

The LHS Newsletter Archive

BALD EAGLE

Volume Thirty Two, Issue Number 2

Originally Published in Lecompton, Kansas : Summer 2006
Digitally Archived July 2006





The Battle of Fort Titus Reenactors in Action

On August 16, 1856, 50 Free Staters from Lawrence attacked the fortified farmhouse of Colonel Henry Titus. He and 33 other Pro-Slavery fighters surrendered when a cannon, "Old Sacramento," blasted a hole through a wall. "The Battle of Fort Titus" has become a significant part of the lore of Bleeding Kansas, which led to the Civil War. The battle will be re-enacted both Saturday, June 24, and Sunday, June 25, at the new representation of Fort Titus built this year by the Lecompton Historical Society. The "fort" sits in a meadow about 100 yards southeast of the Territorial Capital Museum. Please see Page 8 for pictures on the reconstruction activities.

Lecompton's Sesquicentennial Roars

In 1856, Constitution Hall was built, the Battle of Fort Titus was fought and many of Lecompton's pioneers first settled here.

This is the 150th anniversary celebration, the Sesquicentennial, and this year's Territorial Days are bigger than ever.

Territorial Days will be celebrated June 23 and 24. Please see the full schedule on Page 9.

At 9:30 a.m., June 24, Saturday, Ed Hoover of the Lecompton Reenactors rededicates Constitution Hall. He will speak from a gaily bedecked Constitution Hall front porch. It promises to be one of those storied presentations.

At 1:30 p.m., Saturday and Sunday, June 24 and 25, reenactors from five states will stage the Battle of Fort Titus in the field just southeast of the Museum. Please see Page 8 for pictures of the construction of the new representation of Fort Titus. It will be the first time Free Staters attack this "new" Fort Titus.

At 2:30, Saturday, Diane Eickhoff will present a speech made by Clarina Nichols in the late 1880s promoting Women's Suffrage. There also will be a pancake feed, races, contests and a parade. Territorial Days have become a "don't miss" event.

Editor's Note: *The Spencer farm, located on the west boundary of Douglas County in Lecompton Township, has been a local landmark since before the Civil War. Over the years the Topeka and Lawrence newspapers have written articles on the Spencers and their farm, and the Bald Eagle has chronicled the Spencer saga in articles written by our genealogist and historian, Iona Spencer. In reprinting this spring's Lawrence Journal-World article about the Salvation Army's purchase, it's possible to see a significant future for the historic place. In my accompanying article describing the early experiences of my wife and myself on the farm, the hope is that some of the character of the farm and the Spencer family shines through.*

-- John Peterson



Mike Yoder/Journal-World Photo

THE OLD SPENCER FARM, 1988 E. 1 Rd, one mile northwest of Big Springs, has been sold to The Salvation Army for use as a youth camp and conference center.

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Ranch to Become Salvation Army Camp

By Mark Fagan

A majestic ranch at the outskirts of northwestern Douglas County is poised for more than \$3 million in upgrades, all designed to turn the rustic property into a youth camp and conference center for not-for-profit organizations.

Last week the Salvation Army of Kansas and Western Missouri purchased the 160 acres known as the Spencer Ranch—land purchased 149 years ago by cabinetmaker and woodworker John Spencer for \$1.25 an acre. The ranch is just inside the county line, less than a mile northwest of Big Springs.

The organization plans to turn the place into a year-round retreat for adults and summertime escape for more than 1,500 youths, age 7 to 18. Upgrades being considered include construction of cabins, a dining hall, a swimming pool, a garage for equipment, a chapel, multipurpose areas and a gymnasium.

All would blend in with a site that already includes an expanded home originally built in 1865, and a restored 126-year-old barn that likely will be converted into a nature center—perfect for helping visitors understand and enjoy the 30 acres of prairie and other general terrain that features everything from prairie grasses to a registered forest.

“It’s absolutely gorgeous property,” said Maj. Loren Carter, the organization’s divisional secretary for business administration in Kansas City, Mo. “It’s a terrifically exciting project, but it’s also a challenging project.”

The Salvation Army bought the property so that it could replace its Three Trails Camp and Conference Center, the organization’s longtime operation in Independence, Mo.

The Salvation Army started shopping around for a new space this year when it realized that the existing camp no longer fit its needs.

Urban encroachment

At Three Trails on 40 acres at the northwest corner of U.S. Highway 40 and Lee’s Summit Road, campers no longer can escape encroaching urbanism. One of the entrances to a new Bass Pro Shop is going in across from the camp’s entrance....

The Salvation Army intends to put the land up for sale in January or February, seeking between \$4.5 million and \$5 million. The proceeds will be used to cover costs of the new site in Douglas County, and provide the bulk of funds expected to be necessary to turn the new site into an even larger operation.

“It won’t build a new camp—not completely,” Carter said. “It’ll be a good start, for sure.”

The Salvation Army intends to

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A Farm for the Ages

*The Beauty of Mellow Limestone,
Mammoth Oaks and Hickories, and a Rare
Field of Virgin Prairie*

By John Peterson

It was early in the spring of 2000 and a big day for my wife, Jan, and me. Four months earlier we had purchased the “Spencer Riding Stables,” a 160-acre farm in Big Springs just off the fabled Oregon Trail. We weren’t farmers, but we relished the challenge of projects and this farm looked to be the granddaddy of all projects. The farmhouse had burned in 1991 and the driveway off the highway had washed out long before. Throughout the winter we had been hiking down from the highway, crossing through a closely cropped field of native grasses and then through some 20 acres of thorny locust, red cedars, rocks and ruts to reach the house.

What we sensed but didn’t fully realize was that we had bought a big piece of local history. We were the first people to own the farm who were not Spencers. They were among the first pioneers in Kansas Territory, settling in 1855. The Spencer place was the last remaining pioneer-family quarter section in tact and undivided in the area.

At our first glimpse, Jan and I had fallen in love with the limestone relics that had been a stately home and snug barn. We talked vaguely about rebuilding or restoring, but that was before Iona Spencer arrived. She is this short, pepper pot of a woman, a dynamo who was writing and editing this *Bald Eagle* newsletter at that time. She is the sister-in-law of Maxine Spencer, the widow we purchased the farm from.

After talking to us, Iona wrote a major article for the *Bald Eagle* about the farm and its new owners. She concluded, “They say they are going to fix the old place up.”

When Jan read the article she said,

“Iona put us on notice.”

Our first necessity was to build a new driveway. We decided to cut it off the county blacktop north of US40, though that meant a longer, winding drive. Jan and I staked it out, looking for long views over the Kansas River valley. We wanted to keep the tall trees and wild rose brambles. A good farm road has a mystery, an invitation to hidden beauty.

On the morning we spread the last load of gravel, I walked over to my Dodge pickup parked at the top of the drive. I was eager to be the first down the road.

Almost on queue, a dusty brown Buick sedan pulled in

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The restored 1879 barn.

A Farm for the Ages *continued*

(Continued from page 3)

to stop a few feet from me, blocking my truck.

A bespectacled, white-haired gent wearing blue seersucker pants, a sweat-stained ball cap, rumples white dress shirt and brown cotton driving gloves climbed out. "I'm Frank Spencer and this is my wife Freda," he said, gesturing to a smiling woman in the passenger seat. She nodded her hello.

Aha, another of the Spencer clan. Jan and I welcomed them, wanting to know more of the farm's story. Frank, it turns out, had lived on the farm with Freda, then his bride, in the 1930s and 1940s. He helped build the concrete silo. He was looking across the new driveway with that glassy stare old-timers get when they're seeing the past in the present.

"See that stand of cedar trees?" Frank asked, pointing to a grove on a bench overlooking a bog of cattails and willows. "That's where my great grandpa Spencer built our first log cabin. He settled this place. You can see those rocks surrounding the spring just down the hill. That was their water."

I smiled and introduced myself, a bit impatiently. But Frank likes to talk, which is probably why Freda simply smiles a lot. The couple is like most of our new rural neighbors; they're slow to stop by but when they do they're very good at passing the time of day. And this new farm road would pull them in for a long overdue look at the farm's remnants.

Frank kept on with his story, "When the family first got here in 1855, it was Christmas Eve and it was snowing, hard. They'd been traveling for four months and they were worn out. My great grandpa Spencer said, 'We'll stop here. This is where we will live.'" Frank added, "Too bad your road missed the cabin site by 50 yards."

Yeah, Frank, I thought, if the old cabin were still here. Who else would have known? It was just another piece of the neglected acreage, overgrown with cedars, hedge and locust. The last Spencer to live on the farm, Ralph, had moved to a nursing home in 1993 and his departure was the last of the Spencers on this farm. The Spencer saga began in Kentucky.

In the fall of 1855, John and Mary Jane Spencer packed up seven children, an ox and a Kentucky-bred stud horse and left LaRue County in south central Kentucky to head west for Kansas Territory. That was four months after the Kansas-Nebraska Act turned huge tracts of Indian lands into Kansas Territory. It was also a time when it wasn't extraordinary for a couple like the Spencers to just up and set out for a new life.

At Louisville, the emigrants boarded a train and proceeded to St. Louis. Next came a steamboat, the



Native limestone frames the farmhouse's landscape

E.M. Riley, which carried them to Leavenworth, Kansas. On October 8, they changed boats and continued down the Missouri River to the mouth of the Kansas River. Then, for two months, the Spencers delayed their journey while their two youngest children fought a high fever.

Finally in December the travel-weary family walked off a riverboat in Lecompton, the year-old capital of Kansas Territory. John Spencer hitched the stud horse and the ox to a wagon and they headed west for the last seven miles. They stopped a mile northwest of Big Springs, the legendary watering hole for both the Oregon Trail and California Road.

Frank says none of the family know why John and Mary Jane left Kentucky in the first place or why they came to stop just here on the Kansas prairie. It sounds reasonable, 150 years later, for that pioneer from Kentucky to whimsically stop his family's westward journey on Christmas Eve because, as Frank says, everyone was exhausted. It must have been bitterly cold. In those days winters were fierce with temperatures often dropping to 10 and 20 degrees below zero; snow would blow into 10 and 15 feet tall drifts. White outs were not uncommon.

But after absorbing much local history, I believe John and Mary Jane had pushed hard to get here in late December, wanting the family to spend their first Kansas Christmas where they would build their home. Since they were horse people and Union supporters, the Spencers must have loved the rolling native tallgrass prairie that would be home for their Kentucky stud.

The Spencers took advantage of the U.S. government's "pre-emption" law, which said the first-to-come, first-to-settle-the-land could own it for \$1.25 an acre. What really made pre-empting land so

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A Farm for the Ages *continued*

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tempting was that the government let you buy the land and then find the money to pay for it.

In 1856 the Spencers were living at ground zero where momentous historical currents were building. This part of Kansas had long seen tumultuous times and for a time was a crossroads of history. In the 1830s Zebulon Pike and John C. Fremont led expeditions right past the farm. In the early 1840s settlers would water at Big Springs on their way to Oregon and, starting in 1848, gold prospectors turned it into the California Road. When the Spencers arrived at Christmas 1855, the first of the clashes that would produce Bleeding Kansas had already taken place. John Brown, the abolitionist zealot, was still at large and Missourian ‘Ruffians’ were making nightly raids.

Over the decades the Spencer family prospered. The first of them, John, was a celebrated cabinetmaker; a rocking chair of his sits in the Territorial Capital Museum. His son, William Franklin, owned one of the county’s first threshers. He accumulated land, too, owning 540 acres at his death when 90 years old. After World War Two farming suffered and so did the Spencers. The last to live here, Ralph, was a horse breeder and operated the public riding stables.

Naturally Jan and I heard plenty about the Spencers and their fortunes. We were fortunate to become good friends with Iona, who never failed to amaze us city folk. On one visit she said, with a sweet and innocent smile, “If you see a dead gopher on your driveway out back, I just stepped on its head. He was a fat one too.”

She had brought a picture of the Spencer house in its glory years. “My grandpa Glenn built the clapboard east wing,” she says. “The original wing was blown off by



The Edward Hoch Saylor Memorial Pond. The grandson of an early Kansas governor and a prominent Topeka pediatrician, Dr. Saylor was an avid fisherman and a lifelong friend of the author's.

the wind years ago. Grandpa’s addition was still there for the fire in 1991.”

Our first winter on the farm was dedicated to clearing out decades of sloth—fields abandoned to the dark side of nature since World War Two. We were learning that nature needs help against thickets of rose brambles, huge gray rat nests, volunteer scrub trees and tangles of rusty barbed wire. Jan and I had not yet been introduced to the government’s Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP) that would be of immense help in reseeding and restoring pastures to native tall grasses. We were living hand-in-hand with chainsaws and burn piles.

I was particularly delighted when, on a sparkling spring day with the fields just greening up, Iona called to ask if I would like to accompany her on a visit to the Kansas Center for History in Topeka. The Center houses the state’s early land records and public surveys, old newspapers, and genealogical records. I wanted to see what information I could find on our farm.

We walked in and you knew immediately that Iona’s among friends. We had been there only minutes when, one after another, the professional staffers asked her how she had been or if she might recall where they could locate this book or that map. I said, “Hold on, Iona. Before you get into all of that, point me toward the 1860 Public Land Survey.” She nodded, hardly distracted and clearly enjoying the attention.

The History Center is a cavernous room with 30-foot high ceilings and the ubiquitous stacks of bound newspapers, filing cabinets, magazines and assorted artifacts. Clerks sit in alcoves, kind of like caves, and a visitor has to figure which section holds his pertinent data. Iona pointed me in the right direction. I filled out the request form that listed the coordinates for our farm—Douglas County, section 11, range 12, township 17.

The first U.S. Land Office for Kansas Territory opened in Lecompton in 1854. In April 1856, the deputy surveyor, Edmund Flaherty, was placing stones to mark section corners in Douglas County. In April, he and his team neared the Spencer farm. As Flaherty worked his way north along the boundary between Sections 10 and 11, he described tall grasses and wooded creek banks, all written in a formal, curlicue style. “Broken prairie, soil first rate,” he wrote. “Timber—oak, walnut, hickory and elm.” He added, “Road from ‘Big Springs’ to Tecumseh, 20 lks. Wide, bears N. 75° W.”

Then at the corner of original Spencer tract, he wrote, “Set a limestone 22 in. long, 12 in. wide, 3 ½ in. thick for quarter section corner.

“Rolling prairie, soil 1st rate.

“Section corner a cabin bears S10 and E, 4 chains

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A Farm for the Ages continued

(Continued from page 5)
distance.”

Ah, I thought, the Spencer cabin. No one else had ever lived in the neighborhood, yet something didn't jibe. I was a squadron navigator in the Navy and I've sailed the Pacific and Caribbean in a sailboat and I know maps and charts. I closed my eyes and could see Frank standing there, telling me that here is where the cabin stood.

“Hey, Iona,” I stage whispered to her. She walked over to my desk from a microfilm machine. “The surveyor located the Spencer cabin and it is about 320 yards off of the land John Spencer pre-empted,” I said.

Iona said, “He built that cabin months before the surveyor got



The restored 1870 farm house

there. Lot of mistakes made back then. But, I'd have never guessed the Spencer cabin was built off their land.”

I said, “It makes you wonder what old John thought about living

in a cabin in no man's land? Whether he tried to hide that corner stake?”

Iona just smiled. I felt like Sherlock Holmes.

This present-day generation of Spencers knows little of those pre-Civil War years. Records show that, from 1861 to 1865, three more children were born to John and Mary Jane Spencer, and that their three eldest sons left to serve the Union, enlisting in the Ninth Kansas Volunteer Cavalry. All survived.

As the war wound down, John Spencer wrote his eldest son, William Franklin “W.F.,” to tell him that 80 acres immediately to the south of the home place was available. Undoubtedly William Franklin Spencer, perhaps in a bivouac near Vicksburg or Appomattox, had a good laugh or uttered a sigh of relief. That 80 acres, he would know, included the land the family cabin had been built upon.

William Franklin came home from the war and from 1865 to 1870 built the native stone farmhouse and then, in 1879, completed a native stone barn. That's the farm that Jan and I bought on the next-to-last day of the 20th Century.

About Our Society's Genealogist and Historian, Irrepressible Iona Spencer

It wasn't just because she was married to Vernon Spencer that Iona cared enough to be one of the first to make a neighborly call at the Spencer Farm with historical information and photographs. She's like that. If any of the smaller cemeteries in Lecompton Township need grooming, Iona helps organize it. If any descendant of a pioneer Lecompton family needs genealogical help, Iona does that too. For years she was the writer, researcher and editor of this newsletter.

The accompanying article on the previous page about the old Spencer farm tells of some of Iona's interests and adventures. Too, she is a great storyteller, particularly when it comes to her ancestors.

She has written about both her Glen and Zinn families in the Bald Eagle, notably in the Spring

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*Dedication of Lane University Museum - June 1982
David Eisenhower and Iona Spencer*

Our Genealogist, Iona Spencer

(Continued from page 6)

issue, 1981.

One of her stories didn't make those articles. This one was told to her by her grandmother, Eliza Ann Weidick Zinn, who arrived in Lecompton in 1854. "Westport, Missouri—that's downtown Kansas City now—was the nearest town. When my granddad had to go for supplies it would take three days for the roundtrip. My grandmother would stay with their baby, my Mama, and do the chores. One day she came in from milking the cow and an Indian chief was standing in

the middle of her cabin.

"He was holding her dog."

"Grandma was scared but she loved that dog. When the Indian said his people were hungry and wanted her dog for dinner, she said that he could not have it. She told him that the neighbors a mile down the road had many dogs and that he should take one of theirs.

"The Indian left but said he'd be back if he didn't get another dog.

"An hour later he walked by with a dog under his arm.

Iona added, "I don't know if I could have said no to that Indian

chief."

Iona Spencer was born on March 8, 1925. She has two sons, a daughter and four grandchildren, two step grandchildren, six great grandchildren, and four step great grandchildren. Her dog, Pepe, still runs her life although he's 13 now. While Iona might be uncertain whether she could have faced down that Indian chief, there's no question about it for the rest of us in the LHS. Iona defines gumption.

-- John Peterson

Ranch to Become Salvation Army Camp *continued*

(Continued from page 2)

conduct a feasibility study during the next six to eight months, to determine just what features should be incorporated into the land in Douglas County, Carter said. The project likely will require a capital campaign to generate additional financing to make the entire project a reality.

It could be anywhere from two to five years before the Douglas County camp is up and running, but it hasn't stopped official from looking forward to the opportunities it will afford. The Oregon and California Trails run through the property.

"There's a lot of fauna and flora there that we want to keep intact, and not destroy or bother," Carter said. "There's herds of deer, and all kinds of small animals—rabbits, raccoons and possums. There's even been a sighting of a cougar on the property.

"We want to keep it intact. We envision it being a western, southwestern type of theme, with the history and tradition of the land. Big Springs—that's where the pioneers would stop and fill their water barrels before heading west out onto the prairie."

Youths from 24 corps community centers in Kansas and western

Missouri—including Douglas County—would be expected to enroll in summer camps ranging from three to 10 days. The Salvation Army also runs a music camp that includes youth and adults.

The site also likely would be available to churches and other not-for-profit groups in the fall, winter and spring, Carter said. The Salvation Army bought the property from John and Janice Peterson, who bought the land and buildings in 1999 from Maxine Spencer. They

had used a local stone mason to restore the property's old barn, and made alterations to the home—one for a master bedroom, and another for a living room and kitchen.

The property include "literally miles and miles of stacked-stone fences, and the Petersons used federal grants to help preserve the area for wildlife.

"We're just thrilled that it will be kept in a state where so many people will be able to use it over the years," John Peterson said.



John Weldon/6News Photo

History is restored and preserved at the old Spencer Ranch in northwestern Douglas County. John and Janice Peterson, who sold the 160-acre property this month to the Salvation Army, restored the stone barn at left, which has its 1879 construction date carved in stone on the west side. Other structures remain at the ranch, which will be used for youth camps and other retreats.



Lecompton Historical Society's 'New' Ft. Titus

The re-enactment of the “Battle of Fort Titus” has become the traditional highlight of Lecompton’s “Territorial Days.” Every third year, dozens of Free-State reenactors muscle up a mock version of the famous cannon “Old Sacramento” and at the height of the battle, with screeching yells and the banging of rifle blanks and cap pistols, a member of the Free-State troop yells, “This is a new and different issue of the Herald of Freedom!” and the cannon roars.

What had happened in 1856 is that the Free Staters from Lawrence couldn’t find any cannon balls, so for ammunition they melted the drawers of lead type at the newspaper, “Herald of Freedom,” to make a cannon ball. As the tale goes, when the cannon’s blast subsided, a Pro-Slavery member of Colonel Henry Titus’ force sticks a white flag out the window in surrender.

We hope this year is no different. We can only speculate how the “Battle of Fort Titus” might have ended if the Pro-slavery forces under Colonel Titus had such a strong, handsomely built log cabin in 1856 as they will have in 2006.

(For a full account of the battle see LHS’s *Bald*

Eagle newsletters of Winter 1981 and Fall 1983, or visit the hugely popular LHS website, www.lecomptonkansas.com and go to the link <http://www.lecomptonkansas.com/index.php?doc=hist-ft-titus.php>)

The Lecompton Historical Society, with funds generously provided by the Wayne and Maybelle Slavens Hall Fund, has constructed a representation of Henry Titus’ cabin that sits 100 yards southeast of the Museum. It was designed collectively by the Lecompton Historical Society’s Board of Directors.

Reenactors from five states, and especially Missouri’s Holmes Brigade, will present the 150th anniversary reenactment of the “Battle of Fort Titus” twice this year, at 1:30 p.m. on both Saturday and Sunday, June 24 and 25.

Of special note at 9:30 a.m. on Saturday morning June 24, Ed Hoover of the Lecompton Reenactors will portray Douglas County Sheriff Samuel Jones who built the hall in 1856. Hoover will deliver a soliloquy to commemorate the 150th anniversary from a rebuilt front porch on Elmore Street, Lecompton.





History of Territorial Days

In 1975 a ceremony was held in downtown Lecompton on Elmore Street, celebrating the dedication of Constitution Hall as a National Historic Landmark. Until then, Lecompton's annual summer picnic, since before the turn of the Century, had been known as the Harvest Home Picnic. But because of the national recognition of Constitution Hall, Lecompton and Kansas Territory, the city fathers decided to call the summer outing Territorial Days. The event has grown to two days in June and it's the highlight of the year for Lecompton.

Friday

6:00pm – 9:00pm Carnival/Games
Ottaway Amusement Inc.
6:30pm Softball Tournament Begins
6:30pm– 7:30pm Registration
Turtle Race
Frog Race
Pedal Tractor Pull
Bicycle Races
Talent Show
7:00pm LUMC Cake Walk
9:00pm – 11:00pm Teen Street Dance
Parents responsible for children

Saturday

7:00am – 10:00am Pancake Feed
Community Building
8:00am Horseshoe Tournament
District 1 Abate Show
Lane University Parking Lot
Frog & Turtle Races
8:30am Softball Tournament (cont'd)
9:00am Pioneer Skills Living History &
Demonstrations
Blacksmith
Broom Maker
Spinners
Potter
Water Color Artist
Soap Maker
Weaver
9:30am Groundbreaking Speech by Owner,
Sherriff Jones
by Ed Hoover
10:00am Parade Line-up
Lecompton Elementary

Saturday *continued*

10:00am Book Signing by Author, Diane Eickhoff
Revolutionary Heart: Clarina Nichols
At Constitution Hall
10:30am Parade Judging
11:00am Parade
Carnival/Games Open
11:30am United Methodist Church Dinner
**1:30pm Battle of Fort Titus
East of Territorial Capital
Museum
Encore showing -
Sunday, June 25 at 1:30pm!**

2:00pm FREE Old-Time Games
3-Legged Race
Egg-on-the-spoon Race
Egg Toss
MORE!
2:30pm Speech by Clarina Nichols
1800's Women's Suffrage
Proponent by Diane Eickhoff
Signing to follow at the Territorial Capital
Museum
2:45pm Prelude to Civil War/"Bleeding Kansas"
Territorial Capital Museum
4:00pm Bicycle Races
Ages 3-12
5:00pm Schmalstieg Pedal Tractor
Ages 4-12
6:00pm Ice Cream Social in the Park
Bring your blankets!
Talent Show
It's back!!!!!!!!!!
9:00pm - Midnight Evening Concert
Nodding Lizards

Lecompton Historical Society's Major New Membership Drive

As part of the Lecompton Historical Society's celebration of the Kansas Territory's 150th birthday, a major membership drive is being launched. For the rest of 2006 individuals can become members of \$5, families for \$7, and life memberships remain at \$50.

The LDS Board of Directors has voted to increase membership prices, starting January 1, 2007. Next year individual memberships will cost \$10, family memberships will be \$14, and life Memberships will be \$100. Life memorial memberships will remain \$50.

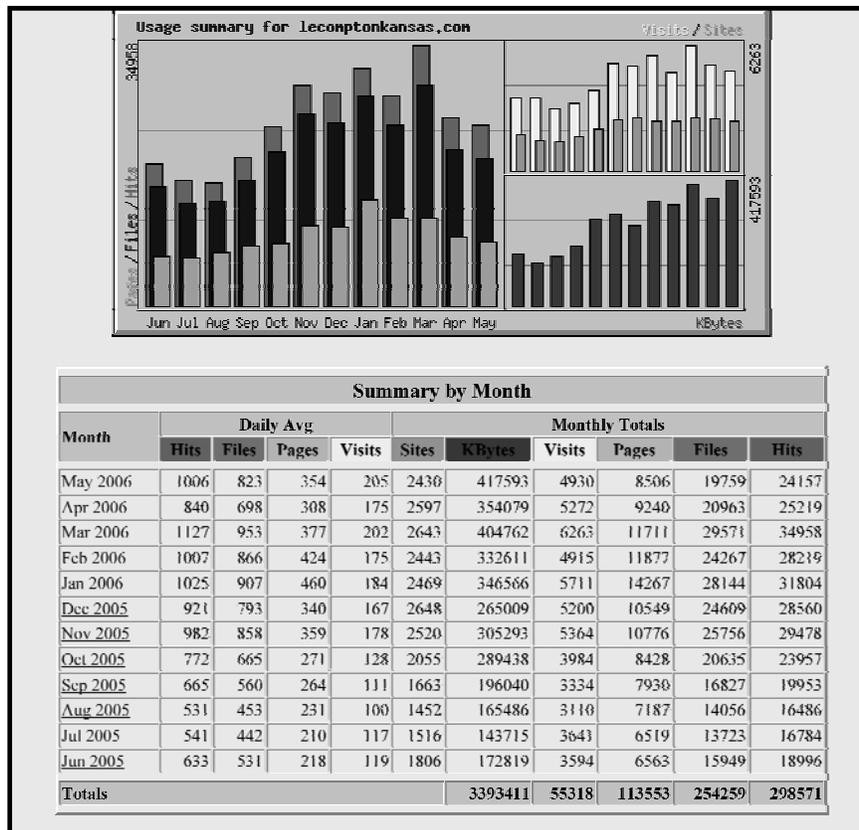
Become a life member and save money while creating a worthwhile tax deduction.

Amazing Website

As the "usage statistics" graph shows, www.LecomptonKansas.com has become a

hugely popular internet address. Last summer the number of daily visits to the site ran from 100 in August to 119 in June. This month, May 2006, the daily average number of visits is 213. In the past year there have been more than 50,000 different internet visits.

These numbers should increase later this year as an archive of *Bald Eagle* newsletters is added to the website. It will include a search engine so if you want to read about your great granddaddy or look at one of the older issues, it'll all be there. The work is being done by Evan Ashcraft, a weekend tour guide for the Kansas State Historical Society at Constitution Hall. He's a history major at Kansas University and well qualified.



Reminder! Lecompton Alumni Banquet

The annual Lecompton Alumni Banquet will be held on June 17th in the Lecompton High School Gym. The years being honored will be 1936-1946-1956-1966-1976-1986-1996-2006. The event will begin at 6 P.M. The cost is \$15.00 and may be mailed to P. O. 63, Lecompton, Kansas 66050

OBITUARIES

Faust, William H., 87, of Phoenix, AZ, died Feb. 28, 2006 at his son's home. He was born June 17, 1918 in Palo Pinto, Texas and served in the United States Navy in the South Pacific in WW II.

He was a Life member of the Lecompton Historical Society. He married Pearl L. Henry Feb. 4, 1939. She preceded him in death April 18, 1987, also a son Gary Dean Faust.

He is survived by his son Dale O. Faust of Spring Valley; a brother Jesse and sister Frances of El Paso, Tex., and two grandchildren and four great grandchildren Burial in Phoenix Memorial Park.

Harris, Bessie Irene, 85, died Mar. 25, 2006. She was born May 23, 1919 at Big Springs, Ks. the daughter of Paul R. and Elsie Irene Custard Glenn.

Bessie married Odess Brown in 1939 and to this union four children were born. She married Glendon E. Harris Nov. 21, 1964, he survives of the home.

Other survivors include a son Paul Brown Turlock, Ca. daughter, Charlotte Plaster, Heyburn, Id.; step children, David Harris, Tahoe, Ca., Dean Harris, Livingston, Ca., Dan Harris, Rupert, Id., Deborah Underwood, Smithshire, Ill.; 20 grandchildren, 14 great-grandchildren; 5 great-great grandchildren, two brothers, George and Ralph Price both of Sun City, Az.

She was preceded in death by an infant brother Charles J. Glenn and two sons, Chuck Brown and David Brown, two brothers, Charles & John (Jack) Price and one sister, Fannie.

She was a member of the Lecompton Historical Society.

Funeral services at View LDS 1st ward Church. Burial in View Cemetery in Burley, Idaho.

Steinman, Arthur Max, 63, passed away April 9, 2006, at his home in Deerfield, Colo.

He was a member of the Lecompton Historical Society.

Survivors include his wife, Suzanne Steinman of the home; his mother, Darlene L. Paslay, Lecompton, Ks.; two sons, Arthur W. Steinman and Larry Dean Bowden; three daughters, Tamara C. Garmany, Chirsta Lee Bowden and Stephanie S. Brandt and brothers; Rick Paslay, Lecompton; David Paslay, Ladell; two sisters, Sheila Robles, Lecompton and Linda Eisenhut, Berryton. Burial in Byers, Colorado.

Brown, Dr. Richard J. We received word that Dr. Brown had passed away in Tucson, AZ. No obituary was received. He was a Life member of the Lecompton Historical Society.

*****Please Clip and Mail With Your Check*****

THE LECOMPTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY, Lecompton, Kansas 66050, is a non-profit corporation for the preservation of historical sites. We are eager for continued membership and new members.

Dues are \$5.00 per year for individual membership and \$7.00 for a couple's membership. The dues are from December to December. Life membership is \$50 per individual. Contributions are tax deductible. Checks should be made payable to the Lecompton Historical Society, and mailed to Georgia Trammel, Chairman, 11 N. 2064 Rd, Lecompton, KS 66050

- () \$5.00 Annual Individual Membership
- () \$7.00 Annual Couple's Membership
- () \$50.00 Individual Life or Memorial Membership
- () Friends of The Lecompton Historical Society \$_____

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PLEASE NOTIFY US OF ANY CHANGE OF ADDRESS

It costs Lecompton Historical Society at least .92 cents for a change of address and the newsletter returned for .78 cent for a postcard to notify us of your change of address, and your newsletter will be thrown away. If you have moved and do not get your newsletter, this is why.

OBITUARIES *continued*

Champney, George W., Sr. 89, Topeka, died May 1, 2006.

He was born Jan. 8, 1917 in Enid, Okla., the son of George & Laura Champney. He was a member of the Salvation Army Church and a Life member of the Lecompton Historical Society.

He married Ruth Gasset Feb. 8, 1943. She survives. Other survivors include a son, George W. "Kicker", Jr. Topeka; three daughters, Sue Randol, Topeka; Patricia Marvin, Lawrence and Elaine Champney, Topeka, six grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Life Memberships:

Larry Hale
Lynda Flieg (Spencer)
Allen Cutter
Rev. William Dulin
Kevin Kersting
Penny Wizer (Sanford)
Carol Higginbotham (Fouts)
Anna Marie Hickock
Susan Bentley by mother Jean Raun

Memorial Life Members:

Neal H. Higginbotham by his wife Carol Higginbotham.

Donations to the Lane Museum

1. Books titled: "Lincoln" by David Herbert Donald
"Revolutionary Heart" by Diane Eickhoff
"Battle Cry of Freedom" by James McPherson.
2. Two centennial dresses by Helen Norwood
3. 1930 Lecompton High School Diploma, 1926 Grade school diploma, 1963 College of Automation Certificate, 1980 Lecompton Alumni Banquet program by Lavina Dekat Hanna
4. Commemorative Spoon of Social Security Act 1935 with President Franklin Roosevelt photo, by Arloene Simmons
5. Photo of the 10 Kansas Territorial Governors, Nine served in Lecompton by Gary Stauffer

Lecompton Historical Society

President *Paul Bahnmaier
Vice President *Rich McConnell
Secretary *Vicki Roberts Bahnmaier
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George & Arloene Simmons, Darlene Paslay
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Bald Eagle Editor *John Peterson

Mailing Labels *Sandra Nichols
Program *Beverly VanDyke
Membership *Georgia Simmons Trammel
Genealogy & Historical Researcher *Iona Spencer
Tours *Charlene Winter
Funding *Mae Holderman
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Kitchen *Helen Hildenbrand & Vicki Leochner
Memorials *Ruth Ice

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The Lecompton Historical Society
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