

# TONGANOXIE COMMUNITY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## 2nd. QUARTER NEWSLETTER, June, 2014



### INDEPENDENT ORDER OF ODD FELLOWS

My entire life I knew where the IOOF building was located, but I never knew anyone who was a member, nor did I know what the letters IOOF meant or what the members did. I wasn't aware of any "Odd Fellows" meeting there. It was just a place where one could play pool or snooker--and it had a back door where you could enter from the ally and thereby reduce the risk of being seen by someone who would tell. There was an upstairs where some groups like the Eastern Star or Masons met, but that was it. Albert Conley described it to me as a group which would help people who needed help. I never knew anyone who went there for help and that was it. I knew no more about it.

My dad would not have cared, but I sure didn't want my mother to know that I was acquainted with Johnson's Pool Hall nor did I want her to know that I played pool. That would have been a mild disaster. There are several things I remember about that building, but three things stand out. There were several really good pool and snooker players who seemed to win every game. I was not one of them. To be good one had to master the "table roll". This was especially noted when one played a slow rolling shot. Yes, the ball might curve 6-8 inches before going in the pocket and those very good players used this to their advantage. The third thing was the two pin ball machines which seemed to have musical bells always sounding the scoring of points. This place to me was Johnson's Pool Hall-known as "The Upper Pool Hall". It was noted for nickel pool games, card games, pin ball machines and smoking if one could find the money to buy them. It also was known for NO BEER. The lower pool hall served beer, and I knew enough to NEVER go in that place.



While performing a historical interview with J. W. Evans, I became aware that I had known at least one person who was a member of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows. J. W. has been a member most of his life. He was kind enough to provide some information about this organization and the good things that they do.

From J.W. Evans:

The IOOF 390, Tonganoxie, Kansas was formed on the 17th day of April in 1891. Some of my relatives were Charter Members. They were J. W. Reno, Dr. W. W. Reno and D. Cronmeyer. Most of the members were business men of the town and local farmers.

When I turned 18, in 1953, I joined the Order, (now 61 years a member). That was the age you could become a member. In the 1920's and 1930's there were 80-90 members, however when I joined the membership was probably 30-40. They were very helpful to fellow members and anybody in the community who needed assistance. I can tell you that they gave blood to anybody that needed it, they bought groceries for people that needed food, when people were sick they went to the homes to stay with the sick. I recall a member fell off his roof and broke both arms, the lodge gave \$200.00 a week for four weeks to the family.

There were three (3) degrees, (1) Friendship (2) Love (3) Truth.

The members met every week on Tuesday, held a meeting and then socialized. They played cards, pool, and shuffleboard. The building was owned by the Independent Order and met up the long stairwell to the upstairs where the room was quite large. Below was first a grocery store, second a pool hall, third a variety store (operated by the Hancock family), and now a dental office.



The IOOF building was sold to a dentist and the membership moved and joined the Lawrence IOOF. The older members found the long stair steps difficult to tackle. The Lawrence Lodge was sold to a church and the membership then moved to Eudora IOOF Lodge. Presently there are three IOOF members from the Tonganoxie Lodge who still belong to the Eudora group.

For several years the Masonic Lodge met upstairs on Thursday evening and the IOOF on Tuesday. Our income came from our \$12.00 dues and the rent from the downstairs. The ladies organization was called Rebecca's and they joined the Bonner Springs Order.

*Editorial addition: from Wikipedia*

*"In 17th century England, it was odd to find people organized for the purpose of giving aid to those in need and of pursuing projects for the benefit of all mankind. Those who belonged to such an organization were called "Odd Fellows.*

*Odd Fellowship became the first fraternity in the US to include both men and women when it adopted the "Beautiful Rebekah Degree" on September 20, 1851. This degree is based on teachings found in the Holy Bible, and was written by the Honorable Schuyler Colfax who was Vice President of the United States during the period 1868–73. Odd Fellows and Rebekahs were also the first US fraternal organizations to establish homes for senior members and for orphaned children.*

*The Odd Fellows and Rebekahs spend over US\$775 million in relief projects annually."*

I have recently learned this is an actively functioning international organization which has membership in all areas of the world. There is strong evidence of groups in Australia, Canada, San Diego and many other world wide locations.

## WELCOME NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Two vacancies on the board occurred almost simultaneously this summer. June Hagenbuch, secretary, is moving from our area to be closer to her children, and we were saddened by the death of Harold Meyer. Kris Roberts was appointed as secretary. Keyta Kelly was appointed to fill the remaining portion of Harold's board position.

Both women bring enthusiasm and skill which will be helpful to our society. Kris who has recently retired, has been volunteering in the museum on Wednesday morning and is most welcome. Keyta a local attorney, will provide a boost to our society with her networking skills and her expertise in coordinating events.

Please make a point to welcome these new members and share your concerns and feedback with them and other members of the board of directors. Board meetings are 6:30 PM on the third Tuesday of each month in the Reno Fellowship Hall. These meetings are open meetings

Board Members are:

President, Kathy Peak

Vice President, Kris Roberts

Secretary, Connie Torneden

Treasurer, Don Fulhage

Board: Laurie Walters, Chairman, Jim Stuke, Connie Putthoff, Bill Peak, and Keyta Kelly

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Chris Deaton	Smithville, Mo.
Beck St. John	Tonganoxie
Kerry Holton	Tonganoxie
Paula Green	Tonganoxie
Michelle Plake	Tonganoxie
Kenneth & Shari Paynter	Tonganoxie

I recognize a few familiar names, and some that are new. No matter, we welcome you into our historical society. We hope that you will consider utilizing some of your known and unknown skills to help and assist us in making this historical society "bigger and better".

We are all very proud of the local history that we share whenever we get the chance. In general we plan and organize educational events, promote the historical society and have fund raisers so that we can operate----and we have 4 parties a year. The parties are a grand opening in the spring, a closing in the fall and a summer picnic in June and a Christmas party.

Please don't wait to be asked, just jump right in.



## Country School Association of America (CSAA) ---by Kathy Peak

One never knows just who it will be that stops in to visit our museum and historical site on a Sunday afternoon. It was about a year ago that a couple traveling through Tonganoxie saw the "Museum Open" sign and decided to check us out. When they drove down the lane they were especially taken with the sight of the Honey Valley School. They spent a few minutes in the museum then asked the docent working that day if they could see the school. He escorted them across the way and spent time telling them about the history of the school and answering



for a look at the schoolhouse. This was to be a short 15 – 20 minute stopover. Once here however, the appeal of our unique historical site was too much to satisfy this group of history minded travelers with a mere 15 minute look. The group visited the school where they received a brief history of the site. Kent Quarrels and Carol Knox Smith were on hand to entertain and inform the group with stories of their days as actual students of the Honey Valley School. Carol Knox Smith's mother was also a teacher at the school. The group visited the museum, had light refreshments in the barn, toured the Reno church and had a look at the restored pumper truck in the firehouse. They boarded the bus to leave about one hour and 15 minutes later!



their questions. He even went out of his way to help them locate another nearby school and actually took them there to see it.

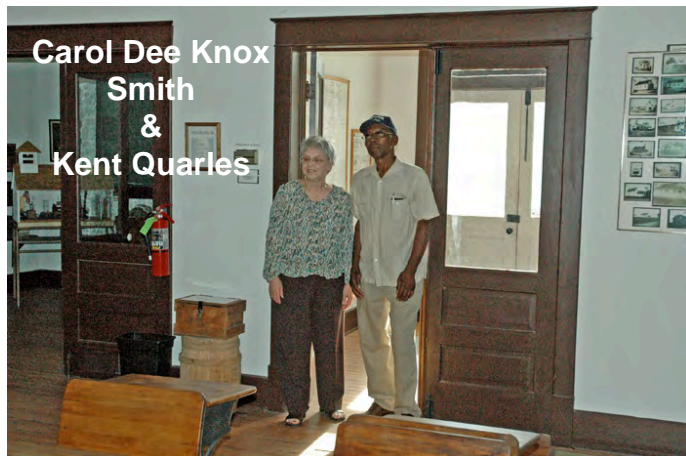
As luck would have it, the visitors just happened to be members of the Country School Association of America (CSAA); a group dedicated to the preservation and history of one-room/country schoolhouses. As greater luck would have it the CSAA's annual conference was scheduled to be in St. Joseph, Mo. this year. Included, as part of the conference, is a bus tour of country schools in the area. So, we were both surprised and honored when we were contacted by the CSAA to see if our Historical Society would host their group at our own Honey Valley School as one of five Kansas City area schools to be included on the tour.

So, on June 18, volunteers of the Historical Society greeted approximately 50 passengers who arrived

It is hard for me to express the pride I felt for the efforts of the many volunteers who made this a very successful experience. There were days of cleaning the buildings, information handouts about the school, homemade muffins, the gathering of items and making up of a "goodie bag" for each of the participants, store trips for juice, friendly faces on



hand to greet and guide the visitors. Contacts were made with First State Bank who contributed water and goodie bag items, and Lawrence Memorial Hospital who also contributed goodie bag items. In other words, a lot of effort was exerted by our member volunteers to ensure this event would be a pleasant experience for our visitors. I think I can safely say we all felt rewarded by the positive feedback from the CSAA members regarding the school specifically and our historical site in general. Thanks you to all who made this happen.



Note: Kent Quarles moved from Kansas City, Mo and attended Honey Valley for the 7th and 8th grade. He lived on the hill west of the Honey Valley school and not only did he walk to that school he also walked to the high school for his freshman year. For his sophomore year he had an old Ford with a loud bell.

Carol Dee Knox Smith attended Honey Valley for all of her grade school years. Her mother was one of the teachers and naturally she was a good girl. She is a direct descendant of the Knox/Fairchild dairy operation where our historical society now operates. Jim Baker also went to this school and he wrote a tremendous tribute to Mrs. Jean Knox. Some who attended this school are Gordon Harmon's kids, Verlin Dunker and his siblings, and Janice Knox.

Programs for the next quarter are:

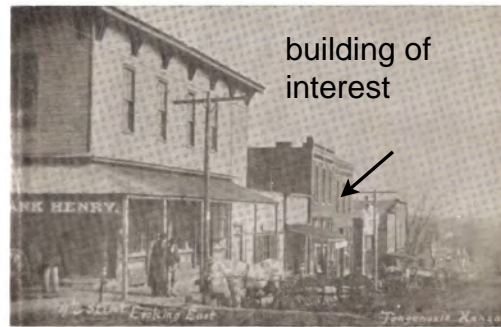
Erika Nelson July 22, 2014  
 "Jackalopes, Hodags & other larger than life myths from the American Road."

There are no other programs planed at this time.

This school was not used after the consolidation and at one time it was used for storage of hay and probably other things as needed.

### TCHS GOES INTERNATIONAL ONCE AGAIN

If you remember, last year we had contact with some Dutch people who had a great interest in WWII grave sites of U.S. Soldiers who were buried in Holland. TODAY IT IS CHINA!!!!



Last fall a young lady from China contacted our historical society for information about a building in downtown Tonganoxie. Her Name is

Sha Li (pronounced "Shaw Lee").

She was a masters student from K.U. studying Urban Planning. It was her class that had the interest in the old buildings in Tonganoxie. Her building was the building in which Mrs. Garner operated a laundromat business. It is just east of the old Mirror building.



Laurie and I helped her as much as we could. She completed her Masters degree and now is volunteering at our historical society.

She is from northern China with a climate similar to our climate here in Kansas. She says she comes from a small town, but on further exploration it's population is 7.5 million.

Her father builds locomotives. Trains are the most popular mode of transportation when you are traveling a distance. Here on the other hand it is probably an airplane. Her mother is a worker.

She is an only child. In China she says a family is only allowed one child. If you have more children there is a tax. She said the wealthy quite often have more than one child.



## News from the Museum ---Laurie Walters

With the completion of our barn annex for storage, the museum has been a bee hive of activity. Betty Englen, Carol Stouffer, Kathy Stockman, Kathy Peak, Laurie Walters, Connie Putthoff, Kris Roberts, Sha Li, and Jenny Alden can be observed on Wednesday mornings. They are preparing items for entry into our data base, arranging exhibits, dusting and mopping floors and otherwise doing all the myriad of chores necessary to maintain our museum.

We must also add our thanks to the men who volunteer every Wednesday; Dan Carr, Jim Stuke, Del Englen and Lloyd Pearson. These men see that the grounds are properly maintained with mowing and trimming. Sometimes this is done more often than once a week. They see that the walks are cleared from snow and help maintain our building by painting, nailing and the plethora of other odd jobs required to keep us functioning. They break for coffee at 10 AM in the fellowship hall of the Reno Church (noted for Michael Landon's film, *Where Pigeons Go To Die*). NEW MEMBERS TAKE NOTE. I'm sure that all of the above activities could benefit from your help. Someone said that this group works for cookies.

Our collections to the museum seems to mount. Recently, we received the B & J letters from the former B & J grocery store which has been in this town for many years. We also have the red ceremonial ribbon which was cut at the dedication of Part 2 of the Chieftain Trail. An original CD was presented by Gary Bichelmeyer with his song about an old country school.

Research about Kirby McRill has been contributed and we continue to process the huge collection donated by John Cass Lenahan family. As of this newsletter, we have entered over 480 items from them and still do not see the end. You might check our special exhibit area with a case of memorabilia about John Cass Lenahan which includes his green Leprechaun shoes. This exhibit is a temporary exhibit and will be changed on a regular basis. Don't miss it.

Remember the museum is open every Wednesday from 9 AM -noon and Sundays from 1 PM-4PM (April-Nov.). Special tours may be arranged by contacting numbers on our web page.

TONGIE DAYS-JUNE 14TH, 2014

This day was perfect!! It was filled with sunshine, a nice breeze and the temperature for June was very comfortable. Mel & Pat Ramsier with help from the Walters family set up the TCHS booth. Jean Pearson and June Hagenbuch provided mid-day relief and Jan and Jim Stuke help the Walters finish the day. Gladys Walters provided spirit and afternoon delight for the other Walters clan.



Janet Burnett won the raffle for the barn quilt. It was a pleasant surprise as she had purchased her ticket several months earlier at the Chili feed. She was excited and even has a barn ready to receive this art work.

There were several things going which I thought were very interesting, and I thought worthy of note.



A group of veterans with their motorcycles gave a demonstration on the proper way to fold the flag. With this also was provided the significance of each fold of the flag.

The **first** fold of our flag is a symbol of life, The **second** fold is a symbol of our belief in eternal life.



All of the folds seemed to involve significant aspect of God, Country and Family. The

**11th** fold, in the eyes of Hebrew citizens, represents the lower portion of the seal of King David and King Solomon and glorifies, in their eyes, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

The **12th** fold, in the eyes of a Christian citizen, represents an emblem of eternity and glorify their eyes, God the Father, the Son and Holy Ghost.

## TONGIE DAYS CON'T

When the flag is completely folded, the stars are uppermost, reminding us of our national motto, "In God We Trust."

Although I am a veteran, I don't believe I have ever seen or heard the meaning of the 12 folds of the flag. It was impressive to me.

There was music. Lots of it. The Stranger Creek band played across the street from TCHS booth. They were country, blue grass and very good. One of the members played a 6 string banjo. However, it was tuned as a guitar. Any way I liked the sound. I somehow seem to like the sound of a banjo. It seems to me that they



regularly play in Overland Park at a Burger King. As stated earlier, we received one of their CD's which has

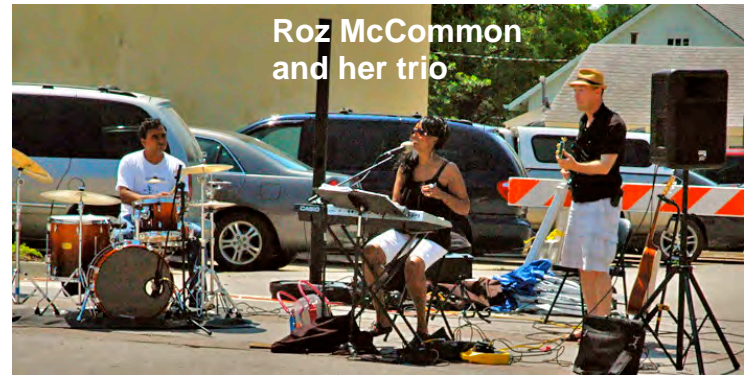
a song about a country school.



Also playing was a young man from Bartlesville, OK. He came by our booth and we discussed some history. I gave him a little conversation tid bit when I told him that Joseph Bartles (whom Bartlesville is named) married Chief Journeycake's daughter.

He bought ten tickets for the raffled quilt, but lost. He sings, writes his own music and has a publisher from Austin, Tex. From him I learned about the various guitars.

Roz McCommon really played for a long time.



Over two hours I believe. I have heard her before and she is very professional with excellent talent. In a personal communication, she told me that she studied classical music and taught in the music department at KU,

She and her husband live in Tonganoxie. He is the city manager.

The crowd was exceptionally large this day, but by 2:30 most of the adults and those over 20 were gone. The kids still enjoyed the day until the last dog was gone.

BEST BUY LABELS  
-From Gladys Walters

I have collected **BEST CHOICE** labels and from that I use the UPC symbol. Those that have saved them will understand. I have sent these in to the company for over 12 years. TCHS gets \$30.00 for every thousand symbols I mail. Which is about \$90 a year with no expense only postage.

Since the new grocery store no longer has Best Choice, the labels will become harder to collect. McLouth grocery, Walmart, Price Chopper still carry the Best Choice. I want people to understand we can still collect these labels, if they will help. Even if there are fewer collected we could still make at least \$30. a year. **MAYBE? I HAVE PEOPLE SAVE THE LABELS THAT ARE NOT MEMBER OF TCHS.** I believe many people shop at Bonner Price Chopper or Lawrence grocery stores.

This is an easy way to recycle your Best Choice labels and TCHS does not turn down money. Please help Gladys in this activity. Let her know!!!!



### Hostesses for the 3rd quarter

July Betty & Del Englen with Jean & Laurence Hill

August Ferry & J.W. Evans with Keyta and Michael Kelly

September Janet & Jim Stuke with Gladys Walters

time” and the annual visit by the public schools. He shared his pioneer skills on many occasions. Larry put innumerable hours into the restoration of our fire truck and the preparation of the fire house for displays. As a “Wednesday regular” he could be seen cutting grass, weeding, edging shoveling snow and doing the many other odd jobs of our Wednesday volunteers. This society is appreciative of his help and dedication. We remain greatly indebted for his service.



### DONNA HOEGLER (Mrs. Kansas Revisited)

Donna is the present reigning Mrs. Kansas who will travel to Tuscon, Arizona to represent Kansas in the National Mrs. Kansas Contest. This final pageant will be held on August 29th. All states plus the District of Columbia will be represented.



She is the daughter of Charles “Tuna” Conrad and Paula Dobbins Hunsaker. The maternal grandparents are Ed and Jesse Dobbins. If you graduated from Tonganoxie High School you know her paternal grandparents

as Don and Shirley Conrad. Both grandfathers are no longer living.

She married her childhood best friend, Nick Hoegler and she has a boy, Wesley.

The picture above is pretty much what you get. A strawberry blond/red head with sky blue eyes that shine. Donna can laugh and her smile radiates.

She is extremely gifted and relaxed in conversation and has determination when needed. This determination has been expressed with her conquering the syndrome, Chiari Malformation, a rare serious condition involving the brain, which was life threatening.

Tonganoxie Community Historical Society wishes her the best.

## Member Appreciation Picnic

Saturday, June 28th, saw rain and stormy weather which cleared and cooled off just in time for our member appreciation picnic which was held in the barn due to wet grass. Lloyd Pearson cooked the hot dogs and Jean Pearson prepared Sloppy Joes on behalf of the board of directors. Members and guests shared a wonderful spread of side dishes and desserts. No one left hungry.

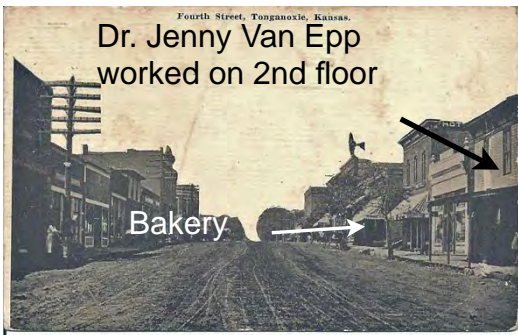
This event honors every one who volunteers at our society, no matter their task. It really takes many hands to make Tonganoxie Historical Society function effectively. As is our custom several special recognitions were made. A “Certificate of Appreciation” was awarded to Dan Carr, Carol Stouffer, June Hagenbuch and Betty Englen. A special posthumous “Certificate of Appreciation was received by Arlene Meyer, Widow of Harold Meyer, who died unexpectedly this year. He not only volunteered every Wednesday, but was a board member at his death.

Our Distinguished Service Award, which may be awarded only one time to a given individual and only after at least 6 years of exemplary service, was awarded to Larry Ross for his many years of service to our society. His Award reads: “He shared his carpentry skills by making wooden display cabinets for use in the museum, building the concession stand which is used on the north ball diamonds, and drawing the plans for the newly completed museum annex which for a period of time alleviated the need for storage. Over the years, Larry attended many seminars and meeting representing our society. He worked diligently on our events such as “Back in

# OLD TONGANOXIE

For several years the TCHS has been conducting interviews of some of the old historic families and more recently we have been targeting the old buildings that still exist or did exist in history. From this I have learned some very interesting things pertaining to people and the buildings. I don't intend to delve into this topic with any depth, but I thought it would be fun to share a few stories now.

This building was a mercantile store when it was operated by Christian Halsted. The family emigrated from Norway when Christian was a child. In Reno he was a railroad station agent and post master. Eventually he move to Tonganoxie where his family operated this store. He was post master for four years, mayor several times and served on the school board for 12 years. He was elected state representative in 1872. His daughter, Bertha, lived a few houses south of the old high school. she worked at the building and loan in tonganoxie. This building became a grocery store owned by the Cory family and it became the First State Bank and is presently the Evans Real Estate business. In 1913 it is listed as a grocery store and notions.

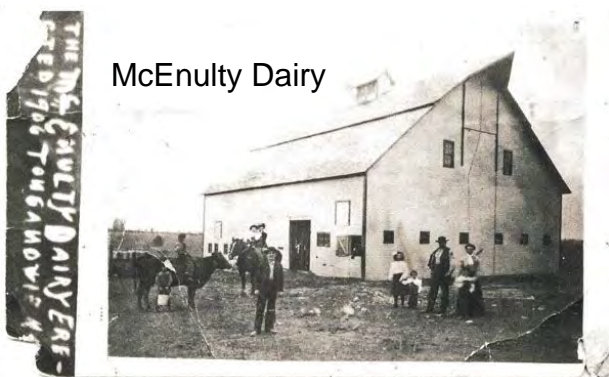


Bob Lenahan reported that Jennie Van Epp had delivered him and one week later she was jailed for selling drugs.

I remember (Bob McEnulty) when I was very little hearing my parents talking about old men walking past our house in that direction and remember hearing that they were from the "Old Soldiers Home" just off the bus en route to see Dr Van Epps for a prescription.

Jennie married Wilmont Van Epps on 27 May 1908. They appear in the 1920 Tonganoxie Kansas Federal census as both being general practice physicians living on Pleasant St with their 3+year old daughter Elizabeth. In the 1930 census Jennie and Wilmont had divorced and Jennie was still in

Tonganoxie with Elizabeth. The Tonganoxie Mirror shows Jennie delivering many babies in the 1920s. The July 21 1930 Lawrence Kansas Journal World has an article showing Jennie to be a resident of the Greybar Hotel in Leavenworth Kansas charged with writing illegal prescriptions for dope. Her license to practice was revoked by the AMA in 1933 after she was convicted.

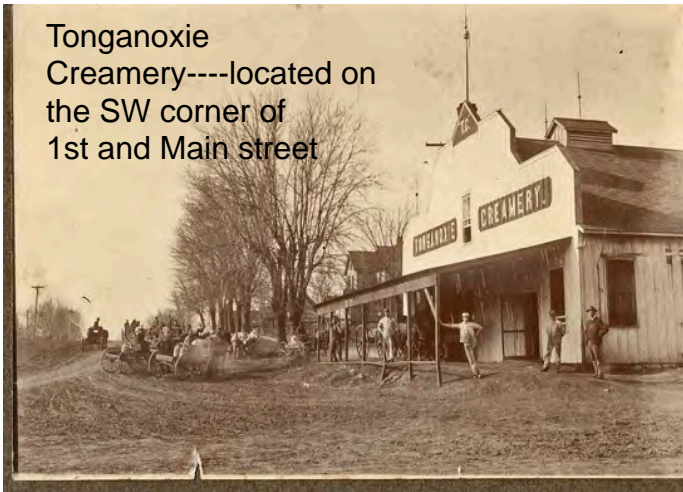


The John McEnulty farm and dairy was located on Hwy. 16. When you top Hubbel Hill and proceed around that long turn changing from Westward to Northward just as you come out of the curve that old two story house on the left was the John McEnulty house and that barn was setting at that location. It was located adjacent to the Haigwood rock query. John's brother James Martin McEnulty( Tom's dad) lived on an adjoining farm. I think his house was located just to the south east of the "Black Cat" tavern. Under stand that Hwy. 16 did not exist in those days,you proceeded west to Pleasant Prairie school then made a right turn north on a road that went past the McEnulty farm. (the "Black Cat" is now "Granny's Hilltop. During its hayday it was raided and closed several times.).

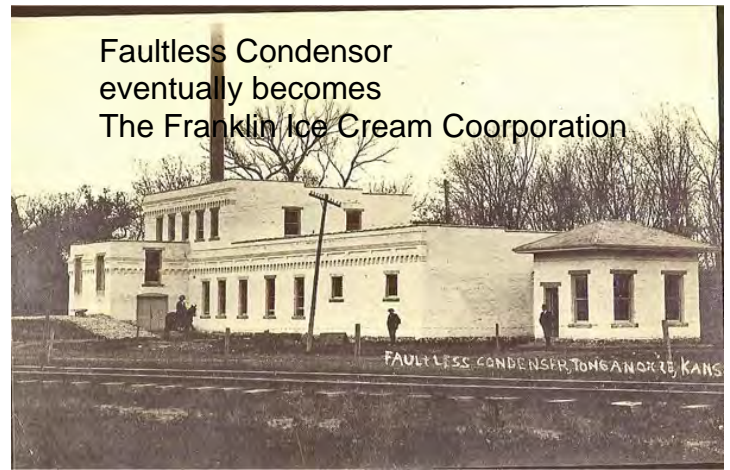
Thanks to Bob McEnulty for providing the information on Jenny Van Epp and the McEnulty Dairy.

There are several family names that appear as owners or part owners on many of the businesses of Tonganoxie. Whitset "Whit" Laming, Jr., Joseph Driesbach, J.M. Phenicie & W.C. Phenicie, Wm Heynen,





Tonganoxie Creamery----located on the SW corner of 1st and Main street



Faultless Condenser eventually becomes The Franklin Ice Cream Corporation

Whitshed Laming, Jr founded the Tonganoxie Creamery in 1898. It was a cooperative institution and was later sold to the Faultless Condenser. He was familiar with farming and devoted much of his time during this period of developing the dairy industry around Tonganoxie.

He owned the largest dairy in Kansas which included 1120 acres of land with 200 high grade milking cows.

A few year after selling the creamery to the Faultless Condenser, Whitshed, Jr. repurchased the Faultless Condenser and made it the second largest condenser in the state. This plant was eventually sold to the Franklin Ice Cream Co. The Franklin existed on this spot into the 1950's



Tonganoxie Roller Mill and Elevator

In 1898, the Laming's took over the Bangs Milling company. Whitshed Jr. made it into a profitable company and sold it. The Tonganoxie Mill and Elevator had many owners over it life. The mill was apparently built in ca. 1884. Sometime long after Whit Laming was involved, the Mill was owned by the Kemper family from Valley Falls. In 1923 it became bankrupt and the Watkins Bank of Lawrence took it over. Legally the bank could not operate the mill so they formed a corporation and attempted to operate it, but sold it in two years. I am not sure, but Charley Miller came on the scene about this time and owned the mill and elevator. The mill burned ca 1930, but the elevator lasted until now.

