
THE MEN BEHIND THE BUILDING



THE FIRST MEN TO WORK FOR THE FIRE DEPARTMENT WERE NOT PAID; THEY WORKED ENTIRELY ON A VOLUNTEER BASIS, WHICH WAS NOT UNCOMMON FOR THE TIME. MANY SMALL COMMUNITIES IN SOUTHEAST MISSOURI STILL RELY ON VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS TODAY.

MAYOR JOHN ALBERT HEADED THE VOLUNTEERS. HE DONATED \$1000 TO THE FIRE DEPARTMENT TO BUY THE NECESSARY EQUIPMENT.

LATER, THE FIRE DEPARTMENT WAS GIVEN ENOUGH MONEY TO PAY FULL-TIME EMPLOYEES AND TO CONSTRUCT LIVING QUARTERS FOR THE FIREFIGHTERS.



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CAPE RIVER HERITAGE MUSEUM: A HISTORY



CAPE RIVER HERITAGE MUSEUM

538 INDEPENDENCE
CAPE GIRARDEAU, MISSOURI

THE MUSEUM -
A BRIEF HISTORY

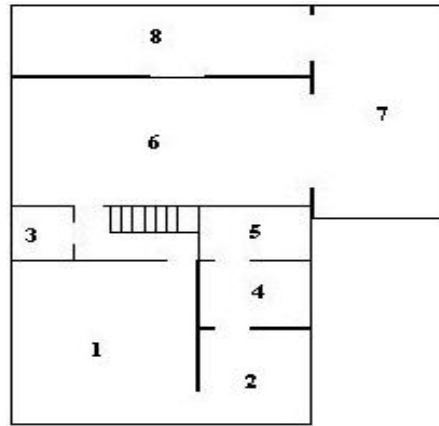


THE BUILDING AT 538 INDEPENDENCE STREET WAS ORIGINALLY CONSTRUCTED AS A COMBINATION COURTHOUSE, JAIL, POLICE AND FIRE STATION ON LAND DONATED BY THE LORIMIER FAMILY. EDWARD F. REGENHARDT PUT IN A LOW BID OF \$7243 AND CONSTRUCTION BEGAN IN AUGUST OF 1908, FINISHING IN 1909. THE PRISON CELLS ON THE SECOND FLOOR WERE CONSTRUCTED BY THE PAULEY JAIL COMPANY.

LATER, A GARAGE WAS ADDED TO THE REAR OF THE BUILDING TO HOUSE THE PUMP WAGON. THE HORSES WERE KEPT IN A STABLE BEHIND THE BUILDING. FURTHER CONSTRUCTION ADDED A SECOND STORY ABOVE THE GARAGE, AN ADDITIONAL GARAGE ON THE EAST SIDE, AND LATER A FINAL TWO-STORY ADDITION TO THE REAR OF THE BUILDING BROUGHT IT TO ITS PRESENT SHAPE.

EVENTUALLY THE BUILDING WAS GIVEN OVER ENTIRELY TO THE FIRE DEPARTMENT.

A TOUR OF THE BUILDING



First Floor

1 - THIS ROOM WAS ORIGINALLY DIVIDED INTO OFFICES FOR THE FIRE AND POLICE CHIEFS AND THE FIRE INSPECTOR.

2 - DISPATCH OFFICE. THE DISPATCHER'S STATION SAT IN THE CENTER OF THIS ROOM.

3 - THIS AREA ORIGINALLY HAD A DOOR LEADING OUTSIDE. THE BATHROOM WAS ADDED LATER.

4 - DISPATCHER'S LIVING QUARTERS.

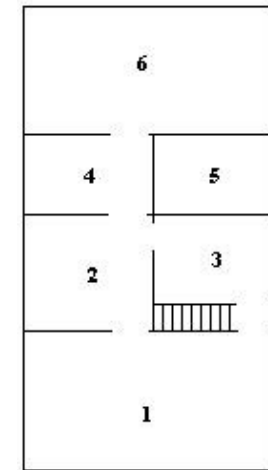
5 - DISPATCHER'S RESTROOM. THE DISPATCHER COULD LOOK INTO THE GARAGE FROM THE WINDOW, AND RAISE AND LOWER THE DOOR.

6 - GARAGE. THE FLOORS IN THIS ROOM WERE ORIGINALLY MARBLE, WHICH WAS REMOVED BECAUSE IT WAS TOO SLIPPERY FOR THE HORSES.

7 - GARAGE. THE PAINTED RECTANGLES ON THE FLOOR IN THIS ROOM SHOW WHERE THE REAR WHEELS OF THE LADDER TRUCK IN ROOM 6 WOULD HAVE RESTED. THE FIRE DISPATCHER'S DESK WAS ORIGINALLY LOCATED HERE.

8 - GARAGE. THE SERVICE TRUCK WAS KEPT IN THIS ROOM.

A TOUR OF THE BUILDING (CONT'D)



Second Floor

1 - THIS ROOM WAS ORIGINALLY THE COURTROOM. PRISON CELLS WERE LOCATED ALONG THE EAST WALL. LATER, IT BECAME THE TRAINING ROOM AND GENERAL QUARTERS FOR THE FIREMEN.

2 - KITCHEN. THIS ROOM LOOKS MUCH AS IT DID WHEN THE BUILDING WAS USED AS A FIRE STATION.

3 - THIS AREA WAS THE LIVING QUARTERS FOR THE ASSISTANT FIRE CHIEF.

4 - THE CLOSETS IN THIS ROOM WERE USED BY THE FIREMEN TO STORE THEIR CLOTHES AND PERSONAL BELONGINGS.

5 - FIREMEN'S BATHROOMS AND SHOWERS.

6 - DORMITORY. THE FIREMEN'S SLEEPING BUNKS WOULD HAVE BEEN LOCATED IN THIS ROOM. THE FIRE POLE IN AREA 6 BELOW LEADS TO THIS ROOM.

LATER, THE PRISON WAS MOVED INTO THE BASEMENT OF THE BUILDING. TOURS OF THIS AREA ARE AVAILABLE.