

TCHS Oct 14, 2015 3rd QUARTER NEWSLETTER



Annual Election of Officers & Board Members

The TCHS Board met on [Sept 15](#) and appointed Keyta Kelly to serve as Chairman of the Nominations Committee. Effective immediately, Keyta is looking for people who would be willing to serve as an officer or as a board member.

What's in it for you? The satisfaction of supporting the Tonganoxie Community Historical Society and being part of a group of people who want to see TCHS prosper.

What skills are required? The ability to work with people to achieve our common goal of sustaining and improving TCHS, while we reach out to become an integral part of the community.

What positions are open?

President – a one year term with the primary responsibility of leading the monthly program meetings, but additional responsibilities as the individual can commit to.

Vice President – a one year term, responsible to act in the absence of the president.

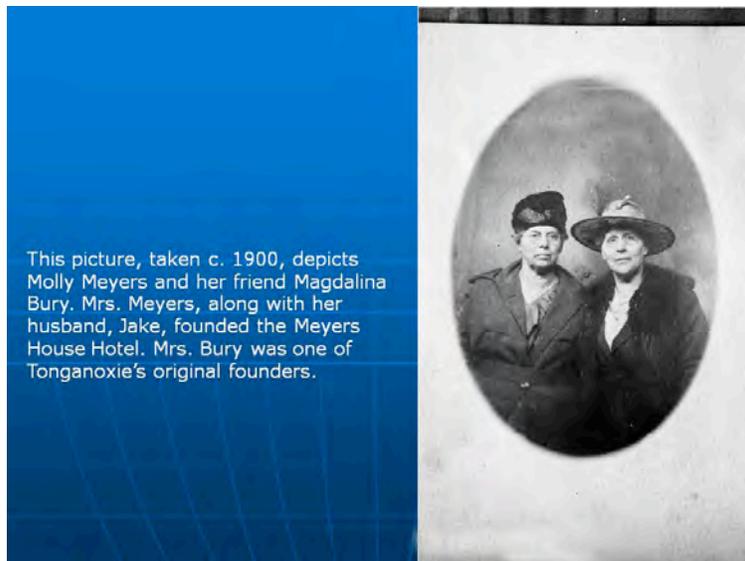
Board Secretary – a three year term. Responsible to take minutes at board meetings and monthly membership meetings. Also responsible for correspondence, including thank you notes and letters, and personal notes to members as required.

Two Directors of the Board – both are three year terms. Responsible to attend and participate in monthly board meetings and to take on additional responsibilities as the individual can commit to.

We strongly encourage members to come forward and serve on the board. You may nominate another individual, or yourself. You have all of September and October to do so, and most of November. The election will be held at the November membership meeting.

Please consider stepping forward to join the Board of Directors and Officers of TCHS.

This photo has been around for many years and it has been mislabeled. It is not Molly Myers and Magdalena Bury. IT



This picture, taken c. 1900, depicts Molly Meyers and her friend Magdalena Bury. Mrs. Meyers, along with her husband, Jake, founded the Meyers House Hotel. Mrs. Bury was one of Tonganoxie's original founders.

IS MOLLY MYERS AND HER MOTHER. It would be nice to have a picture of Magdalena Bury.

THE HOSTESSES FOR THE 4TH QUARTER

October 27 At 7 PM Donna & Emil Wiley,
June Hagenbuch, Laurence & Jean Hill

November 24 At & 7 PM Janet & Jim Stuke
and Carol & Ed Slawson

December 15th Christmas Party [December](#)
15 at 6:00 p.m. Bring finger food

Yogi Berra twice in his career had at least twice the number of home runs vs strike outs.

Words from our President, Kris Roberts

Correction:

When we listed the names of TCHS members who volunteered on the morning we hosted international visitors last May, we inadvertently omitted several of you: So, thanks also to Kathy Stockman, Carol Stouffer, Jim Stuke, and Connie Torneden! Thirteen of us were there to greet the foreign visitors in May – that's a good showing.

Ball Park Concessions:



The ball park concessions fund raiser finished up the season in early July. The season ended just as it started – with more rain than anyone could have imagined –

and certainly more rain than the Recreation Commission had ever counted on. In fact, 6 of the first 9 games were rained out and 5 of the last 8 games were rained out.

Nineteen TCHS members volunteered, with another three community members filling in. And this year, we were joined in the stands by members of the Reno Bobwhites 4H club. For their help, we wrote a check in the amount of \$563. TCHS netted over \$3,700 after paying the Reno Bobwhites. We owe many thanks to Donna Wiley for coordinating the schedule with the 4H club members.

Interesting statistic: Every volunteer hour worked at the concession stands resulted in slightly more than \$9 profit.

A special thanks to Donna and Emil Wiley who presented the Idea of the Reno Bobwhite 4-H club helping TCHS with the ball park concessions. It was a great idea.

The Wiley family have given a great deal of personal time and effort in local 4-H and statewide 4-H activities. Donna has guided the County 4-H food stand during the Leavenworth County Fair for many many years. I personally can't remember when she wasn't in that stand. She knows how to manage buying and cooking hamburgers. A LARGE THANKS TO THE WILEY FAMILY FOR THEIR DEDICATED EFFORT.

Garden Party:

On September 10, TCHS hosted its first BYOT Garden Party. BYOT, you ask? Bring Your Own Tools. We were a party of seven who worked from 4 to 5:30 and then enjoyed cookies and brownies and fresh iced tea. We were joined briefly by several others who could not stay, but were able to check in on our progress. And others had come in several days before to start the weeding and fall clean up.

We are certain you will notice a big difference in the appearance of the gardens. If this type of garden party appeals to you, please let Cindy Brandau know so that she can be sure you get an invitation to the Spring Garden Party, date to be determined.

Monthly Programs Review

Programs for this past quarter have been homegrown. The July meeting was cancelled since the fourth Tuesday fell on the night of the Leavenworth County Fair parade – our 1936 Fire Pumper truck was in the parade and many of us were either in it or watching it.

August brought back another Sharing Meeting with members sharing historical belongings. Again we had great items brought in, with even better stories.

In September, we brought out scrapbooks and spent 45 minutes searching for interesting tidbits. For instance:

1981-83 94 members paid \$3 each for yearly dues.

1985-86 Terry Putthoff (Connie's son) attempted to uncover the stone markers that spelled out Tonganoxie to air traffic in years past. (Connie Torneden's great uncle, Henry Toburen had been instrumental in setting these markers out in the first place.)

1988-89 A Tonganoxie Mirror article talked about gubernatorial candidates visiting Tonganoxie – one of them was Dr. John R. Brinkley, the goat gland doctor!

1989-90 Programs that year included field trips and presentations by neighboring museums.

The consensus was that the Tonganoxie Mirror was a much larger enterprise in years past, as there were long articles devoted to the activities and program meetings of TCHS, as well as many comprehensive historical articles. There is a wealth of information in the scrapbooks – we owe a great debt to those who spend many hours compiling them – Helen Schilling, Betty Englen, Mary Ann Needham, and others.

Roy Salmon

Nov. 8, 1925--June 1, 2015

Our historical site has been selected as the location to celebrate Roy Salmon's life. Roy Was 89 years old. He had recently sold his home and moved to Texas to be closer to his daughter.

Although Roy was born in England, his origin actually began in Tonganoxie. His mother and father had moved here several years before and she took her son Gerald and went to England to be near her father while he was sick. Roy was born there and lived there for two years. This presented a problem for Roy when he went to enlist in the Navy during WWII. He was not considered a citizen. After this problem was solved with bureaucracy even involving the British Consulate, it was finally decided that he could be drafted directly into the Naval Air Corp, which he did. He was trained in radar and bombing from aircraft and served initially on the east coast patrolling and looking for submarines. Later he was transferred to the west coast and again was trained, this time in preparation against Japan. After his military service was completed he came home and married Geraldine Wiley, who had been waiting for 3 1/2 years for this to happen. The marriage lasted over 60 years.

When Roy arrived in Tonganoxie after his military service, Chauncey Angell appointed him to the Fire Department where he served for 47 years. During this time he has many stories about his experiences on the Fire department. He remembers Dale Rawlings 3 fires one in which the wall caved and nearly fell on Roy. While involved with the Fire Department, Roy learned about fire fighting methods, rescue work, and how to acquire much needed fire equipment. The fire fighters received no pay for their service. They did get 5 dollars a fire for proper clothing, boots, etc. But to get the equipment needed, the men got the City to give up their 5 dollars and use that to help buy equipment.

Roy served on the city council and once again his efforts were to improve the city. His expertise was water and roads. His goal was to provide curbs for the streets. He also went down 90 feet to work in the City's two wells. He discovered the problem with the city water to be the discolored grey earth, probably clay.

Roy and his dad also operated for many years the only towing service in town. This work also involved many sad stories, but some did have some humorous events.

Our historical society was fortunate to interview Roy. We filmed Roy two hours as he talk about Tonganoxie and the history that he knew. It was one of the most revealing interviews that we were able to film. Roy discussed schools in Tonganoxie, he told us about bootlegging, about the disasters which he was involved with, he was one of those people who organized the large skating rink located at the fairgrounds during the winter, the bob sled and those memories, he discussed the depression and the dust bowl. He told of the his education in fighting fires, and the acquiring the equipment to become one of the best firefighting units around.

As you listened to what Roy had to say during his interview, one began to understand that Roy loved Tonganoxie, and he spent his entire life working for the improvement of the town. He was very civic minded and always willing to give his time, willingly, for the improvement of these goals.



Roy and Gerald Salmon on trip home with mother

Granddaughters telling stories about Roy

Fire truck is Roy's last ride



Barn Quilt Trail News

The pictures of barn quilts capable of being seen around theTonganoxie area have been taken, cropped, named, etc. and sent on to our website person. Hopefully they will be up and running on our website soon. The Barn Quilt Class to be held on [October 17](#) at the site is full. **Let Jean Pearson know if you are interested in another class!!!!**

An In Depth Look at The Tonganoxie Community Historical Society

HOME



Tonganoxie was once home to many dairy farms in Kansas. The Laming and the Fairchild/Knox dairies vie for being the largest. It depends on who

you read which one

is the largest. The TCHS historical site is located on 10 acres of the original Fairchild dairy. The buildings include: the Fairchild/Knox barn, a 1929 dairy barn with milk parlor and hay barn, silo, and working windmill; the Honey Valley School, a 1916 one room school house; the Reno Methodist Church, a 1918 church; and a 1936 Fire Pumper Truck.

The museum and buildings are open to the public.
Wednesdays 9:00am – Noon, year round
Sundays 1:00pm – 4:00pm, April thru October

Tours can also be arranged at other times by appointment.

Admission is free – Donations are appreciated.

TCHS meets in the Reno Methodist Church building on the fourth Tuesday of every month (except June and December) at 7:00 pm for a brief business meeting and a historical program. The meetings are open to the public.

TCHS is a non-profit organization, funded through dues, donations, memorials, building rentals, grants and fund raising activities.

Mission

TCHS is a private non-profit organization, founded in 1981, with the purpose of bringing together people interested in the history of Tonganoxie and surrounding area. The Society has a specific mission to collect, identify, record, preserve, and display materials which will help to establish and illustrate the history of the greater Tonganoxie community.

Museum & Buildings

About the museum:

The museum is located in the Fairchild/Knox milk parlor. Displays depict the Delaware Indians, the town's early history, family

life, leisure, schools, dairy farming, farming, businesses, and government. New exhibits and items are displayed as our collection continues to grow. **Plan to stop by the Gift Shop** during your visit. Some of the interesting things you will find include Fred Leimkuhler's pen and ink note cards; John Cass Lenahan's "Yesteryears" series, replete with a myriad of historic photos of the Tonganoxie area; Deloris White's "100 Years of Graduates of Tonganoxie High School"; and the TCHS Cookbook. There is also a selection of TCHS denim shirts, t-shirts, ball caps, visors, and aprons.



Fairchild-Knox Barns

The Fairchild/Knox hay barn and milk parlor are now the Community building and the museum at the Site.



The original barn was built in 1901, but burned down in 1928. Frank Fairchild, with his wife, Mattie, formerly of Ulster County, NY started the dairy with 40 acres and 15 milk cows in 1884. Working with Kansas State University he built what became the dairy center of Kansas with himself as top dairy man in Kansas. Frank Fairchild, Mattie and their 6-year-old granddaughter, Thelma, were tragically killed in a train accident in 1917. The farm passed to their only child, Bessie Fairchild Knox and her husband, Archie. The second barn, built in 1929, still stands at its original site. Part of the original rock foundation supports the barn. Bessie and Archie Knox passed the farm to their daughter, Mildred, who with her husband, Arthur Young, raised white faced cattle on the land until 1976. Mildred Knox Young donated the barns and 6.3 acres of land to the Society in 1987.

The hay barn has been renovated with a kitchen and restrooms. It may be [rented](#) for birthday parties, weddings receptions, family reunions and other celebrations.

14/15/1915

Henry Toburen will again take over his bakery next week and Henry Brinkman who has had it for a year under a lease will retire. The latter has not yet decided where he will go but is looking around for a location.



Honey Valley School

The Honey Valley schoolhouse – district #56 - was organized on March 25, 1869. It was located about a mile south of

Tonganoxie on the Gordon Harmon Farm -between County Road 1 and U. S. Highway 24-40. The original building burned down in 1915, was rebuilt the next year at a cost of \$1,200.00, and re-opened on June 21, 1916. This building was moved to the Historical Site in 1991. On September 25, 1999 an open house was held at the school to celebrate the eight years of renovation done by our dedicated volunteers.

The Honey Valley School is a typical one-room schoolhouse where one teacher taught the three "R's" to all eight grades. As many as three generations of Tonganoxie students attended this school.

At no charge to educators, a day at Honey Valley School is a unique way for their students to experience living history.



Reno Methodist Church

The original Reno Methodist Church was opened August 16, 1891 at a cost of \$1,900. Samuel Kelsall and James Phenicie were

instrumental in its organization. The first minister was John Jacobs - a Baptist and blacksmith in Reno.

The original building was destroyed by fire in 1918 and was immediately rebuilt. It holds a rich history of Sunday services, marriages, deaths, ice cream socials and watermelon feeds. It officially closed in 1993. To save it from being torn down its members sold the building to the Society on June 9, 1993 for \$1.00 and paid for the cost of moving it to the Site in the spring of 1994. Prior to moving to the TCHS grounds, the Reno Church was used in the filming of "Where Pigeons Go to Die" in 1989. The film was produced by Michael Landon, who also had the starring role.

The Reno Church may be [rented](#) for weddings, funerals and church or community meetings. The fellowship hall, located in the basement, has a small kitchen, restrooms, and is wheelchair accessible.



1936 Fire Pumper Truck

In the 1930s the Army built several vehicles, including fire trucks, for many of the Army bases throughout the

United States. Our truck was built in 1936 by the Army Quartermaster Corp in the Motor Transport Shop at Camp Holabird, Baltimore, Maryland. The pumper was delivered to Fort Leavenworth, Kansas in 1936 and remained in service there until at least 1943. We believe the truck was then taken over by the Army Corp of Engineers and used for some time until it was sold into the civilian market.

The City of Tonganoxie purchased the truck in 1951 to be its primary pumper for the then- all volunteer Fire Department. The truck served the city until 1961 when it was replaced with a modern pumper fire truck.

The pumper is proudly driven in the local St. Patrick's and Leavenworth County fair parades. (It is very difficult to steer.)

The fire house also houses a history of major Tonganoxie fires and items from the old fire department.

Oral Histories

TCHS established a video interview library project to preserve and share local history; to increase community awareness of the Tonganoxie area history; to reinforce multi-generational communication and understanding; and to support genealogy research.

The Oral History Library now numbers over 35 interviews. The complete library also includes CDs of some of the historical programs from the TCHS early years (pre-2000). The DVDs can be viewed at the museum or purchased for a nominal cost.

The DVD's contain a wealth of information on local history and we are always looking for new sources.

9/23/1915

Mrs. Will Ridgway raised a cabbage head this year that weighed thirteen pounds and was 37 inches in circumference. The cabbage over-exerted itself and busted when it got that size.

Research

The artifacts on display in the museum are but a fraction of the artifacts we have, and historical information that is housed at the historical site. There are many documents and photographs in the archives that are waiting for local history research projects.

Our volunteers can assist in genealogy research, as well as other local history research. Call for additional information.

Charges: As a non-profit, privately funded organization run by volunteers, we have found that we must charge for copies that are reproduced by request.

Newsletters

TCHS publishes a quarterly newsletter to update members of on-going business of the historical society and any upcoming events. The newsletter is also a venue for historical articles and research by members.

The newsletter is mailed or emailed to all members.

EVENTS

Monthly Historical Society Meeting with Program:

TCHS presents 40 minute programs on the fourth Tuesday evening of each month (except June, November, and December). The programs are of a historical nature. All members of the community are welcome. There is no charge and there are refreshments following the program.

Special Events:

There are annual events to watch for all which are open to the public. These include the Picnic in June and the Holiday Party in December.

There are also special events from time to time, the spring opening event, often with a historical theme.

Watch for the 1936 Pumper Truck in the annual St. Patrick's Day Parade and the Leavenworth County Fair Parade in late July.

EDUCATION

Scholarships: TCHS funds an annual \$300 scholarship to a USD 464 student who is pursuing a course of study related to history. Previous recipients may re-apply for additional awards.

Pioneer Trunk: A hands-on exhibit of what a pioneer family would have packed to take with them

in a covered wagon. TCHS volunteers are available to present this trunk to a classroom in a 30-60 minute program. Alternatively, a teacher may borrow the trunk to use in the classroom. Everything in the trunk is meant to be touched by the students.

3rd Grade Program: TCHS hosts all of Tonganoxie third grade students annually for a two to three hour program in the fall. The students arrive at the historical site and participate in five 20 minute sessions, led by TCHS volunteers in period costume. The children experience a one room school house, learn about native American customs and crafts, experience hands-on interactions with antique tools, tour the museum, and learn some children's games of the late 1800's.

Use of the One Room Schoolhouse: At no charge to educators, a day at the Honey Valley School is a unique way for students to experience living history.

Custom Programs: Don't see what you want? Let us work with you to develop a program unique to your classroom needs.

JOIN US

Membership

TCHS is a non-profit organization, funded through dues, donations, memorials, building rentals, grants and fund raising activities. Having a large and active membership is the strength of any non-profit organization.

Volunteer

The historical society and museum are staffed by volunteers. Membership has long supported the site, giving generously of their time and skills. Volunteers act as docents when the museum is open, keep the buildings and grounds maintained, prepare exhibits, plan special events, and perform all functions necessary to keep the museum running. All of our school programs are staffed with volunteers. We welcome new members and new volunteers of all ages. Volunteers certainly benefit an organization such as ours, but it is the volunteers who reap the true rewards.

7/1/1915

Granville Stringfellow, state prison guard, was here a short time Saturday, searching for two convicts who had escaped out of the prison coal mine by climbing up an air shaft.

7/8/1915

Jake Freienmuth drove out from Kansas City a short time ago with a fine new Buick car, and last Sunday drove his family over to Lawrence for a short visit.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES:

Museum Docent during open hours (Wed 9-12 & Sun 1-4) and by special appointment.

Research

Exhibit Preparation

Building & Grounds Maintenance on Wed mornings

Perennial garden upkeep

Volunteer for Fund raisers, such as chili feed, ballpark concessions, and other events from time to time)

School programs, such as third grade visits to site and taking museum artifacts out to classrooms

To find out more about volunteer opportunities at the Tonganoxie Community Historical Society, send us an email with your contact information and interests.

RENTALS

If you are planning a wedding, an anniversary, birthday celebration, or a family reunion, or if you are looking for a place to hold a business or personal meeting, consider one of the buildings at the Tonganoxie Community Historical Society Site.

The historic **Reno Methodist Church** is an elegant location for weddings. It will accommodate up to 100 guests in the wooden pews, and provides a wonderful and picturesque background for your special day.

The **Fellowship Hall** in the basement of the Reno Methodist Church, will accommodate 50 guests. It is handicap accessible with a full kitchen and two bathrooms. This is the perfect location for luncheons, dinners or meetings.

The Fairchild/Knox Hay Barn provides ample space for larger groups, accommodating up to 120 guests. The barn has a fully equipped kitchen and two restrooms. There are tables and chairs on hand for approximately 70 guests. Additional equipment is available.

Non-profit groups from our community may use any of the buildings one time a year free of charge. Educators may use the Honey Valley School for youth programs free of charge. Buildings must be reserved in advance.

All buildings are rented on the first-come, first-serve basis. Reservations and payment will secure the rental.

Rental Contact - Contact Connie Putthoff at 913-669-5538 or email at connieput@yahoo.com

CONTACT US:

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913-845-2960 TCHS2002@att.net
www.tonganoxiehistoricalsociety.org

For general information, to volunteer:

Kris Roberts 913-704-7043
krisroberts85@gmail.com

For property rentals:

Connie Putthoff 913-669-5538
conput@yahoo.com

To donate an artifact or arrange a tour:

Laurie Walters 913-796-6373
plw1673q@embarqmail.com

For membership information:

Kathy Peak 913-845-2852
peak_kathy@hotmail.com

To give or suggest a program:

Bill Peak 913-484-4825
greenpres@hotmail.com

For research/genealogy information:

Laurie Walters 913-796-6373
plw1673q@embarqmail.com

6/10/1915

The dam at Cold Springs lake (This lake has also been called Tonganoxie) is to be raised three feet, and the spillway is to be fixed up in first class shape to prevent damage from future high waters. The Kansas Condensed Milk Company intends to remove its pumping plant from the lake and will run the water to the plant by gravity. This change will make it necessary to re-lay the pipe line.

7/22/1915

A large elm with a trunk four feet in diameter near the Kansas Condensed milk plant was blown out this week. It was on a creek bank and it was feared that the high water would sweep it down stream and take the bridges with it.

4/8/1915

Sheriff Courtney says people have no idea what his office is up against at present. The numerous joint prosecutions and the absence of tips about raids has made a certain element very hostile toward his office force, and in some places the officers have to watch the women very closely to prevent an assault with any kitchen utensil handy

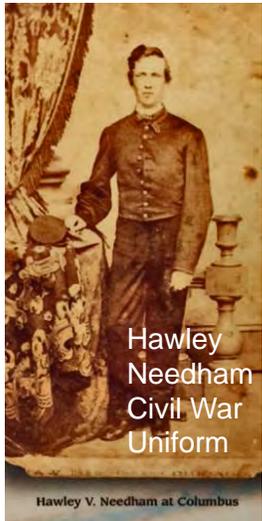
8/5/1915

A young lady's coat has been left at Toburen's ice cream parlor. The owner can have the same by paying for this adv.

Update on Museum Operations by Laurie Walters

As of early October, the number of museum accessions exceeds 1463. Now keep in mind that an accession is a donation given a unique number consisting of one or many items. Our largest accession was a gift close to 800 items. The staff is digitally photographing each item...if it is a paper document it is also scanned and saved digitally. Our computer system is backed up after each work day both on the system hard drive and on a removable drive which is removed from the premises at the end of the day. It is hoped that should disaster fall, we will maintain some sort of record of our past.

Our donations come from many sources....Susy and Larry Ross were visiting a civil war museum in Columbus, Kentucky and came across this photo of Hawley V. Needham in his civil war uniform. H. V. Needham was an early pioneer in the Tonganoxie area settling near "The Cliffs".



Hawley
Needham
Civil War
Uniform

The Leavenworth County Historical Society deaccessioned an original abstract for a tract of land in Tonganoxie. This land came from the Delaware tribe to the US government to the Union Pacific Railroad to the Kaw Valley Town Company to several

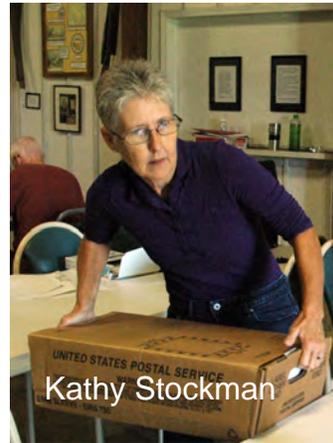
individuals who were all officials of the railroad to Sarah Fairchild, mother of Frank Fairchild who owned the dairy which is now the site of the Tonganoxie Historical Society.

Mary Smith Ketchum donated a three part Southwestern Greyhound Bus ticket for round trip passage from Tonganoxie to Kansas City Missouri. She purchased this ticket in 1957 when she was attending Moler Beauty Academy in down town Kansas City, Mo. She purchased the ticket at Toburen's Bakery/Cafe and did not use it.



A future addition to our museum will be the beautiful quilt (photo) which is to be donated by Pat Black at our next membership

meeting. Pat owned Zoellners store and she pieced and quilted this quilt from fabric sold in her store during her ownership. She will present this to our members at our October membership meeting. Pat would be delighted to see old friends as she makes this lovely donation on October 27th 7PM in the Reno Church.



Kathy Stockman continues our veteran's project. She has finished the World War I section by listing all veterans known and their military histories, battles fought, etc. They will be located in an alphabetical card catalog for visitors to research. She plans to add additional combats in the future.

Museum volunteers continue to meet with relatives as they visit the Tonganoxie area to search our computer system for relatives and they in turn send additional information pertinent to the Tonganoxie story. We also respond to e-mail requests for historical knowledge. It takes many loving hands to keep this wheel greased!



THIS COLUMN IS A REPRINT FROM THE
TONGANOXIE "MIRROR" COLUMN BY
BILLIE AYE

AND PROVIDED HERE BY THERESA
MCGEE

Parts of this column can be seen as ITALICS noted in other areas of this news letter.

9/2/1915

Chautauqua Opens Today—The big Chautauqua tent was erected on the school house square yesterday, and everything will be in readiness for the opening entertainment this afternoon. The Chautauqua manager is J.E. Wattenberg of St. Louis, and he has three others who take care of the business with him. A few season tickets remain unsold, and these may be secured by applying to the ladies of the Library Association in whose hands the ticket sales have been given. The tickets are much nearer sold out than they were two years ago at this time. This is the last place the Chautauqua people will entertain this season, and the manager Mr. Wattenberg seems to be quite proud of the success that has been made.

The History of the Tonganoxie Schools

In the Tonganoxie Mirror dated Dec. 2, 1897 it states that the first school in Tonganoxie was established two years before the town was platted. That makes the log cabin school established in 1864. It was a subscription school that was located on land that Henry Metz owned in 1897. The lumber and labor was donated and the teacher was Helen Tuttle, who boarded in the Crawford Moore home. This school lasted 2 years.



In 1866 there was a “short term” subscription school held in Tonganoxie in a log cabin owned by Mrs. Rice.

District 28 was organized in 1866. Some historians have school being taught in 1867 in a log cabin located south of “Little Tongie Creek”, and near 1st street. If this location was on the most western point of where 1st street might eventually be, it probably would be on the Rev Woodcock’s property and it would be consistent with other described locations. It was written that a Mr. McAlister volunteered to teach what he knew.

The school was constructed by RH Taylor for \$300.00 in 10% bonds running one, two and three years. The new school was located just south of the Elliott House. (The Elliott House at one time was in the 4th street business area in the 500 block. It moved to the location referred to as north of the grade school.) .

The building was 18’ X 40’ with a door on the South. It was on property owned by the Rev. Woodcock of the Congregational Church. In the history of the Congregational Church it states that Rev Woodcock bought a town lot of 4 3/4 acres that contained an old log school house. On Sept 2, 1868, the Congregational Church was formally organized with 16 members who met in the old school building. It further stated that church was held here for a few years.

John Kirby taught here in 1867. There were 117 students with the largest number being black.

Generally, most historians have a large two story brick school building constructed in 1874. One source uses 1870 as the date. It cost \$5000.00 with an additional \$1,000.00 being added the next year. The building was two stories.

This old school building was torn down in 1897 and a new and larger brick building was constructed on the same site. This building lasted until the mid 1950’s when it was replaced by a larger but one story grade school.

The photo of the large brick building is generally thought to be the first large grade school built in 1874, but in fact it is the second grade school building built in 1897. This building had 4 classrooms on the first floor and 4 classrooms on the second floor. The boys restrooms were in the basement on the east side and the girls restrooms were in the basement on the west side. It had a boiler room, and a play room. In 1898 there was a one year high school held on the second floor. It was considered a success and was soon expanded into a two year high school. LM Spray was the principal and he also taught 25 advanced students in the high school.

In 1901 a high school graduation was held in Laming Hall. Total number of pupils was 183. Remember this was not a 4 year high school, but a one or two year high school which involved “Special Classes”.

Ella Davis was the first primary teacher with 47 kids; Mary Phenicie was the second primary teacher with 36 kids.

After the high school was constructed in 1910, Grades 1-4 were on the first floor and grades 5-8 were on the second floor.

Tonganoxie Rural High School was built in 1910. It was north of the grade school and contained 8 class rooms with 4 on the second floor and 4 on the first floor. It had an office. Girls restroom were on the second floor and boys were on the first floor. It also had a basement with a boiler room.



Baseball, football and basketball were always important school activities. I don't know if basketball was played



before 1925 when the gym/auditorium was added. After 1925,

Tonganoxie had several championship BB teams. Additional class room space was made available with this new addition. In 1950 the gym was enlarged to the south. What really happened was the basketball court was enlarged so one didn't have to worry about hitting the wall on a basketball fast break.



The Maypole dance was an activity I never really had the chance to participate. I never could dance until I went to MCRD in San Diego. I am told the goal was to make different designs with the colored strings and ribbon as you wove your path around the pole.

Freshman initiation historically was a great thing. The Seniors got the pleasure of causing stress on the freshman. From what I can find, in those early days the boys at least had some physical stress with running a belt line and feeling belt buckles. In the mid 1950's I thought it was fun, Both as a freshman and a senior. The process started when you arrived at school dressed funny, the progressed all day and ended with a parade down town. When you arrived at the school in the evening various tasks were assigned to the freshman. Some were individual tasks and some were a group effort. The group effort

was polishing the gym floor with a tooth brush or your nose depending upon the year. Shining shoes. Stuff like that. the individual tasks may be pushups, or scavenger type hunts for specific items. This could be an individual event or an event involving one or two additional helpers.

I suppose it could have been considered hazing, but I never felt that way, and everyone knew from past history what to expect. In the really old day it might have been hazing. I don't think it is part of the school function today.

And of course all the boys out for football had to worry about the square needle. My attitude was if they could do it I could do it. I did wonder how it might feel. The fear was unfounded, but if it were true, I think it might have been more than I wanted.

In 1954 the old elementary school was torn down and a new grade school was constructed east of the original grade school. It was all on one level. 1961 a new wing was added for the 1st grade. Eventually the grade school would occupy most of the block.

Suzy Ross Delights 1st Graders at Tonganoxie

with her knowledge of the Delaware Indians and there life in Leavenworth Co., Kans. Among those who know her, she is recognized as an authority on the life and living style of the Delaware. She is shown her discussing her collection of Indian articles they may have used. Suzy has done this type of presentation for other groups, but this time she was invited by the Tonganoxie Grade School to make a presentation to the first graders.

