



## **SVHA News Archive 2012 - 2013**

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Solomon Valley History  
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### **2013**

#### **December 2013**

##### **Meet the Speaker for 2014 Annual Meeting**

John Edgar Tidwell explores the art of creating— the doing and redoing that defines that art. Creative Labor is a process that can be seen in the work of famous Kansas artists Langston Hughes, Gordon Parks, and Frank Marshall Davis. Being able to examine their work and Kansas connections with Mr. Tidwell will provide a chance for discussion. This topic resonates with the SV-24-HA's commitment to encourage voices from this time and this place.

John Edgar Tidwell is a professor of English at the University of Kansas. His program is sponsored by the Kansas Humanities Council, a nonprofit organization promoting understanding of the history and ideas that shape our lives and strengthen our sense of community.

Reservation information for the January 18, 2014, meeting is found with the 2014 Calendar.

#### **December 2013**

##### **Veterans' Memorials Inventory**

The inventory of monuments located in the Solomon Valley recognizing WWII veterans has received its first entry. We thank Lowell Beecher for making this effort and supplying a nice model for the information to include. We hope to hear from every community so that we may create a database to be appreciated by families of veterans as they travel U.S. 24, the WW II Veterans Memorial Highway

#### **December 2013**

##### **Midland Trail Centennial**

Update on SV24HA work to stimulate recognition of the Midland Trail Centennial: About a dozen contacts statewide have responded to our outreach. We have arranged to meet at the Kansas Sampler Festival in Wamego, the first weekend in May. The Midland Trail will have an exhibit in the State Tent.

Two issues of KANSAS MIDLAND TRAIL NEWS have been sent to all contacts, summarizing their suggestions and actions taken so far.

David DeAmond has published Sketching the 1916 Midland Trail Across Kansas as I found it a century later. He is working with us as we plan the Midland Trail rendezvous in Wamego. **October 2013**

##### **Midland Trail Centennial**

As an alliance, we are coordinating work to raise awareness of The Midland Trail. It was the trans- continental, Washington D.C. to San Francisco, trail that was logged through Kansas in 1914. We hope to move from "forgotten" to rediscovered and recog- nized. Our goal is to locate contacts in the 16 Kansas counties the Midland Trail crossed, from Wyandotte to Sherman County, and to work with them through this process. The initial outreach has been made, and responses are coming in. We look forward to commemorating the centennial of this automobile route, portions of which became U.S. Highway 24.

#### **October 2013**

##### **Nicodemus Natl. Historic Site Wraps Up Summer**

--by Superintendent Angela Wetz

On June 14, I flew to Washington DC and met with former Senator Bob Dole who recalled his work getting the enabling legislation for Nicodemus National Historic Site passed. In our conversation, Senator Dole's recollections ranged from his growing up in Russell, his work leading up to the enabling legislation for Nicodemus National Historic Site, his personal interest in the history of Nicodemus, and his other contributions to Kansas and National Park Service legislation. He graciously allowed me to video record our conversation

which can be viewed on our website at [www.nps.gov/nico](http://www.nps.gov/nico). This has been a very exciting project and I am grateful to have been granted the interview.

### **October 2013**

#### **Diversity Posters**

We call them "The Diversity Posters." This series of several posters was created with the National Park Service and the Nicodemus community for display in May, 2012, as Nicodemus highlighted the diversity of the Solomon Valley. The series features settlement stories in our Solomon Valley counties— revealing the rich variety of peoples settling here. The posters have been displayed in Osborne, Stockton, and Alton. They will be in Glasco during September and October. This is a handsome display, suitable for libraries, museums, and banks. Please contact a board member if you would like to have them come to your town.

### **June 2013**

#### **Melvina Williams**

Melvina Williams, Topeka, a founding member of the Solomon Valley Highway 24 Heritage Alliance, recently died. She designed the Alliance logo and was a frequent contributor to the Call for Voices. Sincere sympathy is extended to her family and friends.

### **March, 2013**

#### **Bonita Oliva Wins \$5,000 for Rooks County Nonprofits: Nova Theatre and 4-H Council**

Bonita Oliva, Woodston, was selected as a winner in America's Farmers Grow Communities, sponsored by the Monsanto Fund. Farmers who use Monsanto products are eligible, and one farm in each county is selected for the award. Grow Communities offers farmers the opportunity to win a \$2,500 donation for their favorite local nonprofit organizations. To further support counties that have been declared disaster areas by the USDA due to drought, winning farmers in these counties were able to double the donation for a total of \$5,000 to help support the community. Rooks County was declared a disaster area by USDA, giving Bonita the opportunity to select two \$2,500 donations. She selected the Nova Theatre in Stockton and Rooks County 4-H. In 1,271 eligible counties in 39 states, farmers have the opportunity to win a donation. Monsanto sponsors Grow Communities to highlight the important contributions farmers make every day to our society and to help them positively assist their communities. This program is part of the Monsanto Fund's overall effort to support rural America. Bonita was present at the Nova Theatre on February 18 when checks were presented by Matthew Stevenson from Monsanto to Steve Riffel and Janice Miller of the Nova Theatre and to Ali Miller, 4-H Council President, along with Rooks County Extension Officer Rachael Boyle and Family and Consumer Sciences Agent Anna Muir. Bonita and Leo Oliva farm north of Woodston and are founding members of the Solomon Valley Highway 24 Heritage Alliance.

## **2013**

### **August 2012**

#### **Sleeping Heroes**

The Kansas State Historical Society is promoting the project "Sleeping Heroes: The Impact of Civil War Veterans on Kansas Communities," based on a student project forged by Glasco 7th-grade students in 2007. Students statewide are encouraged to locate Civil War veterans interred in local cemeteries. This information will become part of a state data base. It will also lead to meaningful insight into community development. Information about the Sleeping Heroes project can be found on the KSHS website at [www.kshs.org](http://www.kshs.org).

### **August 2012**

#### **Kansas' 150 Year Observance Marked with Peace Pole**

The SV24 Alliance traces the settlement of the Solomon Valley to the post-Civil War search for peace, and in this spirit the Alliance elected to place a Peace Pole in the valley to mark Kansas' 150-year observance. Glen Elder accepted this honor, with the peace monument being placed in the Town Square there.

This process has renewed acquaintance with Clarence Pickett, whose family came to Glen Elder when he was a child. Pickett went on to a remarkable career of public service. He was the Secretary of the American Friends Service Committee for 22 years, providing strategic leadership for AFSC's work. The 1947 Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to AFSC.

The eight languages selected for the four-sided Peace Pole are Czech, English, French, German, Kaw, Norwegian, Pawnee, and Spanish. Each says "Let peace prevail on Earth."

The dedication program took place July 21, during Glen Elder Fun Day, in the Town Square.

**March 2012****Osborne Public Library Hosts Workshop**

Osborne Public Library hosted a workshop for writers following the annual meeting. Led by Denise Low, a dozen people were introduced to the ideas she explores in her new book *Natural Theologies: Essays About Literature of the Middle West*. Everyone received a copy of the book, and wrote of their own ideas and plans for writing. All were inspired and expressed hopes to gather again to hear the progress everyone makes, with July the target to meet again. We are indebted to Librarian Karen Wallace, the Osborne Public Library, and Denise Low for providing this writing incubator.