

RILEY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Since 1914

Contact us at: 2309 Claflin Road Manhattan, Kansas 66502

785-565-6490

www.rileychs.com

RCHS Newsletter

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July/August 2023

Volunteers Needed for Goodnow Interpretive Garden by Gloria Freeland

Ground was broken in May for the Isaac Goodnow Interpretive Garden at the Riley County Historical Museum property, 2309 Claflin, thanks to assistance from the Riley County Extension Service, its Master Gardeners, and Blueville Nursery.

Using Isaac Goodnow's diary and period agricultural publications, the garden will include vegetables that were grown in Kansas from about 1855 to 1880. It will be a hands-on, interactive, and educational exhibit to aid in the interpretation of the Goodnow and early Kansas emigrant stories.

"Isaac Goodnow kept pretty consistent diaries throughout his life," Derrick Doty, RCHM assistant, said. "At the Riley County Museum, we have transcripts of his diaries from 1855-1880. I've spent about three months going through those and compiling any agricultural information that Goodnow notes. We've ended up with about 100 pages of information. Some of his entries are pretty boring, like 'Hoed in the garden.' Once in a while, though, Goodnow gives us some substance."

"Early in his diaries, he mentions growing Kershaw squash. No doubt he means Cushaw, which is a squash native to North America and has been grown here for hundreds of years. It's a winter squash, which means it develops a hard shell and stores well over the winter, an important feature for early settlers in Riley County. Goodnow describes the 'Kershaw' as prepared and tasting like sweet potatoes. This will be one of the vegetables grown in the museum garden.



"Goodnow mentioned a number of vegetables that we are going to try to grow, like egg beans, vegetable oysters, pie plant, etc. But where he's not specific about variety, we'll use period varieties that are available today and

that were commonly used in the mid-19th century. For instance, Goodnow grew muskmelon but doesn't state what variety, so we'll grow Anne Arundel which has been popular in New England since the 1730s. We also have to depend on availability. While a number of the potatoes Goodnow mentions are still grown today, seed potato for those varieties was not available to purchase this year. So, we'll be growing a good alternative — Rose Finn Apple potatoes — which were pretty common since the 1840s."

Doty said besides growing historic vegetables, he and volunteer gardeners also will be following historic methods as far as practicable.

"Of course, the ground was broken with a modern tiller because we couldn't find anyone with a team and plow to do it the old-fashioned way," he said. "But perhaps in the future ...volunteers helping with the garden this year will be introduced to historic planting methods and have an opportunity at hands-on learning. We'll get to use some old tools like a hand corn planter (*Illustration from "Illustrated Annual Register of Rural Affairs," 1857 edition*).





"Our references for historical culture will be my personal collection of agricultural publications dating from 1851 to 1880. Through the season, we'll get to learn why Goodnow, a good upright Methodist who didn't smoke, grew tobacco, or why he put wood ashes on his apple trees."



Volunteers can expect to spend about two hours each week weeding, hoeing, watering, planting, pruning, digging, shoveling, raking, etc. Depending upon levels of interest, volunteers may also have the opportunity to participate in workshops pertaining to the garden, such as making hickory rakes, or cooking and preserving produce from the garden.

For more information about volunteering, please contact the museum at 785-565-6490 or email: Derrick Doty, RCHM assistant, derrickdoty@gmail.com or Marie Martin, RCHM volunteer coordinator, volunteers@rileychs.com.

Did you Know...? Riley County was named for General Bennet C. Riley, a veteran of the Mexican-American War. It was on the western edge of the original 33 counties established by the Kansas Territorial Legislature in August, 1855. The administrative jurisdiction of Riley County at one point reached all the way to the Continental Divide in present-day Colorado, originally part of Kansas Territory.

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Curator's Corner: The Curious Case of Seldon B. Lard: Reopening a 126 Year Old Murder Case...

Part 1 by Katharine Hensler, RCHM Director

This month, I have hijacked the Curator's Corner from Library and Archives only because we've had great interest in a story we have been working on and it is worth sharing! It is a relatively common occurrence for museums of any size and scope to occasionally come across an artifact they did not know they had. Or in some cases, an artifact a museum knew of which they were in possession, but did not know the exact provenance of the artifact. And while this phenomenon occurs on occasion, it is rarely exciting enough to warrant its retelling.



From Oct. 22, 1897 Manhattan Republic

newspaper clippings – no artifacts or other items associated with the event. Or, so it originally appeared.

Our Curator of Collections, Dawn Munger, was determined to look further. According to a source penned in the Morning Chronicle from June 10, 1937 by William B. Smith, the very revolver used to commit this crime was supposedly donated to the Riley County Historical Society around that same year. The challenge ended up being that at that time, the Society's museum was the Pioneer Log Cabin and record keeping was not as thorough a standard as it is today. Off Dawn went into the dark recesses of the museum, and out she emerged with an artifact that met every specification we had concerning the physical description of the item except we did not have a written connection of the donation and a legal document noting the serial number in its relation to the crime. These are

In March of this year, a gentleman from Oklahoma reached out to our museum to ask if we had any information about County Sheriff Seldon B. Lard, his untimely and tragic murder in 1897, and most importantly, the Forehand Arms Co. revolver that supposedly delivered the fatal shot. He was writing an article about the case and wanted to include information on the weapon. Naturally, questions like this spark a great deal of interest so our team got to looking through the museum's collection. Unfortunately, for such a sensational event, we only had a few



The presumed murder weapon.

two major issues for a museum, which really just means that we have an old Foreman Arms Co. revolver.

As much as we want to be able to connect the artifact to the donor and then further back to the 1897 murder, we just don't have the factual information to do so yet. However, historians are not easily dismayed and in cases like this, are actually energized by the possibility. So, we plug onward with the research!

We are currently working with staff at the Riley County Courthouse to try to locate the available criminal and trial records from October 1897 – March 1898 in hopes that we are able to find official documentation of the weapon's serial number. From there, we also read in the same 1937 record that the County Attorney in 1897, Frank Leslie Irish, had a pocket docket that may still exist. Until then, we claim nothing other than to have a very thrilling and tragic story worth retelling.

At our Fireside Chat in May, after a day full of tornado watches and warnings, we told this story to a group of almost thirty attendees. Due to the weather, we learned that quite a few people were unable to attend. We've had a handful of requests to schedule another presentation on the Lard case, so I can promise you we will. In the meantime, we recorded a KMAN In-Focus segment with Brandon Peoples on the topic, and we wanted to keep you fresh with updates as we learn more. So, this month we felt it was a worthy Curator's Corner conversation. Notice, this story is just a Part 1. I hope to have at least one more part, if not more, to add at a later date.

To hear the KMAN interview and more details and accounts of the S.B. Lard case, please visit <https://1350kman.com/2023/05/in-focus-5-15-23-riley-county-historical-museum/>. The Museum

is on KMAN In-Focus on the third Monday of every month from 9:05-10am. Be sure to tune in as we recount the many stories of Riley County's history. Join us for the next Fireside Chat on July 11, 5:30pm at Flight Crew Coffee, 423 Poyntz Ave.



Memorial to fallen law enforcement officers in the county courthouse.

Katharine joined the RCHM team as Director in 2022. Originally from North Central Pennsylvania, she received a BA in History from Lock Haven University of Penna. and an MA in Historic Preservation from Goucher College in Baltimore, Maryland. With over 20 years of working in museum management, Katharine really enjoys being able to step away from the administrative part of the job from time to time and get to conduct research on some of the collection items. She says that it keeps things exciting! In her free time, she enjoys traveling with her husband, Craig, and competing in dog sports with their two dogs – Nico and Bodhi.

Lives Intertwine Through Time and Distance by Janet Duncan

The Riley County Historical Museum staff received a call from Jim Irish in response to the March/April 2023 Riley County Historical Society newsletter article about the women who started early Manhattan/Riley County clubs.

In researching his family, he had not known Eusebia Mudge Irish (1852-1942) had attended The Boston Conservatory of Music, and asked for our original sources. He lives quite a distance from Manhattan and has never been to Kansas, and he is not related to Frank Irish, Eusebia's husband. The matching last name of Irish is a coincidence; he is a Mudge descendant.

Museum staff were able to help. Eusebia was listed as a student in the 1874 Kansas State Agricultural College student handbook, which included the information that she took a course of study for "Instrumental Music" for piano through the New England Conservatory (NEC).

Jim Irish corroborated that the NEC did have this course of study, which was apparently used by KSAC. The Boston Conservatory has no records from this time, as there was a fire around 1905 and all the early records were destroyed.

Through newspaper searches, museum staff could give him a glimpse of Eusebia's life in Manhattan, as well as information connecting her with Boston. She had an active social life in Manhattan - she knew many people and many knew her and the Mudge family.

In addition to her work on the early library and the formation of the historical society, Eusebia was the matron at the newly-established young Women's Association.

One of the names that appeared several times in the old newspaper accounts was Hattie Parkerson, daughter of Isaac and Ellen Goodnow. With this last bit of information, Jim Irish was able to put a complete name to a photo in Eusebia's old photo album which she had simply labeled "Hattie".

Connections with Eusebia Mudge Irish through time and across distance solved one piece of a family-history puzzle.

Chief Standing Bear is Topic at Third RCHS Quarterly Meeting by Carol Hockersmith



Credit: J. Paul Getty Museum via Picryl.com, courtesy Getty's Open Content Program.

Ron Wilson will present "Off the Reservation: Chief Standing Bear and Riley County" at the third 2023 quarterly meeting of the Riley County Historical Society on Tuesday, September 19. The dinner meeting will be at Lazy T Ranch located five minutes from downtown Manhattan and close to the documented spot in Riley County where Chief Standing Bear camped in the late 1870s.

Wilson's talk will highlight Standing Bear's journey from Oklahoma back to Nebraska to return his son's remains. That journey set off a court case considered one of the early civil rights cases.

Wilson is director of the Huck Boyd National Institute for Rural Development at Kansas State University in Manhattan. In this role, Wilson popularized radio and web versions of Kansas Profile with the tagline "Now That's Rural!" for a series he has written and produced since 1992. The show has featured more than 1,000 small-town Kansas entrepreneurs and community leaders.



Wilson has a bachelor's degree in Agricultural Education and a master's in Journalism and Mass Communications from Kansas State University. He became a legislative assistant to Senator Nancy Kassebaum in Washington D.C., a staff member for the U.S. Senate Agriculture Committee, and vice president of the National Council of Farmer Cooperatives. In 1985, he returned to Kansas to become a vice president of the Farm Credit Bank of Wichita and in 1990, became director of the Huck Boyd Institute. He is a graduate of Leadership Kansas, has published numerous articles, spoken at national and international meetings, and appeared on C-SPAN. In 2003, then Kansas Governor Bill Graves officially proclaimed Ron Wilson to be a Poet Lariat (not laureate) in Kansas.

Dinner is by reservation only, but the Standing Bear presentation is free and open to the public. Dinner will begin at 6 p.m., and the talk will start at 6:45 p.m. The menu is pork loin, cheesy potatoes, green beans, rolls, dessert, non-alcoholic beverages. Reservations for the meal must be made by Tuesday, Sept. 12, and the reservation portal will be open by the end of July. The cost will be \$16 for RCHS members and \$20 for non-members. Not a member? Sign up today and get your dinner ticket at the member rate.

Volunteer Workdays at Rocky Ford School

Our Rocky Ford School Friends group has been busy getting our 1903 schoolhouse, listed on the National and State Register of Historic Places, cleaned, repaired, and ready for fall programming.

Many thanks to those who came out to help on the June 10 and July 8 workdays. With the help of our volunteers, we were able to clean the interior of the building, paint, and clean up the grounds.

For more information on the Rocky Ford Schoolhouse or to schedule a tour, please visit https://www.rileychs.com/rocky_ford_school.cfm



New Exhibit Opens at Museum

A new temporary exhibit titled *Faces of Innovation: Medical Pioneers of Riley County* has opened at the Riley County Historical Museum. Regarding medicine, prolific doctors and surgeons such as Dr. E.L. Pattee, Dr. William Clarkson, and Dr. Belle Little operated state-of-the-art facilities which implemented novel treatments of great benefit to those living in the Flint Hills. Among the items on display are a wicker and wood wheelchair that had been used at Charlotte Swift Hospital; an examination chair from the office of Dr. Clarkson (as well as his medical school diploma); and various surgical and routine exam instruments. According to Melanie Highsmith, Curator of Education and Design, from its pioneer days to modern times, Kansas has served as a bastion of innovation in various fields due to its geographic location and the strong-willed residents who have called it home. This exhibit will highlight the accomplishments of these professionals, and the changing technology used in their practices.



Wolf House Field Trips Recap

From April 18-20 and April 25-27, the Riley County Historical Society and Museum staff and volunteers welcomed 430 students and teachers from nine different Manhattan area elementary schools to the Wolf House Museum at 630 Fremont Street. Stu-



dents got to see what it may have been like to rent a room from the Perry Boarding House, wash clothes by hand using a washboard and wooden paddle agitator, and wade through dozens of serving utensils and dishes (demonstrated with real food!) during a meal in the dining room.

The students were delighted to engage with hands-on activities at six stations doing everything from churning cream into butter, putting wet clothes through a wringer before hanging them out to dry, guessing the use of dining utensils and dishes (celery boat? spoon-straw?), and playing with antique toys. Melanie Highsmith, Curator of Education and Design would again like to thank the many volunteers that helped make these field trips a success: Gary Clift, Lynne Berry, Carol Hockersmith, Kathy Dzewaltowski, Kay Hoffman, Paula Foerschler, Marla Day, Janice Reitz, Charlene Brownson, Marsha Tannehill, Mary Stamey, Doug Tippin, Kitty Pursley, Sabine Martin, Josh Snodgrass, Katrina Otto Radmer, Margaret Pendleton, Doreen Towne, Linda Schottler, Dori Milldyke, Sharlin Sargent, and Mary Mertz. Also, thank you to staff members Dawn Munger, Katharine Hensler, Derrick Doty, and Lisa Jones.



During a meal in the dining room, the students were delighted to engage with hands-on activities at six stations doing everything from churning cream into butter, putting wet clothes through a wringer before hanging them out to dry, guessing the use of dining utensils and dishes (celery boat? spoon-straw?), and playing with antique toys. Melanie Highsmith, Curator of Education and Design would again like to thank the many volunteers that helped make these field trips a success: Gary Clift, Lynne Berry, Carol Hockersmith, Kathy Dzewaltowski, Kay Hoffman, Paula Foerschler, Marla Day, Janice Reitz, Charlene Brownson, Marsha Tannehill, Mary Stamey, Doug Tippin, Kitty Pursley, Sabine Martin, Josh Snodgrass, Katrina Otto Radmer, Margaret Pendleton, Doreen Towne, Linda Schottler, Dori Milldyke, Sharlin Sargent, and Mary Mertz. Also, thank you to staff members Dawn Munger, Katharine Hensler, Derrick Doty, and Lisa Jones.

Calendar of Events

July 8—New temporary exhibit *Faces of Innovation: Medical Pioneers of Riley County* opens at Riley County Historical Museum @2pm, admission is free

July 8—Volunteer Workday at Rocky Ford Schoolhouse, 9-11am

July 11—Lemonade on the Lawn (volunteers), 10-11:30am at Goodnow House Museum, please RSVP to volunteers@riley.chs.com

July 11—Fireside Chat @5:30pm, Flight Crew Coffee, 423 Poyntz Ave., *Television: The Entertainment of the Future*

July 17—***In-Focus*** KMAN radio program featuring Melanie Highsmith from RCHM, 9:05-10:00am

July 18—RCHM Board of Trustees meeting at Riley County Historical Museum/Dallas Gallery, 4-5pm

August 8—Fireside Chat @5:30pm, Flight Crew Coffee, 423 Poyntz Ave.

August 19—History and Genealogy Fair at Pottorf Hall in CiCo Park@10am-4pm, admission is free. For more information, please go to <https://rileycgs.com/>

August 21—***In-Focus*** KMAN radio program featuring Melanie Highsmith from RCHM, 9:05-10:00am

Stay up-to-date with all of our events and programs by visiting www.rileychs.com/rchs_calendar.cfm