

Old Stagecoach Stop Foundation President's Annual Report 2025

Our Mission: “to preserve, restore, protect, and maintain the historic structure in Waynesville, Missouri known as the ‘Old Stagecoach Stop’ in order to permit its educational value to be appreciated by future generations; to engage in educational and charitable activities related to the ‘Old Stagecoach Stop’.”

2025 has been an exciting year in so many ways -- records broken, great memories created, old memories revisited, new accomplishments, etc. We had a wonderful interview of Jan and Terry Primas by KY3, all time visitor records, both for special tours and overall visits, added more countries to our total world visits, and a brand new roof for the Old Stagecoach Stop. Please read on for all the exciting details of the year.

There are many ways to attempt to judge the relevance and success of an all-volunteer, not-for-profit organization such as the Old Stagecoach Stop Foundation. One meaningful measure of success is the number of people who visit the historic building to learn its history.

A visitor register has been kept at the Old Stagecoach Stop (OSS) from the first entry in 1994 to the most current entry associated with the 2025 Christmas on the Square event. This digital database contains nearly 155,000 data points associated with more than 35,000 visitors. Keep in mind that not everyone who visited the OSS over the past three decades was recorded in the guest registers.

After being closed due to Covid concerns in 2020 and 2021, the OSS reopened for the full 2022 season. Visitation results for the first post-Covid year were documented in a new three-page summary format which, with slight changes, continues to be utilized to summarize annual OSS visitation.

Results

Regular Saturdays

The OSS was open for 26 “regular” Saturdays that were not associated with special events in 2025. These Saturdays hosted as few as five visitors (April 5th), to as many as 34 visitors (October 4th). The average number of visitors for a regular Saturday in 2025 was about 22, with about 60% of these Saturdays hosting more than 20 guests. Nearly every volunteer hosted one or more Saturdays that experienced more than 20 guests. There was no statistical difference in the total number of regular Saturday visitors from one month to the next.

The 579 visitors associated with regular Saturdays in 2025, was the fourth highest on record, and only failed to surpass the previous year’s all-time record by 51 visitors. (Figure 1)

Special Tours

In 2025, volunteers conducted **20 tours by appointment to a total of 180 guests**, with tour groups ranging in size from a single person to 62 visitors (Model T Club). There were several other notable tours in 2025, including a visit by a KY3 television crew that interviewed Jan and Terry Primas.

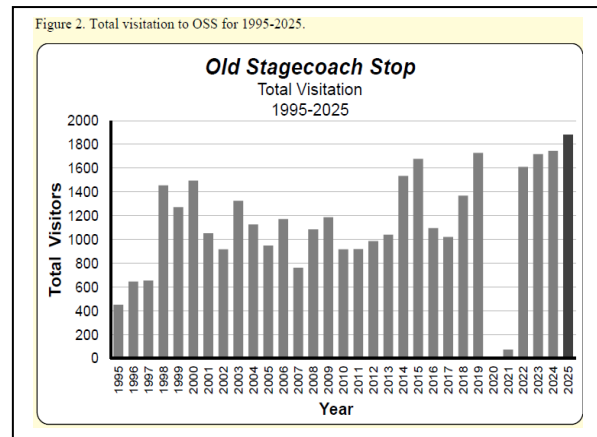
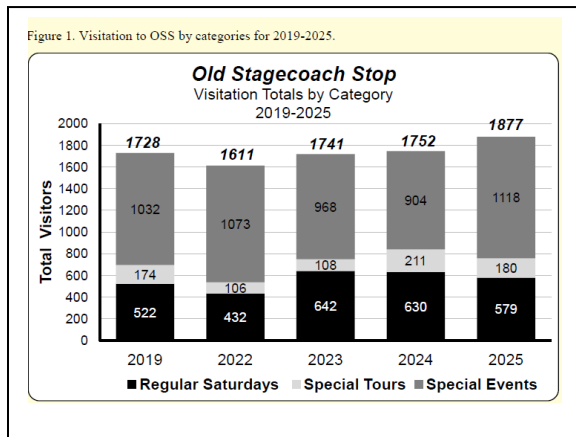


We also had an after-school visit by Partridge Elementary students. Half of these tours, that equaled 57% of all special tour visitors, occurred on Thursday or Friday. This year’s visitor total was the fourth highest on record and only 31 visitors less than the 2024 all-time record. (Figure 1)

Special Events

The OSS was open to the public for five annual events in 2025; they were Freedom Fest, Old Settlers Days, Hogs and Frogs, Oktoberfest, and Christmas on the Square. **The total number of visitors associated with these special events was 1,118**, which is a new all-time record. (Figure 1)

Visitation to these events has remained fairly stable in the four years since the Covid shutdown: with an average number of visitors for each event of about 70, 66, 25, 52, and 790, respectively.



We provided live music and served food and drink to **856 visitors that passed through our doors during the 2025 Christmas on the Square** event, making this year’s event the second highest turnout on record, missing the 2019 all-time record by less than 50 people. (Figure 1) This three-hour annual holiday event has accounted for about 45% of all visitors who have visited the OSS in the past four years...possibly demonstrating the power of warm crackling fires, hot chocolate, and edible goodies galore!

Residency of Visitors

Of the visitors that indicated where they came from on the 2025 register, about 38% lived in Pulaski County, 25% elsewhere in Missouri, 33% from other states and 4% from other countries.

Since we opened 30 years ago, we have hosted visitors from 72 countries. This year, for the first time, we hosted visitors from Colombia, Costa Rica, and Guam.

In 2025, we hosted visitors from 40 states; however, this did not add any additional states to our total, given that the **total number of states has been at 50** for a number of years. We hosted Missourians from 40 counties in 2025.

Summary

In 2025, the doors were open to the public on 51 scheduled occasions, resulting in the OSS **setting a new all-time record of 1,877 visitors**, surpassing the old record set in 2024 by 125 folks. (Figure 1) Approximately 31% of this year’s guests visited the OSS on regular Saturdays, 10% for special tours, and 59% during special events.

Applying regression analysis to the visitor data for the post Covid years, there is a 95% probability that the visitor total for 2026 will be between about 1,800 to 2,100 visitors. This raises a question of how many guests will we be able to host in future years? While many factors may play a role in answering this question, one factor stands out... **VOLUNTEERS**.

During the aforementioned days, tours, and events, about **15 selfless folks collectively provided more than 700 hours** of their time sharing this unique historical treasure with the public! Obviously, this does not include the hundreds upon hundreds of additional volunteer hours spent organizing, scheduling, researching, writing, accounting, maintaining, repairing, and a myriad of other tasks needed to keep the OSS a welcoming and entertaining place to learn a bit of history.

Submitted by Mark Zurbrick, board member

Maintenance and Repair

Assorted “Regular” Maintenance The gutters were cleaned out twice in 2025. We also kept the exterior of the OSS facing the square bright and clean with a thorough power washing twice during the season. The sidewalk and donation bricks were also power washed. Volunteer Joseph Chaney oiled all of the wooden furniture at the beginning of the season and hand washed all of the exterior windows, inside and out in the middle of the summer. Annually, we replace the batteries in all the thermostats, fireplace control units, and video controllers. We also replace the filters in the HVAC systems. Our longstanding contractor mowed the grounds on an “as needed” basis.

Lighting In recent years we have had to replace burnt-out light bulbs and non-functioning light sockets, and 2025 was no different. We had to replace a worn-out socket in the 1950's Room and bulbs in spotlights in the Archeology Room and Black Hotel Kitchen. All of the old incandescent bulbs were replaced with cheaper to use, and longer-lasting, LED bulbs.

Tavern Fireplace We made an attempt to fix the non-functioning gas control mechanism in the ceramic log set without success. We then brought in professional help. After a concerted, but unsuccessful attempt to fix the problem, they suggested that we replace the entire log set, gas mechanism and remote control. After a thorough search, Jan and Terry Primas found a similar set of logs that were installed in time for visitors to enjoy during Christmas on the Square.

Off and On Shortly after the Christmas on the Square event in early December we shut off the heating and water systems for the winter. The heating system shutdown is accomplished by simply turning off the thermostats and water heater breaker. However, the water system requires a bit more effort that entails shutting off the water at the meter, opening all valves and draining all lines and the water heater tank, then blowing any remaining water out using an air compressor. The waste line traps in the sinks and toilet, that cannot be easily drained, are filled with antifreeze. This shutdown work is done by a local plumber at a reasonable price. In March, it takes less than an hour for OSS volunteers to bring the heat and water back online.

Displays

21st Century Tech in a 19th Century Building

In yet another way of sharing the history of the OSS, Terry Primas created four by four inch framed QR codes that were attached to the doorframes of each of the buildings' public rooms (no need to explain our bathroom or storage room). These QR codes allow visitors with a smart phone to link to our website which offers additional info about each room and its contents. While some visitors said that they appreciated this "high-tech" feature, a majority still preferred to take an "old-tech" guided tour with one of our volunteer knowledgeable docents.

Rack Em Up

In an effort to distribute more copies of the 2025 Old Settlers Gazette, we built two wooden racks that are placed on the bench outside each exterior doorway every Saturday during the season. The biggest word on these portable display racks...**FREE**.

Down But Not Out

It is a relatively rare occurrence when someone breaks something in the museum. However, someone decided to use one of the wooden yellow chairs tucked under the dining table in the 2nd floor kitchen/bathroom resulting in a collapse. We don't know of damage to the person, but a couple of dowel rods, glue, and wood screws fixed the chair which is back where it belongs.

Submitted by Mark Zurbrick, board member

Old Settlers Gazette

Due to the dedicated efforts of our Board members who contacted businesses and individuals for ads, and to the amazing writing and layout abilities of Terry Primas, the annual Old Settlers Gazette was published and distributed in July of 2025. We appreciate all of our advertisers who were generously supportive of our efforts to continue this amazing publication. As Ronald Reagan once famously stated, small businesses are the backbone of this great country!

New Board Member

We would like to extend a special welcome to new Board Member, Robin Hammock. She has been instrumental in keeping the tours going for our visitors.

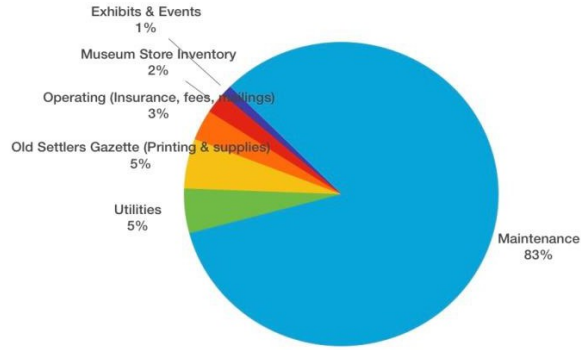
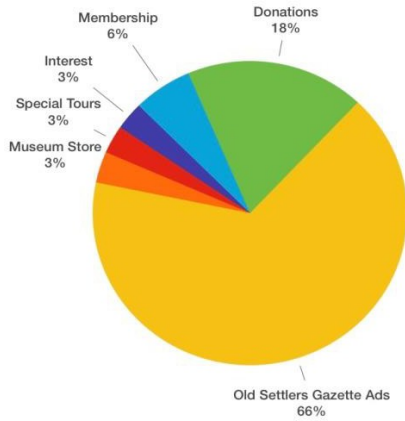
Treasurer's Report

FY 2025 Income

Membership	\$1030.00
Donations	\$3125.69
Old Settlers Gazette Ads	\$11225.00
Museum Store	\$562.05
Special Tours	\$506.00
Interest	\$501.46

FY 2025 Expenditures

Maintenance	\$41949.61
Utilities	\$2388.04
Old Settlers Gazette (Printing & supplies)	\$2671.20
Operating (Insurance, fees, mailings)	\$1634.00
Museum Store Inventory	\$1137.40
Exhibits & Events	\$551.52



The Old Stagecoach Stop Foundation is a nonprofit organization under section 501(c)(3) of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code.

Submitted by Pam Barnabee, Treasurer

Big Project – NEW ROOF!

The click, click, clicks on the rooftop were not the hooves of eight tiny reindeer but the clicking of nail guns. This holiday season, the OSS got a gift of a new roof. For several years, we have been losing wooden cedar shakes from the front roof. An occasional leak was experienced with blowing rain. The back roof was covered with asphalt shingles which were installed when the building was stabilized in 1983. Those shingles were intact but brittle. The lifespan expectancy of 3-tab asphalt shingles is 20 years so their replacement was long overdue.

After surveying the composite offerings, multi-width shakes in an aged cedar color manufactured by DaVinci Roofscapes of Lenexa, Kansas, was chosen. Work began on December 9 and was finished December 15, 2025. Some repairs to the structural roof were required to meet the specifications of the manufacturer. The next generation of caretakers will at least have an excellent roof. For more details and pictures of this project, please visit <https://oldstagecoachstop.org> and click on Current News on the left.



Submitted by Terry Primas, board member

A huge thanks to Mark Zurbrick, board member, who spent countless, tireless hours researching, contacting various companies, evaluating, and overseeing this project from start to finish. It is much appreciated!

Letter of Recognition

In October, President Jeanie Porter presented a framed letter of recognition to local student, Joseph Chaney. In the summer of 2022, Joseph began volunteering at the museum...at age 12! Over the next four years, Joseph greeted visitors and led tour groups on 29 regular Saturdays and 14 special events, including Old Settlers Day and Christmas on the Square, for a total of more than 300 hours of uncompensated time! Guests often commented on his professional, yet pleasant, demeanor when interacting with visitors. Plus, he has eagerly assisted in needed maintenance and repair efforts ranging from the mundane to difficult, all without complaint. The Board of Directors also gave Joseph a gift card to show our appreciation of his selfless service to the museum.



Our Website, www.oldstagecoachstop.org continues our mission of preserving the history of the Old Stagecoach Stop and the surrounding area. It includes historic pictures, archives of all the *Old Settlers Gazettes*, and podcasts with past residents telling stories from the “old days,” including Dru Pippin, Jaretta Laughlin, Robert Lee Bates, Pearl Brown Wilson, Louise Skaggs, Jiggs & Dorothy Miller, and Irene Mitchell Morgan.

Another popular feature on our website is a virtual tour where visitors can start a guided tour or click on a map of the building and explore each room. Terry Primas spent many hours taking pictures, processing historic images, and laying out and revising the new web pages. The virtual tour provides an enjoyable journey for visitors. The website is a rich source for research of our county.

Also, visit our **Facebook page** at www.facebook.com/OldStagecoachStop where Jan Primas posts many lovely pictures of the Stagecoach Stop as well as short stories or articles from yesteryear.

As we look back on 2025, we are grateful for the great privilege of continuing to meet the goals established by the founders of this historic site. We are thankful that so many people have visited and enjoyed our museum, faithfully preserved for future generations. We are looking forward to 2026 being open to share our amazing history every Saturday from April through October, plus during numerous special events.