to be is great history. We gathered at the artesian well on the park grounds and Mark Goldsberry was on hand to tell us about the CCC Camp that was located there. This camp was also used as an internment camp during WWII, and we have a limited history of the folks who were housed there.

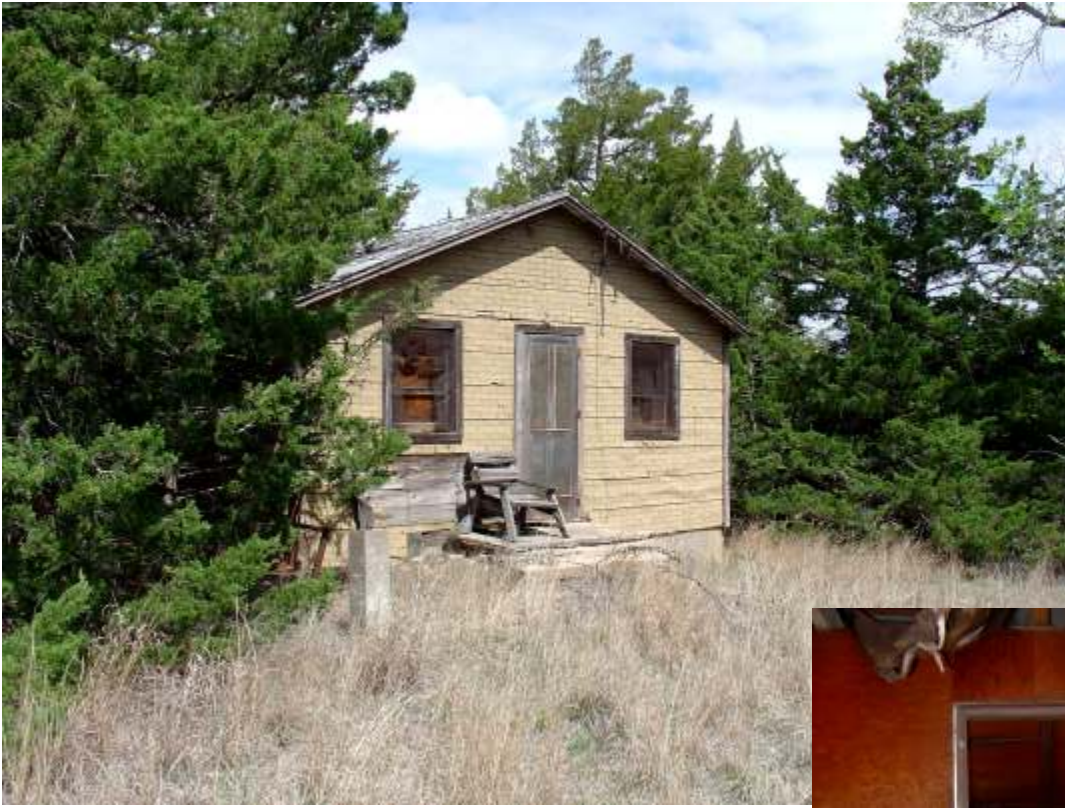


As we ate our lunch at the shelter near the artesian well, we looked at photos of the old camp when it was in operation. Mark showed us the fish hatchery and some of the adobe buildings the "campies" constructed around the lake. We all remember the old adobe bath house that is long since torn down... it was also one of the CCC projects.



Everyone agreed it was a tour well worth taking and everyone seemed to learn something new about Meade State Lake.





Two of the old CCC Camp barracks remain.



Mark Goldsberry was an excellent guide.... he has a wealth of knowledge when it comes to Meade State Lake.