

TONGANOXIE COMMUNITY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

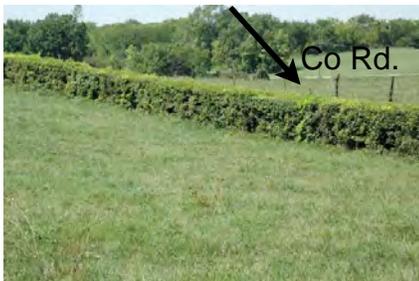
October 2011



What's This?

This fence is located a few miles northeast of Jarbalo, Kansas. It can be viewed a few hundred feet south from the chip and seal road seen in the background. Historically, these fences served an extremely important function, especially before barbed wire. Have you guessed what this is? These fences were said to be **“horse high, bull strong, and hog tight”**.

I drove by this fence for 25 years and never saw it until I met Bill Barnhardt who told me what this was.



You have probably determined that this is a living Osage Orange (*Maclura pomifera*) Fence. Before barbed wire became available, these fences were made to keep the farmer's livestock where they needed to be. Most of today's hunters



have seen Osage Orange in fence rows and loved the hunting provided. The trees were 50 feet high and limbs drooped down to the ground providing a canopy. If you could make a path to get inside this canopy you could discover some wonderful hunting.

Before barbed wire there was said to be over 250,000 miles of Osage Fence. In 1850 the seed was \$50.00 per bushel and to make a “mature” fence required 3-5 years. During this period of time many hours of planting and pruning (**watch out for thorns**) were needed to establish an animal tight fence. And indeed, it probably required many hours of pruning each year to control the area and height of the fence.

The Osage Orange tree is still used for fences, but generally it is used for posts which easily survive 50 years. The wood is sought for burning. The BTU's per cord is said to be the highest of any wood in the U.S. Beware of using wood in fireplaces due to the red hot embers popping sometimes onto floors. The wood is also used to make bows and walking canes. Because of this historic feature the tree was also called *bois d'arc*, or "bow-wood". The American Indians used this wood for clubs and bows.

The scientific category of the Osage Orange tree is related to the Mulberry tree. And although many people use the fruit of the Mulberry tree for making jelly and pie, I think the squirrel is the only mammal who seeks the fruit of the Osage Orange tree. The Osage Orange tree is not native to this country, but it obviously adapts extremely well. The native area of this tree is the Red River Valley of Texas and Oklahoma.

Linda bids farewell

Linda Disanto, Editor of the Tonganoxie Community Historical Society (TCHS) since June 2007, has decided to retire. She has published five newsletters each year. Prior to that time she and **Betty Englen** produced a one page newsletter that was given out at the monthly meetings.

Linda said that George Cooper wanted her to do a monthly newsletter, but she believed she would have the time for the quarterly printings plus a year end printing.

Although she was known as the editor of the newsletter, she was also responsible for acquiring people to present programs, and she was also responsible for the membership of the society. Two very important jobs. She was very pleased that **Bill** (program chairman) and **Kathy** (membership chairman) **Peak** became members and relieved her from those positions.

As the editor of the newsletter, Linda believed that she could encourage more people to be active in the society. It was her goal to gather information, organize the information and present the material to the society in an interesting manner and this would develop interest in the community and the historical society.

Linda will be missed in many ways. She was known as the editor, but she also quietly worked on grants and other projects that many people were unaware.

Yes. Linda will be greatly missed by the Tonganoxie Community Historical Society. The new editor will call on her for much help in the future. He has appreciated all the willing help that she has given to him.

We all wish her the best and that she does not forget "where we work"!!!

Hello! Perry

Perry Walters has agreed to become the news editor of the TCHS' newsletter. Although he has not been seen around "the site" as much as his wife, Laurie, he has been behind the scenes in some of his work.

He has quietly produced some work for the historical society. One of his many hobbies is making and editing movies. He has produced two "Ken Burns" type of movies for the historical society. One on the Class of 1957 from first to twelfth grade and to adulthood. The other is "Ghost Towns around Tonganoxie". The Ghost Town project is also printed as a hard copy.

This winter he converted 50 cassette tapes to CDs so that if one desires they can be utilized for entertainment or research. He and his wife had the VHS movie of Tonganoxie's Jack Hoey, a silent movie star, converted to a DVD so it could be used.

At present he has recorded the P.A.S.T./TCHS production at Hubbell Hill Cemetery and in conjunction with Kathy Peak and Connie Putthoff, an interview with "Bud" Laming.

In the future these interviews will be filmed and edited and placed in the historical site for those wanting to know "how it was" in Tonganoxie's history.

Connie and Kathy will do most of the interviewing and Perry will do the filming and editing. He reserves the right to ask a few questions if needed.

Perry hopes that many of our members will submit articles for publication and for the enjoyment of other members.



"Age is an issue of mind over matter. If you don't mind, it doesn't matter". Mark Twain

IT'S IN THE MUSEUM

The museum maintains an ongoing collection of programs and interviews of items and people/families of general and historical interest. Connie Putthoff, Kathy Peak and Perry Walters are currently in the process of interviewing community members who have extensive historical interest and knowledge about the area of Tonganoxie and the surrounding area. This past winter all of the VHS and cassette tapes held by the museum were converted to DVDs and CD's.

The recent and future interviews will be made as a video DVD.

The items listed below are programs and interviews that you can listen or view for acquiring knowledge about the history of this area.

1. Jack Hoey -CD- interview by Margaret Gallagher, Grace Schilling, Helen Schilling with Tom Holton --Jack Hoey discusses being a movie star, rodeoing, being a cowboy, old buildings and families around Tonganoxie. **He addition he discusses Jean Harlow, who attended Tonganoxie High School for a short time.**
2. Jack Hoey-DVD-Stars in "*Tracy the Outlaw*" a silent western movie.
3. John Lenahan- CD- reflects on Tonganoxie, Angell Hotel, Northwestern RR., Black Americans, Magdalena Bury and others.
4. Judge Pierron- DVD- Program by the Judge
5. Charles "Foy: Brown- CD-program on Foy Brown, noted ventriloquist, by Fred Leimkuhler,
6. Foy Brown & wife-CD- discussion of puppet carving and jokes
7. Underground railroad-CD- Fred Leimkuhler discusses the Underground Railroad. 2 parts
8. Women- CD- Rev, Sandra Discusses women

9. Collectibles and Coins- CD- Sturtridge discusses coin collecting and other collectibles.
10. Submarines in the Civil War-CD-Alex Sewell
11. Geology of the Region-CD-Carmen King, geologist
12. *The Moccasin Speaks* CD-Arlene Jauken discusses her grandmother and great aunt being captured by the Indians, after their parents were killed. The two young children survived over 30 days on the prairie in 1870's.
13. History of Basehor-CD- TCHS program
14. Reno History DVD- Frances Korb discusses Reno, KS.
15. Reno Church DVD- TCHS program
16. Major Albert Huffman, Mrs. Pamela Huffman and Mother Bikerdyke-DVD Jacque and Hershel Stroud present TCHS program.
17. Ghost Towns-DVD & bound copy. A compilation of towns around Tonganoxie that no longer exist or are in serious decline.
18. Harvey Girls -CD- TCHS programs about Harvey Girls and Santa Fe Railroad.

This list represents a small number of the outstanding programs presented at the TCHS site. There are many more programs but due to space this number is limited.



HOST FAMILIES

- Oct. 25 Donna & Emil Wiley and June Hagenbusch
Nov 22 Carol Stouffer and Esther Eason

Dec 13 Christmas Party. Everyone brings finger food. time 6 P. M.

MUSEUM HAPPENING

The historical society (TCHS) has a pictorial display at the Leavenworth County Court House. It presents The Tonganoxie Community Historical Society. It will be there for 30 days. Already a request for a speaker from our society has been requested. Perhaps we need to establish a **speaker's bureau** to provide other clubs information about our historical society.



The Leavenworth County Fair once again had the pleasure of viewing the "Old Fire Truck" once used by the Tonganoxie Fire Dept. and restored by TCHS.. Larry Ross and Jim Stuke rode on the truck with Larry



Ross driving the truck. Larry reports that this truck is not that easy to drive. For one thing the power steering is manual and shifting gears is not a simple process.

The P.A.S.T. people in conjunction with TCHS entertained the local community. Three presentations of "Cemetery Walks" were given. Twelve presenters portrayed people who are buried in Hubbell Hill Cemetery. Each portrayal had historical importance to Tonganoxie, Each program was threatened by rain but the show went on in dry conditions.

The youngest performer was Chase Elkins, who



played Dickie Pearson, a young lad who died of leukemia while in the fourth grade.

Keyta Kelly, local attorney, known for presenting performances on Hilda Clark and Laura Elkins, known for being Madame Carrie Hall, and presenter, Kathy Peak, seen as Molly Myers, have performed previously at our historical site. The official name of this organization is First City's Presenter and Story Tellers (P. A. S.T.). The programs have been enjoyed by all.

JIM STUKE, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD "SPEAKS"

The news media is already starting to report about the 2012 Presidential Elections and the numerous individuals who want to be considered as a candidate.

OUR SOCIETY WILL BE ELECTING OFFICERS THIS NOVEMBER. We will be electing a **President, Vice-President** and **two board members**. The term for these officers is one year for the president and vice-president. The board members serve a term of three years.

The nominating committee for this year is Jim Stuke, Connie Putthoff and Laurie Walters. A list of nominees will be presented to the membership by the nominating committee at the October meeting. The membership will have until two weeks prior to the November election to present additional names for the above positions. These names must be presented to the nomination committee in writing.

The nominating committee encourages the members to submit as many names as possible. We hope to see many names of people willing to serve.



*"I never let my school interfere with my education", **Mark Twain***

*"A nickle ain't worth a dime anymore".
Yogi Berra*

CONNIE'S CORNER

A message from the President

There is a small group of people who have been documenting all, and restoring some of the cemeteries in Leavenworth County. This has been a considerable amount of work. The job consists of evaluating all the grave markers, gathering all the information possible and recording this information. The Sexton, if known, is contacted to verify the information. Sometimes the markers are not located where the



people are actually buried. Some burials do not have any grave

marker. In these cases the information that the Sexton has becomes very significant.

Many stones have much of the information worn so it isn't easily read. In these cases various techniques are attempted to discern what is actually printed on the grave stone.

Once the information about a grave marker is completed. it is then given to Jeff Culbertson and he enters

the information on a web site. Jeff is located at the GIS department in the Leavenworth County Court House.

The Hubbell Hill Cemetery project is being done by Jenny Alden, Carol Slawson and myself. Ed Slawson helps when we need additional help. This project involves evaluation of Carol and Ed's cemetery records, library card files, family members, and other items as necessary.

This project is much more extensive than other cemetery projects because more detail is being recorded. It has involved a great amount of time and will involve more time, but when completed it will be one of the easiest cemeteries to locate a burial with the exception of Sacred Heart.

WHO IS THIS??



A long time member of this community. An active member of TCHS. He loves to mow grass. For mowing too fast he has received speeding tickets

Answer next news letter

TCHS is a non profit organization interested in sharing history with the community

MUSEUM DIRECTOR'S WORDS

by Susie Ross

IT'S FREE

The TCHS is planning a **special celebration, April 28, 2012 at the historical site**. This family festival begins at 9 A.M. and ends at 4 P. M. **This special event will have exhibitors demonstrating and teaching, through living history, how life was in the 19th century.**

Fur traders, Civil War re-enactors, pioneers from the Mormon Trail, Oregon Trail, Santa Fe Trail and homesteaders are welcome. In this regard we are looking for volunteers who can make rope, soap, butter, candles, carve wood, spin wool, spin a tale, knit, weave, play the fiddle and etc.--people who can share any 19th century skill or craft.

The Bald Eagle Mountain Men will provide an encampment featuring skills such as black smithing, candlemaking, archery, flint knapping, fire starting, knife and tomahawk throwing, and how to make flutes and powder horns. These people sharing their 19th skills and crafts will have items for sale.

There will be a quilt show in the Reno Church, and an old time school teacher in the Honey Valley School, and children's games will be played.

In the old barn there will be (for a small fee) an old fashioned lunch.

We are asking that volunteers dress in period clothing. Those interested, please contact Susie Ross, at kanza@basicisp.net or call 913-845 2477 to secure a place in this festival.

MAINTENANCE REPORT

by Lloyd Pearson

The rock and dirt work has been completed at the Washington Street entrance. Material to replace the split rail fence at the entrance has been ordered. The fence will soon be completed. Editor's note: *The work on the entrance has really improved the appearance of the entrance to the site.*

The Maintenance on the outside of the museum has been completed, and the work on the barn will soon be completed.

Thanks to the Calovich Construction for donating a load of fill dirt to reduce the number of low spots around the grounds. Grass has been planted in these areas.

TCHS EVENING PROGRAMS

by Bill Peak

Oct. 25 ***The appeal to reason and its influence on America*** Socialist weekly published in Girard, Kansas & its impact on America. Randy Roberts, Pittsburg State University. TIME 7 P. M.

Nov. 22 ***"Men were cheap, Cattle cost money"*** 150 yrs. of Kansas beef and beefpacking industry. Historical examination of Kansas beefpacking & its impact on communities. Donald Stull, University of Kansas. TIME 7 P.M.

Dec 13 CHRISTMAS PARTY
Bring food and enjoy singing, santa and friends AT THE BARN TIME 6 P.M.!!!!

Mowing does continue, but it has slowed due to the season.

THE FISH WAS TRESPASSING

Consider this situation during World War II. For those who don't remember or are not old enough to remember the personal sacrifices all people made during this war, I ask you to think about RATIONING and all that was involved. This editor was age 5 and wanted a sand pile but there was no gas available to haul the sand. Food, especially meat, was rationed. People bought bonds, stamps, and made huge sacrifices so material goods, food etc. could be available for the soldiers.

Think about how Stranger Creek could flood. Since the 1950's it has been straightened and all the trees cut away from the banks. Plus there are numerous farm ponds to divert water run-off. "Stranger" still floods, but it doesn't flood like it did during the time before 1953/4

Now this is the picture. It's 1943 and Stranger Creek had one of its severe floods, and as usual, the fish had gone out of the banks and into the fields. As the water receded into its normal banks, the fish, as usual, did not. Many of the fish stayed in the fields to eventually die.

Alton Grems was the ice man and was in the territory of Edminister (no longer exists). This was along old forty highway, now known as Evans Road. Just east of Earl Parson's home, where the fish were,

the land is low and flat on both sides of the road. Alton had a large family and he saw the fish swimming in the corn rows. These fish were big and he saw meat. As he was ice picking the fish the game warden saw him. He was arrested for fishing illegally and immediately brought before Judge Walters.

The Judges saw what the problem was. Alton could use the fish. The fish left in the fields were going to die. He had used an illegal method of fishing. The judge wanting to do all he could to have a practical solution, consulted his law books and discovered that since the fish were out of a stream or a lake, the laws

of fishing did not apply. He ruled the **fish were trespassing** and dismissed the case. Several lawyers across the state were upset.

This made the national news papers, the Saturday Evening Post and many of the WW II soldiers in Europe and Asia saw this item in the military paper, "The Stars and Stripes".

New Wrinkle In Fish Law

Legal Circles Are Upset By Tonga Justice In a Fish Case

Fish jurisdiction at Tonganoxie bids fair to take its place in the legal history of the finny tribe, when a game warden from Kansas City, Kansas hooked Alton Grems, Tonganoxie ice man Monday, on a charge of illegal fishing and brought him into the judicial chambers of Judge Perry Walters, justice of the peace of Tonganoxie Township.

It all started some time ago when Stranger Creek, in one of its numerous floods, left some backwater in a corn field east of Tonganoxie, and Monday the Tonganoxie ice man was after a large carp, left stranded there with the tool of his trade—an ice pick. At this most inopportune moment the game warden came upon the scene.

The legal proceedings got under way with Judge Walters perusing the legal angles relative to fish. It seems that the law provides that it is illegal to fish except with hook and line in any lake or stream. Whereupon, the judge ruled as follows:

Since backwater from a flood is neither a stream nor a lake, is of an impermanent nature and temporary nature, and since the fish are in fact trespassers upon the farmers cornfield—the accused is therefore not guilty of violating the state law and therefore the case is dismissed. However, the ice man has his ice pick now exclusively engaged in the ice business—and temptation and the meat shortage being what it is—is no longer interested in fish stranded in the overhang of a flood. Who knows? It might be appealed.

Put Tonga On the Map!

Fish Yarn Gets An Echo From Bracey's In Chicago, Ill.

It looks like Alton Grems fish story, in which he unsuccessfully tried to land a carp with an ice pick only to have a visit from the game warden—seems to have gone all over the United States. Mrs. L. E. Bracey of 1125 South Wesley, Oak Park, Ill., sends a copy of the Chicago Tribune with the Tonganoxie items on page 1, giving Judge Perry Walters decision that the fish was "trespassing in a Kansas corn field." Mrs. Bracey writes:

"I was surprised this morning while reading the Chicago Tribune to see an item about my home town. These Chicago people can no longer say they never heard of Tonganoxie as it made the front page right here in Chicago. We are both fine and enjoy reading the Mirror. The Chicago center for soldiers is one of the finest places I have ever seen."

Judge Walters has a red hot letter from Clelland Cole, editor of the St. John, Kansas, News, who says: "I was raised in Jefferson county so while I do not know you personally I am interested in this matter. You have done a fine deed in turning Grems loose for trying to catch a carp with an ice pick. The carp is the worst menace to fish of anything in the water except gars. The protection of carp is tantamount to protecting weasels and coyotes. I would like to get rid of them with an ice pick, hatchet,

gun, spear or gig—or anything else."

Not Violation of Law to Attack Fish With Icepick

Tonganoxie, Kas., June 15—(P)—Alton Grems, Tonganoxie iceman, lost a brush with a stranded carp but won a bout with a game warden.

Grems spied a carp isolated in backwater of Stranger creek. He grabbed the tool of his trade, an ice pick and went to the attack. His attempt on the carp's life was timed exactly with the appearance of a game warden.

The warden took him to Justice of the Peace Perry Walters and charged him with illegal fishing.

Judge Walters looked into all the angles of anglers laws and dismissed the case with this ruling:

"Since backwater from a flood is neither a stream nor a lake, is of an impermanent nature and temporary nature, and since fish are trespassers on farmers cornfields, the accused is innocent of violating any state law—case dismissed." Grems didn't get the carp.