



BROWN COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Memorial Auditorium –Ag Museum & Windmill Lane

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611 Utah Street --- Hiawatha, KS 66434

“ENRICHING OUR FUTURE THROUGH OUR PAST”

November 29, 2017

Membership Individual \$15.00: Family \$30.00

Issue No. 4 for 2017

Business \$30.00: Life Membership \$200 per person

COMING EVENTS

December 1, 2, starting at 7 p.m. and December 3, 2 p.m. HAATS will present “The Farndale Avenue Housing Estate Townswomen’s Guild Dramatic Society Christmas Carol.”—A hilarious spoof of the beloved Dickens classic. This production will be presented at the Historical Society downtown Memorial Auditorium, 611 Utah Street, Hiawatha.

December 9: HAATS Music of Christmas will be held in Historical Society Memorial Auditorium Museum, 611 Utah starting at 7 p.m.

A message from BCHS

Director/Curator

Elizabeth Lane

The holiday season is upon us and the end of the year is rapidly approaching. It is a time of reflection as well as a time of thanksgiving and planning. My past six months as Director/ Curator have been filled with becoming acclimated to Brown County Historical Society (BCHS) and implementing changes to enhance the society’s success. BCHS’s stock-in-trade is memorializing the changes evidenced through time. Many of us typically focus on events and people outside our personal realm as

they change and evolve. However, we are not impervious to change inside our own personal frame of reference. We constantly change and evolve. The past year for BCHS is reflective of changes, and 2018 will inevitably bring new transformations as well.

Our collection at BCHS changes continually through acquisitions and donations. We thank the many individuals and families who donated objects and artifacts this year to the museums’ collections. BCHS uses these artifacts and objects in the collections to help foster civic engagement and pride. We change our museums by continually replacing old exhibits with new ones. We will change and enhance our programming within the next year to enlighten and entertain our members and guests. These examples are just a small cross section of the many changes the society has undergone this past year and plans to implement in the upcoming year.

My calendar has been extremely full since our last newsletter. Heritage Day, our successful One Room School House Program, Halloween activities in the Auditorium and on the square as well as clean-up of the World Building garage in conjunction with the regular day-to-day operations of the society have filled my days completely. The next several months will

be focused on writing grants and preparing a schedule for the upcoming 2018 season.

Our annual membership drive is currently underway as well. Membership is a method of supporting BCHS in a tangible and meaningful way. Your additional financial support through monetary donations are welcome as well, and you can freely earmark your donation to support a specific project, program or cause. Lifetime members and renewing members are very important to the success of BCHS. However, during this membership drive, our goal is to increase our numbers and welcome new individuals, families and businesses to our society. Increasing our numbers ensures the sustainability of our society and brings about new ideas, concepts, and insights.

I am extremely thankful for the many individuals who have welcomed me to BCHS and Brown County with open arms. I applaud those individuals who seek to promote history through innovative and insightful methods. History is not stagnate. Therefore, the interpretation and presentation of history should clearly reflect progressive thoughts and ideas. BCHS can successfully endorse and foster a society of change.

Wishing you a successful 2018 filled with hope, prosperity and change.

HERITAGE DAY

Another Heritage Day has come and gone. Threats of rain showers kind of put a damper on the day. Attendance was not as good as some years. Talk of maybe changing where riders on the trolley would be picked up caused confusion. Some had heard about the change and others had not. People were confused. We want to apologize for those of you having to wait so long to ride the trolley, then having to leave before the trolley got

back. We are sorry for all the confusion and promise to do better next year,

New this year was Doyle Prawl and his black mules giving rides down WINDMILL LANE. Another popular spot was Gilberta Bendel, face painter. She does this at the ag museum and we had many animals, birds, bees etc running around.

The Pioneer Longrifle Muzzle loaders (black powder) were on the hunt both at the Ag Museum and downtown. They put on a good show and were everywhere you looked. Greg Buser, our local blacksmith, did not have much downtime. It seemed he always had observers. Hope we get people interested in doing the blacksmith thing. I bet Greg would be glad to teach anyone interested.

The breakfast and lunch crowd was smaller than in the past, but Gary Shear, Larry Day, Gil Bunning, Gene Swearingen, Larry Adcock, Joe Nigus and Andy Trent fixed "Great Food." Josephine Ross fixed Indian taco's and fried bread (very good). Dessert was "Thrill's Kettle Corn from Burlingame, and funnel cake by Delores Waite.

Sandy Shear was our story teller and Doris Meyer the basket weaver. Dale Mueting was in attendance with his "GREAT" barbed wire display. Our own Mary Finley was the one room school teacher and is a very popular school teacher. She always had a room full of kids and adults.

Mulberry Patch had their pumpkins and gourds on the front porch with many unusual gourds, sizes, shapes, colors, smooth, bumps, long necks, short necks

and no necks, fat, flat, long, skinny, etc., Meryl and Staci Charles had a "SUPER" display. Wolf River Nursery had many gorgeous mums for sale. The Garden Tractor Pull did not draw near the crowd they usually have, but they didn't have as many entries.

First time helper this year at the ag museum was Deborah Thompson in the Anderson house, returning our faithful Shirley Gifford in the washhouse, volunteer from fire department was in the fire house building. Dennis Greer helped to stay in the tractor building and Ray Puvogel was in the Oltjen building, Dean Bailey in the Bruning Building and Bill Bailey and Jerry Gifford were in the milk barn.

Liz Lane, director/curator was our police, trouble shooter, gofer, locater. She was everywhere. THANKS LIZ U were such a big help.

Do not want to forget Bonnie. She is there to be sure we have everything ready for the event. We really count on her to keep us in the right direction.

Hope we have cthanked everyone for the help. Our volunteers are needed and appreciated. When things go well remember you helped to do it.

REMEMBERING MURL CORBET

(By Donna Corbet Thonen Editor)

I no longer have any brothers. The last of my seven brothers died October 27, 2017 at the age of 96. It is a little strange for me not to have any brothers. They were all older than my sister and I, but always there for us.

My brother, Murl Corbet, died October 27, 2017 at the age of 96. He was born April 6, 1921 in

Severance, Kansas and the fourth of nine children, seven boys and two girls born to Guy and Mabel (Watkins) Corbet. In 1938, he, along with his three older brothers, joined the National Guard in Hiawatha.

He was called to active duty in the Army in 1940. Murl was part of the Normandy Invasion in 1944. He remained in Europe as part of the occupation forces returning to the United States in 1945. He received five bronze stars for his service during World War II. Murl worked as the National Guard Clerk in Hiawatha and retired from the Guard as a Chief Warrant Officer in 1961.

Murl and family moved to Yates Center, KS. in 1965. Served two terms as Mayor of Yates Center. During his tenure, he was responsible for the construction of the new reservoir and water tower allowing Yates Center to become a water supplier to the southeast Kansas region. He had only recently started talking about World War II to me. It was not easy for him to do so. Murl was preceded in death by his wife. He leaves two sisters and one son and two daughters; several grandchildren and great grandchildren.

HIAWATHA CEMENT FACTORY

W. E. Richards was born in 1841 and learned the stone mason's trade, and was a contractor before he came to America in 1872. After spending five years in New Jersey he came to Brown County. He has built many good buildings here, but of late is devoting his energy to the cement industry. At his cement factory, he molds all kinds of blocks and manufactures everything in the way of plain,

fancy and ornamental cement work.

He is a very busy man and employs from six to nine men and could keep more busy if he had facilities. Mr. Richards has raised a family of children, all married and good honest hard working people. He is one of the most energetic, honest upright men we have ever met, and is universally regarded as a strong character for good and the general uplifting of mankind.”—The Year of Big Crops, Souvenir Edition issued by the Kansas Democrat, E Martindale, Publisher.

Editor’s note: Hiawatha Cement Factory was located at 821 Oregon Street according to a Business Directory in the April 9, 1912 issue of the Hiawatha Daily World,

BUSINESS DIRECTORY

A few more names from the Classified Business Directory, April 8, 1912 Hiawatha Daily World.

Another factory listing was Hiawatha Bottling Works it was located at 822 Oregon Street and Lee Walters, mgr. Also listed with the **FACTORIES** was C. H. Cornell, cigars, 727 1/2 Oregon Street, upstairs. Hiawatha MFG. Co., E. V. Allen, Mgr., located on South Eight Street. L. S. Nigus, Creamery, 523 Oregon Street. Hiawatha Mill Co., 904 Kickapoo Street. F. H. McIntyre, 716 Oregon, basement, cement and Hetler & Freiburghouse, cement blocks, 915 Oregon Street.

Under the heading of **AMUSEMENTS** Armory Hall Theatre, B. S. Foster, manager 710 Utah Street. Harnack & Schuller, billiards, pool, cigars, 522 Oregon Street. Wm Ranks, billiards, pool and cigars, 717 Oregon Street. George R. Moore, Electric Theatre, 526 Oregon Street. Jesse Yates, Pastime Theatre, 107 South Sixth Street.

FREAK LIGHTNING GEPHART HOME

Lightning played a queer trick at the farm of Sam Gephart, near Morrill. Mrs. Gephart had been away from the telephone only a few minutes when lightning struck the line. A ball of fire seemed to spring

out of the phone, but it did no damage in the house. At the barn, however, the lightning ran thru the hayloft, down into the lower section of the barn, tore studdings loose from the barn. The lightning burned a small hole thru the hay but for some miraculous reason the fire extinguished itself, doing little damage. Gephart had expected the barn to burn. He was in the building when the lightning hit, was so severely stunned that he had not fully recovered. One end of the barn was completely wrecked.—Brown County World June 7, 1929.

BETTER LIGHTS NOW FOR BAND CONCERT

Preparations were being made for the installation of big, blue lights on the upper balconies along the north side of the court house, in order that the territory near the north entrance might be flooded with light during band concerts. It was said the lights might be in operation for the concert coming up. The floodlights, of 500 watt size, are being provided by the county for the benefit of bandmen, all Brown County who attend concerts. The lights will do away with the trouble, expense of erecting temporary, portable lights each concert evening. “County commissioners,” says J. B. Miller, city commissioner of utilities, “are fine men. All Brown county will thank them for the improvement.”—The Brown County World April 19, 1929.

FOLLOWED HER

SWEETHEART IN DEATH

Six weeks after her sweetheart, Miles Allen, Jr., committed suicide with a shotgun,

Miss Lina Burd, 17, took her own life by the same means Tuesday at the farm home of her half sister, Mrs. Sam Carpenter, near Oneida, in Nemaha county. The two had planned to be married in December. Allen shot himself July 15, leaving a note directing that his insurance be paid to Miss Burd, after his debts had been paid. Miss Burd left a note for her sister: "Bidding all goodbye. You know what I told you. I ask but one thing; have me put beside my intended husband in Sabetha. I will never tell the matter but you will find it out some day." She will be buried beside Allen. Miss Burd had a photograph of her sweetheart taken after his death. On the back of the photograph she penciled this poem: "There's room for his picture in my album. There's room for his name in my heart; There's room for us both in heaven or hell, where true lovers never part." Beneath the verse she wrote: "Well, I've shed my last tear over this picture." Miss Burd shot herself in the heart, exactly where Allen shot himself with the same kind of gun.—September 6, 2919 The Brown County World,

A Baby Injured

John Richard, 2-year-old son of Mr. and Mrs. Dick Bowen, northeast of Hiawatha, was painfully injured at Oskaloosa when he got his hand caught in machinery of an electrically driven pump. The boy was at Oskaloosa with his mother visiting her parents. While grown-ups were busy, John Richard strayed to the back porch, tried to operate the pump, which has a motor in the basement. His hand was caught in cogs. The nails on the thumb, index finger were torn off, the hand badly bruised but will not be permanently affected. After he had been brot home by his father, infection developed in the

boys hand but it is under control now. A peculiar feature, a fortunate one, of the accident is that when the boys hand was caught in cogs of the pump the belt was thrown off, stopping the motors pull. If this had not occurred it would have been necessary for someone to go to the baseent before the machinery could have been stopped. A much more serious injury would have resulted.—September 6, 1929 The Brown County World.

Morrill Public Library has donated reference cards: Jacob Engelhardt settled on a farm near Hiawatha, 1855, Henry Smith, afterwards county commissioner, brought with him three slaves; Arnassa Owen, Joseph Dean, W. J. Proctor, Thomas Hart, and Rudolph Zimmerman, are other 1855 settlers.—This info can be found in the Souvenir Edition 1894 Settlers. (Info is hand written)

Picture view of Hiawatha's \$135,000 Memorial Auditorium. Daily World, May 25, 1920, E. Herbert Publication. Typewritten card

Contract for memorial auditorium was let Tuesday will cost about \$160,000. Work will start immediately. —Daily World July 7, 1920, E. Herbert Publication. Work will start immediately. Typewritten card.

Petitions asking for additional bonds of #60,000 for new Auditorium being issued and circulated by Mrs. John Krebs, Mrs. Hal Fairchild, Mrs. F. Meisenheimer, Mrs Pearl, Welcome, Wheeler and LL Hassenpflug.--Daily World, April 23, 1920, E. Herbert Pub. These cards all filed under Auditorium.

\$3,000.00 road improvement north of Willis made.—Brown County July 22, 1928 Herb, Ed.

The Immanuel English Lutheran Church near Fairview is adding a basement and new furnace. Other repair will be done also.—Brown County World. March 19, 1926. Herbert, Ed. Cards are hand written or typed. So much faster tpday.

Brown County Historical Society
611 Utah Street
Hiawatha, KS 66434

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Remember when there were two of these in the Brown County Courthouse lawn.