



SVHA News Archive 2010 - 2011

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2011

October 2011 The Alliance at Work

Solomon Valley Highway 24 Heritage Alliance has provided heritage support during the past year. This took various forms, responding to needs and opportunities. Just a quick review will give you a behind-the-scenes look at the Alliance at work.

A letter of interpretation, encouraging Beloit to maintain the historic roadside park located there on Highway 24, was an action step related to the history of the highway. The park reflects a different pace of travel and still presents welcome community hospitality.

We are exploring on-site involvement at Nicodemus as the Visitors' Center creates a full schedule of activities.

Damar hosted a week-long residency with students connecting with community elders, listening to their stories, and celebrating them in song. This is made possible by the Kansas Humanities Council, supporting Aaron Fowler's mentoring role as teacher and artist. Humanities consultants Leo Oliva and Denise Low helped facilitate this project.

With our encouragement, organizations in Colby are working to place signs marking the World War II Veterans' Memorial Highway at its western end, the junction of Highway 83 and 24, east of Colby.

The history of the highway was literally on the road, as Lynda Huffer and Joan Nothern paraded the Red Line Basketball Team and Highway in the Glasco Fun Day parade, October 1, and the Kansas 150 Sunflower Parade October 8 in Wichita.

Continuing the connections between the Solomon Valley and Birger Sandzen's paintings, we inspired a cello suite, responding to his art. Composer-cellist Steven Elisha premiered Solomon Valley Sketches in Topeka on October 9, 2011.

Our 7th Call for Voices provided motivation for contemporary authors to add their poetry and prose to the body of Solomon Valley literature. We are grateful to the five judges who help make this possible: Denise Low, Lora Reiter, Jim Hoy, Greg German, and Fred Whitehead.

Finally, the Solomon Valley Anthology, this newsletter, has printed many of the Call for Voices entries and added to our capacity as heritage caretakers to tell our stories. The county themes this year featured libraries, houses with histories, railroads and depots, and WPA projects. Cooperation with county researchers makes this possible.

June 2011 Annual Nicodemus Homecoming, July 29-31

The Nicodemus Homecoming Committee is coordinating preparations for the 133rd annual Emancipation Celebration. The 2011 dates are July 29-July 31, and our theme is "Through Diversity comes Unity." There will be a multitude of activities each day. Highlights include the Free Pancake Breakfast Saturday morning; the parade which follows the breakfast; basketball tournament and baseball game during the busy day, and many other events. There will be vendors on hand with food and merchandise. Friday night and Saturday night will feature a local jazz band followed by a dance and fireworks. A gospel program will be held at the First Baptist church on Saturday evening; and Sunday will feature morning services with a guest church in charge. Family and friends come from all over the US to attend this annual event. Information will be available and updated often at our website www.nicodemuskansas.org

April 2011

New Lottie Albright Mystery by Charlotte Hinger

Lethal Lineage, Charlotte Hinger's second Lottie Albright mystery set in western Kansas, has just been released. Charlotte is a former member of the SV24 board, formerly of Hoxie and now a resident of Colorado. Lethal Lineage follows Deadly Descent (2009) in the Albright mystery series. Both offer details of western Kansas history (they could be classified as historical novels as well as mysteries). Both books in this series have received rave reviews. Details may be seen at www.charlottehinger.com which also includes ordering information for these and other books by this talented writer.

August 2011

Locating Veterans' Memorials and Monuments

The Kansas Commission on Veterans' Affairs sent a request to Chambers of Commerce in Kansas, seeking information of the location of veterans' memorials in Kansas. The entire length of the US 24 corridor in the Solomon Valley is part of the highway designated as the World War II Veterans' Memorial Highway. In response to the spirit of this designation, SV24 is supporting the Kansas Commission on Veterans' Affairs in this effort. If our members are aware of such memorials in their communities, please follow up or contact a SV24 board member. The letter of request reads: "The Kansas Commission on Veterans' Affairs is conducting a survey of veteran and military memorials in the State of Kansas. From the survey, we plan on establishing a registry and developing a directory of all veteran and military memorials in Kansas. Our goal in developing the directory is to bring veterans and community awareness to these memorials and special events held in honor of the brave men and women who served our great nation." The memorials, monuments, and special events dates will be posted to the commission's website www.KCVA.org

August 2011

US 24 Museum Update

The SV24 Alliance and the Glasco Community Foundation have an agreement to work together to establish a National Highway 24 Museum. GCF is striving to restore three buildings in the Glasco Downtown Historic District for the museum site. The buildings, 102, 104, and 106 East Main Street, are a Partnership Historic Site with the Kansas State Historical Society. With tax-credit supported donations, GCF has been able to stabilize 102 and 104 E. Main. Meanwhile, research continues on the highway history. The Midland Trail, one of the original transcontinental roads, followed the Red Line-Solomon Valley Highway route through Kansas. This historic route is attracting fans of historic trails who travel 2-lane roads. This is part of the history to be preserved in the proposed museum.

April 2011

New Bill Introduced to Designate Pike National Historic Trail

The last issue carried an announcement of the proposed legislation to conduct a feasibility study to designate the 1806-1807 route of Zebulon M. Pike's exploring expedition to the Southwest as a national historic trail. The bill that was introduced in the U.S. Senate expired with the end of the last Congress, and new legislation has been introduced in the Senate. Senate Bill 276, "Pike National Historic Trail Study Act of 2011," has been introduced and referred to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources. The Pike National Historic Trail Association is asking Kansans to contact Senators Pat Roberts and Jerry Moran to request that they cosponsor this legislation (a large portion of Pike's route is included in present Kansas, and Pike crossed the Solomon River twice on his expedition). Everyone who supports this legislation is urged to call the Kansas Senators' offices and ask to speak to the person who handles National Park legislation: Senator Roberts: 202-224-4774; Senator Moran: 202-224-6521. Items to mention include preservation of our history and historic sites and tourism that will benefit the economy of communities along the route.

2010

October 2010

Stockton Public Library Plans Centennial Program

The Stockton Public Library, a Carnegie Library dedicated in January 2011, will celebrate its centennial during January 9-15, 2011. Plans include a rededication and open house with special exhibits on January 9 (with Kansas State Librarian Joanne Budler as speaker), a program by Leo Oliva about Andrew Carnegie and his libraries on January 10, a look at the early history of Stockton compiled by Gail McComb on January 11, a program on Sod and Stubble by Von Rothenberger on January 12, portrayal of the first librarian by Joan Balderston on January 13, Joan Nothorn's program about Highway 24 on January 14, and a banquet with program by Robert Day on January 15. All programs are open to the public. The only charge will be for the banquet.

October 2010

Robert Morris Peck Scheduled to Reappear at the SV 24 Annual Meeting

Robert Morris Peck was a private in Company K, First U.S. Cavalry, 1856-1861, and served in Colonel Edwin V. Sumner's campaign against the Cheyenne Indians that year. He was a participant in the Battle of Solomon Fork, July 29, 1857. Peck kept detailed diaries of his life in the frontier army, and his memoirs were published in the National Tribune in 1901. Peck helped restore order in Kansas Territory. He was also among the troops that established Fort Larned in 1859 and Fort Wise (later Lyon) in 1860. He was a trooper in Major John Sedgwick's campaign against the Kiowa Indians in 1860. Leo Oliva portrays Peck, telling his stories as recorded in Peck's memoirs in first-person reenactments. Peck will present a short program at the SV24 annual meeting, telling his story of the Cheyenne Expedition and Battle of Solomon Fork.

August, 2010

New Event Proposed for the Solomon Valley

The Kansas Poems of William Stafford will be tapped for Solomon Valley poetry readings during April 2011. Look for more details as we celebrate National Poetry Month with this 150th year Kansas anniversary event, honoring and reading William Stafford's Kansas poems. Fred Whitehead is working with us, taking a leadership role in developing this project.

August, 2010

Alton Loses Historic Building

The IOOF stone building in Alton, constructed in 1898, collapsed recently. This structure was an important part of the community for more than a century before the roof fell in and much of the stonework came down. The rubble and possible additional collapse are a danger and plans to clean up the site are underway.

August, 2010

Sending a Taste of the Valley

There is more than one way to package the heritage of the Solomon Valley. The honey, soaps, arts, books, and other high quality goods produced here are a potential gift basket bearing a sense of place. The Main Street Gallery and Gifts, 410 Main, Stockton, is willing and able to facilitate creating and mailing custom gift baskets from the Solomon Valley. Please encourage those you know who have arts, crafts, and products suitable for this project to contact Jane Cunningham, 785-425-6674, or at the Gallery. This is a vision that fits the Solomon Valley!

August, 2010

Cottonwood Ranch Opens

Cottonwood Ranch State Historic Site along Highway 24 near Studley, has re-opened. The historic site was closed by the Kansas State Historical Society, September 5, 2009. The KSHS gave the Friends of Cottonwood Ranch permission to have a person at the site beginning May 20, on Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays until September 30, 2010. The site will be manned on those days from 9:00 a.m. until noon and 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. Guided tours of the house and building will be provided during those hours. A contribution for the guided tours is recommended; \$1 for students and senior citizens, and \$2 for others. The site may be visited from dawn to dusk seven days a week, but only self-guided tours are available the other four days.

August, 2010

A Boost for Traveling in Kansas

The April 2010 issue of Reader's Digest had a special report on the nation's highways. It ranked the best roads, from 1 to 50, of the 50 states, factoring safety, congestion, and the condition of roads and bridges. At the top of the list, #1, stands Kansas!

August, 2010

Cawker City Featured

The June/July 2010 issue of Reader's Digest featured "'100 Things We Love About America,' an annual celebration of the people, places, and ideas that make us great." There, on page 115, is a list of the three "Best Roadside Attractions," with the second choice, "The 12-foot high ball of twine in Cawker City, Kansas." These well-thumbed, well-read magazines can't help but nudge some casual readers to take another look at Kansas and Hwy 24 as they plan a road trip.

May, 2010

Initial Road History Now Available

The Story of U.S. 24 and the Solomon Valley: The Automobile, the Men, the Politics, and the Highway is now being distributed to the museums, libraries, and high schools in the Solomon Valley. This is the final step of a project developed with the Kansas Humanities Council. We are indebted to all the researchers who combed local newspapers for this story, to Joyce Sullentrop, for compiling it, and to Leo Oliva for publishing it. Even as this volume comes off the press, we want to invite additional information. It is a substantial beginning—but there is

more to discover and knit into the road story.

September, 2009

Nicodemus Historical Society

Angela Bates, executive director of the Nicodemus Historical Society, now produces the Society's newsletter online. Please consider joining the Society. Contact Angela at nichis@ruraltel.net or visit the web site www.nicodemushistoricalsociety.com where you can download the membership application. Nicodemus is one of the real gems on Highway 24 along the South Solomon River. It is also a National Historic Site, administered by the National Park Service, one of only five National Parks in Kansas. The NPS web site is www.nps.gov/nico. The annual Christmas tree decoration program was held in the Visitors' Center on December 5, as these photos show.

May, 2010

Traveling Exhibit Planned

The Solomon Valley Highway 24 Heritage Alliance has been asked to form a partnership with Traub Design Associates to create a traveling exhibit on the History of U.S. 24 in the Solomon Valley. This means gathering information along the way that relates to the particular histories in each county. The companion exhibit to the Smithsonian Museum on Main Street Journey Stories in Glasco focused on Glasco's role. The museums and libraries within the Solomon Valley will be asked to work with local researchers to fashion the local presentations for the traveling exhibit. This should result in exhibits with high interest at each place along the way. Volunteers are welcome to work with this project.