



# Cloud Comments

newsletter of the

## Cloud County Historical Society Museum

August 2015

785-243-2866

e-mail: [museum@cloudcountyks.org](mailto:museum@cloudcountyks.org)

[www.cloudcountyks.org](http://www.cloudcountyks.org)

### Open House & Ribbon Cutting



On June 6, 2015, we celebrated the Grand Opening of our new Lester's Sweet Shop display. The event began with a Ribbon Cutting officiated by the new area **Concordia Chamber of Commerce President, Amanda Rall, Toby Noskar of KNCK Radio, and Lori Halfhide of Generations Photography. Dana Brewer, Museum Board Vice-President** had the honor of cutting the ribbon held by Museum Board President, **Tom Gennette** and the Museum Director with Board members, volunteers and friends of the museum giving us their support.



At 1:00 p.m., visitors attending the “**Soda Fountains of Kansas**” presentation with **Journalist and Kansas Historian, Cindy Higgins of the Kansas Humanities Council Speakers Bureau** were given an opportunity to relive the glory days of the soda fountain where sugar-laced tonics and fizzy cure-alls were invented by the local pharmacist as refreshments and served by a fast-moving, slang-talking soda jerk.

In Cindy's slide show, she had a picture of the soda fountain purchased By Lester Davis for the Sweet Shop, now located in the Kansas City Union Station Museum. Cindy also had pictures and information about the Tuggle Drug Store located in Cimarron, Ks. where **Tom Tuggle** shared fond memories of his first job working as a soda jerk in his father's drug store.



**"Sock Hop"** —From 2:00 to 4:00, **DJ Tim Halfhide** generously donated his time and expertise entertaining us with familiar tunes from the '50s and the '60s. Tim's lifelong love of music and willingness to share it with others was apparent right away. Tim had folks primed to twist, gyrate and line dance; no inhibitions here. I had more fun watching **Jackie (Martin) Wheeler** and **Anita (Brichalli) Cyphers** perform dance routines from the late '50s with each other and with a few more partners, myself included. Everyone had some fun, even those just watching from the side lines; enjoying a soda fountain treat!



Anita Cyphers w/Madison Strecker  
Georgia Trost w/Jackie Wheeler



Jackie, Anita and classmate Cheryl  
Sulkosky doing the "twist."



Marilyn Johnston and former Board  
member Harold Chartier



Laura Hansen and Harold Chartier  
Happy feet!



Museum staff member Denny Taylor  
dancing with his wife Patricia



Aline Luecke and Marilyn Johnston  
(Thanks to Debi Aaron for the skirts!)



The most adorable couple—  
Jim and Marilyn Douglass



Rose Hansen and David Hansen—  
Enjoying an ice cream treat



Betty Miller and Charlene Hansen  
Mystery man and John Luecke



The happy couple—  
Denny & Trish Taylor



Anita Cyphers doing the "hula hoop"  
Contest winner was Georgia Trost



Dance Contest—Anita Cyphers  
Dress Contest—Jackie Wheeler



Cousins Beth Hinson and  
Denise Hinson  
(Hats courtesy of Cindy Higgins)



Museum Historical Society members Barbara Shunn &  
Roberta Lowrey volunteered their time as Contest Judges



Best Dressed—  
Rose & Laura Hansen



Bonus contest prizes -  
Compliments of Britt's



The winner of the Bubble Gum contest was Madison  
Strecker and the People's Choice Award went to Grant  
Strecker for an "all out" performance. Sorry! No pictures.

Board members Betty Losh and Carman  
Davis donated baked goods, the ice cream  
and sodas and their time serving up treats  
for more than 100 guests. Aline Luecke,  
Bev Taddiken and Alice Walker brought  
homemade treats as well. Yum!



For more fun, **Paul Moon** graciously allowed us to display his 1963 Ford Galaxie 500 affectionately tagged “Barny” at the front end and CD 1 at the rear. It’s also designated as the Sheriff’s vehicle from Mayberry. This car comes complete with siren, rotating light, a pair of hand cuffs suspended from the rear view mirror, and Camel cigarettes on the dash. To top off this display, **Officer William Krasny** covets the steering wheel. Paul provided a manikin of female persuasion and the police officer’s uniform worn by Bill Krasny. **Rosalee Olson** went to work preparing the manikin for display and with a pair of **Harvey Olson’s** sunglasses, it was a little less obvious that the manikin was female. I’m old enough to remember Officer Bill Krasny and I’m sure he didn’t wear lipstick; he was incognito today.

Just in time for upcoming events, **Dallas Nading** brought in several vintage **KNCK Radio** banners made by **Joe Jindra’s** mother, **Helen**. For DJ Tim Halfhide’s set-up, one such banner, **Oldies 95.3 Kicks-FM**, framed in a 45 record, fit in quite well. The **KNCK-KCKS** banner was set up at the entrance as part of the **Weather** display in conjunction with **Joy Haden’s** book signing event to be held on June 13th.

Volunteers **Lyle Morgan, Tom Istus, John Luecke, Harvey Olson,** and **Harold Severance** built us a new candy counter (on short notice) for the occasion. Thanks guys, it’s beautiful! (See pg. 2, 2nd picture from top 1.)



Over the past four years, the museum’s **Police Department** display has grown from a two-cell Glasco Jail (used from 1916-1975) and a collection of County arm patches, to a much larger collection of pictures, badges, radios, helmet, handcuffs and guns. The display is in the Carnegie Library section, downstairs next to the Ham Shack.

This photo was taken by Bergman Studio and donated by **Officer Gene Zigenbaugh**. The police force of the early 1950s is posing next to the Clydesdale drawn Budweiser Wagon.

(l. to r.)—**William Krasny, Harry Sterling, Junior Alkire, Marvin Storz, Kenny Sharp,** and **Carl Clintman.**

**Update**—Folks have been coming in to help identify the children on the mural of the Sweet Shop wall. Hopefully, if you recognize some of these names, you may be able to help us as well. They are **Eugene Mockabee, Kenton McCoy, Judy Cox, Billy Pae, Marla Morgan, Jackie Christie, Diane Alexander, Carl Burt(?), Joy Kutz, Patsy Baker, Barbara Baker, Sandra Van Laningham, Barbara Cox, Diane Alderman, Marietta Sheaffer(?), Jimmy James(?), John Boogaart(?), Jimmy Walker(?), Max Minard, Susie Meador, Coach Karl Kramer, Treva Johnson, Carole Trost, Roberta Dikens,** and **Barbara Dell Krasny.**



Blade-Empire, Friday, June 12, 2015

*Dear Editor and Museum Friends,*

*I would like to take a few minutes to write and tell each of you how impressed and frankly overwhelmed (we are) by the tireless work and effort that has gone into the Lester's Sweet Shop exhibit at the Museum. Cindy has kept us up to date on every step of this painstaking restoration process. My sister and I cannot begin to thank you for all you've done to keep our father and mother's legacy alive.*

*As you know, my sister Mary and I had planned to be in Concordia in June for the Sweet Shop opening and sock hop, but my daughter is scheduled to deliver on or nearly the same day. We sincerely regret we cannot be there, but are all planning on visiting in September during the Concordia Fall Fest.*

*My parents would be so proud of the work you've done. The Sweet Shop was a great place to grow up and Mary and I both cherish the memories of all the Concordia folks who visited the store for coffee, a coke, a hamburger, or to buy candy during the fall and winter. I'll always remember the first hint of cooler weather in September because Lester would immediately begin making caramel for the caramel apples. Lester's had it all, pinball machines, records playing on the juke box, coke for a dime. Still remember my dad complaining that the kids bought a 10 cent coke and then sat around in the booths for hours. The Sweet Shop was a second home for many of my friends.*

*Again, congratulations on the opening. Each of you should be extremely proud of your loving effort.*

*Most sincerely,*

*Mike Davis*

**NOTE—Mike and Mary will be here for Fall Fest in September. Mary Davis Yungeberg will be here as well for her class reunion. They are all looking forward to having a get together at the Sweet Shop exhibit, 2:00p.m. and serve ice cream treats. They would love to visit with friends as well as those of Lester and Wanetta.**



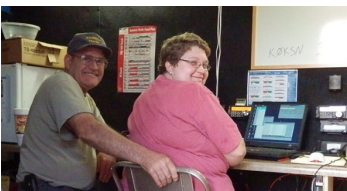
Grandparents **Mike & Mary Davis** with their granddaughter, **Violet Ann**. She was born June 9th weighing 6lb. and 5oz....a tiny little thing.



Mike & Mary's daughter **Liz**, husband **Sam**, and big brother **Henry** giving **Violet Ann** a kiss.

## When the lights go out and the latest technology fails, there's

## Amateur Radio



**Marlin Woodman, KBORSJ**  
**Dawn Moravek, KCOAQL**

Local ham operators **Doyle Scott**, **Marlin Woodman**, and **Greg Geyer** set up classes to assist committed future ham operators study and prepare for their ham radio licensing exam. Classes were being held at the Museum for several weeks and in Beloit with several new hams now operating. The latest ham radio operator to test and receive his license is **Al Urich** from Belleville. His call is **KEOEYG**. He's ordered his radio and should be on the air by now. If you're interested in becoming a ham, classes will be offered this fall. Call now and sign up today!

## Taking A Walk Down Memory Lane

with Aline Luecke

I enjoy meeting people that come to our Museum and many times I hear an interesting story about one of our displays as I'm giving a tour. This happened recently at our **Sweet Shop** display.

**Ina Garrison** and her grandson **Colby Garrison** were looking at the picture board in the Sweet Shop where a newspaper article from the **Blade-Empire**, dated **January 5, 1978** had a feature story about the candy maker and a picture at the top of the article showing the Lester's Sweet Shop store front with two young boys looking in the window. Ina saw the picture and said, "That's my son! **David Garrison** and his friend **Greg Collette** were told to stay in the neighborhood. We were surprised to open the Blade-Empire that evening and see the two boys and the dog Taffy in front of Lester's Sweet Shop. Needless to say, they were grounded for a few days."

Ina called **Rita Collette**, Greg's mother, to come to the Museum. A picture was taken of them by the display. Colby is David's son.



Aline Luecke  
Telephone Open House  
April 17-19, 1950



Pictured from left to right are **Ina Garrison**, **Colby Garrison** and **Rita Collette**, all standing in front of the picture board.



On many occasions, visitors to the Museum will comment on the enormity of our collection. Not long ago, **Joe Gordon** from Ebensburg, Pennsylvania was here visiting with his niece, **Marilee Turner** from Miltonvale. In an animated expression Joe exclaimed, "This is the most extensive small town Museum I believe we've been in. How did you get the folks to give up their family heirlooms?"

In the photograph to the left, Aline, Marilee and Joe are standing behind the violin display of **Fred McBurney**. He built this violin using a commercial template and only a few factory parts to include a violin bridge, tailpiece and the black part of the neck. The planes and tongs he used to build this are part of the display as well. McBurney was 79 years young when he built this violin.

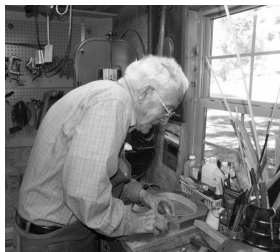
Marilee took an interest in this display because her father, **Robert Gordon Jr.** was a luthier and was working on his 201st violin when he suddenly died in December of 2014.



**A Charming Story**—In 1947, seventeen year old Bob Gordon made a trade with a lady friend-his pistol for her violin. He disassembled the violin, used it as a pattern to make one of his own, and began a life-long quest to know as much as he could about violins.

During the fall of 2014, **Linda Foster** of Miltonvale documented Bob making violin #200, and the photo **Sawing the Scroll** was awarded first place in the Landon Center on Aging annual photo contest.

Bob and **Mary** had relocated from Pleasantville, PA to Miltonvale in 2011 to be near family. The community misses the couple—their warm greetings, interesting conversations, and impromptu violin concerts on their front porch.



**An Interesting Comment**—A young man was looking at our “early office” display. The typewriter on the desk was an Oliver Typewriter No. 5, made from 1907-1914. He asked Aline, “Where is the delete key?”

**Aline** was busy with school tours again this year. In May, we were delighted to receive the third grade classes of **Tricia Koester, Ms. Balthazor, Katy Neace, and Ms. Lamore**. In June, we received fifteen very enthusiastic and



well mannered children from **Bright Beginnings Preschool**. The children took delight in the 1930s Brown Grand Theatre trick mirror (donated by **Ralph Rogers**), the Dempster windmill, and the Whole Wall Mural, all popular displays. Also, on May 11, by special request, Aline gave a presentation on the 1930s era to include a “show & tell” for residents and staff at **Sunset Home** with items from the Museum. May through

June was busy with tours arranged by **Cloud County Tourism**. Besides the **Whole Wall Mural**, the most popular request is our **POW Camp Concordia display** with **Paul Rimovsky**, President of the POW Camp Concordia Preservation Society, starting the tour with a short lecture. A tour of the Lester’s Sweet Shop was requested and continues to be well received.



Some time ago, we set up an early 1900s display for KHC’s *The Way We Worked* Traveling Smithsonian Exhibit to include a steam engine and pump used at the **Kansas Power Co.**, a miniature steam engine handcrafted by **WWII veteran Joseph Larson**, and a six volt wind generator donated by **Don and Georgia Kerr**. We were pleased to direct this visitor to the Museum, **Jason Hale Skaggs**, grandson of **Jake Hale**, to this display which also features Jake’s 1901 handcrafted toy steam engine that he built at the tender age of twelve.

## Letters To The Editor...

Cindy Reimann

**Marilyn Johnston** has proven many times over to be indispensable to me and the Museum in our efforts towards providing genealogy information for our patrons and maintaining the research room records. We’ve been running her ragged with a voluminous amount of requests too lengthy to list here. Marilyn does receive many accolades via e-mail and letters and I wish to share one with you here in appreciation for her tireless services. It was dated Tuesday, June 16th, 2015. “Dear Marilyn— I want to thank you for your generous efforts at finding my “Aunt” Lucille Spaiger-Burnett Arnold! The records you found are fabulous and I have been able to glean so much



valuable information from all that you sent me. I am so grateful. Folks like you are so important to me as a researcher. I hope you know you are greatly appreciated. Sincerely, Jeanie Arthur.” (Bothell, Washington)

**Sweet Shop Open House**—Marilyn knew I was searching for photos taken at the Open House for the newsletter and directed me to **Denise Hinson** who generously agreed to share the photos she had taken. In addition to this, we received this letter and funds— “Hello. This is a for a life time membership in the Cloud County Historical Society. I enjoyed the Lester’s Sweet Shop celebration and opening. I look forward to

*going through the rest of the museum sometime. Thanks! Denise”*

*To all the folks who made the new display possible, enjoy— “Cindy, I was born and raised in Concordia. My mom was the Clerk of District Court for many years. We had a farm five miles south of five corners southwest of town. I have such fond memories of living in Con and all of the friends I had and of course many fun hours at Lester’s Sweet Shop. I enjoyed a copy of your newsletter sent to me by best friend, **Madelaine Grosse**. I’d like to get it regularly. Thanks! I love coming back to Con to visit...wonderful memories there. I have identified some more people in the pictures...some are iffy—but I marked those. Loved this picture—lots of memories. Thx. **Sharon “Sheri Johnson” Haines** (Kansas City, Mo.)*

*Arlene Clayton wrote, “Thank you so much. I thought Saturday was the best celebration so far since you have been curator. You did a splendid job for recreating the most popular hang-out in Concordia during a by-gone era.”*

Last March, **Phil Dixon** of the Kansas Humanities Council Speaker’s Bureau, accompanied by his wife, gave a presentation to coincide with the 90th Anniversary of the **KC Monarchs first World Championship** of 1924. Phil spoke with a passionate regard for baseball, related our local history of the **Travelers** baseball team, displayed historic photographs and recited colorful baseball poetry. Phil is perhaps one of the most animated and knowledgeable speakers we have enjoyed and his regard for us continues. I wish to share his letter of May 29, 2015 written so eloquently for all of us.



*Dear Cindy,*

*I am sure you must know how appreciative we were of your kindness during our Saturday, March 28th visit to Concordia. I had not properly thanked you. Please forgive me for my lateness. To be involved in a program that involved the Cloud County Historical Society Museum and the Kansas Humanities Council gives me a deep sense of gratitude. I believe we kicked off an outstanding feature in recognizing Kansas City Monarchs, Beloit and Concordia Baseball activities of the past.*

*History, research and presentations of my findings are my life’s work. To be able to share these facts with people in the communities where they actually occurred is educational and very rewarding. My research will continue and I must return to Concordia to take a deeper look into the diversity that occurred within the city’s sports history. Your city in particular has a wealth of baseball history, and also a well-established historical connection to the Monarchs.*

*It is exciting to present baseball history in such unique times as these. As you already know I’m appearing at Historical Societies, Libraries and Museums in Kansas, Missouri, Iowa, Nebraska and other states, 90 cities total, to talk about the KC Monarchs’ visits to cities in those regions. This is exhausting work, but I enjoy it immensely.*

*My wife and I will always remember our experiences of that March afternoon in Concordia, for events like this assure our faith in diversity and make certain that talks of this nature are indeed justified. After the event, I received a call from the 80+ aged daughter of former Concordia player Chet Titus. We eventually met when she came to Kansas City to see a Royals game. Thanks for the connection, it was fabulous!*

*Thank you for the honorarium and the fabulous support you gave to this event. Give my regards to Marilyn Johnston and your entire support staff. I wish the Historical Museum continued success, and I hope to see you again when I’m in the area. What an honor to have met so many wonderful people during my speaking engagement.*

*Sincerely yours,  
Phil S. Dixon*

## Presentation & Book Signing

with author **JOY HADEN**

## The Role of “Storm Spotters”

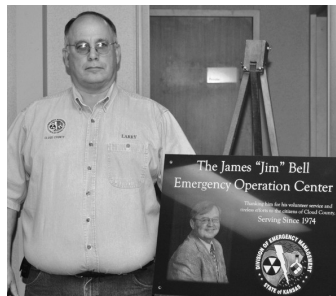
with **Emergency Preparedness Director**  
**LARRY EUBANKS**



On Saturday June 13, 2015 **Joy Haden** took us on a remarkable adventure back in time to May 31, 1935 when a storm surged along the Republican River and rearranged the landscapes of parts of Colorado, Kansas and Nebraska. It claimed more than 100 casualties in its wake of destruction, and is referred to as the greatest flood to hit the tri-state area.

Joy has always had a love for history and strong ties to the High Plains region. She was fascinated by stories her grandparents told of her family history and later, having married into a family of farmers and ranchers, learned to love the land and struggles her husband’s family told of droughts, floods and challenges of life close to nature. A graduate of Fort Hays State University, Joy spent many years studying and compiling the history of the 1935 flood, meeting with survivors, and traveling along the river to document this exciting chapter in the Republican River’s history.

Emergency Preparedness Director and Certified Emergency Manager, **Larry Eubanks** discussed the role that local “storm spotters” play keeping us safe in conjunction with Concordia’s local radio station **KNCK Radio** and the National Weather Service located in Topeka. **Richard Palmquist**, local storm spotter, was available as well to round out the presentation.



We set up a display at the main entrance to include a framed certificate issued by the Kansas Senate and Ks. State **Senator Elaine Bowers** officially recognizing **James Bell** for having the new Emergency Operation Center named after him, and for his contribution to the community as a storm spotter since 1974. (Jim also served as Deputy Coordinator for 30 years.) A DVD collection of various significant local storms, *Your Civil Defense in Action*, ham radio and broadcasting were available for viewing. Also, various rain gauges, pictures and articles of various storms were displayed. Another item of interest was the 1890-1947 pictorial of the course changes of the Republican River diverting its path further north. It’s interesting as well to compare



photos from the 1915, 1935 and 1960s floods and note the topographical changes. Since June is the 100th and 80th anniversary of the 1915 and the 1935 floods, Jim Bell suggested that we take a current photo of the northern landscape of Concordia as a companion piece to the other panoramic photos on display in the Museum. Without a second thought, volunteers **Shaley George**, Curator for the National Orphan Train Complex, and **Audrey Kalivoda** of Cloud County Tourism accepted the challenge to climb to the top of Erickson’s flour mill on Cedar Street and take the photos. Shaley took outstanding photos and they are included in our weather display. **Joy Haden’s** book “**The 1935 Republican River Flood**” is for sale at the Cloud County Museum.





Last June, historian **Larry Burke**, emeritus professor at Dodge City Community College and a Vietnam veteran, captivated an attentive audience with drawings of the trenches and devised war tactics. “Advancements in military technology, particularly machine guns and artillery, made the offensive tactics attempted by both sides early in World War I horrifically costly and obsolete” said Burke. “This caused a stalemate on the Western Front resulting in trench warfare which imposed terrific physical and mental stress on the individual soldier ‘eye deep in hell.’”



I had the distinct pleasure of introducing the Museum’s joint host for this event, **Shaley George**, the **Curator** of the **National Orphan Train Complex** since July of 2014. Shaley has a background in Anthropology and Museum Studies which aids her in increasing awareness of the Orphan Train Movement and its courageous Riders. Shaley in turn gave the introduction of our speaker, Larry Burke and provided refreshments for our guests as well. The cookies she brought were very creative; an Orphan Train roaring down the tracks with the Museum logo in a cloud of smoke. **Thank you NOTC** for sponsoring this program!



In conjunction with Burke’s presentation, we had on display several WWI uniforms worn by Cloud County residents to include: **PFC Walter Bowling**, **Grant Buckley**, **PFC Frank Carlson**, **W.H. Carter**, **PFC Arnie Keiser**, **Lt. Colonel Clarence D. Kosar (WWI & WWII veteran)**, **PFC John H. Lemoine**, **PFC Ross Weaver**, and **Lt. J.S. Whelan**. Along with PFC Ross Weaver’s uniform, his display included his framed certificate from the French Republic, the **Croix de Guerre** signed by the French Minister of War. A large collection of interesting photos brought in by **Art Slaughter** from his father’s war experience were made available to view. **Myrna Campbell** loaned us several artifacts for display belonging to her father, **Alex R. Koehn**. The certificate to the left lists the soldiers Koehn served with from Co. D 137 Infantry, US Army 1917, **Defenders of Humanity** with Koehn’s picture at the bottom. The framed certificate in the center was given to Koehn and reads, “...served with honor in WWI and was wounded in action.” It was typical of the time period to receive this certificate as opposed to the Medal of Honor which was eventually given Koehn many years later.



*From the Editor—Cindy Reimann*



During this quarter, several days of remembrance have come and gone; Memorial Day, the Battle of Midway, D-Day, the Korean War, Independence Day, and the end of WWII with the surrender of Japan. Beginning with the 13 colonies, men had forsaken tyranny at great risk of treason, bodily harm, and death—the ultimate sacrifice. *“Believe me, dear Sir: there is not in the British empire a man who more cordially loves a union with Great Britain than I do. But, by the God that made me, I will cease to exist before I yield to a connection on such terms as the British*

*Parliament propose; and in this, I think I speak the sentiments of America.”—Thomas Jefferson, November 29, 1775.* The **Declaration of Independence** was adopted by the Continental Congress on July 4, 1776 announcing that the 13 American colonies regarded themselves as independent states, no longer a part of Britain, and that they had formed a union becoming a new nation—the United States of America. **Abraham Lincoln** used text from this document in his Gettysburg Address of 1863 and proclaimed, *“We would hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalien-*

able Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.” These words have become the backbone with regard to human rights and has been called “one of the best known sentences in the English language containing the most potent and consequential words in American history.” This passage represents the moral standard that the United States does strive, it is used as the foundation for political philosophy, and it is a statement of principles through which the United States Constitution is interpreted. Americans have lived and died by these words; becoming champions for oppressed people throughout the world.

The attack on Pearl Harbor led to the United State’s entry into WWII. The destruction was devastating and the loss of life and the number of wounded profound. Concordians would mourn with the family of fireman, **Second Class Buford Bonebrake**, the first casualty from this area who served on board the USS *Arizona*. With democracy on the defensive everywhere, men of faith and courage stepped forward to preserve liberty and personal dignity of the oppressed. It would be America’s goal that foreign governments be committed to the advance of political morality, freedom of economic enterprise, and social justice.

**Gen. Douglas MacArthur, Surrender Ceremony of Japan**— *“your mission remains fixed, determined, inviolable-it is to win our wars...you are the ones who are trained to fight: yours is the profession of arms-the will to win, the sure knowledge that in war there is no substitute for victory; that if you lose, the nation will be destroyed; that the very obsession of your public service must be Duty—Honor—Country...you stand as the nation’s warguardian, as its lifeguard from the raging tides of international conflict, as its gladiator in the arena of battle. For a century and a half you have defended, guarded, and protected its hallowed traditions of liberty and freedom, of right and justice. Your guidepost stands out like a ten-fold beacon in the night-Duty—Honor—Country.”* **To all our Veterans of War, a sincere heart felt Thank You!**

The Museum is honored to have several warguardians of our own working here as volunteers. I’m pleased to introduce these heroes— **PFC Harvey Morris Olson** served in the U.S. Army from 1943-1946 and



Harvey Olson

Joan & Lyle Morgan

Harold Severance

Denny Taylor

John Bruce Luecke

is a combat veteran of the **Battle of the Bulge**. The Germans’ initial attack included 200,000 men. Between 67,200 and 100,000 of their men were killed, missing or wounded. For the Americans, 610,000 men were involved in the battle, of whom 89,000 were casualties, including up to 19,000 killed. The U.S. bore the brunt of the attack and incurred the highest casualties for any operation during the war. It was the largest and bloodiest battle fought by the U.S. in WWII. Harvey suffered frostbite and was in the hospital for 58 days.

**PFC Lyle Morgan** served in the U.S. Army from 1951-1953 and was stationed at Hildebrand, Germany. With the Cold War confrontation and the outbreak of the Korean War, the defense of Western Europe rose. Lyle served as a warguardian preserving the peace and security for the U.S. and citizens of Germany.

**Specialist 4th Class Harold Severance** (Personnel Administrative Specialist) served in the U.S. Army from 1954-1956 and was first stationed at Mannheim, Germany, Battalion HQ and then at Karlsruhe, Germany, 29th Signal Battalion. Harold was one of hundreds of thousands of troops stationed in West Germany in anticipation of a possible Soviet attack.

**Staff Sergeant E6 Denny Taylor** served in the U.S. Army from 1965-1978, having served two tours in Germany and one in Korea. He performed as a tank mechanic and later Motor Pool Sergeant being promoted to the rank of E5. Denny now works for the Museum, contracted maintenance.

**AT3 Seaman John Bruce Luecke** served in the U.S. Navy from 1967-1972 and was assigned to the aircraft carrier USS *John F. Kennedy*. John performed as an Aviation Electronics Technician responsible for

the maintenance of all aircraft radio, radar, and other rapid communications devices. John would maintain all navigation equipment, and calibration of aviation and shipboard systems alike. John was on the USS *Kennedy's* maiden voyage and was deployed to the Mediterranean to help deal with the steadily deteriorating situation in the Middle East. John has many interesting stories of War Games executed from Greece.

From *Ironman*, the movie: *“Peace is having a bigger stick than the other guy. Is it better to be feared or respected? Is it too much to ask for both? The best weapon is the one you only have to fire once. That’s how dad did it, that’s how America does it and it’s worked out pretty well so far.”*

*Coming Soon...*

## *56th Annual Dinner Meeting & Program*

*Presenting “Concordia Then and Now”*

*With Lori Halfhide*



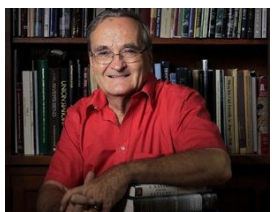
The Annual Dinner Meeting & Program will be on Thursday night, **October 15, 2015** at the **Catholic Parish Hall** located at 307 East Fifth Street beginning at 6:00 p.m. Our Guest speaker this year is former Cloud County Historical Society Board member, Vice-President **Lori Halfhide**. *Concordia Then and Now* is a program that looks at some impressive buildings that have been a big part of Concordia. In the program you will learn the history of those famous (and not so famous) buildings, learn what happened to them and see photos of them in their past glory and what stands there now. Come and take a trip down Memory Lane with us! There is no charge to attend the program.

### WHAT'S GOIN' ON NOW?

A couple of weeks ago, we were pleased to meet and welcome **Barbara Dell Krasny Love** and her brother, **Bill Krasny Jr.** to the Museum. Barbara was surprised to discover that she is now part of our Sweet Shop display and both brother and sister pose next to their father’s display in Paul Moon’s ‘63 Ford Galaxie. We would be thrilled to take more photos like this of folks in the Mural.



**NEW VOLUNTEER—Jeri LeSuer—Welcome!** A joint effort of several volunteers recreated the Carnation drum used in the Sweet Shop that is visible in the framed photos to the right of it. We celebrated **Harvey Olson’s 90th birthday** in July and soon thereafter, Harvey announced that he had cut his last section of glass—retired!

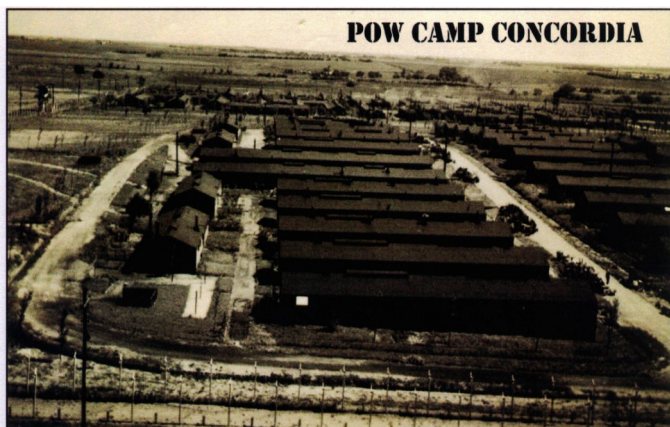


**Dr. Bill Worley** is a professor of History & Geography at Metropolitan Community Colleges of Kansas City and has presented several programs here through KHC Speakers Bureau. **Thank you** Dr. Worley for your help in proofreading the newsletter for me.

**Dana Brewer & Tom Gennette**— Board members go to the Fair!  
**Alice Boschek, Carman Davis, Bev Taddiken, Alice Walker**

Board members chose interesting items for display and **Dan Harris** came up with the quiz for fair-goers with a sweet treat for correct answers. They recruited several new society members and sold several of the new books available for purchase. (See pg. 16)

## POW Camp Concordia Preservation Society Members Working Diligently to Create a Museum in T-9 Warehouse



**POW CAMP CONCORDIA**

**GRAND OPENING - JULY 11**  
**POW CAMP CONCORDIA MUSEUM**

Blade-Empire, Friday, July 24, 2015

### Concordia Has a Soul

By Tom Nelson

Associate Professor of Communications  
Elon University

Concordia has a soul. Some towns are just towns. Concordia is more than a town. It's an insight to something greater than itself.

Greatness is of course a relative term. There are some people who think Satan was great. I'll pass on that one. My own definition of greatness is when a person or a place or a thing becomes a fulcrum for the common good. By that definition then surely Concordia is great.

My prompt for this praise is the civic minded attitude of the town's people who made contributions of labor and money to create the new Camp Concordia Museum which opened this month on the site of the former POW camp.

I've met a lot of Concordia's citizens over the years working with them in various projects. I call them citizens in the ancient Roman sense of the word. To be a citizen of old Rome was to be a part of something bigger than yourself. It was perhaps the highest duty and therefore the highest honor.

The new camp museum really is a marvel of civic sacrifice and cooperation. I watched while the building housing the museum was skillfully acquired, camp artifacts were reunited from their far-flung spots after their seventy-year diaspora, and citizen workers from all walks of life volunteered labor to hammer it into a final form.

Wow! One day this past June I dropped by there while I was passing through town and a prominent Concordia businessman from main street, a professor from Cloud County Community College and a skilled craftsman from the trades were all as busy as could be doing concerted work that rose above divisions of social status. There was only one social status that day, that of citizen.

I first wandered into Concordia carried forward by stories from an old German man I know (still alive at 93) who was a POW in the camp during WWII. Captured in 1943 and sent to Kansas soon after, he told me his time in Concordia was the most meaningful in his long life. Stories about his time in the POW camp sounded more like university study abroad than wartime incarceration. The former POW on hearing a museum was to be built on the site promptly sent the few photos he had from those days. The photos are now a part of the museum's archives and yet another testament to the ethos of citizen, this time a citizen not our own.

It is not hyperbole that the new Camp Concordia Museum is a sort of pantheon on the plains built with old Roman virtue to say to future generations we were here and we stood for things that mattered then, now and always. We stood for the common good. Such is virtue.

Nelson and McMerty, videographer and director of Elon in Los Angeles, most recently received an award of excellence during the 2015 Broadcast Education Association's Festival of Media Arts in Las Vegas, for their documentary on the life and works of Marion Ellet, former columnist for Concordia Blade-Empire. The DVD *"The Marion Ellet Story"* is available for purchase at the Cloud County Museum.



Photos courtesy of Audrey Kalivoda



# GENEALOGY INTRIGUE

With Marilyn Johnston

## One of Our Own... a Soldier Died Today More Local Stories of the Pain of War

In the May 2015 newsletter, I wrote concerning the tragic World War II story of the Cloud County's Bonebrake brothers and I had until recently been unaware that another Concordia family had lost two sons as well, **Pvt. Benjamin Franklin McKenney** and **Lt. Ezra McKenney**.

The men's mother, **Bessie Brooks Dungan** had been widowed and had remarried **Frank E. Dungan** of Concordia. Her oldest son, Ezra had been serving as an aviator in the Army Air Corps in the Southwest Pacific

Theatre. He was with the 91st Bomber Squadron, 27th Bomber Group. Ezra, a graduate of Concordia High School in 1937 was a popular student leader who enlisted and trained at Randolph and Kelley Fields in Texas before being commissioned.

Mrs. Dungan received a cable from Ezra December 12th, 1941 from the Philippines followed by a letter dated February of 1942. When she heard no more, she wrote fellow officers of Ezra and was told he had still been all right in April. Next came a frightening report of May 7th, 1942 from the war department listing him as missing in action. There was some confusion as to whether he was actually missing or if he had been taken prisoner in the battle of Bataan. A later report, now of his death, was issued the 7th of September, 1944. It was assumed he had been a prisoner and may have drowned when the "Shinyo Maru", a POW transport ship went down at sea.

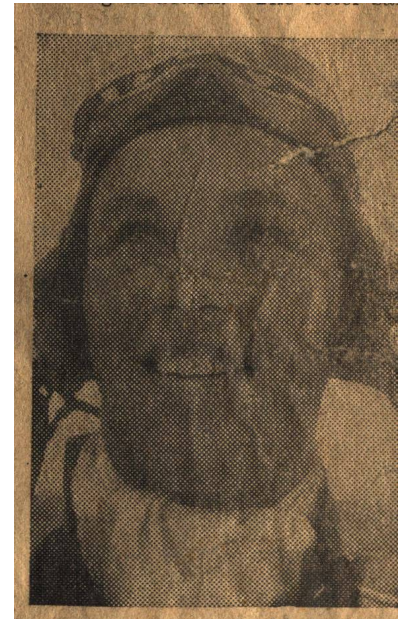
He was awarded the Purple Heart posthumously and a monument exists at Fort William McKinley, Manila, in the Philippines. Records state he was killed while a POW in P.I. He is also listed at the "Punch Bowl" in Honolulu.

Ezra's brother, Benjamin F. McKenney was born in Haddam, Kansas in 1921 and attended Concordia schools graduating in the class of 1939. He was class president in his sophomore year and served on the editorial staff of the school paper. He was a Boy Scout and a member of the Wesleyan Methodist Sunday School and had been working for Boogaarts when he enlisted April 6, 1942.

Benjamin landed in England in October of 1942 with Company H 116th Infantry, 29th Division. There he took a course at Oxford University and also completed a radio course. The war department reported to his mother that he had been killed in action on June 6th, 1944 while in France during the Normandy Invasion.

There are memorial stones for both young men in Pleasant Hill Cemetery in Concordia. Surviving both young men were their mother, Mrs. Bessie Dungan; grandmother, Mrs. Myrtle Brooks; stepfather, Frank Dungan; their sister, Mrs. Lawrence Jenson of Scandia.

**Note from the Editor:** Marilyn is completely inundated with requests from families wishing to have more information regarding their family tree. This project concerning the McKenney brothers has its rewards as do many of the fruitful projects Marilyn has completed. Following is one such account....



“Hello Marilyn, this is **Kyle Johnson**, the teacher you helped with research about **Benjamin Franklin McKenney**, a WWII soldier from Concordia. My student and I just returned from France. I’ve attached a picture of my student giving a eulogy at McKenney’s grave at the American Cemetery in Normandy and also a press release about our trip. Thank you again for your help finding information last March. My student is currently working on creating a website about McKenney’s life and service. When it is completed I will share the link to the site. Best, Kyle Johnson, Gifted Facilitator, Seaman Middle School.”



## **NATIONAL HISTORY DAY**

### **Students Return Home From World War II History Lesson in Normandy, France**

Washington, D.C.—On July 5, fifteen student and teacher pairs returned from Normandy, France where they concluded a year-long program by reading emotional eulogies at the graves of American service members who lost their lives in World War II. The *Albert H. Small Normandy: Sacrifice for Freedom Student and Teacher Institute* seeks to teach a new generation about the sacrifices and challenges faced during World War II. Each teacher and student pair choose a service member from their home state who made the ultimate sacrifice for freedom in World War II. The fifteen silent heroes were honored with eulogies read by the students at their graves in the American cemetery in Normandy, France.

The program is coordinated by National History Day and is funded by a generous donation from Mr. Albert H. Small, a veteran himself. In its fifth year, the program brings students and teachers from around the world to Washington, D.C. for visits to the National Archives, Arlington National Cemetery, and lectures from World War II veterans and historians. The final stage was a journey to Normandy, France where participants traced the route of their Silent Hero, walked on the beaches of Normandy, and, using their extensive research, read a powerful eulogy at the grave of their Silent Hero.

“The impact this program has upon participants is unique in its power and longevity,” said National History Day Executive Director Dr. Cathy Gorn. “Through their research these teams became deeply connected to their Silent Hero and the eulogies they present are awe inspiring and often tear filled.”

Throughout the program, teachers and students create a website about their Silent Hero. In the coming weeks they will use these websites in presentations to local community groups, to their schools and classes, and to veterans organizations. “These digital records of the life and actions of a Silent Hero live on long after these teams return,” said Gorn. “They serve as a digital monument to the sacrifices made by these individuals.”



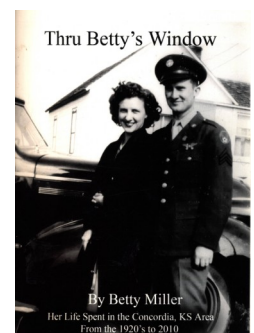
**KYLE JOHNSON, Teacher & DAWSON PODLENA, Student**



## **MORE LOCAL STORIES with Marilyn**

### **Ernie Miller’s World War II Experience**

We have received permission from **Betty Miller** of Concordia to share an excerpt from her book, “Thru Betty’s Window,” her memories of 80 plus years in Cloud County. As a new bride, she, with many others experienced life without their military spouses.



Betty's husband, **Ernie** received training and became a tail gunner in a B-29 that flew from Han Chou, China over Japan to drop bombs. He had never shared much about this frightening period of time. Betty saved his letters and in her book, she quoted one shortly after the bombers stationed at Tinian Airbase in the West Pacific had dropped the war-ending bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. He had told Betty that they were cautioned to not talk of their mission. It never became completely clear what Ernie had experienced flying out of China to Japan. A clue was dropped years later in a visit with his son, Marty. In a conversation where the Atom Bomb was mentioned, he told him "I saw the fire from the blast."

The following is taken from "Thru Betty's Window." In this letter Ernie describes the greeting they received in Han Chou, China when returning from a flight after Japan had been bombed and the Japanese war effort was brought to a halt. The letter is dated, August 22, 1945.

*I feel sorry for those poor people, but they are so happy that the war is over. We buzzed the town 6 times at 250 feet and then landed. About 3/4ths of the town was out at the base to watch us come in. They had never seen anything like it in their lives. When we got off the plane the whole outfit got down on their knees. It made us feel like gods or something. When they got up everyone filed by us and kissed our hands. That's the way they show their appreciation.*

*We all rode into town in two-wheeled carts, two to a cart and two boys pulled each cart. When we got into town everyone was yelling something we didn't understand until the interpreter told us they were yelling, "Welcome Home American Flyers." They had American and Chinese flags displayed side-by-side all over town.*

*Next was a feast....After we ate we had a tour of the city with everyone tagging along beside and behind us. Then the "Ole" man of the city gave us a swell lecture making us feel we had saved China! When he finished the talk he took us to a so-called jewelry store and gave us each a ring as a keepsake to remember their town and China by.*

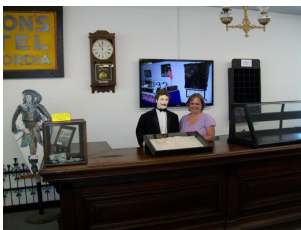
*It was a wonderful experience and I will never be able to forget it.*

Though it might be difficult to prove exactly the part Ernie Miller played on this day in our history, it is not hard to assume that he had been in one of the planes in the Enola Gay's support group. Our thanks to Betty Miller for her willingness to share this story.

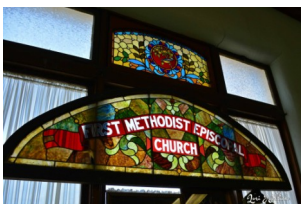
## Facebook Fun!

*Search out the past, know yourself, look to the future...*

*with Lori Halfhide*



Lori Halfhide poses next to the Barons Hotel concierge located in the Museum Annex.



We are up to 872 "Likes" on our Facebook page - we've picked up 19 this week. WOO-HOO! I can't wait until we hit the big 1000!

We have a new feature called Stained Glass Saturday. I have been trying to get around the county and snap pictures of some of the beautiful stained glass windows. It's not as easy as it sounds - the churches are usually locked at the times I get there. I'm hoping to keep this feature running for a while, its been very popular. This is one I took of the stained glass right in our very own museum!

I'm hoping to start another feature this next month. It will be entitled Concordia's Colorful Citizens. The first week of the month, I'll feature a person who helped make Concordia into the great town it is. There were lots of men and women who had a hand in it, and some of them were quite entertaining! I hope you all will enjoy that one too.

If you haven't already, please visit our Facebook page -Cloud County Museum - and click like to join in on the fun!

**CLOUD COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY MUSEUM**

**OFFICERS 2014**

**President: TOM GENNETTE**  
**Vice-President: DANA BREWER**  
**Secretary: ALINE LUECKE**  
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**Yearly Membership Dues**

\$5 Per Individual  
 \$10 Family

**Lifetime Membership Dues**

\$100 (Under 50 Years Old) Lifetime  
 \$75 (50-60 Years Old) Lifetime  
 \$50 (60-70 Years Old) Lifetime  
 \$30 (70-80 Years Old) Lifetime  
 \$15 (80-90 Years Old) Lifetime

**Membership Dues**

Thanks to all of you who have renewed your membership. Please check your label. The year listed on it will identify the year your membership is paid for. We want to thank each of you for your support. Nothing can be accomplished without all the things each of you bring to make this a great place to visit, to volunteer, and to belong.

**FIRST TIME READER:** If you would like to receive our quarterly Newsletter on a regular basis, a \$5.00 membership fee will guarantee delivery. Please consider becoming a member today!

**NEW "LIFE" MEMBERS—John Davis, Leslie & Karen Freeman, Raymond Fudge, Denise Hinson, Donna Morris**

**NEW MEMBERS—Carlene Diller, Karen Gates, Sharon K. Haines, Cheryl Holmes, Shawna Landers, Kimberly Loomis, Richard Schmeling, Bill & Gail White, Jean Wilcox**

**THANKS TO: Reporter Tim Unruh of the SALINA JOURNAL; Blade Staff Writer, Sharon Coy of the Blade Empire; new Chamber President Amanda Rall, Concordia Chamber of Commerce; KNCK Radio 1390 AM; Susie Haver & Audrey Kalivoda of Cloud County Tourism; Jerry Collins, maintains our web page; Lori Halfhide, maintains the Museum's Facebook page; Aline Luecke, photographer; DJ Tim Halfhide; Museum Board members Betty Losh & Carman Davis, soda fountain-jerks; Barbara Shunn & Roberta Lowery, Sweet Shop Open House Contest Judges; Tammy Britt of Britt's Fountain & Gifts, contest winners treats.**

**Come visit our Gift Shop!**



Cloud County Historical Society  
 635 Broadway  
 Concordia, KS 66901

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