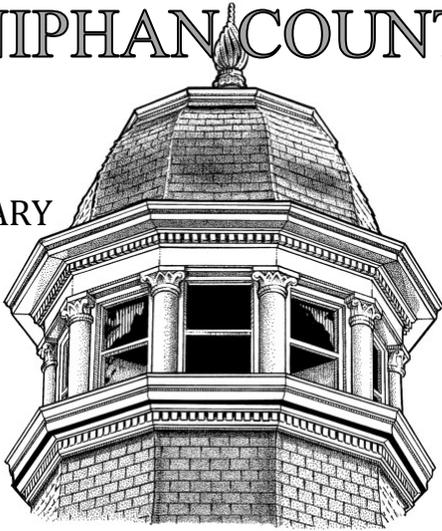


DONIPHAN COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

FEBRUARY
2025

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News Notes

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FEBRUARY MEETING

1990 Doniphan County in Pictures

February 27, 6:00 pm

Presented by Jason and Anna Midyette

St. John's Lutheran Church, 102 Commercial, Bendena

How much have things changed in Doniphan County since 1990? High school students took pictures of county businesses, homes, schools, churches, barns, activities and attractions. This school project resulted in a unique snapshot of what we were doing 35 years ago. Cindy Hoverson created a presentation that at the time used six slide carousels!

We've gone through the slides so we can share them with you. Some need to be identified. If we decide it's worth it, we will send them off to be digitized so we can share them online.

All are welcome to attend. Refreshments will be served.



2025 BOARD MEMBERS

PETE DUNCAN
HONORARY BOARD MEMBER

JOAN OYERLY
510 Fremont St, Wathena, KS 66090
816-261-0676

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785-850-0063
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LARRY FAULKNER
816-591-8898
6108 Kentucky Ave, Raytown, MO

MEETING MINUTES

January 23, 2025

President Jason Midyette welcomed the 21 individuals who attended the annual Show and Tell. Thank you to Corky and Carol Smith for the refreshments. The Officers and Board of Director members will be meeting Thursday, January 28 to plan the programs for 2025. Anyone having suggestions for a program is asked to contact one of those individuals.

SHOW AND TELL:

(Disclaimer – If the following information is not completely accurate, my apologies, but it was easy to get caught up listening to all the information and not get everything down! Vicki Jones)

Jason Midyette: Jason showed a 1912 railroad weigh bill for county freight being shipped from Elwood to Robinson on a passenger train. Several documents such as this were purchased at an auction as apparently the Robinson Clerk of the Railroad station kept a great deal of paperwork. The last depot to close was Troy, Kansas.

Kitty Nourie: Kitty had a copy of the 1860 Census for Wayne Township listing 1390 individuals with their date of birth, birth location, occupation, etc. Many states and foreign countries were reflected as well as a wide variety of occupations.

Glendon Hartman: Glendon reminded us 100 years ago on January 29, Kansas Day, Doniphan County children were voting on the Kansas State bird. He read an excerpt from a news article. A contest was held sponsored by the Bird Society. There were a total of 48,395 votes with the Meadowlark receiving the majority. The Western Meadowlark was chosen as the bird has the Kansas colors and sings a sweet song. Glendon also shared a couple of articles and pictures of Mrs. Hattie Peeler, who was featured in an article in our January newsletter.

Larry Faulkner: Larry is an Abraham Lincoln enthusiast and loves to attend auctions looking for such items. He showed a picture of a recent auction where he paid \$21 total for a variety of Lincoln memorabilia. He circulated a bronze bust of Abraham Lincoln that was a part of this purchase. Upon further research, he found a very similar bust recently sold for \$1539.

Carol Smith: Carol showed an 1872 picture of Little Wren from Iowa Point, which she and Corky purchased from the Massey family.

Corky Smith: Corky circulated a notebook with a collection of foreign currency and tobacco. He also had a wooden box of tobacco products he has produced along with a booklet outlining the steps involved.

Susan Idol: Susan brought an item her husband, Marvin, had. The item fits over the saddle horn and is used to repair fencing (No name provided). Her second item was a tool used by her grandfather to cut and strip leather as he was a leather worker making saddles and

such in his harness shop. The last items were a very tiny funnel to fill perfume bottles as well as a very small magnifying glass from her mother.

Mary Lou Glenn: Mary Lou showed her mom's Hitler pin cushion from 1941. Unique!

Theresa Grossman: Theresa had handwritten documents from her family. One was from her great great grandfather in 1890 showing 75 acres were purchased for \$650 per acre. Another was from her great, great, great grandfather showing property tax paid for 350 acres totaling \$104.

Arthur Mellot: Arthur showed a wood screw box and cutter with instructions. A ¾" wooden rod was used to make the screw. Made 1900-1940 by the Marples & Son Co. The business began in 1830 and is still in business today.

Wendall Ganstrom: Wendall has a chuck wagon and thus the need for the tool he showed; a bung hole borer used to insert the spigot into the oak water barrel.

Anna Midyette: Anna showed the *Sketchbook of Kansas Landmarks* by Margaret Whittemore. The book comes from Cindy Hoverson's collection. Some of the sketches are of a covered bridge in Leavenworth, windmill that was moved to Wamego, Presbyterian Mission in Highland. There is also mention of the Massasoit House in Atchison where Lincoln spoke in 1859.

Marlene Mowry: Marlene circulated a postcard of Chief White Cloud and provided some information. He lived 100 years and had multiple wives. The custom was the man could have as many wives as he could afford. She also circulated a Native American wedding vase that a friend had given her. One spout on the wedding vase represents the husband; the other, the wife. The handle in the middle of a wedding vase represents the unity that a husband and wife will achieve when they come together on their wedding day. The space between the handle and the two spouts is a representation of the couples' circle of life.

Peggy Harden of the Atchison County Historical Society advised the group recently received a large number of photos taken by the Fogler Studio in Atchison. They are asking for assistance in identifying photos that were recently donated to them. There is a link on their Facebook page as well as on their website that goes to the pictures they have scanned. As well as identifying the individuals in the pictures, the group is wanting to return the photos to family members when possible.

The group reviewed and discussed the many items and shared information.

Vicki Jones, Secretary

TREASURER'S REPORT

FEBRUARY 12, 2025

JAN 12 BALANCE	\$34,352.57
INCOME:	
December interest	5.79
Dues	150.00
Donations	680.00
Income total:	\$835.79
EXPENDITURES:	
Cricket Wireless	55.00
Expenditures total:	\$55.00
FEB 12 BALANCE	\$5,133.36
CD #7175	\$7,144.65
CD #6519 (for Save Our Liberty Project)	\$7,871.86

THE RAILROAD TAX

By Jason Midyette

For January's "Show and Tell" meeting Historical Society member Theresa Grossman brought in an 1873-dated property tax receipt (for 1872's taxes) for her ancestor Thomas Davis' land located between Troy and Fanning. While most of the tax categories listed, such as General State and County Taxes, School District and Township taxes, would be familiar to those paying property taxes today, one category stood out as decidedly odd from today's perspective - the "Railroad Tax". At \$23.00, the Railroad Tax was the single largest tax paid and represented 22% of the overall \$104.67 tax bill. So, just what was the Railroad Tax?

To understand the Railroad Tax, we first need a little background. The 1870's and 1880's were a boom time for railroads in America. Rail lines were being built just about everywhere there was a whiff of a population that might need service. For every line that was actually being built, several more were proposed. The railroad represented a massive leap in transportation technology and brought transportation costs, and shipment times, down to never before seen levels. Having a railroad opened up a nationwide market for a rural area's agricultural products as well as allowing rural farmers the ability to purchase factory made implements and other goods from makers far away. The drop in shipping costs also lowered the cost of such goods, as one boxcar could haul what used to take a whole wagon train. A railroad brought an aura of prosperity and permanence to a community (much as a paved highway would 60 or so years down the road and an airport might 20 years further on) and folks were chomping at the bit to get one.

The hurdle standing in the way of all of this potential greatness was, as is the case with many undertakings, money. Railroads cost a lot of money to build and money was scarce. To help fund railroad construction, railroad companies often asked for and counties and towns often offered to issued bonds to build a railroad through a

particular area. The county or town would issue the bonds and give the proceeds to the railroad to construct the line and then, through property or other tax collection, the citizens would pay off the bond principle and interest over a specified time period. Once the bonds were paid off, the tax levy was removed. Like a government bond issue today, such a project required a vote, so if it passed, the citizens must have felt they were getting more benefit from the railroad than the additional taxes were costing.

In this case, the Railroad Tax was the result of Doniphan County issuing \$200,000.00 worth of bonds in 1869 to help fund the construction of the Atchison & Nebraska Railroad from Atchison to the Nebraska state line north of White Cloud. Atchison County issued \$150,000.00 in bonds for the line and private investors furnished some \$90,000.00 to the cause. The railroad between Atchison and the state line was completed in 1871. In 1880 it became part of the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad (CB&Q) and was expanded north to Rulo, Nebraska and thence on towards Lincoln. By the early 1900's the line had been cut back to Rulo, where it met another CB&Q line running east - west. What became known as the "Rulo Branch" was abandoned in 1931, with much of the right of way becoming county roads and the route of Highway 7 north of Sparks.

I suppose the final question to be answered about the Railroad Tax is - Was it worth it? In the end, and as a whole, I would have to guess that it was. The railroad was actually built (and in a timely manner none the less) and provided service well beyond the time it took to pay off the bonds. (Not all who issued bonds were so fortunate. Many proposed, and funded, railroads were never built, built in a direction different than originally planned, or bit the dust long before the bonds were paid off, leaving taxpayers footing the bill for something that never or no longer existed.) In this case, the railroad lasted over 60 years. Even today some of it is still in use as parts of county roads and Kansas Highway 7.

1990 DONIPHAN COUNTY IN NUMBERS

Doniphan County's population increased 11 out of the 32 years between year 1990 and year 2022. Its largest annual population increase was 2.5% between 1996 and 1997. The largest decline was between 1993 and 1994 when the population dropped 2.6%. Between 1990 and 2022, the county shrank by an average of 0.3% per year.

How old is the population in Doniphan County? Among six age groups — 0-4, 5-19, 20-34, 35-49, 50-64, and 65 and older — the 50-64 group was the fastest growing between 1990 and 2022 with its population increasing 32.8%. The 5-19 age group declined the most dropping 20.4% between 1990 and 2022.

The share of the population that is 0-4 years old decreased from 6.8% in 1990 to 4.9% in 2022. The share of the population that is 65 and older increased from 17.8% in 1990 to 20.6% in 2022. *Source: www.usafacts.org*

2025 MEETINGS

All meetings at 6:00 unless otherwise noted.

Presenters/topics/locations subject to change.

February 27 – *1990 Doniphan County in Pictures* by Jason and Anna Midyette. St. John's Lutheran Church, 102 Commercial. Bendena. Refreshments by Jason and Anna Midyette.

March 27 – *James Lane* by Steve Gingery. Elwood Community Center, 803 Massachusetts St, Elwood. *Refreshment volunteer needed.*

April 24 – *Waste Not, Want Not: Reimagining Fashion through Thrift Style* by Marla Day, Humanities Kansas Speaker. Community of Christ Church, 1548 Highway 7, Highland. *Refreshment volunteer needed.*

May 22 – TBA. *Refreshment volunteer needed.*

June 26 – TBA. *Refreshment volunteer needed.*

July 26 – SATURDAY. Car Show and Pot Luck in White Cloud.

August 28 – *Trains, Trucks and Vintage Farm Equipment* by Jason Midyette at his home 544 Hwy 7, Bendena. *Refreshment volunteer needed.*

September 25 – *Wathena Chautauqua* by Joan Oyerly. Wathena Community Center, 303 E. St. Joseph. *Refreshment volunteer needed.*

October 23– *Geologic History of Northeast Kansas* by Betty Gleason. Jones Family Barn, 548 Hwy 7, Bendena. *Refreshment volunteer needed.*

November 20 – *Abraham Lincoln* by Larry Faulkner. Jones Family Barn, 548 Hwy 7, Bendena. *Refreshment volunteer needed.*

December 1 – Soup Supper.

Future meetings and topics are being finalized. Stay tuned.

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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