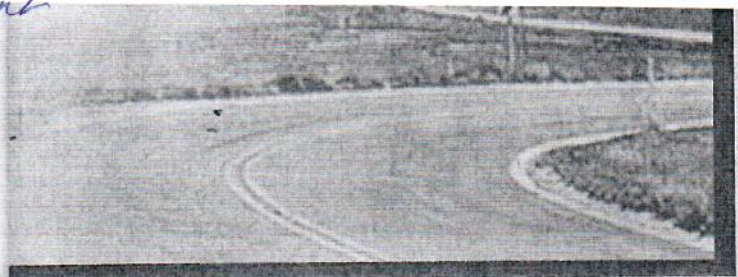


4-25-18.



Hears Presentation On 'Battle Of St. Louis'

The New Haven branch of Scenic Regional Library was visited by local author, Stephen R. Kling, Jr. recently for a presentation on "The Battle of St. Louis, The Attack of Cahokia," based on his book of the same title.

Kling, a St. Louis attorney, studied history and archeology as an undergraduate. His interest in the battle stems from having a distant relative who fought in the attack.

According to Kling's research, by March 1771, about 45 homes on the bank of the Mississippi River comprised the French settlement of St. Louis in Spanish Louisiana.

The local militia of St. Louis, along with Ste. Genevieve's, was the primary backbone of defense for an area that represented the West during the time of the American Revolution.

St. Louis was under Spanish rule, and in an area where Spain was restricting the fur trade along the Missouri River as well as sending contraband up the Mississippi River from New Orleans. The British planned an attack on St. Louis in an effort to wrest control of the river from the Spanish.

St. Louis, basically undefended, was alerted to this imminent danger a mere six weeks beforehand and hastily built a 35-foot-tall stone tower which became the settlement's highest point. They named it Fort San Carlos.

By 1780, St. Louis was up to about 200 homes. In late May, the British with support from several Native American tribes conducted the attack on the settlement and simultaneously on Cahokia. The battle began at 1 p.m. and lasted two hours.

Amazingly, the militia preserved the 2,000 yards of entrenchments that guarded the settlement. During the 1904 World's Fair in St. Louis, re-enactors depicted the battle in a replica of Fort San Carlos.

Kling's audience enjoyed the discussion of the events and also his slides of artifacts, maps and illustrations, all included in his book which is available in the Scenic Regional Library system.

