

Mission: The Harvey County Historical Museum & Archives celebrates a common history and culturally diverse community by sharing stories from the past, experiences of the present and possibilities for the future through creative and dynamic exploration of objects, documents and photos.

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2017 Board of Directors

Nancy Krehbiel, Chair
Jerry Wall, Vice-Chair
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Chris Van Sickle

Contact Information

Address: 203 N. Main, Newton Mailing Address: PO Box 4, Newton, KS 67114
Phone: (316) 283-2221 E-mail: info@hchm.org Website: hchm.org Find us on Facebook!

Hours

Tuesday—Friday 10:00 AM—4:00 PM;
1st & 3rd Saturday 10:00 AM—4:00 PM. Closed major holidays. Sundays as events are scheduled.
Check Facebook and website for closures.
Please call or check website for updated information.

Harvey County Historical Museum & Archives
PO Box 4
Newton, KS 67114

Return Service Requested



Heritage & Now

Sharing Stories and Connecting Community
Harvey County Historical Museum & Archives
Winter 2017-2018

Newton's New Year's Day Disaster

January 1, 1915: Early in the morning on New Year's Day in 1915, Hal Somers and Mary Russell, ran out of gas on their way home from the Knights Templar Ball and New Year's Eve lunch at George Glenn's. As a result, they were walking through Newton at about 2:30 am. They had reached Broadway and Main, when they noticed a light coming from the back of the otherwise dark opera house.

They "soon discovered a blaze coming out of the back door in the second story." They ran to a nearby home and sounded the alarm.

"In a remarkably short time the rear of the building was ablaze all over, by the time the fire department reached the scene it had gained considerable headway."

While the firefighters worked to get the fire under control and keep it from spreading to neighboring buildings, other volunteers tried to save what they could, carrying out valuables and merchandise.



The *Newton Journal* described the scene.

"In less than an hour the flames licked up the offices and shops at the west end and swept through the McManus dry goods and clothing store at the front of the building and the south wall and belfry were down."

The *Weekly Kansan Republican* noted the loss of the town clock, 45 minutes after the fire was discovered.

"The last time the old town clock struck the hour was at the third hour of the New Year, and at fifteen minutes after three the hands of the clock dropped from sight."

By daylight, the entire building, a landmark since 1885, was gone.

(Continued on page 2)

Letter from the Past Director

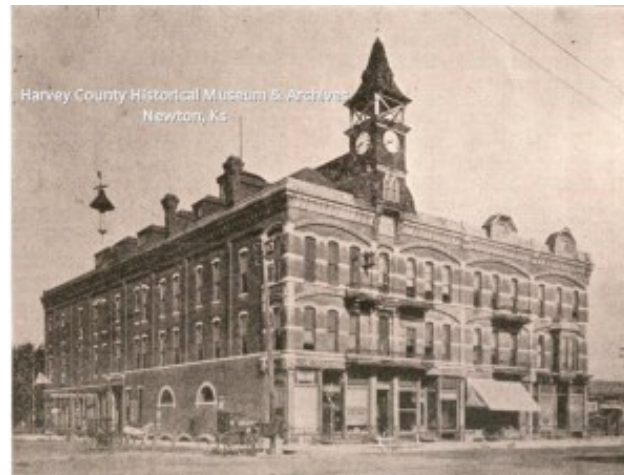
I have had the privilege of serving as director of the Harvey County Historical Museum & Archives for the past 11 years. It has been a lot of fun, with intriguing challenges to meet, interesting people to get to know, and creative projects to work on with talented staff, volunteers and community members. I have moved on to a full-time position with the Hutchinson Regional Healthcare System, leaving HCHM in the capable hands of interim director (and curator) Kris Schmucker and board chair Nancy Krehbiel. I know Kris will keep the organization running well, and that Nancy will lead the search for a new director. I hope everyone is looking forward to new ideas and direction, while enjoying the great organization that exists today. My wish is for everyone to enjoy the future while telling stories from the past!



Debra Hiebert

(Continued from p.1)

For thirty years, the Opera House was a Newton landmark, home to several businesses and the main center for entertainment. On that New Year's Day morning, the community lost more than an aging building. One life was lost, several businesses lost everything and a unique historical landmark was gone.



The cause of the fire was believed to be broken gas pipes in the southwest room of the stage. However, local residents claimed that a "distinctive odor of oil was detected in the vicinity of the stage" causing many to suspect arson. The actual cause of the fire was never verified.

**Harvey County Historical Society
2018 Membership Form**

All memberships enjoy:

- Free or reduced admission to programs and events;
- 10% discount in the Carnegie Gift Shop;
- Four issues of *The Heritage & Now*, the official newsletter of the Society;
- A full year of benefits.

Choose from:

Individual (\$20)

Couple or Family (\$25)

- Member benefits apply for two adults listed on the membership and their minor children or grandchildren;

One-Plus-One (\$25)

- The member may pay member rate for a companion to attend events;
- Can be a different companion for each event;

Sustaining (\$50)

- Member benefits apply to up to two persons listed on the membership;
- One complimentary meeting rental at the museum for a business gathering, club or civic group meeting, reunion, religious group meeting or similar;

Corporate (\$100)

- Member benefits apply to up to four persons listed on the membership;
- One complimentary meeting rental at the museum for a business gathering, club or civic group meeting, reunion, religious group meeting or similar; OR one complimentary Speakers Bureau presentation at the museum or off-site.

Museum & Archives

Hours

Tuesday—Friday
10:00 AM—4:00 PM

1st & 3rd Saturdays
10:00 AM—4:00 PM

Address & Contacts

PO Box 4; 203 N. Main
Newton, KS 67114
(316) 283-2221
E-mail: info@hchm.org
Website: hchm.org
Find us on Facebook!

Please return form with cash or check to:

Harvey County Historical Museum PO Box 4; 203 N. Main Newton, KS 67114

Thank you for your support!

2018 Membership Form

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Membership Amount: _____

Additional donation: _____

Total enclosed: _____

Select a membership category:

- Individual (\$20)
- Couple or Family (\$25)
- One-Plus-One (\$25)
- Sustaining (\$50)
- Corporate (\$100)

Harvey County Historical Museum Events Winter 2017-2018

November 23 & 24—Holiday Closure.

December

December 2, 10:00-4:00—Five Places of Christmas.

Christmas Greetings will fill the museum. Decorations will feature vintage Christmas greeting cards and postcards. Light refreshments will be served.

Visit HCHM, Kauffman Museum, Warkentin House and Carriage Factory Art Gallery for seasonal activities and refreshments. The beautiful **Goerz House** on the Bethel College Campus will be open courtesy the **Bethel College Women's Association**. At 3:00, Christmas music will be played on the historic Teschemacher organ at **Kauffman Museum**. The **Carriage Factory Art Gallery** has fun activities for all ages throughout the day. Enjoy Mrs. Warkentin's Russian tea and peppernuts at the **Warkentin House**.

For specific information and scheduling of events, please contact individual attractions. Free.



December 26—Holiday Closure.

January & February 2018

January 2, 2018—Holiday Closure.



February 15, 2018-Memories in Miniature New Exhibit Opens in the Schroeder Gallery.

February 18, 2018-Program on Collecting Miniatures by local collector, Marla Pauls.

Museum Support (August—October, 2017)

New/Renewing Members

James & Marjorie Gundy
Darren McMannis
Vada Snider
Alethea Ferguson
Christine Vansickle
Ron & Nancy Krehbiel
Gary & Connie Andrews
Pamela R McCullough
Cynthia K. Banman
James McArthur
Mary & Larry Watts
Evan & Carolyn Johnson
H. David & Catherine Anderson
Janett Wiebe
John Wiebe
Walt & Shirley Long
Dr. G.C. Michel

Rebecca Ruth
Richard & Barbara McCall
Gaylen & Loretta Neufeld
James & Barbara Soth
Alma Shelly
Helen Wehry
Richard R. Hege
Ted & Berneil Mueller
Tim & Karen Marlar
Donald & Carolyn Penner
George Graybill
Joann Funk
John & Joan Stretcher
Leonard & Janice Steider
Philip & Sondra Koontz
W.C. Ashcraft

Donors

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Ron & Nancy Krehbiel
Jesse & Rebecca Garza
Lydia Jarboe
Rebecca Ruth
Kansas Humanities Council, Inc
Richard Hege
Vern & Janice Schroeder
J. Courtney Hiebert
Donald & Carolyn Penner
John & Joan Stretcher
Class of 1955 % Mary Watts

New Addition to the On-Line Exhibit

Organization and Continued Settlement of Harvey County, Kansas

Want a glimpse into the beginnings of white settlement in Harvey County? The hardships, political intrigue and excitement of establishing new towns in Harvey County? Do you live too far away to visit in person? Maybe you just do not want to tackle the steps into HCHM. There is still an opportunity to engage with HCHM online. Volunteer and HCHM board member, Ron Dietzel is working on on-line exhibits for the museum. He recently posted, *Slideshow 3 – Organization and Continued Settlement of Harvey Co, KS*, on the HCHM website. The post is the latest addition to the on-line exhibit series *“Short Stories from Harvey County, Kansas.”*

The latest addition provides a glimpse into the birth and early years of Harvey County. The first years were difficult and often contentious. There were fierce rivalries between various factions. Instances of fraud, bribery, payoffs, corruption, and voter irregularities were not uncommon. The organization and continued settlement of the county encompassed a number of transitions, challenges and issues.

Two previous installments explore the pre-settlement period, *“Samples of Life in Pre-Kansas Era: Prehistory and Native Americans”* and *“Sketches of Pre-Harvey County and Settlement of the Area.”* The online exhibit, *“Short Stories About Harvey Co, KS”* provides a sampling of the stories which can be discovered by viewing the HCHM on-site exhibits, by examining source material in the Research Library, by going through the HCHM photo collection and by reading the *“Voices of Harvey County”* blog on the HCHM website at hchm.org