

# Tonganoxie Community Historical Society

P.O. Box 785 Tonganoxie, Kansas 66086

October 1, 2010

## TCHS Windmill Taking Shape

Closing Day Oct 31



On August 27<sup>th</sup>, the topmost section of our windmill was installed by Russell Smelzer and John Jantz, with the assistance of Del Englen and Larry Ross. A temporary restraint has been attached to prevent the blades from “free-



wheeling” until the installation can be completed. The control mechanism has been ordered and, when

installed, it will allow the windmill to be controlled from ground level. The windmill was donated to TCHS by J.W. and Ferry Evans.

## More . . . .

November approaches and that means it is time to look at the nomination and election of new officers. The following positions will be open, and the Board needs your help in filling these openings:

**President** - one year term

**Vice President** - one year term

**Treasurer**

**Board of Directors** - one position open; three year term

In addition to the above positions, volunteers are needed to fill the following openings:

**Membership Chairman**

**Chairman of ballpark concessions**

**Purchasing agent for ballpark concessions**

We need some volunteers to step up and take over some of these positions. Previous experience is not a requirement, just a willingness to help. Please contact Board Chairman Laurie Walters if you can help with any of these vacancies (913-796-6373).

Susy Ross, Jim Stuke, and Laurie Walters attended a seminar on grant applications sponsored by the Kansas Humanities Council. The workshop was held at Old Shawnee Town, and was co-sponsored by Kansas Museums Association. This is the first step toward launching an aggressive campaign for obtaining grants for operating and capital funds from various sources. This informative seminar should prove very helpful as Board member Jim Stuke actively investigates various possibilities regarding grants.

Treasurer Carol Slawson reports that the ballpark concession realized a profit of over \$5,000 this season. This improvement may be due to the addition of pizza and snow cones to the menu. We extend our thanks to Connie Putthoff for her work in organizing volunteers for the concession stand, and thanks to those who give their time to work each week during the season.

Looking ahead to the concession stands for next year, with the additional activity around the newly installed ball fields at the north end of the complex, it will now be necessary to have two areas from which to serve customers. If our organization does not provide additional service for *all* the ball fields, the Tonganoxie Recreation Commission will seek additional vendors. This would result in a loss of income for TCHS. For TCHS to provide two concession locations it will require more workers, and also require some method of preserving the food for the additional area to be served. The loan of a small, portable food trailer which could be left at the site for the five weeks of the baseball season would be one idea. We are asking for suggestions or ideas about how to provide the additional concession service. Many of you have volunteered at the ballpark, and if you can think of any unique methods of improving the operation, please contact Connie Putthoff (913-669-5538 or [conputt@sunflower.com](mailto:conputt@sunflower.com)).

The Wednesday morning workers have had a challenging time trying to keep up with all the mowing between rain storms. They have had plenty to do with regular maintenance and preparing the site for the winter months. A sunny day in late September found them high up on



scaffolding, installing a new metal chute on the silo.

*Larry Ross, Del Englen, and Ed Slawson*

Ed Slawson drove the TCHS fire truck in the Leavenworth County Fair parade on August

10<sup>th</sup>, and won 2<sup>nd</sup> place overall. Our fire truck continues to shine as one of the major attractions

of our historical site, thanks to the effort of all the volunteers who spent countless hours doing restoration work. Built in 1936, the vehicle served the military at Fort Leavenworth until 1943, and served the City of Tonganoxie from 1951 to around 1962. Rusted, decayed, and nearly scrapped, it was acquired by TCHS in 2003. Major restoration began in early 2006, and was completed in June 2009 – a remarkable transformation, and an accomplishment to be proud of as we watch this beautiful old fire-fighter in action once more. Thanks to Ed for driving, and to those who went along for the ride.

Next year Kansas will celebrate the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of statehood. The County Cultural group, which met at TCHS in early August, discussed ways to celebrate this milestone. Here at TCHS we will celebrate the Anniversary beginning in January and continuing to year's end. Also, on January 29<sup>th</sup>, the U.S. Postal Service will issue a new Kansas stamp showing a windmill - very similar to our newly installed windmill – how about that for coincidence!! Watch for the issue of this stamp and for special 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary events at the Site throughout the year.



## Monthly Meeting Hosts

*The host/hostess list is posted on the bulletin board in the church basement. If you cannot serve your assigned time, please contact Jean Pearson, 845-3228.*

**OCTOBER** Howard and Donna Jean Fields, Denise Baker

**NOVEMBER** Jim and Janet Stuke, Carol Stouffer

**DECEMBER** Christmas Party (Bring finger food to share)

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## Museum News

Our part-time museum employee, Melissa Sheinman, brighten our days for a few more months, thanks to a recent decision by our Board of Directors. Melissa has been a valuable asset to TCHS, ensuring that all artifacts in the museum are properly identified, described, and recorded. Her proficiency in working with the Past Perfect computer software program has proven invaluable. She has scanned and entered all the files from the file cabinets – a *massive* task – and is currently photographing select items in the museum which will also be entered into the program. With Melissa's direction, Betty Englen and Carol Stouffer are diligently working to make sure all artifacts in the museum are properly numbered and described for the program. Melissa will be with us through March of next year; she expects to complete her Masters degree in Museum Studies at University of Kansas, Lawrence, in May 2011.

The museum has received several very nice art photos of the barns at the Doege farm, located just north of Tonganoxie. These historic barns will soon be lost to history, demolished for the widening and improvement of Leavenworth County Road 5.

The Tonganoxie Elementary School students are coming to the Site for their annual visit on October 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>. This is always a special time for the students, as they explore the museum and barn, and see first-hand what it was like to attend school in a one-room school house. It may be even more special for those who volunteer their time and talents for the day as teachers, storytellers, and reminders of a bygone era.

The ladies of the museum will again decorate an old-fashioned Christmas tree for the annual Tonganoxie Library Silent Auction. The tree will be provided by Susy Ross, and Betty Englen has been busy making hand-made ornaments. The ladies gather for a day of fun while they decorate the

tree, which will be on display at the library from November 23<sup>rd</sup> to December 15<sup>th</sup>. You can stop by

the Library during that time and place your bid on this or any of the available trees.

The annual Closing Day celebration at the Museum will be on Sunday, October 31<sup>st</sup>. Plan to come out and see the latest additions in the museum, the windmill, tour the buildings, inspect the silo, and enjoy the day with us. There will be old fashioned games in the barn, including checkers, dominoes, board games, and fun for the entire family. We'll have donuts and apple cider available. The Museum will continue to be open every Wednesday morning from 9am to 12 noon throughout the winter months.



## In the Museum

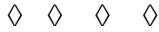


*Melodeon and Carrying Box,  
Donated To TCHS by Arthur Upton*

This melodeon was played by Elizabeth Woodcock, daughter of Rev. Harry Woodcock, founder of the Congregational Church in Tonganoxie in 1868. It was "portable" and was boxed, loaded on the wagon and carried to services and to camp/prayer meetings around Leavenworth and Douglas Counties. The instrument folds down to fit in the velvet-lined box, which is 32" X 19" X 14"; it is believed the player would sit on the box

to play the melodeon. The melodeon remained in the possession of Rev. Woodcock's descendants,  
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and was given to the Historical Society in 1993 by the family. Shortly thereafter, TCHS raised the required \$300 to have the instrument restored. Made of rosewood veneer, the melodeon was manufactured by Prince & Company in 1852.



## Did you know . . . .

The name "melodeon" was originated by Jeremiah Carhart of Poughkeepsie, New York, in 1835. For over ten years he had worked with harmoniums and other reed organs of the day to develop an instrument with a softer, sweeter sound. The final product, when marketed, he called a melodeon; the sound was mellow, and a melody could be played upon it. Most other small foot-pump organs were meant for voice accompaniment, and were not really pleasing to listen to as solo instruments.

The main feature of his invention was the use of vacuum to sound the reeds rather than air pressure, common in the English and early American organs and harmoniums. With air pressure the reeds sounded into the open air; the sound was harsh, loud, and often seemed out of tune. With vacuum, the reeds "spoke" into the case; the sounds were muffled and mellow.

In 1846, Carhart sold his patent rights and other secrets to several manufacturers, among them George A. Prince of Buffalo, New York. Prince Melodeons proved popular, and the business expanded rapidly. In the 1860s they were known as the largest and finest melodeon factory in the world. The main period for this company was 1847 to 1856, when some 40,000 melodeons were made. They were sold in all parts of the United States and exported to many foreign countries. Prices ranged from \$52 to over \$300.

(From *Antiques Digest – Lost Knowledge From the Past*; article entitled "Melodeons" by Arthur H. Sanders, originally published July 1963)

## Good Choice Labels

Remember to save your Good Choice labels and give them to Gladys Walters. She does a great job in collecting and redeeming these labels which generate a nice profit for TCHS. You can drop them at the museum on Wednesday mornings, mail them to TCHS, or bring them to the monthly meeting. Gladys sends a big Thank You to everyone who helps with this fundraiser.



## Upcoming Programs at TCHS

**October 26 – 7:00pm: "Twisters: Living in Tornado Alley" by Jay Antle.** Will include a video presentation.

**November 23 – 7:00pm: "Burl Ives: Music and Laughter" with Bob Spears and musical accompanist.**

**December 14 – 6:00pm: Annual Christmas Party**



### How to Contact Us . . .

Newsletter @TCHS  
P. O. Box 785  
Tonganoxie, KS 66086  
913-845-2960 (Museum, Wed AM)  
913-369-3835 (Home)  
[lindadisanto43@gmail.com](mailto:lindadisanto43@gmail.com)  
[www.tonganoxiehistoricalsociety.org](http://www.tonganoxiehistoricalsociety.org)



## Membership Report

Our purpose is to preserve our community's history, and bring together others who are interested in our history. We all want to see our organization grow and succeed, and to see our heritage preserved for future generations. When you join the Historical Society, you are contributing to that success. As a totally volunteer organization, our success depends on income from dues, fundraisers, and donations; this, combined with a fantastic group of volunteers, is the backbone of our organization

If you have not sent in your dues for year 2010, now would be a great time to get that done. As year 2011 fast approaches, we sometimes get distracted by so many events of year's end that the small things get pushed aside for lack of time. Please know that each amount paid (or each donation) to TCHS is valuable to us.

To tell if your membership is current, examine the address label on this newsletter.

- If you find **(10)** located alongside your name, *your dues are paid through year 2010.*
- If you see **(L)** alongside your name, this indicates you are a *Life Member* of TCHS and *no dues are owed.*
- If you see **(09)** beside your name, *you are paid through year 2009 and we would appreciate hearing from you.*

If you do not wish to renew your membership, or if you do not wish to receive future mailings from us, please let us know.

Renewal forms for year 2011 will be mailed with the January 2011 newsletter.

### NEW LIFE MEMBER:

Coleen Anton

### NEW MEMBER:

Melvin B. Taylor Tonganoxie

## Events Around Our Area

Now thru Dec 19<sup>th</sup> – Exhibit: **“Snapshots”** – a photography exhibit. Lansing Historical Museum, 115 E. Kansas Avenue, Lansing. Contact Laura 913-250-0203 for further information.

Oct 22-23 - **“A Night at the Museum”** Watch the exhibits come to life: Be greeted by the butler, meet a one-room school teacher, observe the local dressmaker, stroll through the fog at Glenwood Cemetery . . . Suggested donation of \$5 for adults, \$2 children. Proceeds to benefit the museum's educational programs. Basehor Historical Museum, 2812 W. 155<sup>th</sup> St. (913)724-4022 for further information.

Nov 7-Dec 31 **“Wedding Wonderland, Vintage Wedding Dress”** exhibit will feature wedding dresses and all the frills, in a wedding wonderland. Basehor Museum, 2812 W. 155<sup>th</sup> St.

Dec 11<sup>th</sup> 9am-5pm **“Christmas Open House”**  
Carriage rides, vintage music, holiday refreshments.

2:00-4:00pm **Mother, Daughter, Grandmother Christmas Tea.** Learn the proper etiquette for a proper tea time. Taste different types of Christmas teas and a variety of treats. Door prizes, giveaways. Cost is \$10 per person. Reservations a MUST!!! Contact Carla at Basehor Museum for reservation information and forms. (913)724-402

“The biggest argument against democracy is a five minute discussion with the average voter.”

-Sir Winston Churchill, 1874-1965

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“Democracy is the recurrent suspicion that more than half of the people are right more than half of the time.” - E. B. White

## **Mark Your Calendars:**

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