

COWAN CENTER for the ARTS & TRAINING CENTER  
P O Box 84  
301 Montgomery Street  
Cowan, TN 37318  
931 691-0722  
www.cowancenterforthearts.org  
www.Smithsonian.CowanRailroadMuseum.org

Contact: Pat Underwood  
Telephone: 931 691-0722  
Email: [cowanarts@yahoo.com](mailto:cowanarts@yahoo.com)  
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SMITHSONIAN COMING TO COWAN March 10 through April 21, 2012

Cowan Railroad Museum will explore the professions and the people that sustain American society when it hosts "The Way We Worked," a Smithsonian Institution traveling exhibition on display March 10 through April 21, 2012 at the Cowan Center for the Arts Theater.

How have jobs changed over the past 150 years? What careers were available to people in 1880? What companies have come and gone? We invite you to stroll through Franklin County history with some bullets gathered by Sally Hubbard from issues of the *Franklin County Historical Review* (FCHR).

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Work was begun in 1911 by Ross and Henry Hawkins to bring **electricity and water** to Cowan. A spring was purchased from their Aunt Kate Cowan, and a light plant built. Within a year the town was supplied with light poles, wires, indoor hot and cold water, bathrooms and a sewer system. The two enterprising brothers were also working on the railroad, so were relieved to sell their power and water interests to Southern City Power Company of Atlanta in 1915. (FCHR Vol. 21, No. 1, 1990)

Sinking Cove, 11 miles SW of Sherwood did not receive electricity until 1951, and telephones in 1955. Gravel roads were paved in 1968. (FCHR, Vol. 13, No. 2, 1982)

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The Hawkins House, a remarkable carpenter-gothic cottage, was the first house in Cowan to receive electricity and indoor plumbing.

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Yankee Private Charles D. Sherwood (1832-1895) was enchanted by south-central Tennessee and the **Crow Creek Valley** when he discovered them during the Civil War.

The forests, potential for coal mining, the railway and tunnel brought him back after the War, and he founded the **town of Sherwood** in 1875. C.D. Sherwood for whom the town was named, was born in 1832 in Connecticut, was Lieutenant-Governor of Minnesota, and moved with a colony of settlers to Crow Creek Valley in 1875.

An elegant hotel was built for customers who came to “take the waters.” A newspaper was established, and trails cleared for connection with the young university on Sewanee Mountain. However, it seems that the noise and pollution of the lime plant and railroad caused the young resort to flounder, and there are fewer inhabitants in the valley now than there were in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. (FCHR, Vol. 15, No. 2, 1984)

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A study of “how we worked” would be incomplete without mentioning coverlets and blankets made in Franklin County in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Sheep were raised and sheared locally, and the wool combined with cotton and spun into thread. A few cherished copies of John Hargrove’s **Weaver’s Draft Book** of 1792 and similar books preserved patterns inherited from England and Ireland. Dyes were made from trees, berries, and plants of the area. (FCHR Vol. 14, No. 2, 1983)

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“The Way We Worked” has been made possible to Cowan Railroad Museum by Humanities Tennessee.

“The Way We Worked,” an exhibition created by the National Archives, is part of Museum on Main Street, a collaboration between the Smithsonian Institution and State Humanities Councils nationwide. Support for Museum on Main Street has been provided by the United States Congress.

For more information call Pat Underwood at 931-962-2356 or check the website at [www.Smithsonian.CowanRailroadMuseum.org](http://www.Smithsonian.CowanRailroadMuseum.org)

*Promoting integrated enlightenment in Cowan and surrounding Middle Tennessee.*