



## **SVHA News Archive 2014 - 2015**

To Read More about  
Solomon Valley History  
visit our website at  
[www.hwy24.org](http://www.hwy24.org)

### **2014**

#### **September, 2014**

##### **A New Magazine**

*Highway 24, Life along Route 24* published the first issue in May 2014. It is a publication of the St. Marys Star newspaper, with future annual editions planned.

The initial edition carried a feature article "Following the History of Highway 24." Leo Oliva and Joan Nothern were contacted for this story. Oliva reviewed the military trail history, and Nothern introduced the Midland Trail connection.

Working with the staff of Highway 24, a vision of having this publication include the whole of 24 across Kansas, seemed to materialize. This would be a significant opportunity for the Solomon Valley Highway 24 Heritage Alliance to reach Highway 24 neighbors to the east. This promising connection will be pursued this fall.

#### **September, 2014**

##### **Bull City Café Open Again**

The Bull City Café in Alton is open again, thanks to the rat race in Denver where the new owners, Larry & Michelle Boyd, moved from with Michelle's son, Chaes. Hoping to buy a "bit of land," they had initially tried to buy in the Phillips County area. When that deal fell through, they began to look around and found a bit of land with a small house in Alton. There's much to do to the house, but the spot of land will be plowed up this fall in readiness for the orchard in the spring.

They have pitched in by readying the Bull City Café, which had been closed for a year. Everything was clean and freshly painted on opening day, Sunday, August 31, with a popular fried chicken buffet. This is the first time in six years the café has been open on Sunday. The crowd that day proved that they will patronize it enthusiastically.

The Solomon Valley welcomes the Boyds and wishes them well. It is great to have this restaurant open and serving meals again.

#### **September, 2014**

##### **Preparing for Midland Trail Recognition**

Less than two years ago, the SV24 Alliance proposed leading an effort to recognize the 100-Year Midland Trail route designation—connecting first with Kansas towns on the historic transcontinental route. Going national was proposed as a second step.

We have gathered friends who are supporting this discovery and celebration process. An exhibit at the 2014 Sampler Festival in Wamego was the first public statement sponsored by the SV24 Alliance about this historic route. A planned rendezvous at the 2015 Sampler Festival in Wamego will bring car and road enthusiasts together to complete this first phase of the Midland Trail 100 Year recognition. Wamego is strategically so well placed for this to happen there, for Wamego was on the Midland Trail!

Researchers in Manhattan have located news articles from 1916 to 1921 documenting the work of the Midland Trail Boosters. The Riley County Historical Society is coordinating this work. This adds to the extensive work Sherry Brown, an Alliance board member, has done on the Plainville papers, tracing the history of the Midland Trail.

Close looks at photos and postcards from the 1916-1926 decade of the trail have located telephone poles with the

bands of paint, marking the Midland Trail.

Glasco has chosen the Red Line, forerunner of the Midland Trail, as the theme of the annual Glasco Fun Day, October 4, 2014. This history will be the talk of the town!

Boosting Kansas towns was one of the primary purposes behind the road associations a century ago. The Solomon Valley Highway 24 Heritage Alliance follows in this tradition, encouraging cooperation to boost travel today.

**June, 2014**

### **Veterans' Memorial Highway**

In respect for the World War II Veterans' Memorial Highway designation, U.S. 24 from Colby to Riley, we have begun an inventory of veterans' memorials in the area.

On February 9, 2014, a public program was held in Riley, Kansas, honoring the forthcoming publication of *Love & Kisses*, the WWII Letters of George A. Campbell to his wife Bea. This tender transcription of letters is a living memorial. Campbell was living in Hill City at the time of his induction into the military in 1943.

**June, 2014**

### **Website Update**

One of the first projects of the SV24 Alliance was to establish a website that introduced the Solomon Valley and the 24 communities participating in the new Alliance as places of interest. The website has grown into a resource for travelers and a fine collection of articles about this special place. You can access the stories that have appeared in the Solomon Valley Anthology. You can find the winning poems, stories, and essays from our annual Call for Voices.

Please note the website, [www.hwy24.org](http://www.hwy24.org), has a new look. It is easy to navigate. We invite you to visit it soon and make yourself at home.

**June, 2014**

### **New book by Ronald Parks -- *The Darkest Period***

SV24 member Ron Parks, Manhattan, has a new book, *The Darkest Period: The Kanza Indians and their Last Homeland, 1846-1873*, published by the University of Oklahoma Press. The news release follows:

Before their relocation to the Indian Territory in present-day Oklahoma, the Kanza Indians spent 27 years on a reservation near Council Grove on the Santa Fe Trail. In *The Darkest Period*, Parks tells the story of those years of decline in Kanza history following the loss of the tribe's original homeland in northeastern and central Kansas (including much of the Solomon Valley). Parks uses accounts by agents missionaries, journalists, and ethnographers in crafting this tale. He addresses both the big picture— the effects of Manifest Destiny—and local particulars such as the devastating impact on the tribe of the Santa Fe Trail. The result is a story of human beings rather than historical abstractions.

The Kanzas confronted powerful Euro-American forces during their last years in Kansas. Government officials and their policies, Protestant educators, predatory economic interests, and a host of continent-wide events affected the tribe profoundly. As Anglo-Americans invaded the Kanza homeland, the prairie was plowed and game disappeared. The Kanzas' holy sites were desecrated and the tribe was increasingly confined to the reservation. During this "darkest period," as chief Allegawaho called it in 1871, the Kanzas' Neosho reservation population diminished by more than 60 percent. As one survivor put it "They died of a broken heart, they died of a broken spirit." But despite this adversity, as Parks's narrative portrays, the Kanza people continued their relationship with the land—its weather, plants, animals, water, and landforms.

Parks does not reduce the Kanzas' story to one of hapless Indian victims traduced by the American government. For, while encroachment, disease, and environmental deterioration exerted enormous pressure on tribal cohesion, the Kanzas persisted in their struggle to exercise political autonomy while maintaining traditional social customs up to the time of removal in 1873 and beyond.

The 328-page book sells for \$34.95 and is available at bookstores, from the publisher, or the SV24 Alliance (contact Leo Oliva at 888-321-7341, and income from these sales will benefit the Alliance). A presentation by Parks about this book will make a good Alliance program; we will work on that.

## **March, 2014**

### **The Midland Trail: The Shortest Motor Road from Coast to Coast**

The Solomon Valley Alliance has set for itself the task of promoting the centennial of the Transcontinental Midland Trail across Kansas. In the first year of this effort, we discovered it is a largely unknown historical phenomenon in Kansas. And once introduced the name "Midland Trail" tends to cause misconceptions.

"Trail" is suggestive of the Oregon Trail and Santa Fe Trail, famous overland routes from the 19th century. The Midland Trail is a 20th Century auto route, conceived to facilitate travel by adventurers willing to tackle miles of unpaved dirt roads. It was established by the National Midland Trail Association after traveling and logging the way from Washington D. C. to San Francisco. Town boosters were anxious to be on the Midland Trail, attracting the new wave of auto travelers to their businesses.

The decade, 1916-1926, was unique in road improvement and auto-travel history. In 1926, the National Highway Association replaced highway names with numbers. This was a wrenching experience for towns that were attached to their highway names, but it was a merciful gesture for travelers. There were over 250 named highways—a traveler's nightmare to decipher.

It is that decade, that Midland Trail Tour Guide 1916 Route, that uncommon effort by towns to accommodate travel, that we are lifting up for recognition and celebration.

# **2015**

## **March, 2015**

### **ON YOUR MARK, GET SET, GO!**

Hometown Teams: How Sports Shape America is the Smithsonian Institution's Traveling Exhibit currently touring Kansas. Glasco is one of nineteen Hometown Team partner sites placing the local sports story on display. Glasco's exhibit reflects Glasco: A Triple Threat on the Diamond, Field and Court. Newspapers and scrap books, memories and myths, have been mined to create this local sports review.

In September 2014 Glasco students spoke to the theme of games and play through an essay and poster contest, initiating local engagement with the sports topic. The Glasco Sun has been publishing these student responses each week, extending the connection to readers.

Glasco's exhibit opens March 21, 2015, at the Corner Store, 129 E. Main Street, Glasco.

The grand opening with Kelly Werts in concert, featuring Sports on the Road, will start at 2:00 on Sunday, March 22.

Other special events are a Dug Out Coffeehouse and Reception on April 12, welcoming family members with hometown team connections. A dialogue on women in sports will be encouraged.

April 26, at 2:00, Lorraine Madway will be presenting Kansas Basketball at the 1936 Olympics.

The Kansas Humanities Council produced a series of sports trading cards representing the Hometown Team sites. Glasco is represented by three cards: The Red Line Basket Ball Team—an extraordinary town booster and athletic success in 1915; The Pee Wees Baseball Team—a story of growth on the ball diamond; the third card features Ross Kelly and his impact as coach on a generation of youth.

The Glasco sports trading cards will be available at the exhibit which runs through May 3.

## **March, 2015**

### **Making the Midland Trail Known**

by Joan Nothern

The SV24 Alliance will sponsor the second Midland Trail Rendezvous at the Kansas Sampler Festival, May 2 and 3, in Wamego. The research, contacts, and promotion of the history of the Midland Trail—the transcontinental route across the U. S. that included many of our Solomon Valley towns—has raised awareness of this early road story.

Kelly Werts will be presenting his original musical Road Show as he recaptures the Red Line Basket Ball Team's 1915 tour to promote the Midland Trail route and towns. He has been booked in Goodland, March 21; Glasco, March 22; Wamego, May 2-3; and Colby, in August.

Dave DeArmond has continued sketching Kansas towns as he sees them now. First, he sketched and painted those that appeared in the 1916 Midland Trail Tour Guide. His passion for roads and towns combined again as he has published a second book, tracing the White Way across Kansas—and through parts of the Solomon Valley.

These stories will be featured in Wamego.

## **March, 2015**

### **SV24 ALLIANCE RECEIVES KHC GRANT**

The Kansas Humanities Council (KHC) recently awarded Solomon Valley Highway 24 Heritage Alliance a \$2,950 grant for the "World War II Veterans Memorial Highway: A Tour of Remembrance, A Corridor of Service" project. Joan Nothern serves as the project director. This project is included in KHC's special veterans' initiative, "The Things They Carried Home."

Nothern notes the Alliance is uniquely connected to the World War II Veterans' Memorial Highway, since the alliance corridor on U. S. 24 is included in that 200 miles of designated Memorial Highway.

The project, "World War II Veterans Memorial Highway: A Tour of Remembrance, A Corridor of Service," will inventory veterans' memorials and collections of veterans' artifacts in the communities along the highway. These tributes and resources will be made known, facilitating a Tour of Remembrance.

The WWII Veterans Memorial Highway extends from the U. S. 24 intersection with U. S. 83, east of Colby, to the intersection with U. S. 77, at Riley. Governor Sebelius signed the memorial designation on March 20, 2008.

As part of the KHC's special veterans' initiative "The Things They Carry Home," the Alliance project will identify resources connected to veterans of the Korean, Vietnam, Afghanistan, and Iraq Wars as well as WWI and WW II. Workshops on preservation of military artifacts will be made available during the coming year.

"KHC's The Things They Carried Home project grants encourage the preservation of local cultural resources," said Julie Mulvihill, executive director of the Kansas Humanities Council. "Solomon Valley Heritage Alliance's preservation project will recognize a fascinating range of veterans' artifacts. I'm looking forward to hearing about the stories they uncover in this project."

The Kansas Humanities Council is a nonprofit organization that supports community-based cultural programs, serves as a financial resource through an active grant-making program, and encourages Kansans to engage in the civic and cultural life of their communities. For more information, visit [www.kansashumanities.org](http://www.kansashumanities.org).

## **June, 2015**

### **Work Underway on KHC Tour of Remembrance**

The recent Memorial Day events, often taking special notice of the 70th anniversary of the conclusion of the war in Europe, pointed out again the responsibility the WWII Veterans' Memorial Highway through the Solomon Valley has placed on the SV24HA.

It was in respect for this designation that the alliance project "The World War II Veterans Memorial Highway: A Tour of Remembrance, A Corridor of Service," was proposed to the Kansas Humanities Council. The project is part of KHC's special veterans' initiative, "The Things They Carried Home."

Cynthia Harris, archivist at Hale Library, Kansas State University, is providing preservation workshops for veterans, their families, and others in how to care for clothing, textiles, artifacts, books, documents, and photographs.

Four preservation workshops are scheduled at this time:

- June 27, 2015, 2-4 pm, Clay County Historical Museum, 518 Lincoln, Clay Center

- August 15, 2 pm, Prairie Museum, Colby
- September 26, 2-4 pm, Cawker City Library, Cawker City
- October 24, 2-4 pm, Riley Community Center, 902 W. Walnut, Riley

The alliance project continues through May 1, 2016. Other preservation workshops will be offered in communities along the WWII Veterans Memorial Highway. Please contact Joan Nothern for further information.

### **September, 2015**

#### **Report on Tour of Remembrance Activity**

On July 22, Kim Stanley, the chairman of the Modern Language Department at McPherson College, facilitated a Kansas Humanities Council TALK program at the Glasco City Library.

In preparation, several people in Glasco had read *The Things They Carried* by Tim O'Brien, adding to the effectiveness of the evening discussion about the book. The author is a Vietnam veteran who wanted to make readers feel what he had felt. This is a very good way to explore the power of storytelling.

Other communities are urged to include this TALK presentation in the year we have dedicated to the WWII Veterans Memorial Highway: Tour of Remembrance. Contact the *Kansas Humanities Council* for booking information.

### **December, 2015**

#### **Annual Meeting, January 23, 2016**

The 16th Annual Membership Meeting will be held January 23, 2016, at the United Methodist Church, Osborne.

The first Faye Minium Spirit Award will be presented to a community-nominated representative who is dedicated to the well-being of that community.

The awards will be presented to 2015 Call for Voices winners, with first place writers invited to read their work. Von Rothenberger and Cynthia Harris will report on their work on the World War II Veterans Memorial Highway: Tour of Remembrance, Corridor of Service project. This is the Kansas Humanities Council grant the SV24 Heritage Alliance is implementing at this time.

Members and friends are encouraged to attend the annual meeting: 11:30–registration, 12:00–dinner. Dinner reservations (\$15.00) are requested by January 18. Call 785-568-0120, mail PO Box 572, Glasco KS 67445, email [joannothern@gmail.com](mailto:joannothern@gmail.com).