

TONGANOXIE COMMUNITY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

3rd QUARTER NEWSLETTER; September 2021

Nixon's run for the President of United States; Chicago, 1960. Kansas sent 4 bus loads of kids to the convention—"Youth for Nixon" you should know at least 2 people here



Gracie Reusch

I don't know much about the family history of Merle and Gracie Reusch. Merle had some relatives who lived in the Eudora, Kansas area. He never talked about them. You knew they existed because Gracie might mention them in passing.

Gracie had a sister who lived in Overland Park, Kansas. She mentioned her once in a while. I don't know how many nieces and nephews Gracie had, but I do know that every summer each of the three older girls would stay one week, each, with Merle and Gracie.—and they loved it. When these girls got older it seems that once or twice two girls came at the same same time to spend their week with Aunt Gracie. One of those girls now lives in the Tonganoxie area and in fact she ran for the school board, but lost the election.



These annual visitations lasted for many years. I never kept track, but I would guess that they all came for more than 6 years.

If you had kids and lived in the Tonganoxie area you had to know Gracie. If you made it to Gracie's your kids always got some free candy. Now, this would not happen every day, but more like once a week or two. Gracie did this for more than 40 years. Can you imagine how many pounds of candy this might be?

Young people who didn't really understand the difference between Gracie, the person and and Gracie's candy, thought that word Gracie meant a type of candy and not a person. These younger kids would think the word Gracie was candy. Generally, it would take several years of angst to figure out that. Yes the word Gracie meant a person and you would be getting some candy given by Gracie.



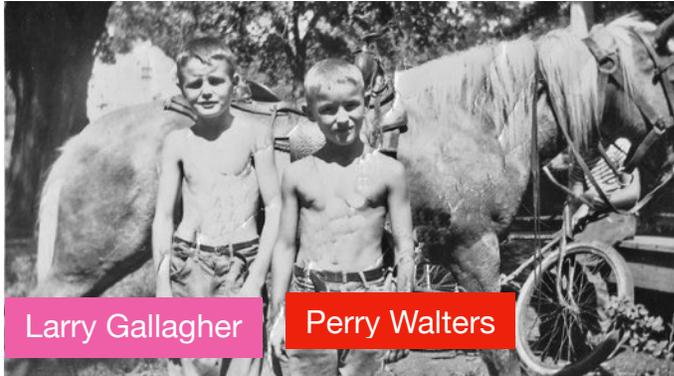
One evening Gracie was gone and Merle was managing the store. The Reusch family always kept a large supply of candy. It was about 8 PM and I guess little Perry Walters age 5 looked hungry for candy. Merle noticed my actions and said, "Bud! (I hated being called Bud) You want some candy. Just get up in there and eat all you want". I did just that. I found myself sitting among all the candy anyone could hope to eat. It was Hog Heaven!!! I had Hersey bars, Milky Ways, Tootsie Rolls and others. I think the eating lasted about 15 minutes. I was fine until I got home, and then I vomited all over the kitchen floor. My mother was angry and I got a little lecture, but Merle got a phone call. I think that was the last time anyone was offered all the candy they could eat.

Merle and Gracie had no children but Gracie loved all kids. Merle liked kids too, but he was somewhat reserved in his actions towards little kids. When the kids got older he could better understand them and at that point he could communicate with them. Merle loved to tease kids.

Merle and Gracie not only provided kids with free candy, they also helped many kids earn money. Gracie would buy empty pop bottles, beer bottles and quart beer bottles. At this time there were no cans of pop. All pop, beer, etc., were in glass bottles and those bottles were worth some money. Many kids picked up these bottles and brought them to Gracie for

redemption. Gracie paid **full value** which was 2 cents for pop bottles, 3 cents for a beer bottle, and 5 cents for a quart beer bottle. She sold the pop bottles to the pop distributors, but I don't know how she got rid of the beer bottles.

Picking up these glass bottles was an easy way for a 9 year old to make some spending money. It worked quite easily for Larry Gallagher and me. We would saddle up "Old Goldie", put about 4 gunny sacks on her back and ride around the highway with one picking up the bottles and the other guiding the pony and managing the gunny sacks with the bottles. We would switch jobs every so often to balance the work. The most lucrative highway area for bottles was from the high school football field west then slightly south to 2nd street. To get all of the bottles you had to work both sides of the highway. You won't believe the amount of money we could make in the month of June in preparation for buying firecrackers for the Fourth of July. We both liked the two inch firecrackers (not Chinese). We got a really good deal too. The usual price was 2 for a nickel. Because we could buy a box of 50 of the firecrackers for 50 cents, we got a really good deal and could buy as many as we wanted with money left over.



Merle and Gracie operated a gasoline filling station. At first it was Skelly and later it became Mobile. At that point Bernard Uhrich was involved because he brought Mobile gasoline to the farmers. Merle and Gracie actually operated two businesses. Gracie operated the filling station and those items associated with a filling station. In addition she kept the books and also managed to keep Merle's schedule so he knew where the next trucking job would be.

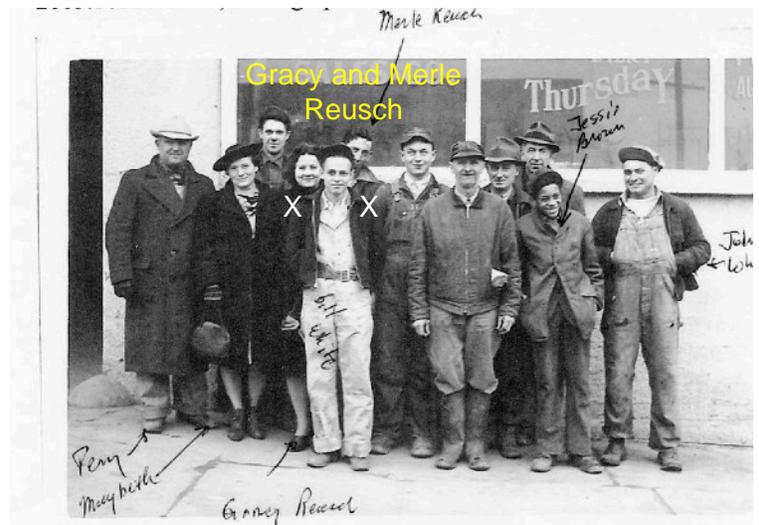
Merle's trucking business involved two items. The bulk of his business was hauling cattle and hogs to market or from one farm to another. During the wheat and corn harvest he would clean up the truck bed and haul the grain to various markets. Later in his business he became the person to haul water from the town to the country. It seems that many people were moving out of the city to the country and drinking water was not always available. Therefore, trucking water for many years was a good and reliable business.

The name of the trucking business was "Walters and Reusch Trucking". I'm not sure about the word "Trucking", but the words "Walters and Reusch" were permanent. Here is how it worked. Merle wanted a truck line for his business. Perry Walters loaned him the money to purchase the truck and became a partner. The partnership lasted about 3-4 years. When the loan was paid off Perry Walters ceased to be a partner, but because of the amount of paperwork involved to change the name, it was decided to keep the original name of "Walters and Reusch".

Here is a good story about Merle and the trucking business. It was during the 1951 flood. Merle happened to be down in the livestock area of 12th street. It was at the base of the hill that goes up to the Follies Theater. He had emptied animals from his truck and was deciding how to get home. He started up 12th street just as one of the dykes broke.

He put his truck in low gear and pushed two cars up 12th street with Kaw river water in the back of his truck bed. He was lucky and made it home to tell the story.

Merle and Gracie did not own any part of the sale barn. Mr. Walters bought the barn ca the middle of 1930's. The people who owned the building prior to Mr. Walters were a family known as White. They were originally Quakers, I believe, and they operated an automobile repair facility. There was another White family in Tonganoxie who operated a Phillip 66 station. This family was from Reno, Kansas. Perry Walters operated the sale barn until a few years after the 1951 flood. Because the flood took most of the farm animals, there was not much to sell nor was there any money to buy animals. Merle and Gracie rented the filling station. I never knew what the rent was, but I expect it was a good deal for Merle and Gracie.



In fact, I don't believe Merle and Gracie owned any real estate. They rented all the places that I knew about. One home was at the base of George Road. The building was some distance south of George Road. They also rented a home on 2nd street. It was two houses east of J.C. Laming's home. Another home they rented was east off K-16 hwy. It was located below the crest of the hill in an area that you could not see the home except in the winter. This was a road just south of the Haigwood home that went east. This road ceased after you got to the home. This road was about 1/4 mile long. I remember this house because one afternoon I was staying there with Gracie. While there she showed to me a very old United States stamp. It was black with a few small areas appearing white. She said the man on the stamp was George Washington and the stamp was valuable. I have recently wondered if the home was in the area known as "Little Dixie"

The strangest place they used as home was the storage area of the filling station. This area was a few steps below the business area of the filling station. I was never down in that area, but from the work area you could look down the steps and see items involved in a filling station business. Tires, boxes of oils and grease—all the items you would expect to see in a storage area. Where they washed, bathed/showered, cleaned their clothes, etc, I will never know, but without discussion one has to admit it was a unique place to live. Merle and Gracie lived longer here than any other place I know.

The final story—Soon after John Shoemaker bought the sale barn, he was going through the boxes and items in the area where Merle and Gracie slept. He discovered several cigar boxes full of coins. He took over \$900.00 in coins out to the nursing home where Merle and Gracie lived the rest of their lives and gave the money to them.

MOLLY MYERS AND THE MYERS HOTEL

The first Elliott hotel that we know about was seen on the north side of 4th street. Benjamin Elliott was listed as the owner of this hotel. After the Elliott family moved their hotel business to the north side of second street (near the old high school), the Jones brothers operated a grocery store on 4th street where the Elliott's hotel had been located. We have no photo of the Elliott hotel located on 4th street. The photo seen on our left is of the Jones brothers grocery store, which had been the Elliott hotel.



Elliott hotel later the Jones grocery store

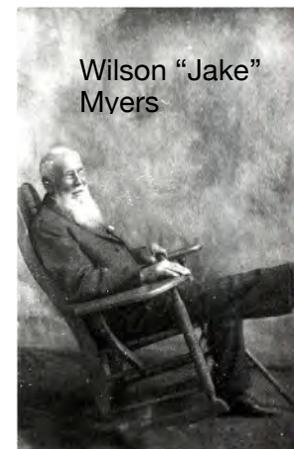
Two of Benjamin Elliott's daughters, Mrs John Pearce and Molly Elliott (later she was a Myers) eventually were in the hotel business.

Mrs. John Pearce and her husband lived in what would become a hotel operated by Ida Jeanquart (It was torn down a few years ago.). This house was on the SW corner of 3rd and Delaware. Jack Hoey in his interview noted that the Pearce home was never a hotel, but was a family home. John Pearce worked for the county and built bridges. In 1908 Mrs Pearce was listed as the owner of the Elliott hotel which was now on the north side of 2nd street near the old high school.



The photo to our left was taken in 1900. It is the Myers Hotel. In 1866 Magdalena Bury owned the building on this lot. This building did not resemble the Myers Hotel.

Benjamin Elliott owner of Elliott hotel



Wilson "Jake" Myers

This photo is a copy of a tin-typist's copy of a photograph of a very early settler, Tongaxoxie. Jake was a civil war veteran, where he lost his leg and his wife, Molly, founded the known Myers House Hotel on the northwest corner of 3rd and M Street, across from the swimming pool. The Myers family operated the hotel for many years. It is known nationally for its family-fried chicken dinners. A bed & breakfast continues to operate at the site making it in continuous operation for over 100 years.

In 1868 the building was purchased by Jame McKeehan and operated as a mercantile store until 1879. The original hotel was constructed in 1879. In 1894 Mollie Myers purchased this building. Mollie began remodeling this 15 year old building to become the famous Myers hotel. In 1908 a dinning room was added to the hotel building. In 1925 the south part was added. This would be the last addition to the Myers Hotel.

On October 1884 Molly Elliot became Molly Myers, Her husband was Wilson “Jake” Myers, a Civil War veteran. He had lost his leg in that war. Jake suffered many ailments the last several years of his life. His memory was not functioning as it should. Physical problems added to his situation. Jake died in 1900.

The wedding, held in the Elliott hotel, was a great social event with over 100 people attending. All the people who knew the wedding party were there. It lasted until midnight. The guests went home well fed on food that would normally be difficult to acquire and difficult to prepare for 100+ attendees.

James McKeehan was Molly’s grandfather, and in 1894 the building became the Myers Hotel. Throughout the hotel’s early history, it was extremely impressive. The hotel was a destination point, and people came from all over to enjoy the fine chicken dinners provided by the hotel. General Pershing ate lunch at the hotel on his way to Ft. Riley. Major Dwight D, Eisenhower came down from Ft. Leavenworth to enjoy the chicken dinners. Also, William Inge is supposed to have dined here. That contact may have provided Inge the idea of the play, **Bus Stop**. Later the play was made into a movie starring Marilyn Monroe.

At some point in time Mr. and Mrs ‘Benjamin Elliott moved from the Elliott hotel to the Myers Hotel. This probably was because Mollie could use their help. Also, Mrs Pearce, one of the Elliott’s daughters, had become the manager of the Elliot hotel on 2nd street, just north of the old High School. Therefore, they weren’t needed at the Elliott hotel, and Mollie needed their help. She had children to raise, animals to feed, hotel to mange and her husband was beginning to have physical problems.

From 1919 to 1934 both the Greyhound and the Santa Fe busses stoped at the hotel. It was a stop that allowed the travelers some respite. They could eat a meal and clean up. It was another way for people to learn about the Myers hotel.



Molly Myers was regionally known for her outstanding chicken dinners. She raised her own chickens and had a milk cow to give her customer fresh milk. Mollie was also noted for keeping the eating area very clean and attractive. The main room looked as seen in the photo to the left.

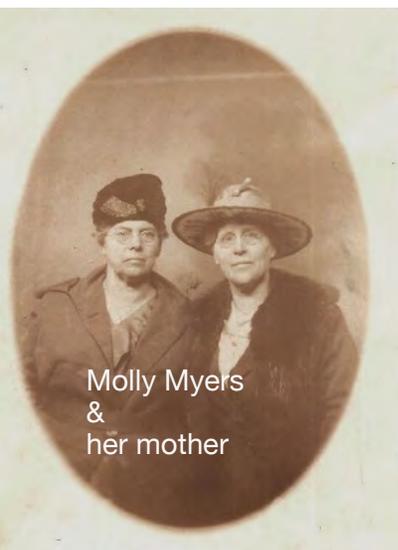
One of the most humorous stories was the life guard, Len Burres, from the swimming pool would come over to the hotel to eat his lunch. Physically, he was a muscular person who looked like a life guard, but his body was heavily covered with hair. It was speculated that some of the women in his area probably discussed the situation.

This photo is Molly Myers and her mother, Mrs. Benjamin Elliott.

In 1931 Molly Myers died. Francis & Jake Myers II continued to operate the hotel business until 1934 when it closed. I am not sure why the hotel remained closed for so many years. It may have something to do with the depression and drought in the '30's.

The Barber family had been living and managing the Jones hotel located in the 600 block of 4th street. In 1940 Old “Doc” Barber had a fight with the owner. The owner kicked the Barber family out of the hotel. The Barber family promptly went to the sheriff’s sale and bought the Myers hotel.

Almeda removed the restaurant business and established a women’s hair salon. It was very successful and well enjoyed by the ladies of Tonganoxie. She rented rooms on a daily basis to those traveling, but she also rented rooms on a long term basis. I



Molly Myers
&
her mother

remember Alice Ford who lived there for many years. Her son, Loren Ford, also lived there until he graduated from high school.

Almeda Barber Tinberg operated this building for many years, but the source of income changed from hotel and restaurant to hair salon and long term room rental. There also were some bed and breakfast business later in its operation.

The Interurban Trolley (Trolley Travel in 1918)

By Mary Cox

My great-grandfather, Wm Reetz, had a dairy farm. Every morning he would take the ten gallon milk cans to meet the interurban at Lansdown station. The interurban trolley line ran on the north side of the Kansas River from Kansas City to Lawrence. The daily schedule included fifteen trains going each way with trolley cars leaving every hour.

There were twenty stations and flag stops between Bonner Springs and Lawrence. They were named for the farmers owning property along the line and some were named for the schools. There were two substations between



Bonner Springs and Lawrence, Mahane and Kent. Kent is still standing today very near my farm. At the Kent substation there was a ticket office, a waiting room, and a high voltage transformer. The current was fed into the overhead trolley cables that powered the trains. In building this thirty-five mile line from Kansas City to Lawrence, it ran through three Kansas Counties—Wyandotte, Leavenworth, and Douglas.

Both children and dogs were allowed to ride on the passenger trolleys. Children rode free until age five. Then they were charged half fare until age twelve. If they were twelve years old or older, they were charged full fare. If riding from Lawrence to Bismarck one nickel was collected; from Linwood to Kansas City, it cost seventy-two cents, or from Lawrence to Kansas City it cost passengers \$1.08 for one way fare.

Owners of dogs were charged twenty-five cents no matter what the distance.

The passenger cars each had seating room for sixty people and standing room for sixty people. In 1922 the line estimated it handled 500,000 passengers a year. The train would go speeds of sixty miles per hour. That would make a very wobbly, bumpy ride !!!

The Interurban also had freight cars that carried many farmers' milk to market along the flag stops, and produce to market in Kansas City. Many cars were added to carry the famous Kaw Valley Potato Crop (many families, even children, from Tonganoxie went to the Kaw river to dig potatoes.) Some years between three hundred fifty to four hundred carloads of potatoes were hauled.

The trolley made it possible for Lawrence residents to shop and attend events in Kansas City and still return by the end of the same day. Passenger trolleys took Kansas City folks to Kansas University and Haskell sports events. KU football games on Thanksgiving Day drew crowds so large that the interurban ran two double-car trains to the field.

Until Henry Ford invented the Model T Car the interurban railroad was our highway. The Interurban had provided a quick and inexpensive way for each passenger to get to their destination. After people could afford cars and paved roads were built, the interurban had very few passengers. After passengers quit riding, the interurban continued carrying produce in freight cars for many years. My great-grandfather took his milk a mile and a half north of his farm to the Lansdown station. I am the fourth generation living on that same farm. Today we travel the very same interurban route that is known today as K-32 highway.

There are still two of the charging stations present today. One is one mile west of Co. Rd #1 and south of K-32. A second charging station is located on the East side of the county near Co. Rd #2. The dark photo is of the charging station located near Fall Leaf. The lighter colored charging station is located near Co. #2.



Charging Stations for Interurban

From Wikipedia: The **Kansas City, Kaw Valley and Western Railway (reporting mark KV&W)**^[1] was an **interurban** electric railway that ran between the **American** cities of **Lawrence, Kansas**, and **Kansas City, Missouri**, between 1914 and 1963. Passenger service was eliminated on the Lawrence segment prior to its demise in 1949. The line between Kansas City, Kansas and Bonner Springs, Kansas remained an electric freight operation until 1963. Major portions of **Kansas Highway 32** are built on the original roadbed.

The line was opened in 1914 between Kansas City and **Bonner Springs, Kansas**. In 1916 the line extended to Lawrence. The line had 75 passenger station stops, and trains left Kansas City hourly between 5:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m.T

Ed. note: Feb 1917 Whitsed Laming Jr. attempted to establish an electric commuter train with Belgian help. The name of the train was to be The KANSAS CITY AND SOUTHWESTERN ELECTRIC RAILROAD. From a news article in the *Tonganoxie Mirror*: A reception was held for Whitsed Laming when he returned home from securing a loan of \$12,000,000.00 for an Interurban Railroad (an electric trolley line) that would extend from Kansas City, Topeka and Independence, Ks. Mr. Laming and Mr. Gould** (a western man) negotiated the loan from Europeans. I have never heard nor read any news articles that suggest this railroad was ever established.

**The person known in the paragraph above could not have been the Jay Gould who was noted for his railroad investing. That Gould died of TB in 1892. He had several children and the Gould mentioned above could have been one of his male children or grandchildren.

NEW ITEMS IN THE MUSEUM

Thread displays from Win Zoellner



“Win” Zoellner and his mother, Lynn, scheduled a visit to bring us a delightful family donation of three thread cabinets from the Zoellner Mercantile on fourth street. Win is the grandson of Fred Zoellner who owned and operated this store for many years. His father and Lynn’s late husband was John Zoellner. The thread or spool cabinets were display cases which held and displayed thread to be used in sewing (both machine and hand sewing). They would have been in the dry goods section of the general store with fabrics, sewing needles, fabric, and the like. They are:

1. The Merrick’s round cylinder cabinet with stenciled curved glass windows which revolves and has a door at the bottom to retrieve the spool. Spools are loaded through the top via a sliding door which slides open to open the channel lying beneath the door. The Merrick Thread Company in Mansfield, Conn. dates its origin from July, 1865. In 1868 machinery was modified which enabled the company to manufacture six cord thread which was suited for use in the shuttle of the sewing machine.
2. A Clark’s O.N.T. two drawer thread cabinet. The spools were organized inside and the drawers could be opened so the proper color of thread could be selected. The Clark Thread Co. was opened in Newark, N.J. in 1856. O.N.T. stands for “Our New Thread” which was a six-cord thread developed by George Clark for use with sewing machines. In 1952 the company merged with J.&P. Coates and is in business today as Coats & Clark, w.
3. A cabinet style thread cabinet which also displayed thread. Spool may be removed from the bottom by lifting the lid of a flap which is missing.

This gift necessitated that the Zoellner exhibit in the museum complete with door, collar display, shoe stand should be reworked. We invite you to visit us and view the new additions, And yes, the roll of brown paper with the cutter is still in its spot. Let us show you how everything from hamburger to a dress was wrapped.

Visitors to the Museum

On August 14, Carol Dee Knox Smith and her sister Janice Lee Knox Adams visited the museum site, along with Janice’s two daughters, Kris Schellhamer and Kelli Dome. They were most interested in the barns, which were built by Archie Knox, Carol

and Jan's grandfather. They also spent much time reminiscing in the Honey Valley School House where both attended school and both were taught by their mother, Jeanne Knox (Alfred's wife).



Janice was three years older than I and the one thing I remember most about her was she and her horse always got first place in the judging at the Leavenworth fair. My horse always was awarded second. The picture is of Janice's horse with Janice holding the rope and ribbon.



- The X marks a Saffordshire English pottery- a jam jar. This jam jar was owned by Reuchlin Wright, a brother to Wilber and Orville Wright.



Bruce Baker's family history-coming to Kansas- is an interesting story. They were Quakers who came from England to the United States looking for a place to farm. It was February when they arrived in Kansas. They noted that the farmers were working their fields with no shirt. They thought this would be a good comfortable climate to live. It probably didn't take much for them to realize that in February it can be quite warm and then it can be quite cold.

They settled on Stranger creek about 4 miles south of Tonganoxie. Stranger has the reputation for doing some serious flooding. Bruce noted that the creek flooded but since the house was on a small hill, it did not suffer from excess water. However the crops and fields did. His part of the family moved up by the Holton farm which is high with no flooding.

Eva Baker, Bruce's aunt, became the owner of the original place. She married Frank Smith and the place became known as the Smith place. It was noted for excellent cat fishing. The Boy Scouts fished here many times on over night camping trips. There were always lots of Channel Cat fish caught on bank lines.

A hefty solid wood quilt frame was donated. Donna Talbott has oiled and restored antique belts and cleaned our three treadle machines to put them in good working order with free movement and the ability of each to sew a nicely formed stitch. She envisions a seminar to teach the "ins and outs" of treadle sewing.

Sharon Phenicie, Michael Coffin and his wife were also visitors who added to our knowledge of the Phenicie family. They enjoyed looking around the site and viewing the contributions made by their family to our museum.

Rose Mangan, Donna Talbott, Joy Lominska, Jenny Alden, Kris Roberts, and Laurie Walters stay busy making room for new accessions, reworking exhibits, and adding additional information to our archives. We welcome visitors to the site.

Leavenworth County Fair Parade

For the first time in many years, we had a full contingent of people riding on the 1936 fire pumper truck in the Fair parade. We invited participants in our 2021 History Camp to ride on the truck. It was great! What a wonderful perspective to watch the folks who lined the streets that very hot July 27 afternoon. Marie, Jude, Tyler, Will & lane represented the TCHS History Camp.



This list of 12 books written by people with Tonganoxie connection was displayed in the Tonganoxie State Bank. The display was recently removed.



*Little Toy Dog, William White, writing about John McKone

The Old Home Place, Joy Lominska

Jayhawk, Jay Stout with George Cooper (basically George's WW II experience."

**Homemade Biography, Tom Zoellner

The Bear, Lisa Scheller

Formation of the Solar System, James Louis Baker

***Yankee Reporters and Southern Secrets, Michael Fuhlhage

Unfettered, Kent Weatherby, and numerous other titles

Airball, Lisa Harkrader

Fighting the Current There and Back, Jared Jellison

Autobiography, Helen Funkhouser

The Past Speaks, Geoff McCue

*John McKone was the oldest of two boys born to Edna and Jean McKone. "Colonel McKone became famous when his RB-47H reconnaissance bomber was shot down over the Barents Sea on July 1, 1960 by a Soviet MIG-17. He was one of two survivors (Freeman Bruce Olmstead was the other), both of whom were placed in solitary confinement for 7 months in Moscow. They were released on Jan 25, 1961. They were flown to Washington D.C. where they were met plane-side by President John F. Kennedy. A book entitled, The Little Toy Dog, written by William L. White relates the full story of this incident." In Tonganoxie Jean McKone was a well known staunch Republican. He had very little to do with any Democrat. People around town chuckled when they noted that Jean had to thank and shake hands with president John Kennedy the newly elected Democrat President. William White is the son of William Allen White, Emporia, KS.

**Tom Zoellner is the grandson of Walt Zoellner. I believe that this Tom Zoellner's father is also named Tom.

"Tom Zoellner is an American author and journalist. He is the author of popular nonfiction books which take multidimensional views of their subject. His work has been widely reviewed and has been featured on The Daily Show.^[1] His book Island on Fire: The Revolt That Ended Slavery in the British Empire was a finalist for the Bancroft Prize in history and in 2021 won the National Book Critics Circle Award for Nonfiction."

"Zoellner is also the co-author of An Ordinary Man (Viking/Penguin, 2006), the autobiography of Paul Rusesabagina, the real-life hotel manager whose story was featured in the film "Hotel Rwanda." The book was a New York Times bestseller in hardcover and paperback, and was translated into 14 languages."

***"One of the best new Journalism books" -

Michael Fuhlhage delivers a comprehensive look not only at Northern newspaper coverage, but also at how often articles were reprinted through apparent exchange arrangements with other newspapers.... He has done an admirable job of looking at evidence, such as the clippings they saved with their papers and their written responses to news coverage. Historians have widely reported on how generals used their public relations skills to court favorable coverage and followed their image in the press, but Fuhlhage has opened new avenues for exploring the use of news. ... Fuhlhage here presents a disciplined, focused academic approach to the use of

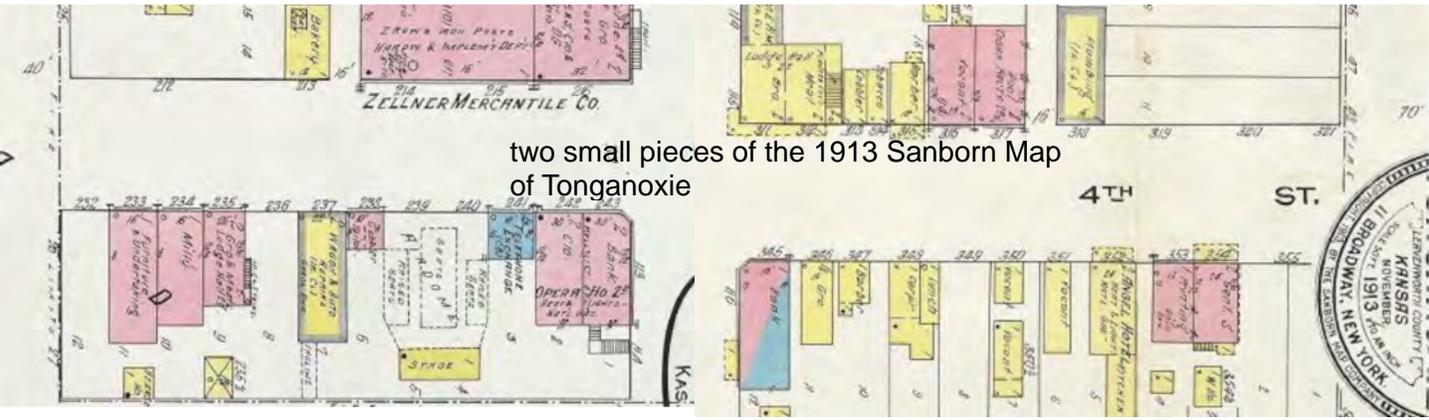
news in making military decisions, while noting the legacies relevant to the continuing use of intelligence in the war on terror."--William E. Huntzicker, Journalism History

Michael Fuhlhage earned his PhD in mass communication at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and his MA in journalism at the University of Missouri. He is an assistant professor at Wayne State University, where he teaches media history, news reporting, and editing.

I believe he and his family were active in 4-H. Quite often they went on the annual weekend rock hunt sponsored by a professor from K-State.

Other visitors bringing family history and family items for donations were Kerry Holton and Lorene Cox. It is rewarding to talk with our visitors and learn about their family connections to Tonganoxie and our history.

Joy Lominska has completed her work on the hanging maps section and it is stunning!! Shown on the Sandborn Fire Insurance Maps of 1913 are the type of business, the form of heating, and of course clearly marked are the huge cisterns buried in the center of the street for water supply in case of fire. Near by hangs the original survey map of the state of Kansas in 1866. Other pages of interest are the many pioneer families with photos, the report of the KKK, and a discussion of how Tonganoxie was given its own quilt pattern from Madam Carrie Hall, noted quilter from Leavenworth.



two small pieces of the 1913 Sanborn Map of Tonganoxie

Restoration of the Reno Church Windows, Doors and Ceiling

In 2020, TCHS received grant awards from the Pete and Margaret Leighty Trust and Leavenworth County. Our goal was to renovate and restore the Reno Church windows and doors and to refresh the ceiling in the church sanctuary.



In the first quarter newsletter of 2021, we showcased the progress made on the restoration of the windows. During the second quarter, we did more planning and were very productive during the third quarter.

We have nearly completed our upgrades to the sanctuary ceiling, which means we have painted the old grid and replaced the old ceiling tiles with new. The original church



ceiling was plaster, and we have seen it while the work has proceeded. We also have saved some pieces of the wallpaper that was on the ceiling and have them in our archives.



All the woodwork on the exterior of the church has been painted. The crew did a great job of scraping and prepping the wood for an oil primer and a finish coat of latex acrylic. The doors leading to the fellowship hall and the lift on the east of the church have both been replaced. One is currently serving as a temporary front door.

And the pair of doors on the front of the church are currently in the hay barn in the final stages of restoration. The doors have been glued and screwed; the water damaged wood has been hardened with an epoxy product and cracks have been filled with an epoxy wood filler. The door panels were removed and replaced. The doors are now ready for paint and then reinstallation.

Volunteer Festival

On September 11, TCHS set up a booth at a Volunteer Festival sponsored by Rural Leavenworth, Inc. We met members of the community and our County Commissioner, Mike Stieben, as we shared information about the museum and historical society. We had two activities for the younger set – making a whirly-gig toy and creating an artifact label. We were also able to share our tent with the Basehor Museum.

40th Anniversary of TCHS

The Historical Society was founded in 1981, and John Cass Lenahan was the first president. The first program was given on the evening of October 16 by Gordon Harmon. Gordon talked about the history of the Leavenworth County Fair.

On the evening of September 25, TCHS hosted a box supper to celebrate the occasion. Fifty-five members joined us for the picnic on the yard just north of the hay barn. Each of our board members made brief remarks but visiting in the fresh air was the order of the evening.



Leavenworth Council on Aging Visits the Museum

On the morning of Friday, September 24, twenty senior citizens from Leavenworth spent over an hour in our museum. There was much reminiscing and conversation before the group left to visit the Basehor Museum.



SHARP Recovery Grant

TCHS is very pleased and grateful to be the recipient of a grant in the **amount of \$4,900 from Humanities Kansas**. The SHARP Recovery Grants support Kansas cultural organizations that provide humanities programming and are facing financial hardship due to the coronavirus. Grants are for general operating support, staff retention, and needed digital and/or operational transitions for cultural work in the post-pandemic era. Humanities Kansas awarded 121 SHARP grants statewide.



“Humanities Kansas is honored to be able to support Kansas cultural organizations as we recover from the impact of Covid,” said Julie Mulvihill, Humanities Kansas Executive Director. “This past year has demonstrated that Kansans lean into the humanities during challenging times. Kansas cultural organizations that do work in the humanities provide important social connections and contribute to the economic well-being and strength of our communities.”

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Fourth Tuesday Programs Return



Phil
Dixon

After a nineteen-month hiatus, Fourth Tuesday programs return. Join us on October 26 for a program sponsored by Humanities Kansas. Phil Dixon, author and co-founder of the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum, will share his knowledge of the Kansas City Monarchs with us. The program starts at 7:00 pm and masks will be required. We will follow the program with a reception in the hay barn to meet Phil Dixon and browse his books.

I believe Mr. Dixon spoke at the old Myers Hotel several years ago. He is very knowledgeable about baseball.

THE MUSEUM HAS NEW HOURS

The museum is now open on **Saturdays from 10am – 2pm**. These hours replace our previous Sunday afternoon hours. We also open by appointment – call us if our hours don't work for you. Come see us soon!

Tuesdays 9am-4pm
Wednesdays 9am-noon
Saturdays 10am-2pm

CONTACT US

Questions? Comments? Don't hesitate to let us know!

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Facebook – Tonganoxie Community Historical Society

Instagram – TonganoxieMuseum