

A historic anniversary

Milton Historical Society at 40

BY KEVIN MERTZ

The Standard-Journal

MILTON — Deb Owens has long had a love of history, and for years has volunteered with the Milton Historical Society. Her ties to the society's Cameron House run particularly deep.

"My great-grandmother was born here," said Owens, while standing in the gallery of the house, located along Route 405, just south of Milton.

Owens noted that her great-grandmother — Clara Lahr — was the daughter of tenant farmers who worked on site.

While the Cameron House dates to the late 1700s, the Milton Historical Society is marking its 40th anniversary this year.

Three open house events will be held at the Cameron House. The events are sched-



KEVIN MERTZ/THE STANDARD-JOURNAL

From left, Deb Owens and Ron Johnson display historic ACF Industries photos which will be on display during open house events being held from 1 to 4 p.m. Sundays, Oct. 3 and Nov. 7, at the Cameron House.

uled for 1 to 4 p.m. Sundays, Oct. 3, Nov. 7 and Dec. 4.

During October and November, items depicting the rich history of ACF Industries in the Milton community will be on display.

A Santa's workshop will be held Dec. 4.

According to Owens, the historical society was formed shortly after Bill

From the Front

Support Your Local Businesses

Historical society

FROM PAGE A1

Hastings — who once owned what's now known as The Standard-Journal newspaper — purchased the Cameron House as he did not want to see the property fall into disrepair.

"He called a town meetings," Owens recalled. "The town decided we needed a historical society."

The West Branch Canal Society morphed into the Milton Historical Society, with Owens selling the Cameron House to the new organization for \$1.

The first section of the house, Owens said, was built

in the late 1700s. The main section was built in 1810, with a gallery added in 1830.

"This was a farm of 275 acres," Owens said. "(Col. James) Cameron purchased it in 1841."

According to Owens, Cameron died in the First Battle of Bull Run, in 1861 Virginia. His brother William then took over the home.

"It's a beautiful home," Owens said, adding the property was in generally good condition when the society acquired it.

"It has all original doors," she said. "It has a gallery space we can display (arti-

facts)."

Although located close to the West Branch of the Susquehanna River, Owens said the home sits on a hill.

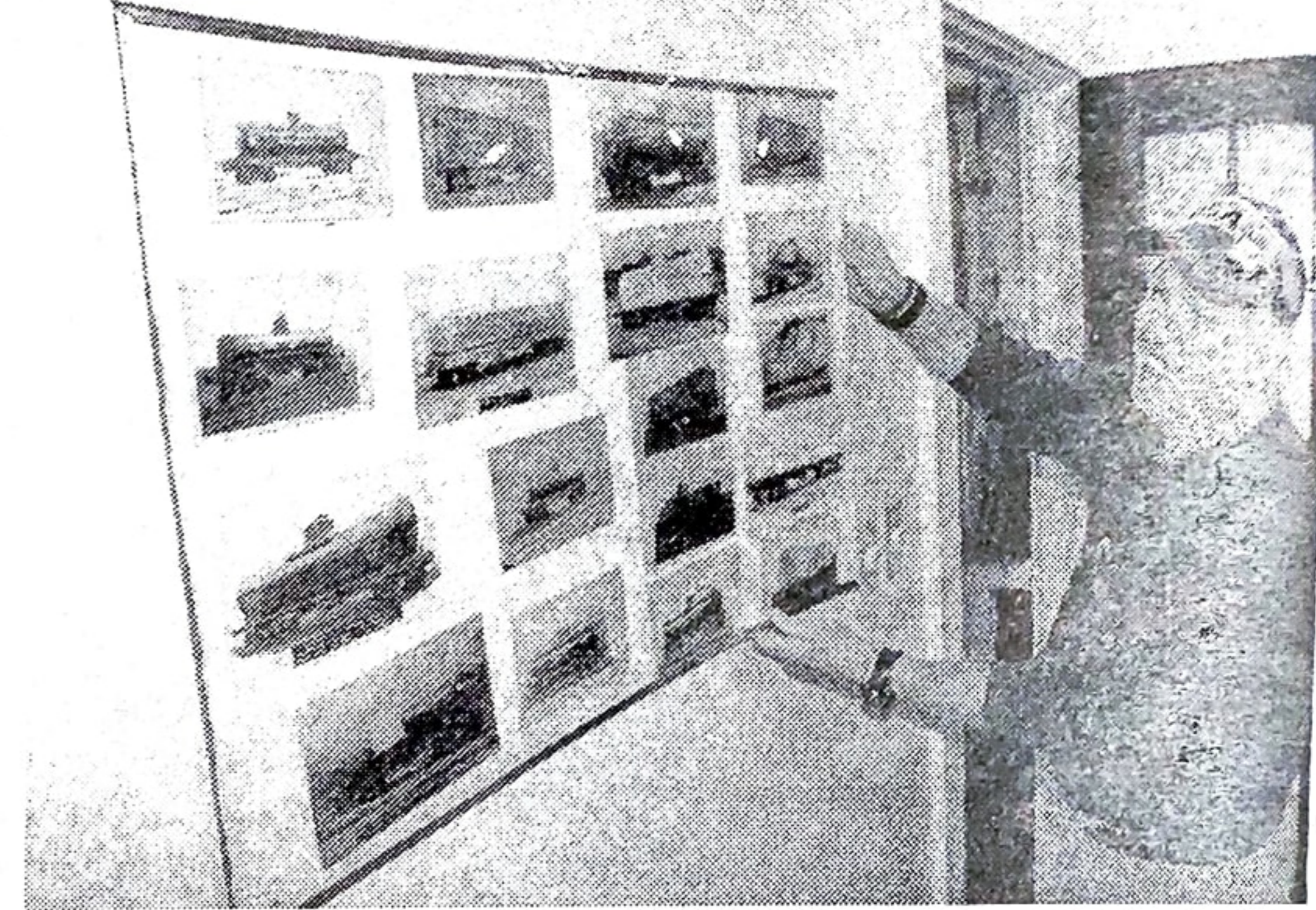
"It's never been flooded," she said. "It was, basically, an island in the 1972 flood."

Owens and society volunteer Ron Johnson said the home is a treasure, as well as the location where thousands of historical Milton items donated to the society are stored.

They said many of the ACF Industries items which will be on display were recently donated to the society by Bart Reichard, a retired plant supervisor. Some items in the collection had been given to Reichard by late Milton historian and author Homer Folk.

Owens said the display, which features numerous photos of the now shuttered railcar manufacturer, is being set up in conjunction with the society's recent acquisition of a replica railcar which stood for years along North Arch Street, at the facility.

The railcar was recently refurbished by John Gummo, of Beech Creek, and is on display next to the Milton Police Department on Fil-



KEVIN MERTZ/THE STANDARD-JOURNAL

Ron Johnson places historic ACF Industries photos up for display at the Milton Historical Society's Cameron House.

bert Street.

Owens said those who attend the open house events will enjoy looking at the old ACF photos.

"I like that there's candid photos of people working, the interior (of the ACF facility)," she said.

A railroading enthusiast, Johnson said he's glad there are many different photos of various railcars built at the facility over the years.

"(ACF) was a major employer for years and years," Johnson said. "It was the best paying employer... My grandfather (Earl Burns) worked there for 40-some years."

While Johnson has not yet

spotted his grandfather in any of the photos donated by Reichard, he hopes those who view the display will recognize people in the photos.

Johnson said anyone viewing the display who recognizes people will be asked by historical society volunteers to write the names down so it can be noted with the photos.

Anyone unable to attend the open house events, but would like to view the ACF items to be displayed, can contact Johnson at 570-538-9409 to schedule a private tour.

Staff writer Kevin Mertz can be reached at 570-742-9671 or email kevin@standard-journal.com.



KEVIN MERTZ/THE STANDARD-JOURNAL

A historic edition of the Milton Evening Standard noting ACF Industries' impact on the community is part of a display of historic items at the Cameron House.