

The Peers Store

Established 1896



© William Fields, Art Photography 2015

All sales at the store benefit beautification and conservation along the Katy Trail.

THE KATY LAND TRUST

PRESERVING FARMS AND FORESTS
ALONG THE KATY TRAIL

In the 1890s, the countryside along the north bank of the Missouri River was alive with activity and anticipation. After years of discussion, the Missouri-Kansas-Texas Railroad (the MKT) was finally nearing completion. It would provide a link to St. Louis and other eastern markets and to points as far west as Galveston, Texas. During that time, the Peers Store -- as well as general stores in the neighboring towns of Treloar and McKittrick -- were opened to meet the needs of these growing communities.

The Katy railroad operated until 1986 when the right-of-way was abandoned and rail service was discontinued. In 1990, with the advocacy and sponsorship of Ted and Pat Jones, the former railroad right-of-way became the Katy Trail, which is today Missouri's most popular State Park.



Music on the porch at the Peers Store, 2015

Eventually the demand for the products offered by the Peers Store and neighboring stores declined, and they were closed. Following decades of operation by the Glosemeyer family, the Peers Store closed its doors in 2012.

The Peers Store was located in an ideal place to access the railroad and initially, the river. Unfortunately in 1903, the river channel shifted two miles to the south and Peers was no longer a riverfront location! The Peers store was, however, still in the Missouri River floodplain. It has been inundated on many occasions, including 1941, 1947, 1951, 1986, 1993 and 1995. The front of the store has an official Corps of Engineers marker indicating the water level from the 1951 flood.

The store was acquired in 2014 by Dan and Connie Burkhardt, founders of the Katy Land Trust. In 2015, they installed a new floor to replace the flood-damaged original and applied a fresh coat of paint. This rejuvenation celebrated the 25th anniversary of the Katy Trail and reminds us of the value of conserving the culture and natural history of the Missouri countryside -- which the Katy Land Trust advocates.

The Katy Land Trust seeks to educate all Missourians about the value of our rural landscape and farmland.

The Peers Store is a testament to many things: the craftsmanship of those who built the store 120 years ago; the need to respect our floodplains and the consequences of building in them; the changing nature of our economy and transportation system; and the history and beauty of the landscape of the Missouri River Valley.

The Katy Land Trust seeks to educate all Missourians about the value of our rural landscape and farmland, and to provide landowners an opportunity to keep their land permanently in agricultural, forestry or recreational use.

2016 at the Peers Store

New in 2016 - Gift items from Bowood Farms, one of St. Louis' most unique stores!

The Peers Store is open weekends from noon to 4 pm -- April through October. On some afternoons we will have acoustic music -- blues, bluegrass, country and old-timey.

At the Peers Store, you can see the original art of exceptional Missouri artists who get their inspiration from the river valley and the communities, hills, bluffs, fields and country roads that follow the river across our State. Artists include Bryan Haynes, Gary Lucy, Billyo O'Donnell, Julie Wiegand, Bill Fields and Patrick Murphy

See the just-planted Peers Pollinator Garden where butterflies and other wildlife will find a home in a few years.

Also look for the artwork of Bryan Haynes (below) on the grain elevator at Treloar (just three miles up the Trail from the Peers Store) and see Billyo O'Donnell's banners on the old coal tower at McKittrick.

