The next time you go to the Scenic Regional Library in St. Clair, please take a few minutes to look at the new wayside sign on the Springfield Road side of the building.

This sign marks the location of Traveller's Repose Tavern - the place where the town was founded in 1843. The sign, created and paid for by the St. Clair Historical Museum, was installed Feb. 13, by students from the St. Clair High School building trades class.

Back in the 1840s, a tavern was a restaurant, short term hotel, stagecoach stop, livery stable and in this case, the first post office in town. Located where Virginia Mines Road intersects with the St. Louis-Springfield Road, the 18-room, two story structure was an imposing public building, which survived until 1927, when it was destroyed by fire. It was operating under the name of Conn's Saloon.

“The museum has no photos of the original building,” said Jo Schaper, Museum treasurer and graphic designer. These structures had a similar design, so we got permission to use a 19th century photo of the Waynesville (Missouri) stagecoach stop.” Since then, a photo of the associated livery stable was discovered.

The sign was the idea of Glen Alsop, Museum vice-president in early 2022. He reached out to Scenic Regional Library Director, Steven Campbell, once we found the location was on library property.

“The library is always happy to partner with local organizations to improve our communities. We’re very pleased that situations where the community and museum can work together.”

The sign and frame were fabricated in Texas using iZone Imaging, which is also a vendor for the National Park Service and Missouri State Parks exhibits.

Editor’s note: Information for the story was provided by the St. Clair Historical Museum.