

The Riley County Historical Society and Museum

2309 Claflin Road Manhattan, Kansas 66502 Telephone: (785) 565-6490

RCHS NEWSLETTER

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Hope Amid Hardship: Pioneer Voices From Kansas Territory

Author Linda Johnston will speak about her new book, *Hope Amid Hardship: Pioneer Voices from Kansas Territory*, Thursday, September 12 at 7:00 p.m. at the Manhattan Public Library, 629 Poyntz Avenue, Manhattan. This free program is sponsored by the Riley County Historical Society and Museum.

In a fresh approach to history, *Hope Amid Hardship: Pioneer Voices from Kansas Territory* brings together the words of sixty settlers who wrote about the brighter side of pioneer life in 1854-1861. Through their writings, these men and women reveal moments when their burdens were lighter—times that gave them reason to sing, dance, and celebrate. Many of the pioneers featured in the book are from Manhattan, Kansas.

In addition to the political turmoil and ensuing violence surrounding the slavery question in the new territory, citizens of Kansas faced the additional challenges of disease, drought, and homesickness. In this collection of letters, diary entries, and newspaper items, readers gain insight into how settlers coped with these challenges. Readers attend a prairie wedding with Thomas Wells, celebrate Fourth of July festivities with Sara Robinson, and camp along the Kansas River with Joseph Savage on the future site of Lawrence.



Photograph courtesy of Linda Johnston

Through vivid descriptions from Miriam Colt, Lucy Carruth, and James Griffing, readers learn about prairie wildflowers and birds. Readers also accompany Daniel Mulford Valentine to hear Abraham Lincoln speak in Leavenworth. Throughout the book, newspaper items provide colorful and informative context for community news and social events.

The unique format of *Hope Amid Hardship: Pioneer Voices from Kansas Territory* preserves the character and charm of the writers' words and the whimsical watercolor illustrations give the book a journal-like feel, making it irresistible to those who enjoy history, memoir, art, and nature. Thoughtfully researched and illustrated, this piece of Americana presents the hopeful, light-hearted side of life in Kansas Territory.

The 1951 Flood



The worst flood in the history of Manhattan occurred in 1951. Heavy rains in May and June brought the river above the 1935 flood level. As many as eight more inches of rain in July caused the Kansas River to pour into Manhattan on Wednesday, July 11th. With an additional rainstorm on Wednesday night, the river crested at 33.5 feet on Friday the 13th, with water as deep as 12 feet in the downtown streets. Boats and helicopters were used to rescue people from their buildings. Refugees from the flood camped out in the almost-finished Ahearn Fieldhouse on the Kansas State College of Agriculture and Applied Science (now Kansas State University) campus.

Root Cellar Ruminations

The Riley County Historical Society and Museum will host a brown bag lunch and learn **Thursday September 5 from noon to 1:00 p.m.** at the **Riley County Historical Museum**, 2309 Claflin Manhattan. Artist Tom Parish will discuss Flint Hills root cellars, his research into their history, and his artistic documentation of these remnants of the past. This program/brownbag discussion is also sponsored by the Kansas Humanities Council. The Kansas Humanities Council (www.kansashumanities.org) is a nonprofit cultural organization promoting understanding of the history, traditions and ideas that shape our lives and build community.



Photograph courtesy of Tom Parish.

“Take Shelter -

An Installation by Tom Parish,”

an art exhibition, research project and photographic exploration of **Native Stone, Arched-Roof Subterranean Shelters of the Flint Hills** will be on view at the Marianna Kistler Beach Museum of Art, Kansas State University (www.beach.k-state.edu), February 4 - May 25, 2014.

To learn more about the work visit the website www.parishphotography.net or www.rileycountyks.gov/museum.

Tom Parish is collecting stories, photographs and other information about root cellars and other types of arched roof underground structures (such as spring houses, kilns, smoke houses and storm shelters.) If you have stories or other information to share on these types of structures, please contact the Riley County Historical Museum at 785-565-6490 or ccollins@rileycountyks.gov or contact Tom Parish at tomparish-photo@gmail.com. For more information on the research project you may also view the Root Cellar Journal available at the Riley County Historical Museum.



Photograph courtesy of Tom Parish.

Kansas Book Festival, Topeka September 7

Kevin Olson, Author of "Frontier Manhattan," will speak at the Kansas Book Festival September 7 in Topeka at the beautifully restored Capitol building. For more information go to:
www.kansasbookfestival.com.

Smithsonian Museum Day Live! September 28

Participate in Smithsonian Museum Day Live! Free admission to Museums across the country is offered on September 28, 2013. Go to www.smithsonianmag.com for details. Visit Goodnow House State Historic Site and the Riley County Historical Museum 1:45 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

UFM History Tours

UFM is offering a number of history tours in September and October. Kevin Stilley will lead a series of driving tours of Riley County Cemeteries September 7 and 21 and October 5 and 19. Cheryl Collins, Director of the Riley County Historical Museum, will highlight some of the people and places of K-State's last 150 years on a Trolley tour of Manhattan October 24. Two tours are offered 10 a.m. to 12 noon and 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. For more information on cost and tour details or to register contact UFM at www.tryufm.org or at 785-539-8763.

Visit our Outreach Exhibits:

"**Illuminating Manhattan**" at Meadowlark Hills Retirement Community, 2121 Meadowlark Road,
"**Celebrating 150 Years: Kansas State University**," at the Riley County Courthouse (Fifth and Poyntz)
and "**Conservation and Controversy: 50 Years of Tuttle Creek Reservoir**" at the Riley County Office Building (Fifth and Humboldt). All the exhibits are free and open during regular business hours Monday through Friday.

RILEY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP FORM

January 1 -- December 31

(Member donations are tax deductible.)

Please select the category of your choice.

Make checks payable to the Riley County Historical Society and mail to:
2309 Claflin Rd., Manhattan, KS 66502

Individual Annual Member Donation

_____ Friend \$10 - \$49
_____ Sponsor \$50 - \$74
_____ Sustainer \$75 - \$99
_____ Patron \$100 and above

Family Annual Member Donation

_____ Friend \$15 - \$54
_____ Sponsor \$55 - \$74
_____ Sustainer \$80 - \$110
_____ Patron \$110 and above

Individual Life Member Donation

_____ \$300 (May be made in three annual \$100 installments)

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

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New _____ Renewal _____ Amount Enclosed: _____