

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 4, 2016
EVENT DATE: AUGUST 11-14, 2016
Dan Emmett Music & Arts Festival

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:
Pat Crow - Festival Director
Ph. 740-392-3378 Fax 740-392-7840
Cell phone – (740) 507-3898

For Detailed Up-to-Date Festival Information, Visit www.DanEmmettFestival.org

Limited Public Tours of the Woodward Opera House at Emmett Festival

MOUNT VERNON – Mount Vernon is home to America’s oldest authentic 19th century theater, the Woodward Opera House. This historical treasure will once again be open during the Dan Emmett Music & Arts Festival, held August 11th -14th . Guides will be available to explain the progress of the project to date, and to explain the mission and objectives of the Woodward Development Corporation promoting the restoration project. Unfortunately, during construction, the theater itself is not available for tours. While visiting the Woodward Opera House building during the current construction period, you will see the progress of the construction, as viewed from the rear alley, and be able to hear about the construction process. All tours start at 8 West Vine Street.

Occupying the 3rd and 4th floors of the Italianate commercial block on the southwest corner of South Main and Vine Streets, the Woodward Opera House (built in 1850-1851) hosted an incredible variety of performances, from lectures on scientific discoveries to brass bands to full dramatic productions. Mount Vernon’s own Dan Emmett graced the stage in the heyday of the theater’s operation in the late-19th and early-20th centuries.

The project to restore the Woodward to its 1880s grandeur and re-open it as a 21st century performing arts venue began in 1998. The first phases are complete, which included a new roof, exterior facelift, renovation of ground level commercial spaces, and partial restoration of second floor that will provide 3,000 square feet of office space. The Woodward now exhibits an exterior representation of its original appearance, along with later 19th and early-20th century alterations. This included restoration of historic Main Street and Vine Street stairways, 2nd floor hallway, and reinforcement of the entire theater auditorium. With tax credits and some local funding secured, work has already begun to complete the balance of the Woodward/Annex complex. This work is divided into two parts: Part 1 being restoration and new construction in the Annex; Part 2 being restoration of the opera house itself and the balance of the Woodward building.

The Woodward Opera House will host limited tours to the public three days during the Festival: Friday, August 12th from 6:00-8:00 pm; Saturday, August 13th from 5:00-8:00 pm; and Sunday, August 14th from 1:00-3:00 pm. Any questions that you may have concerning the Woodward will be answered by any

of the guides available throughout the open houses. For additional information on the Woodward, call (740) 392-6142, or visit their website at www.TheWoodward.org.

Again this year, ThePlace@TheWoodward, now at 101 South Main St., will host many events and activities during the Festival. Thursday evening will feature the ever-popular Chautauqua program and many other local musicians and performing artists.

The Woodward Local Foods Initiative (WLFI) opened a new local foods store late in 2012 and is going strong. The WLFI, in partnership with area growers and producers, will grow into a fully evolved sustainable local foods program as the overall restoration project is completed. Visit the Harvest@TheWoodward (105 S. Main) while you are downtown to see all of the incredible products produced right here in Knox County and central Ohio.

The 2016 Dan Emmett Music & Arts Festival runs August 11th – 14th in Downtown Mount Vernon with various activities each day. This year's Festival is made possible through the contributions of Ariel, First-Knox National Bank, and Time Warner Cable. For additional information, contact the Festival at (740) 392-FEST (3378) or email at director@DanEmmettFestival.org.

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