



Historical Highlights

Nov. 2010



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Running of the Lizards, 9-19-2010



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Annual Meeting, Dec. 5	1
Kansas Capitals/Topeka Capitols	2
News Briefs	3
Potawatomi Trail of Death, 1838.....	4-5
Women's Equality/Ltr. from Member.....	6
Tidbits	7
Ramblings from Early <i>Bulletins</i>	8
The Jayhawk Theater	9
Letter to the Editor, by Chris Schultz	10
Membership Form	11
TSCPL's Petrified Tree	outside mailer

You Are Invited

SCHS will hold our Annual Meeting on **Sunday, December 5, 2010**, at **The Break Room**, 911 S. Kansas Ave., Topeka, KS, 66612, **2:00-4:00 p.m.**

This annual event will give SCHS members and friends an opportunity to share in the accomplishments of the SCHS throughout the year and inform them of upcoming events and plans. It also serves as the annual business meeting of the Society, voting opportunity, and election of new officers. This event will coincide with the 156th anniversary of the founding of Topeka.

The program will include a talk by **Nathan McAlister**, named **2010 National History Teacher of the Year** by the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History. He teaches at Royal Valley Middle School, in Mayetta, where students successfully lobbied the Kansas Legislature to name a portion of US 75 highway as Lane Memorial Trail.

Historian **Deb Goodrich Bisel** will also make a presentation on the 150th anniversary of Kansas statehood and the beginnings of the American Civil War.

This event is free and open to members and those interested in membership. Refreshments will be served.

November offered **Ritchie House** Open House events:

- **Nov. 6—Pioneer Days**, with weaving and other pioneer activities, games played by pioneer children, pioneer recipe tasting
- **Nov. 13—"What the Apple Means to Kansas"** talk by Deb Goodrich Bisel
- **Nov. 20—Terrible Homicide, the Trial of John Ritchie** in the a.m. and **Underground Railroad in Kansas**, with Anne Hawkins as Mary Jane Ritchie, in the p.m.
- **Nov. 26—19th-century Holiday Celebrations**



Kansas Capitals/Topeka Capitols Event

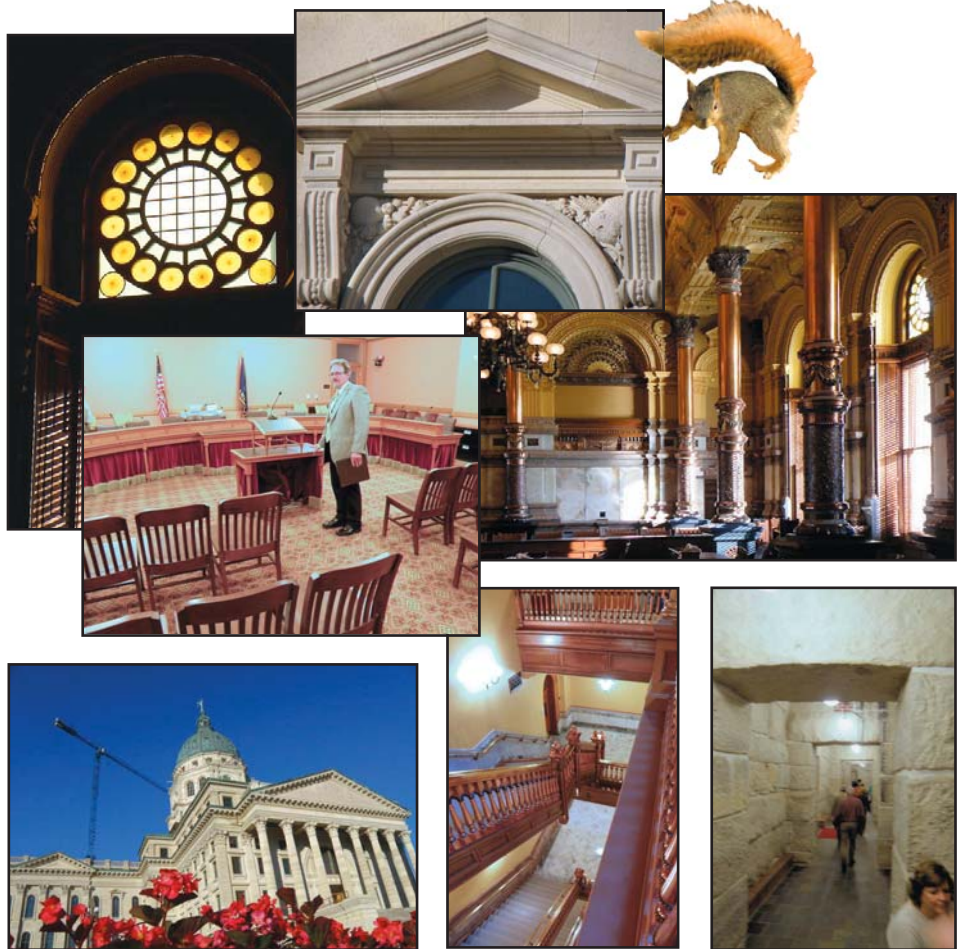


left to right:
Don Lambert, Judge Terry Bullock, Honorable Dick Bond, Host Ralph Hipp, architects Barry Greis and Vance Kelley.

Our October 2010 public event was held at the State Capitol and jointly hosted by SCHS, WIBW Channel 13 and Visit Topeka.

Speakers focused on the history of picking a state capital for Kansas and on building, and now renovating, our beautiful State Capitol building. Presenters were:

- Master of Ceremony, **Ralph Hipp**, WIBW-TV
- Welcome by **Chris Schultz**, President SCHS
- **Don Lambert**, "Constitutional Hall: The Free State Capital of Kansas"
- **Judge Terry Bullock**, "Winning the State House for Topeka"
- **Hon. Dick Bond**, "Committing to historic preservation of the Capitol"
- **Barry Greis**, State House Architect, "21st Century preservation"
- Tours of State House by **Vance Kelley**, Treanor Architects; **Barry Greis**, State House Architect; & **Andrea Burton**, curator of State Society at the Capitol



Capitol photos by Carol Yoho and Joan Wagner

► **In what became known as the “Sheridan Club killings” of 1935,** assailants beat and fatally shot federal agent **William Louis Pappan** and a private investigator as they investigated illicit liquor activities at a Tulsa County, Oklahoma, nightclub. News of the slayings, linked to corruption born of the Prohibition era, gripped headlines for years. But as decades passed the story of their slayings faded into history.

This year, nearly 75 years after his death, Pappan took his place among the fallen heroes of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. Because Pappan’s death was in the line of duty, Dennis Lippe, chairman of the Oklahoma Law Enforcement Memorial, placed his name, story and picture on the organization’s website, where ATF historian Barbara Osteika discovered the entry while searching the Internet this summer.

To recognize his service, the ATF posthumously awarded Pappan the agency’s highest honor, the Gold Star Medal, during a ceremony at the National Native American Law Enforcement Association’s annual conference in Las Vegas.

Pappan had a history of service before becoming a federal agent. During WWI, he drove a mule-drawn ambulance as part of the 166th Ambulance Company, 117th Sanitary Train (medical train), 42nd Division. He was injured and hospitalized more than once while serving in France.

Pappan was born on the Kaw Indian Reservation in Oklahoma in 1894. He was a first cousin to Vice President Charles Curtis, the first

► **The Hale Ritchie House** has been the site of two Bare Bones previews as renovation work continues. The outside of the house is complete, with new roof, siding, porches and handicapped



accessible walkways and ramps. The inside has heat and electricity. Drywall has been installed. Soon steps will be taken to paint and trim, then work toward completing indoor plumbing. A spring opening is targeted, with a Donor Recognition event on April 17, 2011. 🍷

Pappan continued —

American Indian vice president, who served under President Herbert Hoover; a grandson of Louis Pappan, who operated a locally famous river ferry in Topeka, Kansas, transporting countless settlers westward; a great-great-grandson of Kaw Nation Chief Monchousia (White Plume); and a great-great-grandnephew of Osage Nation Chief Pawhuska (White Hair), who met and negotiated a treaty with President Thomas Jefferson in Washington.

Accepting the Gold Star Medal was Pappan’s son, Stephen Maxfield Pappan of San Diego; his first cousin, Jim Benbrook of Arizona; and his great-grand niece, Erin Blackshere Pouppirt of Kansas City, Kansas. 🍷

Information here was gathered from “1930s agent hero to receive ATF honor,” an article in *Tulsa World*, 9/13/2010 edition, written by Nicole Marshall.



Above:
William Louis Pappan

► **The Kansas Historical Society** will have “vernacular architecture and statehood” as its theme for the 2011 Preservation Conference to be held in Topeka on May 12, 13, and 14.

Part of the program may consist of a walking tour of the downtown area of Topeka or the historic Potwin area. SCHS Trustee Jeanne Mithen is helping to plan tours, working with Mary Smith, Conference Planner, Kansas Historical Society. 🍷

Potawatomi Trail of Death, 1838

How the people of the Potawatomi Nation came to Kansas

The Potawatomis were forced to sign many treaties giving up their lands in Indiana, Illinois, and most (but not all) in Michigan. An agreement called for another removal to the west of the Mississippi River by the year 1838. Many tribal members had already left before the year 1838. The 1838 removal from Indiana to Kansas became known as the Potawatomi Trail of Death as many on the 660-mile trek died. A total of 42 children and elderly were known to have lost their lives as 859 Potawatomis were forced marched at gunpoint by U.S. soldiers and accompanied by priests.

Documented always as an imposing figure amongst the Potawatomis and an Indian of intelligence, **Chief Abram B. Burnett** would become a great and important mediator and leader amongst his people. Chief Burnett's name can be seen documented on several treaties. On April 11, 1836, he and his first wife, D'Moosh-Kee-Kee-Awh (Dah-Moosh-Ke-Keaw), were known to have signed a treaty together. He signed his name as Nanwishma, his native name. By treaty, they were to be removed to the west within two years. In 1838 he helped lead the band of his people as a chief/mediator and interpreter on the removal forced upon them by the U.S. government.

On June 5, 1838, three months before the removal from Indiana to Kansas began, Chief Burnett was baptized and married to his first wife, D'Moosh-Kee-Kee-Awh (Dah-Moosh-Ke-Keaw). Chief Burnett was baptized as Abraham Joseph Burnett. After relocation and settlement to Kansas, Chief Burnett would never be recognized as Abraham Joseph Burnett, but known to all as Abram B. Burnett. Middle initial "B" stood for "Bear," a nickname given to him by the Kansas settlers for his truly enormous size, strength, and build.

Many other Potawatomis had also been baptized by Father Benjamin Marie Petit, a young priest originally from France. Before leaving their homelands, the natives attended Mass in Logansport with Father Petit and Bishop Brute. The Bishop gave permission for Father Petit to accompany the Potawatomis, so he went back to South Bend to pack his things.

The march began at Twin Lakes, Indiana, on September 4, 1838. General Tipton's power expired at the Illinois state line, so he turned the emigration over to William Polke, appointed to be federal conductor, at Rochester, Indiana.

Father Petit caught up with marchers at Danville, Illinois. One of the first things he did was to get six chiefs, who had been forced to travel in a jail wagon, released: "On my word the six chiefs who had till now been treated as prisoners of war were released and given the same kind of freedom which the rest of the tribe enjoyed."

Father Petit also wrote: "The order of the march was as follows: the United States flag, carried by a dragoon (soldier); then one of the principal officers, next the staff baggage carts, then the carriage, which during the whole trip was kept for the use of the Indian chiefs; then one or two chiefs on horseback led a line of 250 or 300 horses ridden by men, women, children in single file, after the manner of savages. On the flanks of the line at equal distance from each other were the dragoons and volunteers, hastening the stragglers, often with severe gestures and bitter words. After this cavalry came a file of 40 baggage wagons filled with luggage and Indians. The sick were lying in them, rudely jolted, under a canvas which, far from protecting them from the dust and heat, only deprived them of air, for they were as if buried under this burning canopy—several died thus."

It was noted by Chief Burnett that many of his people were starving and, when dying of thirst, they were not always allowed to stop at creeks or rivers to drink. Father Petit was in charge of the sick. Records indicate that Polke and Petit did all they could to help the suffering and dying but medicine in those days did not amount to much more than rest, tea and sugar. Father Petit said Mass every day and baptized the babies who, in his own words, "with their first step passed from earthly exit to the heavenly sojourn."

Across the great prairies of Illinois they marched, crossed the Mississippi River at Quincy, and they made their way though Missouri to enter Western Territory (Kansas) south of Independence, Missouri.

—continued, p. 5

The Trail of Death, cont.

They arrived at Osawatomie, Kansas, on November 4, 1838—the end of the trail. There were supposed to be houses ready for them as winter was coming on, but no houses had been built. The Potawatomis were very upset and asked William Polke to stay with them. He agreed to leave his son with them. Polke then went back to Indiana. Father Petit stayed with them for a few weeks, as he was sick with the fever too. After placing the Potawatomis in the spiritual hands of Jesuit Father Christian Hoecken at the Sugar Creek Mission in Kansas, Father Petit set out to return to St. Louis. He was accompanied by Chief Burnett, who was the same age as Petit. Father Petit was very sick with sores all over his body. Burnett had to hold him on his horse part of the time. Petit died in St. Louis on Feb. 10, 1839. Burnett carried Petit's chalice and other personal things to Vincennes to give to Bishop Brute. Petit was buried in St. Louis. In 1856 Father Edward Sorin, founder of Notre Dame University, took Father Petit's body back to Indiana. Today Father Petit's remains rest under the Log Chapel at the University of Notre Dame at South Bend, Indiana.

Chief Burnett's first wife, D'Moosh-Kee-Kee-Awh (Dah-Moosh-Ke-Keaw), died on October 19, 1842, at Sugar Creek, Kansas. Later, Chief Burnett moved westward from Osawatomi, into Shawnee County. He and his descendants have

had strong ties with the Prairie Band reservation established north of Topeka, and with the Citizens Band, whose people were removed to Oklahoma after 1867.

This article is Part One in a series about the Potawatomi tribe in Kansas.



Information is from <http://www.wiskigeamatyuk.com/>

Gary Wis-Ki-Ge-Amatyuk Jr. is great great great-grandson of Potawatomi chief Abram B. Burnett, a figure well-known in Shawnee County history. Gary lives in the greater Los Angeles, CA, metropolitan area with his wife, Roswita, and daughter, Kayla. He was raised as a Potawatomi and is well acquainted with tribal customs. He speaks the Potawatomi language and performs/sings/dances his heritage at

public schools and at public events. He has done in-depth family research. Gary is also comfortable on horseback, and has been an extra in Hollywood movies. Living in the L.A. area, Gary and his family know many film actors.



Left: Trail marker, Warren Co., IN, — from Wikipedia

Menninger Archive Processing

The KSHS State Archives & Library staff will soon begin detailed arrangement and description of about half, or nearly 1,000 cubic feet, of the Historical Society's Menninger Archives. The collection was received in 2004 and includes the administrative records of the world famous Menninger psychiatric clinic. Also included in the archives are papers of Menninger family members affiliated with the clinic and documents illustrating the history of psychiatry. There are no records of individual patients, but the collection does contain historically significant material from the Menninger Foundation and its hospitals, institutes, and departments. The processing of this collection is possible through a grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission.



photo:
Menninger family 1935, from KSHS kansapedia

Women's Equality Day

August 26, 2010, was Women's Equality Day, celebrating the 90th anniversary of the passage of the 19th amendment—giving women the right to vote: 8/26/1920. Kansas was the eighth state to approve equal voting rights for women—in 1912, after three tries, dating back into the 1860s.

The first annual meeting of the Kansas League of Women Voters was held in June, 1919, at the Hotel Lassen in Wichita. In January, 1920, the Kansas League held the “First School of Citizenship and Called Convention of the Kansas League of Women Voters,” again at the Hotel Lassen in Wichita. Leagues from Topeka, Enterprise, Hutchinson, Emporia, Manhattan, Wichita, Lawrence, Leavenworth, and Winfield were represented.

On February 14, 1920, six months before the 19th amendment to the Constitution was ratified, women formally organized in Chicago as the national League of Women Voters. At the first league convention participants voted on 69 separate items as statements of principle and recommendations for legislation, including protection for women and children, rights of work-

ing women, food supply and demand, social hygiene, the legal status of women, and American citizenship.



SCHS member Carol Yoho's grandmother, Mabelle Seamans Miller, attended Washburn University 100 years ago: the 1910-11 academic year. Maybelle was a suffragist, and her “Votes for Women” button is one of Carol's prize possessions. Mabelle is standing at the left in the photo above. Carol wishes she had her grandmother's hat. She *does* have her hatpin!

Letter from a New Member

I moved to Dallas in 1998 when I was 30 and in the past 13 years have learned a lot about the history of the city of Dallas, the History of the area of North East Texas and the History of the state of Texas. I grew up in Topeka and went to Shawnee Heights and tried to harken back to what I knew about Topeka's history and there wasn't much I could really recite. I'm sure I was a decent student in my day, but there was just a stumbling block of where I came from that I could no longer tolerate.

I got on-line and one of the folks from the Shawnee County Historical Society sent me some information on Topeka and its beginnings and I was hooked. I love visiting cemeteries and visiting leaders of our past, (I've been to see Cyrus K Holliday at his resting place), and thanked him for making the railroad what it was. And that was the reason my grandfather came to Kansas/Topeka back in the '20s: to work for the railroad.

Which, of course, is the genesis of the Hernandez family in Topeka and the Oakland area.

So, Mr. Wagnon, it is with great enthusiasm that I accept being a member of the Shawnee County Historical Society and appreciate your welcome letter and thank you for giving me the opportunity of learning more about my hometown.

**David
Hernandez**
Dallas, Texas



Above Cyrus K. Holliday steam engine, 1941
— from Kansas Memory

► **Each year, the Society produces a Bulletin** which records aspects of the county's history. The 2010 Bulletin focuses on the state house and is entitled *Capitols of Topeka: Winning the State House for Cyrus K. Holliday's Town, 1856-1886*. Persons interested in the subject will want to join the Society and receive their copy when it is published—in December, or early in January. A membership form is available in this newsletter on p. 11. You can also join on-line through our new PayPal account. Visit shawneecountyhistory.org and look for the PayPal logo at the lower left of our Welcome page.

► **Remember: previous Bulletins make good holiday gifts.** Our 2008 Bulletin is *Bungalow Homes for the Nation: the L. F. Garlinghouse Company of Topeka*. Copies are available by contacting Trustee Jeanne Mithen at the Topeka Room of the Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library, jmithen@tscpl.org, 785-580-4510. Our 2009 Bulletin is *Lively Elmhurst: the Classic Topeka Neighborhood*. Copies are available for sale in the Booktique, ground floor of the Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library.

► **“Running of the Lizards,”** mentioned on page 1 of this newsletter, refers to an event held every fall in the 21st St./Seabrook Av. area of Topeka. Children and their families search for Italian Wall Lizards and Western Green LaCerta Lizards. These lizards are descendants of those that escaped or were set free from a business located in the Seabrook area of the city during the late 1950s or early 1960s. Read more about Topeka's alien lizards at <http://tcslacerta.tripod.com/tcsphotos/id22.html>

► **E-mail from Bill Wagnon, 10-6-2010:** “Today's newspaper carried the obit for **Betty Leech**. She was John and Mary Jane Ritchie's great grand daughter and a strong supporter of the Society's efforts in preserving the Ritchie Houses. She was invariably

generous with her time and her resources, both material and culturally. I did get to show her pictures of the restoration work on the Hale Ritchie House before she died and she was grateful to see the progress and know it was finally coming to fruition. I'll miss her. Bill”

► **“Slave Chasers Face Judge Lynch: Vigilante Justice in Kansas on the Eve of the Civil War,”** a research paper by **Leon B. Graves**, independent researcher, was published as a lesson within Kansas History, 7th Grade Kansas History Standard, Benchmark 2—a piece of our Educational Initiative. Benchmark 2 states: “The student understands individuals, groups, ideas, events, and developments during Kansas Territory and the Civil War (1854-1865).” Those interested in this topic and paper will find a link to it from “Educational Initiative” at shawneecountyhistory.org

► **Jeanne Mithen** responds to an e-mail inquiry: “Your inquiry was forwarded to the Topeka & Shawnee County Public Library/Topeka Room local history collection. The Shawnee County Historical Society does not maintain its own library or museum and makes use of local historical resources available in the community.

The Hicks block was put on the Kansas Register of Historic Places in 1976, and the National Register the next year. The nomination form with the Hicks block history is available on the KSHS website:

http://www.kshs.org/resource/national_register/nominationsNRDB/Shawnee_HicksBlockNR.pdf

The structure was built for Elhanan Hicks in 1889. He was listed in the 1887-8 and 1888-9 city directories as a real estate agent and in 1890-91 as a capitalist [banker]. He borrowed heavily to build the seven row houses, \$50,000, and lost the property in the economic depression of the 1890s; he left town shortly after. No architect or builder was listed on the nomination form. The Topeka Room vertical files contain photos and newspaper articles written about the block. The SCHS website also has photos of the Hicks block.”

Ramblings from Early SCHS Bulletins

by **Jeanne Mithen**, SCHS Trustee and Reference Librarian, Topeka Room, Topeka & Shawnee Co. Public Library

► **Ichabod Washburn** was a wire magnate [in Massachusetts].... In 1831, at the age of thirty-three, he entered the wire manufacturing business and at once became the leader of that industry in the United States.... Washburn found numerous uses for wire.... sewing machine needles, wire for crinoline skirts, galvanized wire for telegraph wires, and finally patent steel barbed-wire fencing.

In 1850 Ichabod Washburn invented a process to make steel wire for piano strings, an undertaking which he pronounced the greatest success of his mechanical life. The suggestion was made to him by Mr. Chickering, a producer of pianos. (Bulletin 14 (Sept. 1951), p.14-15)

[Additional note: Of course, Ichabod Washburn is best remembered here for his generous support of the struggling Lincoln College, which in 1868 was renamed "Washburn." The Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library owns a square grand piano produced in Boston by the Jonas Chickering Company- and who knows, maybe strung with washburn-produced piano strings! JCM]

► **Winter [1857-58] —The Lane Trail** has become the established route of the Underground Railroad out of Kansas, John Brown directing its operations and having as lieutenants in Shawnee County, John Armstrong, Col. John Ritchie, Thomas Archer, Rev. Lewis Bodwell, Jack Willets and Daniel Sheridan, the latter living on a farm in what is now Highland Park. (Bulletin 14 (Sept. 1951), p.24)

► **Two memorials**, one in stone and one in land, each valued at \$10,000.00 were given to Topeka by G.G. Gage, a prominent and beneficent citizen of the early days. The first, a splendid and imposing monument of granite, is in Topeka cemetery. It is surmounted by the figure, standing, "at rest," of a private soldier in the uniform of the Civil War.

It was presented in memory of Mr. Gage's comrades, the men of the Second Regiment, who fell in the Battle of the Big Blue, October 22, 1864. Near-by, these soldiers lie buried. More than thirty years later,

on Memorial Day, this beautiful statue was unveiled, and of the original roster of 561 men of the Second Regiment, only 36 men were able to march with their commanding officers to the dedication.

The second gift Mr. Gage made to Topeka is a large tract of land, of great natural beauty, adjoining the city on the west. It is called Gage Park in honor of the donor, and is enjoyed by all Topeka, as well as by citizens of near-by towns, who bring their families to picnic there.

G.G Gage, who was a native of Ohio, settled in Topeka in May, 1856. – Nancy Veale Galloway (Bulletin 31 (December 1958), p. 50)

► **Before Kansas went dry** in 1880 and, for that matter, for several years following, Topeka's saloons and breweries enjoyed a thriving trade. From 1870 when only eighteen grog shops were listed in the city directory, the number of establishments grew until an all-time high of thirty-seven was reached in 1884. One year later, under the directory's usual classification, "Saloons and Liquor Dealers," there appears but a single line of type: See "Drug Stores," and the latest revised Prohibition Laws." (Bulletin 33 (December 1959), p.64)

► **Tag Line** —The SCHS Trustees have adopted a tag line to capture the Society's mission: **Lighting freedom's pathway; Building heritage culture.** It links local heritage identity with fundamental ideas that have defined the nation and influenced global development:



*Lighting Freedom's Pathway;
Building Heritage Culture*

The Jayhawk Theater, memories and rebirth

A short documentary film about the history and importance of Topeka's Jayhawk Theater is currently being produced by Juli Stone Pitzer, KU PhD film student. Funded in part by the Kansas Humanities Council, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and Kansas 150 Short Film Grant, the documentary will explore the impact the theater has had on downtown Topeka throughout its history, from dances, vaudeville, fashion shows, weddings, and the projection of motion picture films.

If you'd like to contribute your personal memories of the theater, contact Jayhawk State Theatrer 720 SW Jackson, Topeka, KS, 66603, or call 785-233-4295.

Facebook "like" options are available at "Jayhawk Theatre Documentary Project" and "The Jayhawk Theatre of Kansas."

Origins:

Working together as a connected building complex the Jayhawk Hotel, Arcade or Jayhawk Walk, the Crosby Brothers Department Store, and the Jayhawk Theatre enticed patrons from its opening in 1926 through the 1970s.

The Jayhawk is important as part of an early "mall" development. E.H. Crosby of the Crosby Department Store, built the Jayhawk Hotel, two restaurants inside the hotel, and the adjoining Jayhawk Theatre, connecting all with the Jayhawk Walk, featuring small shops and window displays of wares available for purchase at Crosby's. Famous Topeka architect **Thomas Williamson** was supervising architect. [For more about William-

son, see our June, 2010, *Historical Highlights* newsletter, pp. 3-5.]

Quick Facts:

- Although the Jayhawk was primarily a movie palace, vaudeville acts loved to play the Jayhawk in summer because it was air conditioned.
- The star career of "Gypsy Rose Lee" started when Baby June Hovick, star of a show produced by her mother, Rose Hovick, eloped with another cast member on December 31, 1928, after their last performance at the Jayhawk. Mama Rose went home to Washington and originated a new show starring her other daughter, Louise, whose act eventually moved from vaudeville to burlesque. As Gypsy Rose Lee, Lousie became a queen of burlesque.
- WIBW radio started broadcasting from the stage of the Jayhawk in 1927.
- Alf Landon accepted the Republican party's nomination for U.S. president from center stage of the Jayhawk in 1936.
- The Jayhawk featured (and will again) both an orchestra pit and a huge theater organ.
- The theater originally seated 1500. The renovation will feature wider seats and ample legroom, reducing seating to about 900.

Renovation fundraising includes opportunities to have a name affixed to a plate on the back of a sponsored seat. Seat donation categories range from \$1500 to \$3500. Contact Jayhawk personnel about your interest in donating.



Letter to the Editor

by **Chris Schultz**, SCHS President

Passion, creativity, motivation, and sharing a strong sense of community with fellow residents is the recipe for how the founding fathers of Topeka built such a strong base out of nothing, a base that our community still stands strongly on today. In recent decades, Topeka has had a self-image problem that needs some serious commitment from its leaders and more importantly its residents in order to overcome. We must remember and respect the lessons that our elders taught us in order to keep the city moving in a positive direction. The rest of the world is looking at us right now with a great sense of optimism. With recent worldwide attention from Google, Business Week, News Week and a myriad of others, we must keep our heads held high and be proud of the community we have become. Perhaps Kiplinger's pick of Topeka as one of the best places for your future was one of the most insightful to me. Kiplinger actually spent a little time telling the rest of the world about who we are and not just what we are working on. In the online version of their article, they featured a slide show that blasted our image to the rest of the world. A very simple analysis of the twelve images they selected for the presentation was that seven of them were images from our downtown and not one shot was taken of the west side of town. Being a life-long Topekan, I was a little shocked that Wanamaker didn't make the cut. When I sat back and realized that every city on their list has a "Wanamaker" and none of them are unique, it's a blatant reminder that we should be paying more attention to our historical assets and the things that set us apart, our downtown in particular.

I serve as the President of the Shawnee County Historical Society and I had the opportunity to attend the Chamber's recent inter-city visit to Oklahoma City. The focus of this trip was to learn how Oklahoma City stood up against great odds and actually turned ideas, some of which would be hard to imagine in a dream, in to sustainable reality. They did this in a very short period of time and they have been seeing nothing but great rewards and a steadily booming population from their efforts. This trip was one of the most uplifting experiences of my professional career. To hear Oklahoma

City's leadership describe where they were and where they have come, made me realize that our challenges at home are certainly not exclusive to us. Many times, I felt as though they were describing Topeka when they were actually describing themselves. From my perspective, the residents of Oklahoma City somehow gained a great deal of pride in their community. And with that pride they grew more willing to go the extra mile to share a higher quality of life with their fellow residents. They have a fantastic historic preservation plan that responsibly preserves their heritage assets, builds power of place with their residents, and encourages economic growth and development in historic districts. They have a unified city and county government that works seamlessly together to give confidence to their constituents that tax dollars will be spent appropriately and for the good of all. They have a strong business sector that is not only willing to take a chance on their residents, but is also proud to loudly sponsor quality of life initiatives. And through using the power of place as a community building tool, they have found that their youth will have a better chance to grow up without having an overwhelming dream to leave town when they turn in to young professionals.

These were the results of their successfully planned downtown redevelopment, riverfront improvements, highway re-alignment, and arts district organization. Does the combination of these projects sound familiar? I look forward to standing on the front lines with so many others to make Topeka an even greater place to call home. We would love to have you to join us!

Very Truly,

Chris Schultz
**President,
The Shawnee County
Historical Society**



Mark Your Calendar:

2010 Annual Meeting of SCHS

Sunday, December 5, 2010

Focus on: Lane Memorial Trail & Kansas Statehood

Historical Highlights

November 2010

Visitors to the Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library will want to take time soon to enjoy the huge piece of petrified tree on exhibit west of the library's main entrance. A gift from Edward Wilder, a Topeka Library Association Trustee from 1874-1905, the piece was displayed outside our old library, which stood along the north side of State Capitol square. The piece is beautiful and has a hole straight through its center!

Tidbits →



P.O. Box 2201, TOPEKA KS 66601-2201

Lighting Freedom's Pathway;
Building Heritage Culture