



# Historical Highlights

v. 4, n. 2



May 2015

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## President's Message

by *David J. Heinemann*, SCHS President

The Shawnee County Historical Society was privileged last month to be able to **welcome C-SPAN to the Ritchie House** to help kick off their weeklong Topeka visit to record and feature the rich history and literary life of our city. Mayor Larry Wolgast was here to officially greet our guests; including Ashley Hill, Representative/Producer, C-SPAN Cities Tour; Scott Humelsheim, C-SPAN photographer; and Dennis Clary, Cox Communications Senior Manager of Public Affairs. They planned to visit various literary and historic sites and to interview local historians, authors and civic leaders. After their news conference Bill Wagon, retired Washburn history teacher, provided a video interview about John Ritchie, the Historic Ritchie House, and their ties to the "Bleeding Kansas" abolitionist era. Hopefully, by the time you read this, you will have seen on C-SPAN3 their special Topeka weekend May 2nd and 3rd program. If you missed it you should be able to access it on their C-SPAN Cities Tour website or their C-SPAN Cities Tour Twitter page. Cox Communications, as you may know, was instrumental in providing a major share of the funding to preserve and renovate the adjacent Hale Ritchie House that we know as the Cox Communication Heritage Learning Center where we provide most of our educational programs. Cox Communications partnered with C-SPAN to do the Cities Tour program.



Again, this year, as your president, I was privileged to participate in the **Kansas District 3 History Day Program** held at Washburn University's Memorial Union. Rachel Goossen, the program's coordinator, provided a short article about this event in our last newsletter. I want to emphasize that this is no small deal as the event literally packs the Memorial Union with attendees. Over 200 junior and senior student from our area schools made presentations consisting of historical papers, individual exhibits, group exhibits, individual and group performances, documentaries, and individual and group websites. The topics they covered were just as diverse: ranging from "Advancing

—continued on p. 2

## President's Message, cont.

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Treatment, Transforming Lives: The Legacy of the Menninger Clinic”; “The Antiquities Act: An Act of the Past For the Future”; to “Charles Loring Brace: The Father of Foster Care”. Rachel Goossen and her friends at the Washburn University History Department deserve a great thank you for what they do to promote this event. Therefore, it was no coincidence that, when we were in need of a program for our **2015 Historic Preservation Awards Ceremony** scheduled to take place at the Historic Dillon House this May 3rd, we took up Rachel’s offer and enlisted the talents of six students from the Seaman High School who participated in Kansas History Day to be our program. Your Shawnee County Historical Society for many years has provided a \$1,000 grant to support District 3 History Day.

Kudos are also in order for **Girl Scout Troop 4306**. Girl Scouts Ana Austin, Sarah Austin, Alaur Austin, Destiny Grubbs, Alora Johnson and Jordan Bond, together with Troop Leaders Yolanda Huggins, Kwaneka Bennett and Joan Wilson, volunteered their time to clean up the area around the Cox Communication Heritage Learning Center and Ritchie House last month. Their hard work is most appreciated.

In a continuation of our renewed effort to improve communication with you and our community, the recently formed **Communications Committee** presented the trustees with a new website design that is still being developed. This website will allow members to access a new “Members Only” section. An added benefit of this new section is that you as a member will be able to obtain tickets to SCHS and community events before they are offered to the public. Plans are also being made to re-engage our communities and neighborhoods throughout Shawnee County and to present their local histories. In addition,

we are working with other boards to put together a new initiative called **“Because History Matters.”** This will be designed to engage these local groups and bring new interest to our society. The Communications Committee is trying new ways to engage Facebook followers. Our audience reach has already increased by an amazing 459.2%. Engagement with our audience, based upon time interaction on our Facebook page, has increased by 353.8%. We welcome your thoughts as we continue this process.

**Again, I want to call to your attention to two very important ways you can help your society.** First, and this is a simple one. Our last newsletter explained how you can join the new community **Rewards Program** offered through **Dillons Grocery Stores** and have an automatic percentage of your spending contributed to the Shawnee County Historical Society by use of your Dillons Plus card at no expense to you. It’s like a “cash back” bonus, except that the bonus you earn goes to help fund your society. Please visit <https://www.dillons.com/communityrewards> and enroll. **The SCHS NPO number is 33429.** This is a truly painless and great way to help fund SCHS’s educational programs.

The second way for you to help is to go to the Fairlawn Mall on June 2nd (start time is 7:00 a.m.) and participate in **Topeka Gives 2015**. Topeka Community Foundation invites all charitable organizations to take part, solicits donations from the public to support these local charities, then matches, on a pro rata basis, what you contribute to each participating charity. It’s another great way to maximize your personal commitment to SCHS. We encourage this way of obtaining additional funds for SCHS. *Please plan to stop by our booth.*

Finally, if you have not already done so, **renew your membership.** ☞



## SCHS Joins Dillions Community Rewards Program

### A REMINDER:

**You can increase your support for the SCHS by grocery shopping.** The Society has joined the new community **Rewards Program** offered through **Dillons Grocery Stores**. If you have a Dillons Plus card and designate the SCHS as the designated recipient, each time you use your Dillons Plus card, a percentage of your spending will be

contributed to the SCHS by Dillons. This allows Dillons shoppers to designate recipients of what would be normally Dillons’ charitable contribution as a corporation. It doesn’t add anything to your grocery bill. Visit <https://www.dillons.com/communityrewards> and enroll. The SCHS NPO number is **33429**.

# Educational Opportunities

by *Melinda Abitz*, Education Program Developer

## School field trips

Seeing busloads of school children enter the Ritchie House and the Cox Communication Heritage Education Center never seems to get old. This time of year when the “Rediscover Freedom’s Pathway” school field program comes to an end, there’s a sense of gratification that we, as staff and volunteers, experience that brings us back to the days when the dream of yellow school buses lining Madison Street would become a reality. It’s enjoyable for us to provide a historical experience that can give students something not found in a textbook.

“They enjoyed the interaction and the fact that this was an actual part of history. Text books will never be able to capture the imagination and reality of what the Ritchie House offers.” - Urban Scholastic Center KC

With a record number of approximately 2,645 students for this school year, about 250 more than last year, we are grateful to those who support us with encouraging words, advertising, volunteer work and monetary donations. We believe that we are providing history education to Kansas school children in a very special way. We want to say thank you for your support.

## History Camp for Kids

“The Trails of Shawnee County History” is the theme for this year’s History Camp for Kids with sessions meeting one time each week June 1 – July 10. Each week of the six-week camp will focus on a different Kansas trail during Kansas’ years. Each week’s programming will feature a guest presenter(s) / reenactor(s) who specializes in historical presentations for students. There will be hands-on opportunities, primary source documents and take-away activities for the campers to connect with weekly themes. Each week’s topic will include the “experience” element which is the reenactment or involvement in a simulated scenario.

Five community centers and learning organizations are planned for this summer with approximately 120 campers coming each week with a “Trails End” event closing out our summer camp (see column two). **We have room for an additional limited number of campers (3<sup>rd</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> grades) for friends and family of SCHS members.** This is free programming for each camper. Registration will end soon. If you are interested in learning more, please call: 785-234-6097 or visit our website: [historicritchiehouse.wix.com/historicritchiehouse](http://historicritchiehouse.wix.com/historicritchiehouse)

## CAMP SCHEDULE

**Week 1: “Trail of Death”** – forced removal of the Native American members of the Potawatomi nation from Indiana to what is now Kansas in 1838.

**Week 2: “Trappers and Traders”** – The trails and history of the fur trappers and traders of Shawnee County, Kansas before statehood.

**Week 3: “Military Trails”** – from Fort Leavenworth to Fort Riley involving the movement of military supplies and establishing a military presence for new settlers.

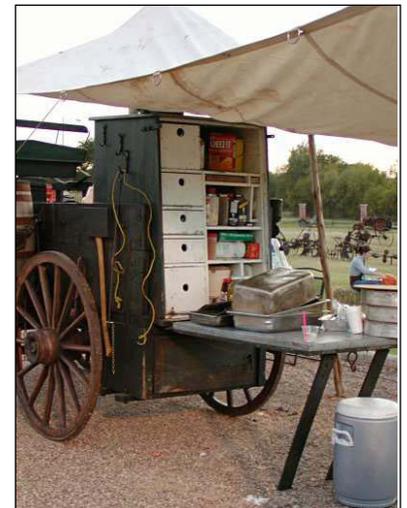
**Week 4: “Oregon Trail”** – Kansas, the gathering point of wagon trails and their trek through Shawnee County and beyond.

**Week 5: “Underground Railroad”** – consisting of a series of safe houses in Shawnee County, which would take in escaping slaves from Missouri and help them on their journey North.

**Week 6: “Railroads”** – creation of the Atchison, Topeka and the Santa Fe Railroad and later, the Great Overland Station. This will be an offsite visit to the Overland Station in Topeka.

## Chuck Wagon Dinner, Finale to History Day

Soon school will be out and our SCHS History Camp for Kids will be getting underway. This year’s theme is “The Trails of Shawnee County History” and the six-week schedule is posted, above. The finale to the camp will be a Chuck Wagon Dinner served from an authentic restored chuck wagon. The dinner will be free and open to campers, their parents, and SCHS members. Plan to join us on July 10, at 6:00 pm around the campfire! We’ll need a count to plan properly, so call Melinda at 785 234-6097 to let us know that you’re coming!



## Our Thanks to Girl Scout Troop 4306!

On Saturday afternoon, April 11, 2015, six Girl Scouts along with four Troop Leaders came to the Cox Education Center and the Ritchie House. The Scouts, along with Board Members **Bill Wagnon** and **George Bernheimer**, cleared the grounds of trash and debris around the buildings and the area up to the Interstate highway. Afterwards, they enjoyed chocolate chip bars and lemonade courtesy of **Diane Bernheimer**.

Troop Leaders are **Johne Green**, **Yolanda Huggins**, **Kwaneka Bennett**, and **Joan Wilson**. The Girl Scouts were **Ana Austin**, **Sarah Austin**, **Alaurn Austin**, **Destiny Grubbs**, **Alora Johnson**, and **Jordan Bond**.

*Our thanks to all!*



## New Old Clock

The clock pictured here is a gift given the Society by a friend of Melinda Abitz's family who enjoys flea markets and had this clock for several years. After visiting the Ritchie House last fall, he thought we might like to have it to display. It was made in the mid-1800s — and at it still works! It's currently on the mantle in the living room.



## Tidbit

“**Freedom’s Struggle**” is an ongoing project of *The Topeka Capital-Journal* about the events that unfolded in the **Freedom’s Frontier National Heritage Area** in eastern Kansas and western Missouri, from pre-Civil War battles to the enduring struggle for freedom.

The feature includes several online components that can be viewed at <http://cjonline.com/news/freedoms-frontier>. Those features include: all the stories in the series, video walking tours of Freedom’s Frontier sites, maps and timelines. Additional features will be added as the projects progress.

## Highlight [pp 5-8] author & his capstone requirement:

Evan M. Thomas is a Washburn University history major. He wrote the article chosen as our May, 2015, SCHS Highlight from research he did in fulfilling his History 399 capstone project. The capstone requires students to immerse themselves in original research based in primary sources. Students first identify a historical topic or question they want to investigate. They then write a research paper containing original historical argument, supported by evidence gleaned from primary sources. They are encouraged to apply critical thinking, research and writing skills they have honed throughout their careers as history majors. The History Department

also encourages students to share their 399 projects, and SCHS is happy to help in sharing this work.

Evan makes these comments, “As I began, I found myself pulled into investigating the history of Topeka during the Great Depression, a time when the city’s population grew considerably. In the historical literature on suburbaization, the Great Depression period is a black hole. I knew this topic was perfect for 399.”

He also writes, “Currently I am serving in the U.S. Navy and have every intention to someday return to the sphere of academics that I enjoy so much, this time as an educator.”

Feature —

## SCHS Highlight:

# A Fresh Look at Suburbanization in the Great Depression: New and Growing Neighborhoods on the Periphery of Topeka, Kansas, in the 1930s

by **Evan M. Thomas**, written as his History 399 capstone project as a Washburn University history major.

In the midst of an exodus of Kansans during the Great Depression, Topeka, Kansas was a growing metropolis with blooming suburbs fueled by the increasing accessibility to automobiles, roads, utilities, and lower tax levies. Kansans in the Depression began a trend still seen today as they abandoned their farms for the cities, and those in the cities fled to neighborhoods on the peripheries of those cities. Highland Park was an affluent neighborhood which used Works Progress Administration labor to improve its infrastructure while Moundview Acres advertised with headlines promising a life insulated from the troubles of the Depression. The 1930s in the narrative of American suburbanization is nearly void of stories such as these, yet they are important for understanding what became of the late nineteenth century affluent suburbs and the surge of suburbanization which followed World War II. As Topeka grew during the Great Depression, its suburbs of Moundview Acres and Highland Park illustrated both unique and common trends.

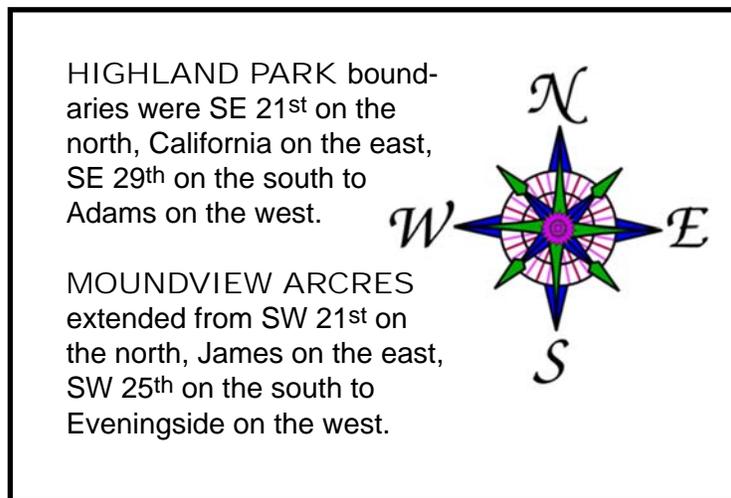
Just like the national Census in 1940, a study of the Kansas Board of Agriculture's yearly Statistical Rolls between 1929 and 1940 shows positive increases in population for

the Topeka Metropolitan area, which includes the city of Topeka, Topeka Township, Mission Township and Soldier Township.<sup>1</sup> The three townships listed are important as they absorb all growth outside of the city limits where the suburbs lie. A comparison of county property maps show that township population growth must have been occurring in the neighborhoods on the peripheries of the

city.<sup>2</sup> The City Planners Harland Bartholomew and Associates, who created a Comprehensive Plan for Topeka in 1945, highlighted this in stating that "there has been about as much increase in these suburbs as in the City of Topeka itself."<sup>3</sup>

There were many advantages to living in or near Topeka which included employment opportunities as well as

access to utilities. A stated "101 manufacturing establishments" existed as of 1938, the Atchison Topeka Santa Fe Railroad provided substantial employment, and the Topeka area made exceptional use of Works Progress Administration projects and funds.<sup>4</sup> Topeka also had a strong water infrastructure, and by 1939 all the townships surrounding the city had access to it, ending sporadic growth and decline among the townships and — *continued on p. 6*



<sup>1</sup> These increases were 20, 37, 17 and 9 percent respectively. Kansas Board of Agriculture, *Abstract of Statistical Rolls: Counties*, Kansas State Historical Society: Archives Division, Microfilm Records, 1929-1940; U.S. Department of Commerce, *Bureau of the Census, Sixteenth Census of the United States, 1940*, 1940, 393.

<sup>2</sup> There is no obvious increase of lots designated on the maps, but several areas on the latter map are hashed out to denote neighborhoods. John W. Dozier, *Shawnee County Kansas Map*, (The Columbian Abstract Company, Jan. 1934); Charles Estes and Ed Steckler, *Shawnee County Ownership Map*, (Topeka Title and Bond Company, 1939).

<sup>3</sup> Harland Bartholomew and Associates, *Comprehensive Plan of the City of Topeka and Shawnee County, Kansas*, 19.

<sup>4</sup> Topeka Daily Capital, *Market Data: Kansas and the Topeka Market*, (Topeka, 1938), 9; "Topekans Hear of Car Business," Topeka State Journal, May 31, 1938 in Auto Clippings at Kansas State Historical Society, 112; Topeka Daily Capital, *Market Data: Kansas and the Topeka Market*, 9.

## A Fresh Look at Suburbanization, cont.

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— continued from p. 5 city.<sup>5</sup> The County Statistical Rolls show positive growth in each township for the years 1939 and 1940, while the population of Topeka proper dropped slightly during both.<sup>6</sup> There were four years in the period reviewed that the city saw population loss and three of those four years also saw every surrounding township gain population, which seems to show an outward migration.<sup>7</sup> The shift was most dramatic after water lines had been laid in all of these areas and people could move out from the city without leaving behind the amenities they had grown so accustomed to and dependent on.<sup>8</sup> This is supported by an article in the Topeka State Journal on September 28, 1939, which points to the loss of city population caused by people moving to the suburbs where there was increasing water access and a lower tax levy.<sup>9</sup>

The possibility for running water in the areas outlying Topeka started to take shape in the mid 1930s as Topeka's suburbs began to grow. Beginning in March of 1935 several citizens of the Highland Park suburb who were described as "business and professional men" inquired about having Topeka water running to their homes.<sup>10</sup> Over two years later, in late 1937 and early 1938, the Topeka Township Board was finally making this a reality after being presented 927 contracts, representing 1,050 individual homes, signed by residents who wished to see water piped into the neighborhoods of Highland Park, East Hills, and the Pierce Addition.<sup>11</sup> This initial petition was meant to

determine where the lines would be laid, and if there were even enough homes interested in receiving water. The projected cost was 400,000 dollars and would be financed by the Township Board selling 270,000 dollars worth of bonds while the Federal Government would cover up to 126,000 dollars worth of labor for a WPA crew to lay the estimated "25 miles of mains" through the spring and summer of 1938.<sup>12</sup>

An article in the Topeka Daily Capital from 1938 refers to the area as "Highland Park, pleasant and beautiful Topeka Suburb of 5,000 to 6,000 population."<sup>13</sup> However the County Statistical Rolls show that the entire Topeka Township had only 5,746 persons during the same year.<sup>14</sup> Some of the people in the area that the reporter was looking at likely lived in Topeka proper, but wherever the discrepancy lies, it is apparent that Highland Park makes up a substantial portion of the population enumerated in the Topeka Township counts. This indicates that large changes occurring among population statistics for the Topeka Township such as the 37 and 19 percent increases in 1939 and 1940 can be largely attributed to increases in Highland Park.<sup>15</sup> This also means that it is the largest suburb since other townships are not nearly as populated, thus could not hold a larger suburb. This would be natural since parts of Highland Park first received water in 1918, gas lines in 1928, several concrete and macadam roads around and through it as of 1935, and a more exten-

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<sup>5</sup> Keith Krause, *Impact of Water on the Development of Topeka: A History*. (The Topeka-Shawnee County Flood Control and Conservation Association, Inc. March 1993), 18; Kansas Board of Agriculture, *Abstract of Statistical Rolls*.

<sup>6</sup> Kansas Board of Agriculture, *Abstract of Statistical Rolls*.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> "City Loses 1,000," Topeka State Journal, September 28, 1939, in *Randal C. Harvey Scrapbooks Vol. 6* as compiled by Mrs. Randal C. Harvey, 5.

<sup>10</sup> "Highland Park Presents Plea for Water Services," *Topeka State Journal*, March 22, 1935, in *Randal C. Harvey Scrapbooks Vol. 2* as compiled by Mrs. Randal C. Harvey, 8.

<sup>11</sup> "Highland Park Water Plan Before WPA Soon," *Topeka Daily Capital*, January 4, 1938, in *Randal C. Harvey Scrapbooks Vol. 3* as compiled by Mrs. Randal C. Harvey, 65; "Highland Park Gets Last O.K. On Water Works," *Topeka Daily Capital*, January 28, 1938, in *Randal C. Harvey Scrapbooks Vol. 3* as compiled by Mrs. Randal C. Harvey, 67.

<sup>12</sup> "Highland Park Gets Last O.K. On Water Works," *Topeka Daily Capital*, January 28, 1938; "Highland Park Water System Step Nearer," *Topeka State Journal*, January 26, 1938, in *Randal C. Harvey Scrapbooks Vol. 3* as compiled by Mrs. Randal C. Harvey, 66; "Highland Park Gets Last O.K. On Water Works," *Topeka Daily Capital*, January 28, 1938, 67.

<sup>13</sup> "Highland Park Sewer Problem," *Topeka Daily Capital*, July 7, 1938, in *Randal C. Harvey Scrapbooks Vol. 4* as compiled by Mrs. Randal C. Harvey, 36.

<sup>14</sup> Kansas Board of Agriculture, *Abstract of Statistical Rolls*.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

## A Fresh Look at Suburbanization, cont.

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sive water system in 1937 and 1938.<sup>16</sup> The City Planners Harland Bartholomew and Associates recognized all this when they stated “suburban development is largely concentrated in Topeka Township and extends approximately one and one-half miles to the south and east of the corporate limits.” They went on later to say that “the Highland Park community has grown rather rapidly.”<sup>17</sup>

Highland Park had been settled in since 1887 and is a classic example of suburbanization as it was first populated by professionals using a circle railroad to commute.<sup>18</sup> This connection to Topeka continued until at least 1937, and like its role in so many other suburbs, it helped make their growth possible until those living there began buying personal cars for transportation into the city.<sup>19</sup> Like its predecessors and peers, this suburb was a neighborhood for the affluent. In a publication from circa 1914, several residents contributed phrases and mottos which might attract future settlers of the suburb. One of these states: “Don’t get boastful because you live in Highland Park.”<sup>20</sup> In a *Topeka Daily Capital* article on July 7, 1938 about sewer problems arising from their “fine new water system,” the author notes that “building is increasing in Highland Park.” And a publication about Highland Park’s schools in 1940 had the following description of the area; “scores of attractive residences, whole blocks of which have been erected within the past five years, are modern both in architecture and utility.”<sup>21</sup> This mention of Highland Park exemplifies the growth occurring in the 1930s

before, and especially after, utilities were improved.

In the early 1930s there had been a call for Americans to move “back to the farm” in order to be more independent and to strengthen rural areas of the country. Unfortunately the movement in Kansas was not successful due to the lack of utilities and services that cities can provide, but rural areas cannot. This pull was still used however as a method for the selling of suburban homes, and a perfect example of this sat just outside the gates of Topeka. Moundview Acres, in the Mission Township, was one of the newest suburbs in the 1930s and the Real Estate Subdividers, the Trentman Company, certainly played up the benefits of agrarian life with their 1934 advertising headlines which included “Topeka’s Newest Garden Addition,” and “Plan a Big Garden This Year! Why Not?”<sup>23</sup> Their half acre lots only a quarter mile from the city limits were specifically promoted as large enough to plant a garden on, but also a more affordable and comfortable alternative to renting. This was driven home by statements such as “Home Owners Came Through the Depression,” and “Buy a Tract, Begin Your Home, Save Your Rent, Pay For Your Home, You Own It, You Are Independent!”<sup>24</sup> All this was in spite of the high number of property foreclosures in the 1930s, and the unemployed of Topeka and Shawnee County successfully rallying, marching and demanding resignations to express their discontent with state aid and work programs in the same year as the previously quoted advertisement.<sup>25</sup> — *continued, p. 8*

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<sup>16</sup> C.A. Martin, *Road Map of Shawnee County Kansas*, 1935; Shawnee County Historical Society, *The History of Highland Park*, 9-10.

<sup>17</sup> Harland Bartholomew and Associates, *Comprehensive Plan of the City of Topeka and Shawnee County, Kansas*, (St. Louis Missouri: May 1945), 19.

<sup>18</sup> Shawnee County Historical Society, *The History of Highland Park Bulletin No. 26* (Topeka: Press of F.M. Steves & Sons, December 1956), 8; Robert W. Richmond, “Street Railways and Suburbs, Promotional Twins,” *Shawnee County Historical Society Bulletin*, No. 46 (December 1969), 12.

<sup>19</sup> Robert W. Richmond, “Street Railways and Suburbs, Promotional Twins,” 11.

<sup>20</sup> Shawnee County Historical Society, *The History of Highland Park*, 60.

<sup>21</sup> “Highland Park Sewer Problem,” *Topeka Daily Capital*, July 7, 1938, 36; Glada Strode, *Highland Park Blends the Urban With the Rural*, Kansas Teacher, Vol. 4 No. 2 May 1940, 10.

<sup>22</sup> Emil B. Dade, **Migration of Kansas Population: 1930-1945**, 25; J.C. Mohler, *Report of the Kansas State Board of Agriculture: Fourth Quarter Ending December 1936*, (Topeka, Kansas: Kansas State Printing Plant 1937) 15; *Ibid.*, 103; “Rural Costs Too,” *The Emporia Citizen*, Vol. 1 No. 2, Monday April 4, 1932.

<sup>23</sup> The Trentman Company, *Moundview Acres*, (May 10, 1934).

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>25</sup> *Topeka State Journal*, “Jobless of City to State House,” April 2, 1934, *Labor Clippings*, Vol. 2 (1930-1953), 11.

## A Fresh Look at Suburbanization, cont.

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— *continued from p. 7* The Trentman Company claimed that these conveniences and this “back to the farm” movement were putting suburban land in high demand. It was the best of both worlds, the potential for hard work and independence without the independence from the city. They were keenly aware of the insecurities that had come from the depression the country was still in the midst of and played to the rugged individualism that Americans had always prided themselves on. Americans were afraid of losing their homes, throwing away precious money every month on rent and extra taxes, and not being able to provide enough food for their families. The lots were cheap enough that had an individual or family been able to save some money, which was increasingly likely given Topeka’s employment opportunities, they could afford one. Although the development was advertised to those who had seen hard times during the Depression, it was not for all downtrodden Topekans. The advertisement explicitly stated that the subdivision was for “whites only.”<sup>26</sup> Regardless, on a 1934 map the section which would contain Moundview Acres only had a few individuals holding tracts which were comparable to those found in the rest of the county, but by 1939 a similar map had three quarters of the section hashed out in the same fashion as other neighborhoods on the edge of town with too many owners to separately mark.<sup>27</sup>

The Trentman Company was pushing a new American Individualism for a new age, one where people were now dependent on cars, electricity, and other utilities. It was the end of the American frontier as Midwesterners realized that farming was no longer the future, and modern amenities had become a necessity rather than a convenience for those living near towns and cities. It represented a transition stage which set precedence for working and middle class Americans using their increased access to automobiles to move themselves into communities where they are surrounded by people just like them, hard working white Americans. A man could buy a house and just as the Subdividers said, be independent from the worry of rent. Moundview Acres was also addressing the concerns of those opposing the “back to the farm” movement, not by bringing the amenities to rural communities, but by

bringing the rural communities to the amenities so that city dwellers tired of dirty and crowded conditions did not have to go far to go “back to the farm.” This compromise showed a shift and expansion in which the American dream was moving from a plot of land to farm, to a lot with a garden close to the conveniences and employment of a city.

The suburb model that Highland Park fit into had lasted, mostly unchanged with the exception of automobiles, for half a century, but by the end of the 1940s would be combined with the model that Moundview Acres fit in. During the 1930s the availability of cars meant that more individuals could move into classic suburbs, and working class individuals could move to plots of land which made them more independent. Both were still seeking the rural charm that these peripheral neighborhoods offered, but the appeal of that rural charm would soon fall by the wayside. The 1930s, despite the Great Depression, experienced a new wave of suburbanization which set the stage for the post World War II suburbanization that was made possible by America’s renewed prosperity, and which is so prevalent in American History.

As Topeka grew during the Great Depression, its suburbs of Moundview Acres and Highland Park illustrated both common and unique trends, the previous being an area which was marketed to those who were insecure, while the latter with its improving infrastructure attracted the secure and affluent. Even while Kansas’ population withered, Topeka did not just maintain its size, it gained citizens. There were plenty of business and professional men ready to move to Highland Park where WPA funds and projects had helped create infrastructure to increase its appeal. Simultaneously there were enough unemployed among a still strongly agricultural area to create insecurities and a hope that these could be solved by moving “back to the farm,” and these fears were capitalized on by advertisers and subdividers. Topeka was exemplary of two models of suburbanization that represent an important and pivotal point in the story of American suburbanization as it was edging its way into the mainstream, and becoming a major player in shaping the face of the United States. 

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<sup>26</sup> The Trentman Company, *Moundview Acres*, (May 10, 1934).

<sup>27</sup> John W. Dozier, *Shawnee County Kansas Map*, (The Columbian Abstract Company, Jan. 1934); Charles Estes and Ed Steckler, *Shawnee County Ownership Map*, (Topeka Title and Bond Company, 1939).

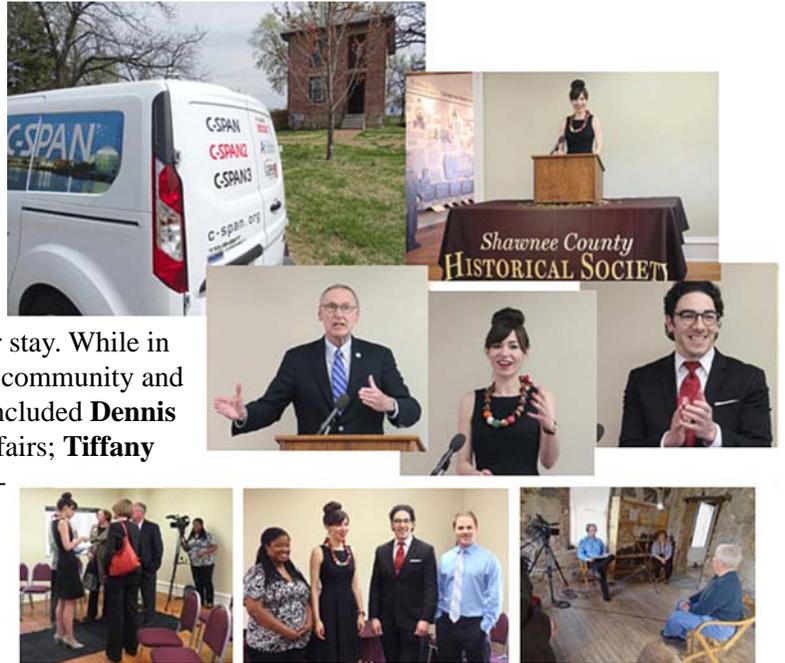
## Visit from C-Span News

On Tuesday afternoon, April 7, 2015, SCHS President David Heinemann welcomed Mayor Larry Wolgast and Cox Communications representatives from C-SPAN to Topeka. The event was held at the Ritchie House, as C-Span kicked off a visit to record and feature the city's historical and literary life.

At the event, C-SPAN representatives revealed the stories and segments that were to be explored during their stay. While in Topeka, C-SPAN representatives also planned to conduct community and education outreach. C-Span guests at the Ritchie House included **Dennis Clary**, Cox Communications senior manager of public affairs; **Tiffany Rocque**, video journalist; **Ashley Hill**, representative/producer of C-SPAN Cities Tour; and **Scott Hummelsheim**, videographer.

After the news event C-Span did a video interview with **Dr. Bill Wagon** about the Ritchie House as area historic site, and about **John Ritchie** and his ties to the "Bleeding Kansas" Abolitionist era.

Programs recorded in Topeka were to air on Book TV/C-SPAN2 and American History TV/C-SPAN3 on May 2-3, 2015. C-SPAN is available in Topeka on Cox Communications channel 279.



## News from Historic Topeka Cemetery

Memorial weekend HTC will host hundreds of visitors and numerous events:

- On **Saturday, May 23**, the **Ride 4 The Fallen** will begin with registration and breakfast at 8 a.m. at the VA Hospital. Hundreds of motorcycles will end the procession in front of Mausoleum Row at HTC. Sponsored by the Military Veteran Project, the mission of the ride is to perpetuate the memory of military heroes who have made the ultimate sacrifice while protecting America's freedom.
- During the **100th anniversary of the End of World War I** we are marking the graves of our veterans who died during the war with their photos and biographies. These will be in place by May 21 and will remain up for one week. A map will be available in the office. A ceremony honoring **General Norman Ramsey** and **all WWI veterans** will be held near his grave at 7:00 p.m. on Sunday, May 24. *The public is welcome.*
- There will be ceremonies by various veterans' organizations throughout the day on Memorial Day, May 25.

Topeka Cemetery has launched a fund-raiser to pay for a website that has walk-to-site capability—that is, you put in Grandpa's name and your phone takes you right to him. It has lots of other great features, which you can read about at [www.topekacemeterygeeks.com](http://www.topekacemeterygeeks.com)

On **April 11, 2015**, nearly **100 Boy Scouts and leaders** visited Historic Topeka Cemetery, the Great Overland Station, and Brown v. Board NHS to study the life of **Vice President Charles Curtis**.

Superintendent Lisa Sandmeyer and HTC Friends, Douglass Wallace and Jeanne Mithen, were on hand to interpret the grave sites and documents related to Curtis. Several of the Scouts enjoyed sack lunches on the grounds. Leaders also discussed potential Eagle projects with Lisa. There are many opportunities for community service projects at HTC.



On **April 6, 2015**, HTC welcomed video journalist, **Tiffany Rocque**, from **C-Span**. Tiffany, along with producer **Ashley Hill** and video journalist and producer, **Scott Hummelsheim**, spent a week visiting Topeka historic sites and interviewing locals, including HTC's Resident Historian **Deb Goodrich**. While in HTC, Tiffany filmed interviews at the gravesites of **Charles Curtis** and **Cyrus K. Holliday**. Episodes will air on C-Span's Book TV and on American History TV.

If your name is not on this list, your membership is in arrears. However, to err is human and there might be a mistake. If so please notify the membership clerk, Bill Wagon at [wwagon@cox.net](mailto:wwagon@cox.net) or 230-6481. Otherwise, to support the work of the Society and continue receiving the newsletter, please remit your check today to PO Box 2201, Topeka, Kansas 66601. \$35 Regular; \$50 Patron; \$100 Renovator; \$150 and above Sustainer.

Life:

Donald and Janet Chubb  
 Mildred Francis  
 Carolyn Huebner  
 David Laird  
 Larry D. Marken  
 J. Douglas and Janice Mauck  
 Tom and Kathleen McClure  
 Walter Menninger  
 Pat and Jerry Powers  
 Irving Sheffel  
 Olive Stanford  
 Ann Strecker  
 Warren Taylor  
 Nancy Toedman  
 Mary B. Voigt  
 William O. Wagon  
 Cynthia Wahle  
 Mrs. Martin E. Wanamaker  
 Mr. and Mrs. W. R. Williams  
 June Windscheffel  
 Charles W. Wright

Regular:

Allen County Public Library  
 Donald and Janet Chubb  
 Melinda Abitz  
 Steven Adams  
 Betty Alderson  
 Gregory Allen  
 Jo Anne Amis  
 Grace Beam  
 Marge Bradshaw  
 Melvin and Lorene Bruntzel  
 Kay Conn  
 Phil Coolidge  
 Virginia Correa  
 James Daniel  
 Karen Dashnaw  
 Shirley Driscoll  
 Virginia Foster  
 Gail and Ben Franklin  
 Betty Frantz  
 Leon Graves  
 Charles Greene

Anne Greitl  
 Mary Hall  
 Michael Hall  
 Marilyn Ham  
 Thomas & Cinda Henderson  
 Karen Hiller  
 Christin Hollenbeck  
 Susan Hudgens  
 Mark Hunt  
 Duane Iles  
 Richard Jones  
 K. Vance Kelly  
 Kenneth Kerle  
 Robert Knecht  
 Alice K. Landers  
 Jan Leuenberger  
 Carolyn Litwin  
 Janet Loebel  
 Steven Magee  
 Richard McDonald  
 Bill McFarland  
 James A. McHenry, Jr.  
 Craig and Akimi McKinney  
 Austin and Mariana Nothern  
 Norma Pettijohn  
 James Reardon  
 Robert Reeder  
 John and Alicia Salisbury  
 Jan Seagraves  
 Pamela Sensney  
 Marsha Sheahan  
 James Sloan  
 Joan Smith  
 Robert Steinmeyer  
 Wanda Stephens  
 Herschel Stroud  
 Robert Taggart  
 Larry Tenopir  
 Virginia Wallace  
 John Whiffen  
 Jack Wisman  
 Doug Wright

Patron:

Jon Boursaw  
 Jeffrey Carson

Sheldon Cohen  
 Douglas Cook  
 Kim Cordova  
 Bill Cutler  
 Patricia Decker  
 Clark Duffy  
 Stewart Entz  
 Lowell Fowler  
 Richard Friedstrom  
 Richard Hanger  
 Joanne Harrison  
 Ruth Lawson  
 James Maag  
 Roy Menninger  
 Kevin and Mary Alice Murphy  
 Tom Muth  
 Duane Pomeroy  
 Paul Post  
 Ramon Powers  
 Douglas Sheafor  
 Dale Somers  
 Stan and Jodie Teeter  
 Stacie Torrez  
 James Van Sickle  
 Steven Waugh  
 Michael Worswick

Renovator:

Nancy Landon Kassebaum Baker  
 Karen Craig  
 Charles T. Crawford  
 Robert Duncan  
 John Gilbert  
 Rachel Goossen  
 Camile Heeb  
 David Heinemann  
 Douglas and Dorothy Iliff  
 James Lagerberg  
 Donald Rutherford  
 Ralph Skoog

Sustainer:

Tom Ellis  
 Jill Wolters  
 Carol and Max Yoho



# MEMBERSHIP FORM

**Our membership year is Jan. 1 to Dec. 31 annually.**

Make check to "Shawnee County Historical Society" and mail form w/ your check to: Shawnee County Historical Society, P.O., Box 2201, Topeka, KS 66601-2201  
PLEASE PRINT or TYPE info requested.

Choose type:  Regular / \$35  Patron / \$50  Renovator / \$100  Sustainers / \$150 (+)

## PERSONAL MEMBERSHIP

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

## GIFT MEMBERSHIP

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Tax Deductible 501 (c)(3) DONATION Indicate amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I wish to join this/these SCHS committee(s):  Nominations  Membership  Publications  
 Annual Meeting/Socials  Public Relations  Historic Preservation  Education/Communications

SCHS has gone High Tech AND is saving members money by teaming with PayPal on-line to accept memberships and donations. We also hope to offer sales of our inventory of *Bulletins* with on-line payment via PayPal. Links now appear on-line <http://www.shawneecountyhistory.org> to allow payment transactions via PayPal by secure credit or debit card transaction.

SCHS dues year runs from January 1 to December 31, each year.

**Now is the best time to join for 2015!**



## KS Commercial is moving Downtown

KS Commercial has purchased 433-435 S. Kansas Avenue. The company is proud to announce that they will soon become a part of the downtown community.

“We have been great proponents of Topeka’s Downtown Revitalization and we are very proud to support the monumental efforts of civic minded Topekans in their bid to vitalize downtown Topeka.”

—Mike Morse, Partner, Office Sales and Leasing

“I am looking forward to working with DTI, the Chamber of Commerce and all of the stakeholders, large and small, from our newly renovated downtown offices to help energize an emerging retail core for Topeka.”

—Mark Rezac, Partner, Retail Sales and Leasing

“This move will allow us to house our hardworking and dedicated team for some time to come, enhancing the continued success of the Kansas Avenue revitalization.”

—Ed Eller, Partner, Industrial Sales and Leasing

“We look forward to moving downtown. Many of our property owners will see the benefit of proximity and the efficiencies that come from being close to our work.”  
—Steve Wieser, Partner, Property and Asset Management  
They plan a Spring opening.



This news was shared by SCHS Trustee **Doug Wright**.



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

Lighting Freedom's Pathway;  
Building Heritage Culture

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TOPEKA KS

Save These Dates. Plan Now to Attend!

## 5 Member Events:

### Chuck Wagon Dinner

*Friday, July 10, 2015*

@ Ritchie Houses, 1116 & 1118 SE Madison St., Topeka

— A meal served from an authentic chuck wagon at the close of our SCHS History Camp. For campers and their parents. Read event details on p. 3.

### Neighborhood Ice Cream Social & Santa Fe Band Concert

*Sunday, Aug. 9, 2015, 7 p.m.*

@ Ritchie Houses, 1116 & 1118 SE Madison St., Topeka

All members are welcome to attend! Ice cream is complimentary, but donations are welcome.

### Baseball Program @ Lake Shawnee

*Thursday, Sept. 10, 2015*, details to be announced

### Sesquicentennial Civil War Gala Celebration

*Saturday, Sept. 19, 2015*, details to be announced

@ Great Overland Station, 701 N. Kansas Av., Topeka

### SCHS Annual Meeting

*Sunday, Dec. 6, 2015*, details to be announced

## Historical Highlights

*May, 2015*



Tiger Cub, Topeka Zoo