

Tonganoxie Community Historical Society

TCHS

July 1, 2008

A Few Words from our New Chairman

We have had a few Board meetings with me as the new Chairman, and we continue to carry on our business with continuity as a few of us players settle in to our new rolls.

The Board has approved an easement for a water line across our property to the new Vintage Park construction site. The line should not interfere with any activity at our Site, and we don't expect any impact on our daily operations. The Vintage Park Living Center is scheduled for completion in 2009.

A new policy has been written and approved by the Board regarding awards issued for service to TCHS. In addition, a new award has been established – the Distinguished Service Award. A person may be considered for the Distinguished Service Award based on certain criteria, among which are five or more years of exemplary service in a position of significant responsibility.

A special Thank You goes to member Larry Ross for work done to refurbish one of the old picnic tables that had once been a fixture at the Tonganoxie Swimming Pool. Thanks also to Charlie Ussery and Himpel Lumber for their generous donation of lumber and hardware for this project.

- Al DiSanto, Chairman

Last Call

Our Calling Committee has placed their "Last Call"

The TCHS Calling Committee was organized to contact those members living in the area who could possibly attend monthly meetings. Originally initiated by George Cooper, this reminder call served to keep our members

informed about meetings, cancellations, and activities at the Site. Due to the new TCHS website, email/internet services, and regular mailings which now serve to keep members informed, the committee no longer spends hours and hours calling with reminders.

The TCHS Calling Committee included Harriett Mark, Nila Denholm, Winnie Turner, and Jean Pearson, with Harriett serving as chairperson. The women divided an up-to-date list of members and kept their own records and notes of those to call and those who did not wish to be called. Personally, I always enjoyed that reminder call – it gave me a chance for a short personal visit with my caller. This I will miss.

Our sincere thanks go to Harriett, Nila, Winnie, and Jean for their time and work in providing us with this valued service.

Highlights from Annual Picnic

Our annual picnic was held on June 28th and as usual the food was superb. We thank Lloyd Pearson and Delbert Felts for serving as our cooks for the evening and Janet Angell-Felts for serving as our hostess.

The evening began with perfect picnic weather, a little windy but with nice shade alongside the Reno Church. The tables were being set up, chairs arranged, and grills prepared when Lloyd discovered a leak in one of the lines leading to a propane tank. A loud "poof" was heard, followed by fire engulfing the entire propane tank. After shutting off the valve, Lloyd quickly recovered and after checking to ensure that all his hair and eyebrows were still intact, he and Delbert did an excellent job with the grilling.

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In lieu of music this year, George Cooper entertained us by reading a few political anecdotes of Will Rogers, many of which apply perfectly to today's political agenda.

Before departing for the evening, George presented a Distinguished Service Award to Susy Ross for her years of service as our Museum Director. Also mentioned was service by Del Englen, who was not present.



Susy Ross accepts Distinguished Service Award from George Cooper.

Museum Artifacts/Accessions

Each and every artifact that enters our Museum is a treasure to be shared with generations to come. No matter the category it represents – artifact, manuscript, maps, photos, tools, personal items, household items, etc. – every item is processed and accessioned using the same basic procedure. When it is determined that an item is suitable for our collection, proper paperwork is prepared to insure the legal transfer to TCHS. Following the paperwork, some items will be prepared for immediate display; others will be carefully prepared for storage using various techniques for preservation.

To be acceptable for our permanent collection, the item must meet certain criteria, mainly that it would have a direct connection to or representation of our area. It should be in good or restorable condition, and should be well documented as to origin and background. For further guidelines on the policies regarding artifacts for donation to TCHS, contact Susy Ross at the Museum.

Many museums in the surrounding areas have either city or county funding, which allows them to be open on a full-time basis and to employ a full-time Curator, perhaps other paid employees. Although TCHS is a totally volunteer organization, every effort is made to stay abreast of up-to-date information relating to archival preservation, restoration, and storage. With this in mind, it is hoped that everyone who wishes to donate their valuable treasures to our Museum will know that their heirlooms will receive the best possible care and will be preserved for years to come.

In the museum

White Sewing Machine c. 1890



The White Sewing Machine Company was founded in 1858 in Templeton, MA by Thomas White, age 22. When the company began, the first machine sold for \$10, and due to minimum finances, the machines were made as they were sold. The first machine labeled as “White” was a vibrating-shuttle model introduced in 1876. The most popular model was the “White Family Rotary” model, manufactured in the late 1890s, with production continuing in various models into the 1950s.

The machine shown above was first owned by Dorothy Koehn in the 1890s, and was given to her granddaughter Coleen Anton in 1939. Originally bought in Kansas, it traveled to Nebraska, Texas, Colorado, Utah, and then back to Kansas. It was donated to TCHS by member Coleen Anton.

Volunteer Spotlight

Lloyd and Jean Pearson have been active members of TCHS for about five years. Lloyd, one of our “every Wednesday” volunteers, serves as a Board member and also does the buying for the ballpark concession stand. He keeps the stand stocked with food and supplies so it is ready to open each evening.

Jean is in charge of securing the hostesses for each meeting and is in charge of the Vintage Quilt Show every year during Tongie Days at the Site. This marks the fourth year for this quilt show.



Lloyd was born in Junction City, Kansas, the fifth child in a family of nine. He worked for KDOT for 43 years as a surveyor and later as an inspector. He saw the construction of I-70 from design phase through completion during the 1950s and 1960s. Retired for nine years, Lloyd keeps busy with gardening, carpenter work, and attending the grandkids’ sporting events. He also helps out at the Good Shepherd when needed.

Jean was born near Council Grove, Kansas. One of three girls, she grew up not too far from Lloyd’s home. After raising her children she worked for 20 years at the accounting and tax office in Tonganoxie. Jean is a quilter, not just stitching the quilts, but doing the actual quilting. She quilts at the Rifford Center, and is active at the Good Shepherd Thrift Shop, where she serves as secretary of the board and is manager of the shop one day each week.

Congratulations

Life Member Shirley Martin is retiring from her job at the Tonganoxie Post Office after 30 years of service. Shirley says she is not sure what she will do next, but knows she will continue to work in some capacity, perhaps something that will allow her to spend more time with her grandchildren, and do some of the things she has been saving until retirement day. Congratulations to Shirley on this milestone!



Museum News

Carol Slawson, Howard Fields, Laurie Walters, and Betty Englen have been measuring, cutting, and installing protective film on the museum windows. Each of the windows in the barn requires careful measurement, as they are all different sizes. The film will help protect items in the museum against sun damage.

Member Fred Leimkuhler is donating copies of his pen and ink drawings of local school houses to be sold in the Museum, with proceeds benefiting TCHS. Other drawings by Leimkuhler are featured on note cards which are available for purchase in the Museum Gift Shop, and several of his original paintings depicting local historical sites are on permanent display in the Museum. Our thanks to Fred for all the knowledge and support he provides to our Historical Society.



The Tonganoxie Library has donated two oak bookshelves to us, which we will use for storage. They also donated several genealogy books and materials for use in the future, when a research room becomes a reality.

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Membership Report

The first half of 2008 has seen our membership rolls expand, and we welcome and appreciate everyone who has chosen to join us. It is rewarding to see this interest in the organization. If you would like to become a volunteer but do not know what opportunities are available, we would love to hear from you. Call or stop by the Site.

New Members:

Tony Baker	Leavenworth
Dennis & Pamela Barba	Leavenworth
Carol Bradbury	Tonganoxie
Patty Dickinson	Basehor, KS
Annie Dunavin	Tonganoxie
Joan & Stan Hughes	Tonganoxie
Owen & Amy Lewis	Tonganoxie
Mike & Theresa Megee	Tonganoxie
Janet Nelson	Easton, WA
Tim Phenicie	Roeland Park
CarolAnn Smith/Amanda Allen	Tonganoxie
Herschel & Jacque Stroud	Topeka, KS
Ralph Ungles & Jayne Aylward	Tonganoxie
Perry & Laurie Walters	McLouth
John & Alberta Welch	Rapid City, SD

New Life Members:

Al DiSanto	Tonganoxie
Linda DiSanto	Tonganoxie
Denise German	Vintage Park, Tonganoxie
Bud Laming	Lawrence
Carol Knox Smith	Overland Park

From our Program Chairman

Several of our members have given suggestions and ideas for future speakers and programs. For this I am very grateful, as it makes planning for our meetings much easier. I ask that you continue to pass along your suggestions. While these ideas may not be immediately utilized, they go into a file for future reference, and will be an invaluable asset to anyone who may do this job in the future.

When you make a suggestion, please provide all the information you have: full name, address, phone number, subject matter, anything that you feel will be of help in contacting the person. You may call or email me, or just leave a note at the Museum office. As always, I hope to provide the most entertaining and informative programs possible for our meetings. Phone 913-369-3337 or email me as kaslaitis2@aol.com.

- Julienne Kaslaitis, Program Chairman

Preview of Coming Attractions

July 22 – Elizabeth Wilson-Agin

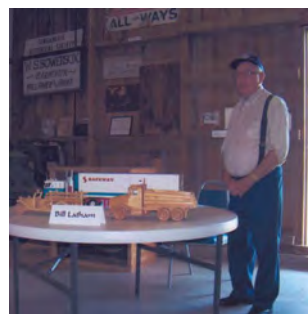


Elizabeth Wilson-Agin is a 1994 graduate of Tonganoxie High School. She earned a Bachelor's degree in Archaeology

from the University of Kansas and a Master's degree in Geophysics from Emporia State University. Wilson-Agin is employed as a Geophysist/GIS Specialist with FPM Group, Ltd. of Oak Ridge, TN; she is internationally known for her research and investigations in locating unmarked graves with geophysical tools. A nationwide speaker, her work has been featured in various publications in the U.S. and throughout Europe, including as a top story on the Yahoo! Homepage.

August 26 – To be announced.

Tongie Days at the Site



Bill Latham displays some of his hand-made models for the Men's Hobbies display during Tongie Days.



Cleopha Hurla, MaryAnn Needham, Gladys Walters working on baby quilt in Honey Valley School.

Life Member Larry Ross exhibits his black powder gun collection.



Del Englen demonstrates stained glass work for Bill and Mary Latham.

How to Reach Us:

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In person: 201 W. Washington Street
Wed mornings 9-12
Sun afternoons 1-4

Phone: 913-369-3835 Home
913-845-2960 Museum
(Wed mornings)

Email: disanto@wildblue.net
(Please mention TCHS in the subject area so your message will not be automatically deleted.)

Website: www.tonganoxiehistoricalsociety.org

Other Events Around the Area

Thru Aug 10 – *New Harmonies: Celebrating American Roots Music*. Smithsonian Institution traveling exhibit which showcases our state's musical heritage. Hear the music of legendary roots musicians like Bill Monroe, Mahalia Jackson, Muddy Waters and others. Watkins Community Museum of History, Lawrence. Further information, call 785-841-4109.

Thru Aug 15 – *Quilts – The Fabric of Warmth*. Leavenworth County Historical Society, Carroll Mansion. 1128 5th Ave., Leavenworth. Tue-Sat 10:30-4:30. Contact Joanie Soukup, 913-682-7759.

Aug 16 – Open House – *Mugged! A Rogue's Gallery of Leavenworth Penitentiary Mug Shots*. A photographic exhibit of inmate mug shots taken from the early records of the famed prison. A traveling display of the National Archives, the exhibit will be on display beginning Aug 16 thru end of Oct. Also see the museum's permanent exhibit of prison artifacts. First City Museum, 743 Delaware, Leavenworth. Contact C. VanOrden, 913-682-1866.

Thru Aug 23 – *Popular Childhood Toys*. Features 20th Century toys to be enjoyed by multiple generations. An opportunity to view a collection of artifacts from the Museum's rarely-seen holdings. Wyandotte County Museum, 631 N. 126th St. Mon-Sat 10-4.



Old cars line up outside the Honey Valley School during Tongie Days celebration.

Additional photos from the Annual Picnic and from the Tongie Days celebration may be viewed in the TCHS albums, located on the piano in the Reno Church basement.