

DONIPHAN COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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News Notes

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February 23 6:00 pm

My Great-Great Uncle Rode with Jesse James

by Eric Royer. St John's Lutheran Church,
102 Commercial Street, Bendena

Eric Royer, of Valley Falls, grew up listening to his family's tales of Clell Miller, one of the James gang members. The tales launched his research to find more about this connection to the Jesse James Gang. Clell Miller's parents were James and Eliza Miller. They came to Kansas to get away from the troubles in Missouri at the time. They settled southwest of Muscotah in 1850. Clell was born in 1855. Eric's grandmother's father was Clell's younger half-brother. Eric has documented proof of the Clell/Jesse relationship, and fiction that goes along with the facts. Clell is buried at the Miller family cemetery at Arington. Eric is the son of Dale and Benita Royer, who live on the same family farm in rural Atchison County.



The meeting will be held in the church basement. All are welcome and refreshments will be provided.

Added note: If you have any stories of the James Gang in Doniphan County, please write them down to share at the meeting. I know I have heard some stories about Jesse James at White Cloud and Eagle Springs but I'm still looking for proof. – Cindy Hoverson

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MEETING MINUTES

January 26, 2023

The business meeting was called to order by President Todd Miller. The monthly program was a "Show and Tell" held at the Pioneer Center in Troy, Kansas with 31 in attendance. The birthday of Kansas was also acknowledged with singing, birthday cake, and drawings as provided by Cindy Hoverson.

The suggestion was made to have a spring clean-up day at the museum, e.g., dusting and tidy up items. There will be a day selected later and announced. Repairs have been made to the leaky kitchen sink and leaky toilet.

Anna Midyette provided an update on the upcoming April meeting. An indigenous meal will be served and program provided with the ticket cost \$20 each person to cover the food and other expenses. The meal will be at the Highland Community Center.

Reminder to pay the \$10 dues to Anna.

February presentation and meeting will be at St John's Lutheran Church in Bendena February 23. "My Great-Great Uncle Ran with Jesse James" with presenter, Eric Royer. Kent and Marcia Symms will provide refreshments.

Jason Midyette moved and Todd Miller seconded the motion to adjourn. Meeting adjourned.

Vicki Jones, Secretary

SHOW AND TELL

January 26, 2023

31 individuals attended the Show and Tell at the Pioneer Center, Troy, KS.

The following shared their treasures:

Wendell Ganstrom— a powder horn, powder measurer, shotgun wad cutter he was given when he was 12 years old. The items were his great grandfather's. And a booklet of tin plates of pictures of his relatives

Theresa Grossman with her Aunt Jean Ashworth – a box covered with pyrography from her great, great uncle from England with items inside

Larry Faulkner – metal Lincoln Log Home sign of Missouri. Inc. He is looking for information on this company; was it in St. Joseph, MO? And a centennial button of Abraham Lincoln 1809-1909

Kitty Norris – Picture of students of Doniphan County school 1947-1953 Frank B. Schroeder, Bendena was the photographer

Glendon Hartman – Article from 11/25/99 about a Home in Blair (1859) And a picture

Karen and Ted Rockhold – looking for info on Rockholds who taught in 1930's in Doniphan County. Showed a picture of the four Rockhold first cousin boys as young children. Looking for a copy of the "normal training" teaching certificate. There has been a teacher every generation in this family since Ted's great grandmother

Todd presented a donation from Cheril McKay of the Wolf River Community Club meeting notes with 1937 being the first entry. The notes will be placed in the museum.

Susan and Mike Holt – Mike's mother bridal gift ceramic cream and sugar set. Very unique.

Corky Smith – wooden checkers in a modified cigar box cut down; emblem piece off a safe from Iowa Point; electric light from an 1910-1920 automobile; a painting and the beginnings of a doll dress from an old house in Iowa Point

Jason Midyette – Bottle of Corn Huskers Friend and the label. Jason wrote a recent article on this find.

Anna Midyette – tablecloth of the Mexican eagle purchased at an auction. 1880-early 1900's. also came with napkins

Clifton Israel – picture of Grandfather Edward and document from 1898. When the family came to America some changed their name from Erickson to Israel and some kept Erickson. Also a pin that looks to be a clinch pin found in antique shop.

Marlene Mowry – small pottery found in St Joseph antique shop with article inside identifying as Nemađji pottery.

Cindy Hoverson – Mother Goose book from 1958 given to her from brother-in-law. She was wearing a "Kansas" coated decorated by and worn by her sister, Bernice.

Joan Oyerly – books her great Grandmother gave Joan's mother as Christmas Gift The only color in the books is on the cover.

Kent Symms - items from his parents home that was built by the grandparents in 1926 – 50th anniversary copy of the Globe 1887-1927; wooden Velveeta box; medicine bottles; container of "Sugar of Milk" – baby formula from early 1900's.

BOOK REVIEW

By Anna Midyette

The Last Wild Places of Kansas; Journeys into Hidden Landscapes

by George Frazier

Published May 2016 by The University of Kansas Press

212 pages

Winner: Ferguson Kansas History Book Award

Winner: Hamlin Garland Prize in Popular History

Winner: Midwest Book Award-Nature Category

A Kansas Notable Book

I have never included a book review section in this newsletter, but there's a lot in this book that I think members would find interesting. It's available at the Troy Library and can of course be purchased online. I checked it out from the library, but after reading just a couple of chapters I decided I wanted my own copy, so I ordered it from University Press of Kansas.

The author is a Johnson County, Kansas native and attended KU. A software developer by trade, he has a passion for the land and history of Kansas.

Mr. Frazier defines wild places as:

Wild landmarks infused with personal and cultural meaning . . . have always been rare. Natural places you can fall in love with, places of passion, of pilgrimage – I have always just called them wild places.

There are nine chapters on topics such as Ottering, Old Growth, and Renegade Streams of Eastern Kansas. The old growth pecan grove on Fort Leavenworth property in the Weston Bend of the Missouri River Bottoms and the Kansas Cross Timbers stretching from the Chautauqua Hills of southeast Kansas to Central Texas were revelations to me.

This book combines natural history and cultural history to paint a vivid picture of Kansas' wild places. I highly recommend it.

A BOY'S ADVENTURE.

This excerpt from Gray's Doniphan County seems timely with balloons dominating the news lately.

On the Fourth of July, 1872, the citizens of Elwood and some few hundred people from the country witnessed a novel balloon ascension which proved to be one of the most interesting features of the great day. The aeronaut had his balloon ready for the skyward journey about the middle of the afternoon, the day being clear and calm. In the crowd was an ambitious young Irish boy with very red hair and an abundance of freckles to decorate his beaming face. The boy was interested in the aeronaut and his car, and in a bantering way the aeronaut asked the lad to accompany him on his journey to the clouds. The boy expressed himself as both ready and willing, whereupon the man told him to ask the permission of his parents. Of course the permission was refused, and while the boy seemed greatly disappointed, there was hidden in his heart a definite plan. The boy disappeared and no one seemed to know just where he had gone. Many supposed he had gone away to cry with a broken heart, but those were unacquainted with the boy. Some time passed, and the balloonist was ready to enter his basket car. No one knows just how it happened, but the ropes were loosed and the balloon darted upward before the aeronaut had had time to get aboard. When the great air car was several hundred feet from the ground, a small head was seen

peeping over the edge of the basket. It was the head of a boy, and it was a very red head. Then it dawned upon the minds of the excited multitude that the ambitious young Irish boy, instead of having gone home to cry with a broken heart, had slyly hidden himself, red head and all, in the balloon basket, thereby giving himself permission denied by loving but misunderstanding parents. The man of the balloon may have known of the presence of the boy in the basket, but certainly he had not conceived of the balloon's abrupt departure from the terrestrial sphere. The balloon arose majestically to a great height. The boy was seen waving his hat in a very self confident and enthusiastic manner, as if he thoroughly understood and was master of the situation. If the boy could keep his composure there was hope for his safety, although great odds were against him. The great air-car rose higher and higher until it seemed to bob against the ceiling of the sky. Then, meeting a current of air, it began slowly to drift. Different currents seized it, each playing with it for a time, but it never passed out of sight of the watching multitude in which there were eyes that were tearful and eyes that were weary, and necks that were painfully awry. At last, however, the balloon began to descend slowly, like a bird alighting on her nest. As it neared the earth it began to lose the dignity of its motion. It swayed and plunged and teetered, but did not collapse. Again the red head appeared over the side of the basket, and some that had good eyesight and better qualities of imagination, say that a very wide grin strained the elasticity of the boy's mouth. The balloon man shouted some instructions to the boy who, still in full possession of nerve most admirable, followed them and soon found himself on the dear old earth and in the arms of a dear mother who punished him then and there before the multitude, by covering his freckled face with the most affectionate kisses. The boy, reaching manhood, still had "high" aims, and soon arose to the dignity of a responsible railroad official with a cozy office in the heart of Chicago.

TREASURER'S REPORT

FEBRUARY 12, 2023

JAN 15 BALANCE	\$37,575.08
INCOME:	
December interest	3.14
Dues	220.00
Donations	45.00
Income total:	\$268.14
EXPENDITURES:	
City of Highland Community Center reserve for April meeting	90.00
Expenditures total:	\$90.00
FEB 12 BALANCE	\$37,753.22
CD #6519 (for Save Our Liberty Project	\$7,627.54

2023 MEETINGS

All meetings at 6:00 unless otherwise noted.

Presenters/topics/locations subject to change.

February 23 *My Great-Great Uncle Rode with Jesse James* by Eric Royer. St John's Lutheran Church, 102 Commercial Street, Bendena. Refreshments Bendena State Bank.

March 23 *Barns & Quilts* by Eula Mae Drake and Nancy Fuhrman at Highland Senior Center, 102 N Kirkwood, Highland. Information on the self-guided barn tour of Doniphan County.
Refreshments needed.

April 27 *Indigenous Meal* with Native Chef, LLC. A limited number of tickets will be available.

May 25 *Lincoln School History* by Joan Oyerly. Elwood Community Center, 803 Massachusetts St, Elwood. Refreshments Kent and Marcia Symns.

June 24 *St John's Baptist Oratory Feast Day Mass and Picnic with Cellar Tour* (dependent on weather).

Fresh Produce: Kansas's Orchardists, Market Growers, and Truck Farmers

The SLK cordially invites the public to attend a presentation by Kansas Humanities speaker Cindy Higgins at the Troy Library on Tuesday, March 14 at 6:30 p.m. Admission is free and refreshments will be served.

When she does this presentation, Ms. Higgins always says "Doniphan County was the fruitiest place in Kansas." So much fruit was grown in this county! For example:

There used to be an Apple Blossom Festival in Troy where thousands came to tour the orchards, an Apple Blossom Queen was crowned, and a big pie was made. For the 1930 festival, a pie with 20 bushels of apples made was not enough, so another one was made. In 1938, they made a pie pan 10 feet in diameter and a 12-inch pie containing hundreds of bushels of apples for the festival.

Kansas Chief, July 8, 1915: In all the middle west there is probably no county in which the industry of growing small fruits is as extensive as in Doniphan County, Kansas. . . .Thousands of orchards and berry patches dot the surface of the county.

To better and easier market their produce, orchardists and small fruit growers joined in associations such as the Troy Fruit Growing Association and fruit growing associations in Wathena, Blair, and White Cloud. The fruit went to Kansas City, Denver, Cheyenne, Omaha, Chicago, Sioux City, Des Moines, and elsewhere."

Please continue to support your Doniphan County Historical Society. *Your membership is greatly appreciated.* Please consider receiving this newsletter by email to keep our mailing costs low.

DONIPHAN COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP FORM

Detach and mail with payment to: Anna Midyette, PO Box 197, Bendena, KS 66008

All Memberships are \$10.00. This is a: Renewal Membership New Membership

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