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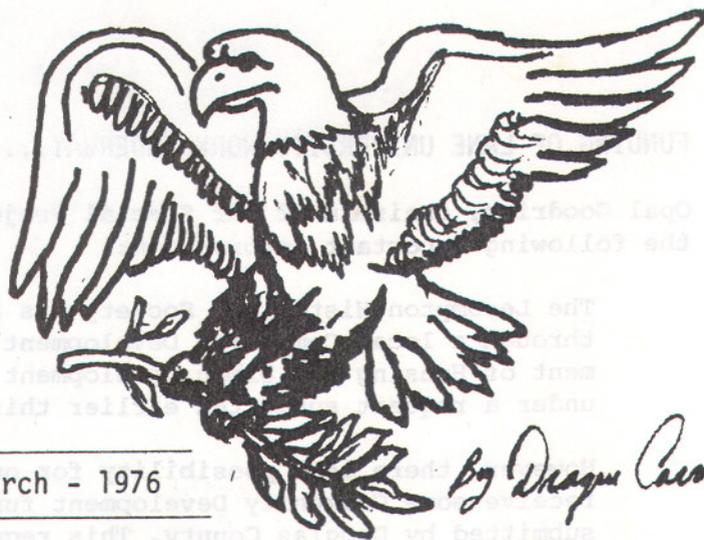
# **BALD EAGLE**

**Volume Two, Issue Number 1**

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# THE BALD EAGLE



Vol. 2 - No. 1

Lecompton, Kansas

March - 1976

....published quarterly by the Lecompton Historical Society, a non-profit organization, dedicated to the preservation of Lecompton's colorful and historic past...and its hopes for the future.

If you've been watching your mail for "The Bald Eagle", and gotten the idea that you've missed an issue, we hasten to assure you that we just haven't gotten around to getting it out. Blame it on Spring work, because your editor has had plenty of that. But, here is the first issue since the December, 1975 one, and we hope to have another one written the 15th of June. If you have any material for "The Bald Eagle", please send it to us.

## LANE UNIVERSITY RESTORATION NOW WELL UNDERWAY...

Your Board of Directors and the Building Committee have been very busy the past three months, getting much accomplished on the restoration of Lane University.

To begin with, new windows have been put in place on all window sites in the building, and the roof has been given a new coat of silver weatherproofing cover.

On April 8th, a contract was signed with Charles Hall & Associates of Manhattan, to begin architectural work on the restoration. We had proceeded in our work to a point where we felt it necessary to bring in someone with a background of restoring historic buildings, and Charles Hall is that man. He brings to us a wealth of experience in restoring historic buildings all over Kansas.

His work will be in five phases:

1. A schematic report...what he believes we should do first on the building.
2. Cost estimates for this work.
3. Construction document phase...preparing the necessary blueprints.
4. Bidding and negotiating.
5. Construction.

As he told us at the April 8th meeting, the fifth phase depends upon all the other four, and it will be the most exciting one because all of the other work will culminate in the actual construction.

We owe much to Bill Maxwell and his Building Committee for the many hours of work they put into getting the new windows installed and the roof covered, and getting us the service of a fine architectural firm. Now all we have to do is raise the necessary funds and the work can proceed.

(continued on next page)

FUNDING OF LANE UNIVERSITY WORK UNDERWAY...

Opal Goodrick, chairman of our Special Projects and Funding Committee, has given us the following important information:

The Lecompton Historical Society was informed that hoped-for funding through a local Community Development pre-application to the department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) would not be forthcoming under a request submitted earlier this year.

However, there is a possibility for our Lane University project to receive some Community Development funding through an application submitted by Douglas County. This request has reached the final application stage, and would include a grant of \$50,000 for preservation of 2 or more historic sites of Douglas County which are on the National Register. Lane University is in this category and should be eligible for a portion of the \$50,000 grant.

A final application is now being prepared and will be submitted to HUD soon. At this time, prospects seem good for approval. We hope so!!!

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IMPORTANT                      IMPORTANT                      IMPORTANT                      IMPORTANT                      IMPORTANT  
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Plans are now underway for preparation of the 1976-77 Douglas County Community Development application to HUD. A series of public hearings will commence April 29th. The Lecompton public hearing will be at the Lecompton Community Building, Monday evening, May 3rd, starting at 7:30 p.m. PLEASE TRY TO ATTEND THIS PUBLIC HEARING, SO WE CAN MAKE OUR HISTORIC PRESERVATION NEEDS KNOWN TO OUR COUNTY OFFICIALS.

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SPRINGER SPRINGS FORTH WITH A HONEY OF AN IDEA....

Recently our Board Chairman, Julia Springer, proposed a real moneymaking idea to our Society...the sale of Bicentennial pendants...an attractive silver necklace with a pewter pendant hanging thereon. Made in four different styles...flag, minute man, bell, Liberty, that is, and a Scroll.

These sell at \$2.50 each, and listen to this...TO DATE, WE HAVE MADE MORE THAN \$2,000 by selling these to our friends, neighbors...and everyone. To say that they have been selling "like hotcakes", would be putting it mild.

They have been selling so fast that Julia has had the "hotline" busy between the manufacturer and her house...and she just can't keep up with it. Seems that when she receives an order, it's already sold and she has to reorder.

While most of the pendants have been sold by our own members, we have also had them sold by others for us in Oklahoma City, Columbia, Missouri, Kansas City and Topeka.

If you haven't ordered yours yet...or better still...if you want to sell some to your friends in Alaska, Vermont, North Carolina, or anywhere else, just get in touch with Julia and she'll be happy to fill your order. Her address is Mrs. Forrest Springer, 1602 East 23rd St., Lawrence, Kansas 66044.

All money from this sale is going into the restoration fund for Lane University, so now's the time for us to really build it UP BIG...WE NEED YOUR HELP TO DO THAT!!!

## NEW OFFICERS ELECTED FOR 1976....

At our Annual Election of Officers on December 11, 1975, the following were elected:

William J. "Bill" Smith, president  
Larry Gish, vice president  
Mary Nelle Lasswell, secretary  
Alice Clare Wright, treasurer

Also, Jack Gregg was elected to a three year term on the Board of Directors, to serve with Mrs. Forrest (Julia) Springer, and Charles Wright. With 1976 well underway, these new officers are leading the way to bigger and better things for our Society.

## WE WELCOME THESE NEW MEMBERS...

We are extremely happy to welcome into our membership the following:

Mrs. Agnes T. Lysen, Madge H. Rothberger, Warren Mott, Barbara Silver,  
Mrs. J.N. Hunley, Sr., and Miss LaRue Rodgers.

To date we have 49 paid-up members for 1976, BUT we are behind last year's total...so if you haven't paid your 1976 dues yet, PLEASE SEND THEM TO OUR SECRETARY NOW!!! Remember, it only costs \$5.00 per year to belong to the "Liveliset Historical Society in Kansas."

AND, IF YOU'D LIKE TO BECOME A LIFE MEMBER, WE'LL ACCEPT YOUR \$100 CHECK...AND MAIL YOU ONE OF OUR HANDSOME NEW "LIFETIME MEMBER" CERTIFICATES. (Note: They aren't printed yet, but will be in another week or so. If you've already sent in your \$100, you will be receiving your certificate soon...but we could still use additional funds for our Lane restoration.

## OUR TREASURER REPORTS...

...that as of our last meeting on April 8th, we have a balance of \$1,599.64 in our Savings account, and \$710.52 in our Checking account. All bills have been paid.

## SOME INTERESTING HISTORIC FACTS ABOUT LANE UNIVERSITY...

(The following letter was written by Mr. Fred C. Bartlett to George L. McCarty during )  
(October, 1951. It contains interesting facts relative to the early history of Lecompton)

Dear George:

What a subject to me? As you know, my 81 years was so thoroughly tied up in that old town, that a thousand years cannot erase some of the many memory pictures. I first saw the light, the 8th of December, 1866, at 4 p.m., Saturday. I did not know it was Saturday, I was so young, can't remember, and, too, my memory is now what I forget with. But George, you know I saw all the silly, foolish things and these I remember, but the better and more worthy things, don't register as I often wish they would. You ask me, "how I am?" Never felt better, no aches, no pain, in fact most folks would think they were dead. But being an odd sort, kind of a lone wolf, and an undertaker for 20 odd years, I find it's best not to let folks know I am dead, so they won't shovel dirt over me.

Well, as to your questions...some, I can answer, some you know more of the better class of events, that the lady wants to know, than I. At least she was sent to you by some one that knew you and your ability to tell what the party wants.

As to old Jim Lane, history gives much of the essential information, one talk he made in Lecompton that I think of now, was in front of the Constitution Hall there, and his first remarks were "God has done much for your country! (pause) God has done much for your country! (pause) God has done much for your country, man Damned little!"

I've looked at Lane's bust in the museum at Topeka, many times and surely, he was a Brick. Sharp, sharp, eager piercing, bitter, acute, if a foe, better letting alone than stir up his feelings. When he offered L.U. \$2000 to name the College Lane Univ. he knew if named, he'd no thought of paying for same. And his strategy was what put Lecompton off the map, as Capitol of Kansas. As he led the 300 men up the Kaw, at night, and reached Lecompton at sunrise and marched them around and around on top of the hill east of town, it looked like a big army, then sent his white flag over town to the officer in charge of 500 cavalry, of the "South", and demanded 40 Union men, held in the Union Hotel, be liberated in 20 minutes, or he'd blow Hell out of the place. His answer was, - 40 men came running up that hill and folks thot to see them, and found 2 big black logs on 2 wheeled carts, but they looked fierce from over town. So Topeka was selected, and is our Capitol.

All cause Jim Lane, played foolery with "Sesesh" plans.

So a town of 3000 folks scattered and "Sun Rise" vanished. So the Lady that told you Jim Lane was a Great Uncle, told the truth, as he certainly was a "Great Uncle".

Lane was founded by Solomon Weaver of Iowa U.B. School "Western College" at Western I, in 1865 and Weaver was the 1st Pres. but only for 1 year and then Prof. Shuck took over, but hard times fleeced him, and N.B. Bartlett was the 3rd, and he stayed eleven years. Prof. Tohill was the 4th and he flew his kite in one year.

Then came Pres. Ervin as 5th Pres. 2 or 3 years and he got out and died. N.C. Droke was the last. Then Miller came and he lasted 3 or 4 years. Then Pete Bonebrake. Then Chas. Brooke as 7th Pres. and then Droke finished the school.

Yes I remember all the Cardwells, but can't find any memory of much that would interest folks. I know the old gentleman was the 1st to preach for the U.B. and at Big Springs, but don't remember the whiskey talk, by the old preacher.

The old Rowena Hotel was built by the 2 Migliario brothers in 54 or 55. They also worked on the Capitol and Catholic Church, opposite the Kettering home and the Baptist church 1 block west of Rowena Hotel. The Rowena was said to be the largest Hotel west of the Mississippi river at that time. It had 30 rooms. Now as to the Kaw.

The Bishop ferry just east of the then mouth of the Grasshopper, or Delaware (as they call it now) was run by Mr. Bishop several years. Then a company was formed to build a Pontoon bridge about 2 hundred yards up the river from the present bridge, and piling was driven and boats made and placed so that wagons and folks could cross, and the pontoon was used all that summer and folks thot that it mighty fine, but, the ice in the Spring destroyed it and carried it down the river. Then Wm. McKinney fixed a cable and ran a ferry boat several years, then sold to Mr. Konkle, and he was owner some 10 or 12 years, when Al Greene bot it, and Owen Baughman worked for Greene till the present bridge was built. I remember of crossing on the pontoon bridge in 1872. I was 5 or 6 years old. Wm. McKinney built a feed mill at one time and ground all kinds of grain. The mill stood about 20 ft. south of the Santa Fe depot and Ace Iliff, then a young kid was looking at the grinding and said to Mr. McKinney, "I could eat that much ground grain as fast as it is ground," but McKinney said, "how long could you stay with it?" Ace said, "till I'd starve to death."

Now George, as to the mill that made history in Lecompton, J.P. Rogers, coming here to go to Lane, and after a year or so, saw what he thot a good chance to saw natural timber and put up a mill, that could cut 3 to 4 thousand ft. of lumber per day, and did make a fine contribution to the community. He worked many thousands of ft. of lumber, to help many folks build houses, barns, fences, cribs, etc. That was one thing that helped this old town back on its feet again. But after some 10 years of sawing, the mill burned to the ground. Rogers wife died, and he went to India as a missionary, and died after 25 years of that work.

Now as to the Eisenhower family. Dave came to Lane, one of the cockiest kids I ever saw. He was afraid he could not get in the College building door, as his head was so big. He couldn't scratch his head clear up on top, as his arms were too short, but inside of 3 months he could get thro any small door and found himself so shrunken, that twas funny. He found such folk as Eddy, Jacoba, Miller Ward and a lot of boys and girls that took his measures without stretching necks. He never quit loving himself, but took water so many times twas pittiful. He thot he could get a lesson while going up the College steps. But after a while he settled down to find he was common as an old shoe. Got bluffed so many times in trying to shine at the girls that were ahead of him, and made dismal failures, one after another, till he finally came out with Miss Stover. Now Ida Stover was not pretty or specially bright, but a finer character never graced L.U. And as she advanced in her classes by hard digging and a courage not to be thwarted, she was honored by high grades and was one of the toro going pupils that draw the better class of students to her. Her friends were not of the flighty kind. She came from "River Brethren" stock, similar to U.B. folks. He brother, or I rather think, her uncle, lived in the 1st house north of Jake Carlson's blacksmith shop. And Ida lived with him. He was a U.B. preacher and served Big Springs and Salem, a church 6 or 7 miles southwest of Big Springs.

Now, Dave was so smart, one evening at a Social for students, and was so rude to Ida, that 5 or 6 students in their crowd, took him to task, and gave him to understand that they would not tolerate his ugly attitude toward Ida, and after a severe talk from Eddy to Dave, before we boys, he agreed to beg her pardon, and after that he seemed to try to please her and be somewhat human. And I want to say "twas the mother and not the father, that gave character to the family of Dave and Ida Eisenhower". They neither graduated at L.U.

Now as to D.B. Day's shop, Mr. Day was one of the finest of smiths, as he made shoes and nails for his horseshoeing. He was the best metal temperor in Kansas. He could make knife blades that would stand up under hard useage. He made my dad 2 tuning forks, a C and an A pitch that were perfect. As you know, we had no instruments in church to pitch the tone for singing with. He made lumberwagons thruout and made the first spring wagons ever made in Douglas county. He made his own bolts and nuts. Made post hole diggers, Spring seats, and anything iron was used for. As a casket or coffin was not to be found on market, he made all coffins for Lecompton and vicinity out of walnut wood as this wood don't rot like most timber. He made the 1st washer that came to this county - that's when washboards went out of business. He made ladders of all kinds. You know Kansas was primitive at one time. Mr. Leamer too, was a fine man to look after the wants of Lecompton. When he went East to order goods for his store, he never forgot the Ladies and brot hats, all trimmed ready to wear, and they would last till the next year.

At one time, before railroads were so prevalent, I've seen 500 crates of strawberries shipped to Topeka in one day. And beside strawberries, blackberries, gooseberries, dewberries, raspberries, red and black loganberries, apples, peaches, pears, plums, grapes, apricots, quince, cherries, etc. shipped to Topeka, but in a few years the railroads brought from the South, carloads, knocked out our market as southern fruit came earlier.

THIS INTERESTING LETTER WILL BE CONCLUDED IN THE NEXT ISSUE

## OUR PRIZEWINNING FLOAT TO RIDE AGAIN...

Last year, under the direction on Jack Gregg (who built most of it), a float was constructed as a replica, to sclae of Constitution Hall. For lack of a better place to store this float, it was parked in the rear of Rose Smith's house just west of town on the county road. Everyone felt it was such a fine float that they didn't want to see the little building destroyed. Last year it took the first prize at the parade in Eudora, and was in the big Lawrence parade also.

Constructed out of Masonite, no one believed the little building would survive the bitter winter, but fortunately, we didn't get the bitter weather with lots of snow. So, Jack and his committee have decided to use the little building again this year, to enter in parades around the county. A meeting of the Parade Committee was recently held where everyone tried to come up with a better idea for a new float, but the conversation always returned to the "little Constitution Hall", so you'll be seeing it again this year...and we hope it wins more prizes as it proudly wends its way along the parade routes.

WE ARE SADDENED TO REPORT THE DEATH OF ELSIE MAY LASSWELL EMKEN on February 16, 1976 in Houston Texas. Elsie May was born in Tecumseh, September 14, 1909, and was laid to rest in Maple Grove cemetery in Lecompton on February 21, 1976. She was the sister of Opal Goodrick, Marv Nelle Lasswell, and Edna Bahnmaier.

## RIVER ROAD GETTING NEW INTEREST...

*The River Road which runs west of Lecompton to Tecumseh along the river, is finding new interest among many area residents. A Committee has been formed with Jack Pinney, chairman. Jack lives at 416 Woodlawn in Topeka.*

*On April 24th and 25th, a big Clean-Up campaign will take place. A group of Wahnburn students have agreed to work and several other groups have pledged their services. Shawnee County is furnishing some trucks, and Oliver Wingfield and Lapeka, Inc., are each furnishing a truck, but they need more. They need pickups, winch trucks to get the heavy stuff up the hill, or anything that can haul junk.*

*Activities for the River Road project have boiled down to three major tasks: Clean-up, Signs, and an Overlook. Hopefully, with funds in the future, more work on the road can take place. The signs will be routed on redwood and mounted on creosoted wood posts, and set in concrete. An Overlook is planned on land owned by Robert Fulton. This will enable travelers along the road to stop and enjoy the breathtaking beauty of the wonderful Kansas river valley. We'll have more to report on this project in later issues. Right now this Committee needs volunteers to operate the router and paint the signs; furnish and or operate post hole digger; furnish a small cement mixer; and do other labor installing the signs. If you can contribute anything to the project, please call 235-2256 in Topeka.*

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