“THERE WERE NO BOOTLEGGERS IN TONGANOXIE!!”

At least that might be the official word on the subject!! But in fact there were 9—that is nine—stills around the area of “Good Ole Tonganoxie”. Some of the bootlegging business was big time. It was said that one local bootlegger could plant a bottle in his garden at night and harvest 10 bottles tomorrow morning.

Roy Salmon relates a story of a fellow coming into his garage for some work on his car. Roy noticed that the car had extra heavy springs and that it was sitting low. He knew immediately that the owner’s car was loaded with liquor and he was involved with bootlegging. The fellow always gave him a large tip for working on his car. He became a regular customer.

One day Frank Hoey, the sheriff, came into the business while the bootlegger was there. The bootlegger disappeared. It wasn’t unusual for Frank to drop in for a visit, and he alway had his badge so one could easily see it. After several minutes, Frank left and the bootlegger came back into the work shop. It seems that this fellow was hauling Canadian booze into Oklahoma by way of Chicago, Ft. Leavenworth-avoiding Kansas City and by accident came to the Salmon Shop.

The fact that the Salmons operated one of the few wrecker services placed them in a position to see some of the effects of booze. At one party some of the group placed a car on a large stump. It was a macho ( Y chromosome ) thing. And then they couldn’t get the car off the stump. Roy gets the call to get the car off the stump and now they offer him some relaxation if he wanted to join the party. He declined, but the group from Leavenworth had some fun. It is amazing how strong one can be under a little influence, but in a short time the strength dwindles.

The best story involves the town, the judge, and the town marshall. Booze in bottles had been confiscated by the law, brought into the court house, a pretrial with the bottles (evidence) brought up stairs in the city hall was held. The bottles were then put back in the jail, which was in the basement of the city hall. The bottles were locked in the jail, but that night all of the bottles disappeared and THE TOWN HAD A GOOD TIME!!!!!!! But the evidence was gone.

George White Sr., before he operated the Phillips 66 station, was a farmer near Reno. He was explaining how the liquor operation worked to a fellow who lived southwest of Reno. It worked like this. When the distilling operation was working a notable smell could be detected. To keep the secret from the unsuspecting public, a popular method was to burn rubber tires which would over ride the alcohol smell. To one who was observant, you might see a large quantity of black smoke with a pungent smell in the air. Tony Hess operated his still by burning tires in his furnace.

Since Mr. Hess was the Justice of the Peace for Reno township, he was always notified by the Sheriff’s department 3-4 hours before the raid would occur. The judge would call some of his buddies in the business. A few more phone calls would be made in the area of K-32 highway followed by another phone call, and two young men with fast ponies would be in business. Two ponies would be saddled up, and ridden to the other stills where the bottles would be in gunny sacks. The sacks would be loaded onto the ponies and the boys would ride off; drop the bottles in a field some distance from the still; and go home. I am not sure what payment was received, but these boys were well taken care of if they wanted their own party in the bootlegger’s cabin on the Kaw River.

I grew up ( I am 62 and a few months--quite a few) in the transition zone of liquor use. 3.2 % beer was legal, but there was to be no selling in bars. Over a period of more than 30-40 years, Kansas went from being dry to package liquor, to BYOB, to private clubs until now when you can even buy liquor on Sunday.

Because of the cowboy/cattle drive element in Kansas towns, and because towns like Tonganoxie with numerous bars and taverns and the effect these bars had on the towns, Kansas was dry from 1881-1948. 3.2 was legal since 1937, but by law it wasn’t considered alcohol, but a malt beverage. It is amazing how one can redefine words in the English language.

What I remember about those days is that there were several people around town who always seemed to be very drunk. Some were quite mean. But what I really remember MOST are the White House in Reno, operated by guess who, Tony Hess, and the Blackcat out on Hwy 16. There were lots of fights in both places and they would be closed for sometimes several weeks.

I was in the White House twice in my life. The place that I lived at KU would on the Saturday, before classes began, arrive at the White House ca. 7. We would all have dates and the large number of our people would occupy the entire building for the entire night. We had a live band and free music and a private party for the night. The locals would be confused and leave. 40 years later a friend of...
mine from McLouth told me how he saved me from a fight on one of those nights our fraternity occupied the house. The White House was the only place I could dance with two girls at the same time—I was sober; they weren’t.

**Jarbalo, Kansas**

Jarbalo has an interesting history. In 1854 the first community around where Jarbalo was to be, was “Wright’s Station”—previously written in an earlier newsletter. It is not really known why this place did not survive, but speculation would immediately involve the explosion of the steam source for the Wright’s mill operated on Stranger Creek. This killed several people and injured many more.

The first community known as Jarbalo was actually one mile north and a little west of the present town of Jarbalo. It was located on the Leavenworth-Perryville (Perry, KS) road. This was a strategic location.

However, in 1871 with the coming of the Leavenworth, Topeka and Southwestern RR, located ca. a mile to the south, the first Jarbalo moved to the present location of the now defunct town known as Jarbalo. Six trains ran over this route every day.

The name, Jarbalo also has an interesting history, beginning in the mid 1840’s. The military at Ft. Leavenworth used to work their people into shape using the hills around Jarbalo for exercise. In 1846 when Colonel Alexander Doniphan’s expedition left for Santa Fe, and the Mexican War, his men had been well conditioned for the trip. Someone named the hills around Jarbalo, “Diabalo Hills”. Apparently the name Diabalo was corrupted by early pioneers to Jarbalo.

Jarbalo was once a thriving small town, but as many small towns when the trains declined, the towns declined.

Jarbalo had a bank which in 1916 was robbed of $1,000 dollars. Tully Moore and the bookkeeper were locked in the vault, but the lock didn’t work and they escaped. I wonder?? Again in 1930 the bank was robbed once more with $215.00 being the prize. The bank closed in 1940 and the building is gone.

In 1935 Jarbalo replaced the burned high school bldg. with a new high school. This building exists today, but the school closed with the last class graduating in 1966. Tonganoxie became the location for those from Jarbalo after the Jarbalo closing.

Frank Zoellner operated his first store in Jarbalo. He moved to Tonganoxie and became one of the region’s larger stores with groceries, dry goods, hardware and implements.

Traditions suggest that Jarbalo may of been a small gambling center. This author has two personal communications offering some insight into this issue.

1. Some builders were remodeling an old house in Jarbalo. When the plaster and slats were removed a very large amount of gold and silver coins were discovered.
2. Another person who lives in Jarbalo removed a fence post from near his house and once again many silver coins were found. No gold was found this time.
3. I am now digging around my farm and thinking about a metal detector.
GETTING THE GARDENS READY FOR SUMMER

Kris Roberts, President

On May 1, Tonganoxie High School students continued a tradition of community service. Eleven students and one teacher spent almost two hours at the Tonganoxie Community Historical Society and Museum that morning. These students diligently and industriously worked to thoroughly weed three of the flower beds. Their help in this chore was huge.

Special thanks to Dave Walker, who accompanied the students (and handled a shovel pretty well, too) and the following students: Dylan Rinne, Garrett Martin, Kody Nehl, Jared Sommers, Kaitlin Hall, Rachel Maurer, Aubrey Sittner, Dasha Markina, Tanner Waldun, Elisabeth Laundy, and Emily Williams. We extend hearty thanks to all of the students and wish them a wonderful summer.

INTERNATIONAL VISITORS

Kris Roberts, President

Tuesday, May 12, Nathan McCommons, City Administrator, hosted seven international visitors for the day. He organized a tour of the city, several businesses, the school and our historical site. These foreign guests were part of the State Department’s International Visitor Leadership Program.

The second stop of the day was at our historical site--the visitors had specifically requested that they see a local museum. Our guests included: three gentlemen, one each from Bosnia, India, and Bangladesh; four women, one each from Belize, Israel, Lebanon, and Uruguay; two women from The State Department, and one from the Kansas City group that organized the local tour.

Nathan McCommon arranged for the fire department to park a ladder truck on the site and hoist an American Flag above the driveway, as a formal greeting to the guests, who had started the local tour at the City Hall.

In the Fairchild Dairy barn, Bill Peak gave a brief history of Tonganoxie. Nine TCHS volunteers were on hand to act as docents in the museum, barn, church, and school as our guests were escorted through the site by four TCHS volunteers.

Our guests were most impressed by the amount of volunteerism they were finding on their tours. Several asked our volunteers about the amount of government funding we received. Indeed the guests were quite surprised to learn none of our volunteers were paid and the government did not provide us with funds.

They were also in awe of the amount of displays at our site. The firetruck was a frequent photo op. The guests wanted to see everything, and they used every bit of the hour they had to spend with us.

We also were in awe as JW Evans reported that the man from Bosnia who was in the newspaper business had a salary of $20,000 US dollars per month.

More than 5,000 international visitors come to the US every year. The State Department International Visitors Leadership Program has hosted more than 200,000 international visitors since it was founded in 1940. Thirty current and 314 former heads of state are alumni of the International Visitor Leadership Program.

A most hearty thanks to the TCHS volunteers who hosted our guests: JW Evans, Keyta Kelly, Bill Peak, Kathy Peak, Connie Putthoff, Gladys Walters, Laurie Walters, and Perry Walters.

Ed. note: I was quite surprised to learn the gentleman from Germany was very familiar with some of the old farm tools. I also noticed upon hand shaking that his hand gave evidence of being used in heavy work.

Baseball Concessions

To keep TCHS operating in the black, we have several money making projects. The baseball concessions have been one of those projects for many years. This project is much work, and it works because some people dedicate one night a week for the duration of the ball season. Other people like Laurie and I only offer our services as a back up. To date ca. 19 members have worked at least one night. This year we are being assisted with 4-H members which provides us very good help.

Kris Roberts organizes the people who will “man” the stands on a routine basis. If some one has to miss their work time, Kris calls on those who will fill in— that is to
be a “Back-up”. Managing all these people is a tough job, but it gets done.

And then there is Lloyd Pearson, who for years has quietly performed the task of insuring there is something to sell. He keeps track of all the items required and makes trips to Kansas City for hot dogs, Gatorade, pop and of course pop corn and peanuts--- all the items kids like to buy.

On the 18th Laurie and I were back ups along with regulars, JW Evans and Cindy Brandeau. Those people can work! TCHS operated two stands and JW went up the hill and operated one by himself, Laurie, Cindy and I worked the lower and bigger stand. We all worked hard that night. It was a smooth operation. In the lower stand we had some unexpected help, Cindy Brandeau’s granddaughter. She was quite enthusiastic, mature for her age, learned very quickly and helped with taking orders from paying patrons. She was a pleasure to see working.

That night we took in over $500.00. To my surprise, Laurie took in at least $6.00 from tips. Hummmmm!

BARN QUILT PROJECT

-----Jean Pearson

Glacial Hills Barn Quilt Trail is the name of the TCHS sponsored barn quilt project. A photo of a hanging barn quilt may be submitted to the historical society to be placed on a map in our WEB site. This will allow a person to locate the barn quilt so they can view it.

A barn quilt class has been set for October 17, 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. in the barn at The Tonganoxie Historical Site. Cost will be $35 for all supplies. Questions may be directed to Jean Pearson, 913-845-3228, e-mail lloyd.pearson@knology.net.

The Hostess for the next Quarter.

July 28 See you at the Leav. Co. Fair (No meeting that night)

August 25 Ferry & J.W. Evans - Keyta & Mike Kelly

September 22 Gladys Walters & Theresa & Mike McGee

THE COVERED BRIDGES OF LEAVENWORTH CO.

According to the Leavenworth County Court House, Stranger Creek had at one time 4 covered bridges (All in Leavenworth Co.). They were all constructed in 1858 and 1859. The military person involved in overseeing this construction was Col. Albert Sydney Johnson.

The bridges listed at the court house from north to south are Easton, Springdale, Jarbalo and FARMINGTON, SE of Tonganoxie. Now! I asked a county commissioner and a person at the GIS department. “Where is or was Farmington”? No one
knew of any town in Leavenworth County with the name, Farmington.

There is most likely a serious error here because I can find no one who has ever heard of a town in Leavenworth Co named Farmington.

But, Guess what? Using the internet anyone can type in the name, Farmington and Kansas, and you will soon see in ATCHISON Co. a town known as Farmington. And it is very close to Stranger Creek, much closer than the “John Bell” bridge is to Jarbalo.

When one is working with history and in particular, local history, like Old Tonganoxie, it is very difficult not to make errors. Generally local history is generated by newspapers, some family’s written history, some family’s hearsay history and written after the fact. Many of the stories I have heard are hearsay and passed from person to person. Now assuming this is accurate is dangerous.

I have made errors in local history more often than I want to admit, but when I discover the error, I correct it. Jean Harlow was probably my biggest error. Jean Harlow, the mother vs Jean Harlow the actor. Harlene Carpenter took her mother’s maiden name (Jean Harlow) for her stage name. My error was quickly made known to me.

The question is, how does one deal with published news articles that are being “republished” with errors. What effort, if any should be made in determining accuracy????

MUSEUM NEWS

The recent addition to our oral history collection of DVDs is an interview with Mary Ann Needham. Kathy Peak conducts the proceedings. We have quite an interesting collection of oral history interviews which are available to be viewed during regular museum hours.

Kathy Stockman, docent coordinator, has developed a scavenger hunt to provide our visitors with a more complete museum experience. She has three different levels, preschool, ages 6-10, and adult and scavenger hunt fans. Upon completion your completed form may be exchanged for a prize. Try your hand at this as you may discover some new items in the displays.

A recent donation of this heavy metal car tag was received from Pamela Thompson Carter, daughter of TCHS member Gladys Walters. This tag was on her grandfather, John Sparks truck as long as she can remember.

John Sparks parents operated a general store in the community of Hoge, just northeast of Tonganoxie.

His first job was hauling milk from local farmers to the Creamery for 50 cents per week. He became a pipefitter for the Sunflower Powder Plant until he suffered an accident in 1958.

John and his wife, Mildred Johnson Sparks, were owner/operators of Sparks’ Café from 1961 to 1963. This was a popular restaurant/bakery/bus stop on 4th street which now houses Kramer and Associates accounting.
John & Mildred
Sparks

Mildred was known for her home-made pies. When asked, which pie she liked the best, Gladys Walters answered (after some consideration) Blackberry.

John worked in the maintenance department for Tonganoxie for 13 years. He served the city as volunteer fireman for over 30 years and frequently drove the fire truck and maintained the truck that has been restored by the historical society.

If anyone knows about this license plate, please tell us as the city does not recognize it nor does the state.

THE PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE
Kris Roberts, President

It has been a busy several months for the historical society and the museum. We have hosted several impressive special events including our grand opening, “Back in Time”, the time being a 1915 Box Lunch Social, a state department tour,(see above) of the museum, an Antique Engine show on the property grounds, and the annual picnic.

We also hosted a Chamber of Commerce coffee in May. These events allow us to showcase the museum and historical site for a variety of visitors from both near and far.

We had some great programs at our monthly meetings and have had some new visitors as well as returning members attending. Our programs are very high quality----and our members are encouraged to invite friends and neighbors to attend these programs.

Personally, I continue to learn something new every day. I enjoy my time volunteering as it gives me opportunities to get to know those with whom I volunteer. I am never disappointed and I always have fun.

Volunteer workdays are Wednesday morning from 9 AM to Noon. We welcome anyone to join us for a Wednesday morning. There is a task for every volunteer---your skills, whatever they may be, are needed and wanted.

Recent Programs

The Youngest Program Presenter ever at TCHS was Taylor Rantz, (just finished the 4th grade). Taylor researched the history of Tonganoxie’s elementary school by interviewing local people, researching articles at the public library, and interviewing past principals. Her computer generated program was lively and informative. Taylor is the daughter of Lynn Rantz, the superintendent of schools.
Bringing Back Old Traditions refreshed our memories of earlier meetings where people brought some historic “show and tell”. The earliest known date that we know this was done was Oct. 23, 1984. Members brought favorite books, old photographs, a set of dishes won at a grocery store and an old vase. While the artifacts were interesting, the stories accompanying these items were the highlight.

Beyond cold Blood: The KBI from Ma Barker to BTK was presented by Larry Welch, former Director of the Kansas Bureau of Investigation (KBI). Chief Brandeau, who had worked under Larry and had been a Special Agent in Charge with the KBI, introduced Larry. This close personal tie to our group made this program especially interesting and meaningful. The stories Larry told made one want to start reading his book.

Letter from the Chairman
----------Keyta Kelly, Chairman of the Board

Greetings! In this newsletter, I just wanted to take a few minutes to review the duties of the Chairman of the Board pursuant to our Policy Manual. This is for my benefit as it reminds me what I am supposed to be doing, and it also gives me the opportunity to address some issues weighing on my mind. Here is the verbiage of our policy manual:

1. Duties:
   a. Preside over the Board meetings.
   b. Establish an agenda for the Board meetings.
   c. Promote TCHS in a positive manner to the Community.
   d. With Board approval, prepare and keep current such lists of assignment and responsibilities as may be necessary for the orderly conduct of operations.

2. Responsibilities:
   a. Assures that the Board:
      i. Creates and reviews the annual budget
      ii. Annually reviews and updates the Policy manual
      iii. Annually reviews and updates the Strategic Plan
      iv. Assures that the Board selects a Director of Services to coordinate the ASSIGNMENTS.

As I reviewed this list, I victoriously called “check!” after each one. But, when I got to 2. A. iii., I stopped. Yes, the Board did review and update our strategic plan at the beginning of this year. We discussed our plan at great length and decided that our goal this year would be simple. Our goal is to increase our membership to the end that we increase the hours the museum is open and increase our revenue.

It sounds pretty simple, but just stating the goal, doesn’t accomplish it. I realized that we are already half-way through the year and have not been too successful in reaching this goal. This is where all of you come in. None of us on our own is going to be able to accomplish this goal. But all of us as a community can. The duties do not state, “assign homework to members”, but I’m going to anyhow. Here is your homework for our August meeting, 8-25-15. (no July meeting due to fair).

1. Make a list of your acquaintances who live in the Tonganoxie area but are not members of TCHS.

2. Review that list and choose one of them that meets this criteria:
   a. Is a go-getter
   b. Enjoys learning
   c. Enjoys community

3. Call that person and invite them to the August meeting.

4. Make contact with that person at least two more times to remind them of the meeting and how excited you are that they will be attending.

5. Bring that person to the meeting and introduce them as your guest.

That’s it! Simple! Can’t wait to see each of you and your guest at our August meeting!
A HUGE thank you to all the celebrities and generous bidders who helped make today's fund raising event a success. And to our guest auctioneer, Lynne Sebree who did an awesome job. Also Mrs. Harrell's 8th grade history club and 7th grade Wombwell girls for their help in setting up and acting as docents in the museum. What a great group of students! It was a fun day. Thank you everyone!

**THE GRAND OPENING**

Kris Roberts, president

In the spring, usually in late April or Early May TCHS has it opening, meaning that the museum will be open more than in the winter months. This year's Grand Opening was bringing forth the year 1915. Therefore, the year 1915 was used as a backdrop for reliving “The Box Social”. It usually went like this. A lady—remember this is 1915—would prepare a picnic lunch for an auction. A gentleman would bid on that lunch and the right to enjoy it with the lady.

In our case many of the rules were broken, but the idea was the same AND TCHS walked away with ca. $1,800 dollars.

The box lunches were made (somewhat commercially), and assembled by Mrs. Harrel's 8th grade history club.

The bidding was fast, and very competitive. It seemed that in some cases a few individuals dualed it out for the privilege of dining with one of the following:

**Steve Bell** began broadcasting at KANU in 1958. He is a graduate of KU and a member of the Tau Kappa Epsilon fraternity. He knew the 4-Freshmen well. When they performed at KU they would always visit the TKE house. Steve can be heard on KCUR doing newscasts and feature reporting.

**Charley Green** was born and raised and schooled in Linwood, Kansas. He is billed as an author, entertainer, and part time cowboy. He has been referred to as “The Will Rogers of the Plains”. He has been previously seen performing at our historical society. He does play the guitar and sing.

**Todd Thompson** has been County Attorney since 2009. One of his goals is to have the County Attorney’s office be more accessible to the public. Todd enjoys history and family history. This has brought him to our historical society a few years ago.

**Jason Ward** is the Mayor of Tonganoxie and has been for several years. He is an attorney in Kansas City, Missouri in a rather large law firm. He recently won a close election for his next term.

**Donna “Sissy” Hoegler** is a native of Tonganoxie and was Mrs Kansas in 2014. She is a hairstylist in Tonganoxie. This newsletter has previously written about her.

**Jack Holcum** is a native of Salina, KS and a graduate of Salina South High School. He comes to us via the Salina fire department, the Olathe fire Department and now Chief of the Tonganoxie Fire Department. Jack likes the smaller communities because communication is usually one to one.

**Chief Jeffery Brandeau** come to us via Afganistan where in 2010 he was working with US Marines. He overseas 9 full time Police Officers, 8 part-time Police Officers and a Reserve Unit. Jeffery has directly served this historical society by providing us with a real life Santa Claus--I wonder how that works?? Also, because of his association with the KBI as administrator, he was instrumental in getting Larry Welch—see above— as one of our speakers.

**Lyn Rantz** has been an administrator in the elementary, middle school and high schools. She came to Tonganoxie from Blue Valley, USD 229 where she was principal of a middle school. Her formal education was
Shannon O’Brien is an Emmy Award Winning news broadcaster with FOX 4 news. Her award was based on helping a person who was hyjacked in his own car. She noticed that the hyjacked person had written on the fogged window “HELP”. From this she was able to contact the police who were able to apprehend the culprit. It was for this story that she was awarded the Emmy.

Lynne Sebree, auctioneer from Basehor, did an outstanding job in moving the auction along and in getting the people to bid. He also could provide the necessary humor to “break the ice”. He was exceptionally good and he was very entertaining.

**Antique Small Engines**

A huge Thanks goes to Mel Ramseier who hosted the MOKAN Antique engine club on TCHS ground. It was a rainy day but members came from out of town to set up a wide variety of small engines. The people who attended had a good time and a good learning experience. Most of the people with the engines came from Missouri and they were very educational in explaining their engines. I thought it was a very good show for all ages to see.

**THE ANNUAL PICNIC**

---Kris Roberts, president

The annual TCHS picnic also dates back to the very early years of the Tonganoxie Community Historical Society. The first picnic was held on June 22, 1982 at the home of John C. and Jean Lenahan. The group discussed the upcoming Leavenworth County Fair, and also talked about potential fundraising activities.

For this year, the weather could not have been more perfect. The church provided shade and the meats, cooked by Lloyd Pearson and Jim Stuke, were delicious and well complemented by side dishes and desserts brought by members.

Our picnic this year was marked by much lively conversation. Returning members included June Hagenbuch, who led us in the blessing. We had six Guests in attendance—we hope to see all of them again soon. We said a farewell to Roger Shilling, who was remembered by Perry Walters.

And we honored Carol Slawson with a Distinguished Service Award. Carol’s nomination was unanimous. It was based on years spent as a board member, as treasurer, and her years of dedicated volunteering at the society and museum. Carol has always been a team player, and her cheerful and positive demeanor have always made working with her a joy. Our historical society and the museum are better for her efforts.

Certificates of Appreciation were also given to members who make a difference. This year’s recipients included Perry Walters, Lloyd Pearson, Carol Stouffer, Kathy Stockman, Laurie Walters, Dan Carr, and Jim Stuke.

If you desire to become a member or know of some who would, please fill out the information below and mail it to the printed address below.
Become a member today by filling out and mailing the membership form below to us.

Name_________________________________________
Address_______________________________________
City, State, Zip ________________________________
Telephone_____________________________________
E-mail________________________________________

I would like to join or make a donation:
_____Individual $10.00/year _______Family $15.00/year
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Choose your contributor level
_____Supporter $100.00 _______Sponsor $250.00
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Make checks payable to TCHS and mail to:
   Tonganoxie Community Historical Society
   P.O. Box  785
   Tonganoxie, Kansas  66086