

HONOR • EDUCATE • INSPIRE

Reflections

A publication of the Kansas Historical Society and the Kansas Historical Foundation

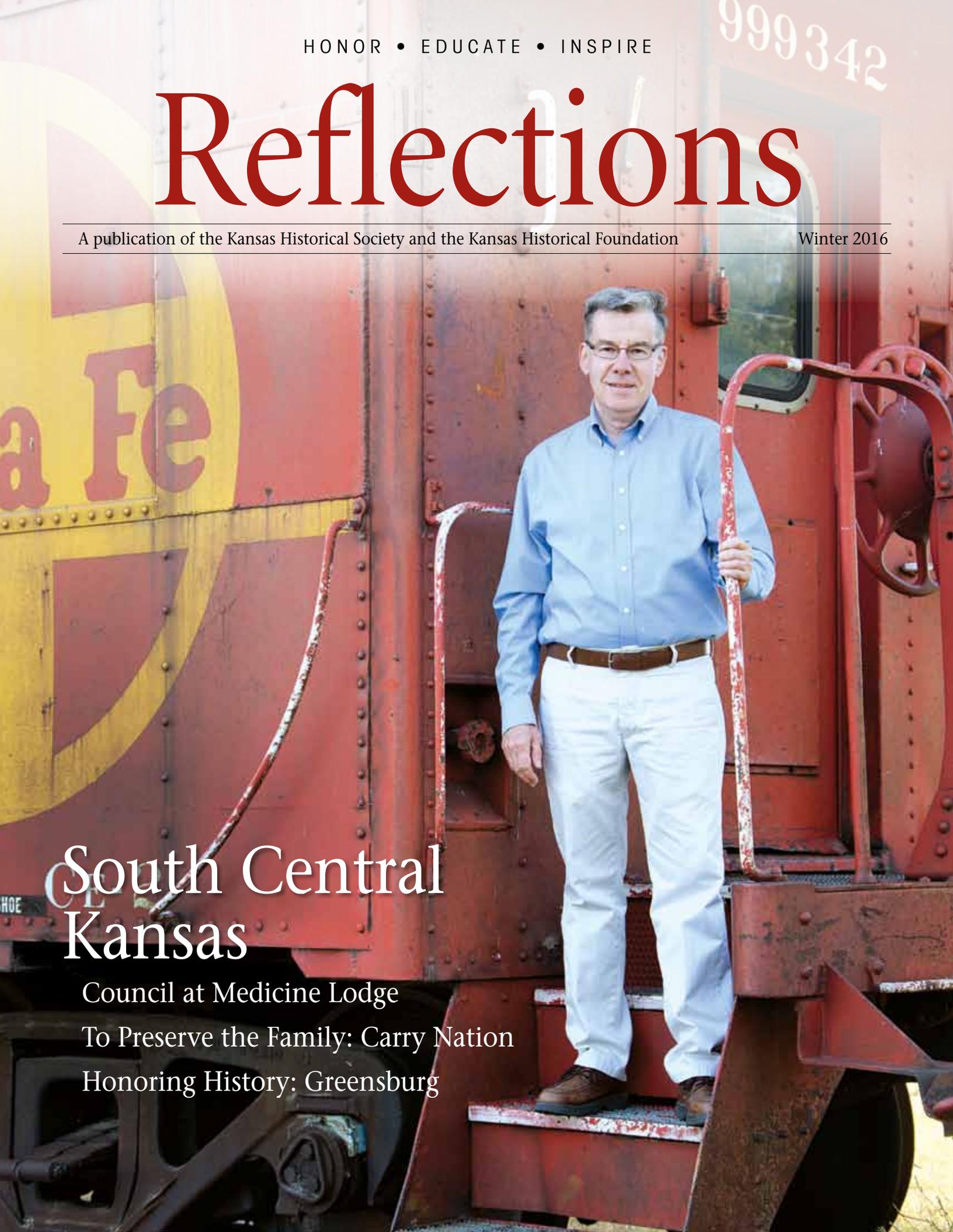
Winter 2016

South Central Kansas

Council at Medicine Lodge

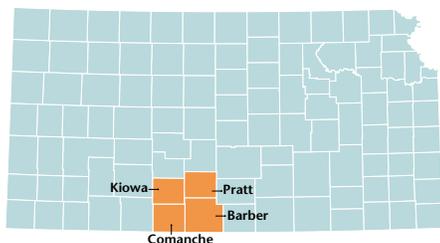
To Preserve the Family: Carry Nation

Honoring History: Greensburg



The Kansas Historical Society touches different regions of the state through its programs. This issue of *Reflections* explores the south central counties of Barber, Comanche, Kiowa, and Pratt.

The dramatic Gypsum or Red Hills in this region is a distinctive and unique feature in Kansas. The rich iron deposits contribute to the colorful red bluffs and buttes with contrasting white gypsum layers and green cedars. Thousands of native peoples gathered here with U.S. government representatives to negotiate treaties in 1867. Farms, ranches, businesses, and industries were created in the area, sometimes drawing well-known people like the Rockefellers, Wyatt Earp, Carry Nation, and Ted Turner. Today the area continues to recognize its history and resources through museums, pageants, and scenic byways. Find more information, photographs, and videos online at kshs.org/19322.



ON THE COVER:

Dave Webb, a life member of the Kansas Historical Foundation, lives in Protection and has a passion for railroad history.

Barber, Comanche, Kiowa, and Pratt counties

1700s

Plains Indians live and hunt in the region when Spanish explorers arrive

1867

Thousands of native people participate in Medicine Lodge Peace Treaty

1873

Comanche County organized based on bogus population figures and named for Comanche people

1874

Barber County organized amidst padded census returns, named for freestater Thomas Barber

1879

Pratt County organized and named for freestater Caleb Pratt

1880

Comanche Cattle Pool becomes the largest fenced range in the U.S.

1884

Medicine Lodge bank is robbed by Caldwell's Marshal Henry Newton Brown

1886

Kiowa County organized and named for Kiowa people



1887

Greensburg hand dug well created to provide water for the city and railroads



1889

Carry Nation moves with her husband to Medicine Lodge



1908

Fromme-Birney Round Barn constructed in Mullinville

2007

EF5 tornado destroys most of Greensburg, but the city rebuilds

1942

Pratt Airfield created to support war effort



Reflections

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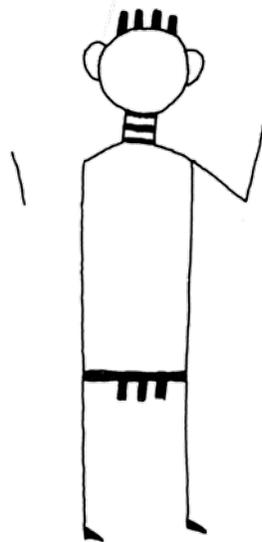
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Kansas Cave Images

Hundreds of years ago storytellers created work on rock that portrayed images from their daily and spiritual lives. They fashioned tools to carve, peck, or paint line drawings and geometric designs that represented stars, animal tracks, animals, and human figures.

The Kansas Historical Society conducted a survey in 1979 and 1980 to help identify the location of these images in rock. Some 55 sites were identified at that time. All but one of these sites were petroglyphs, work that was pecked, incised, or carved into a rock face. Only one of those displayed pictographs, work drawn or painted on the rock surface; it is located in a Comanche County cave, an area where more than 235 caves have been identified.



Above, this drawing of a human figure was made in the Comanche County cave, shown at right.



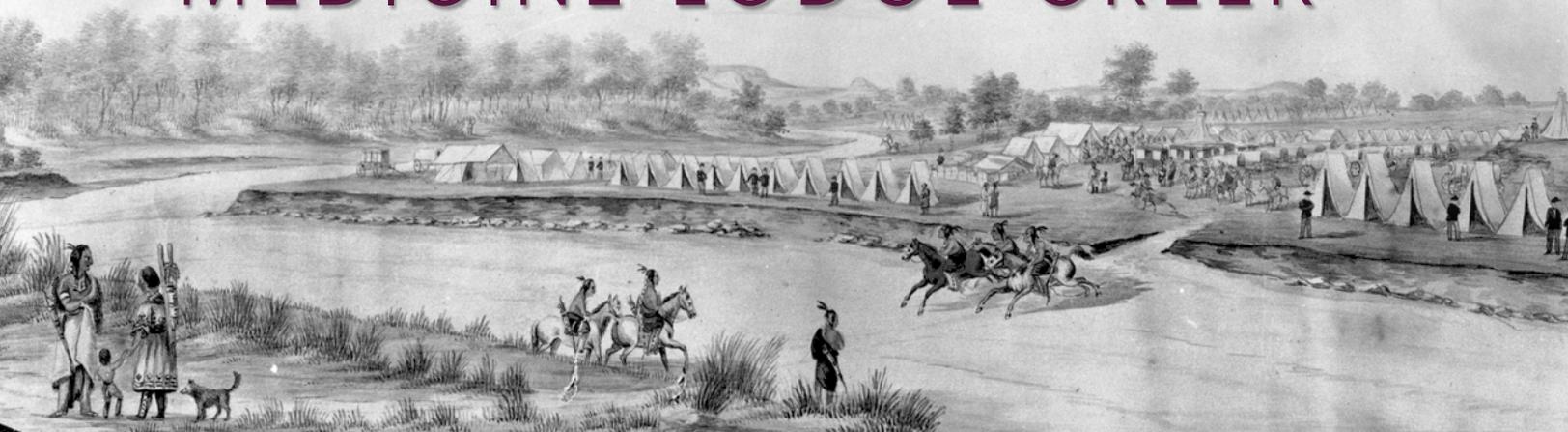
Inside this cave in the Gypsum Hills, five figures outlined in black appear high up on the ceiling. Two of those figures have patches of red. One is a human form, which has deteriorated over time. The figure appears to have a round head with hair or feathers and ears, fingers, a rectangular body, upraised arms, legs, and feet. The creator applied color to the designs with a hollow tube, such as a bird bone or reed.

The pictographs are among the precious and fragile works in rock that have been documented around Kansas. They serve as a visual glimpse into a time with no written records.

SITE PROTECTION

Kansas rock art will not last indefinitely. The locations of sites are not identified to help with their protection. Find more about our archeology and site protection programs at kshs.org/19067

COUNCIL AT MEDICINE LODGE CREEK



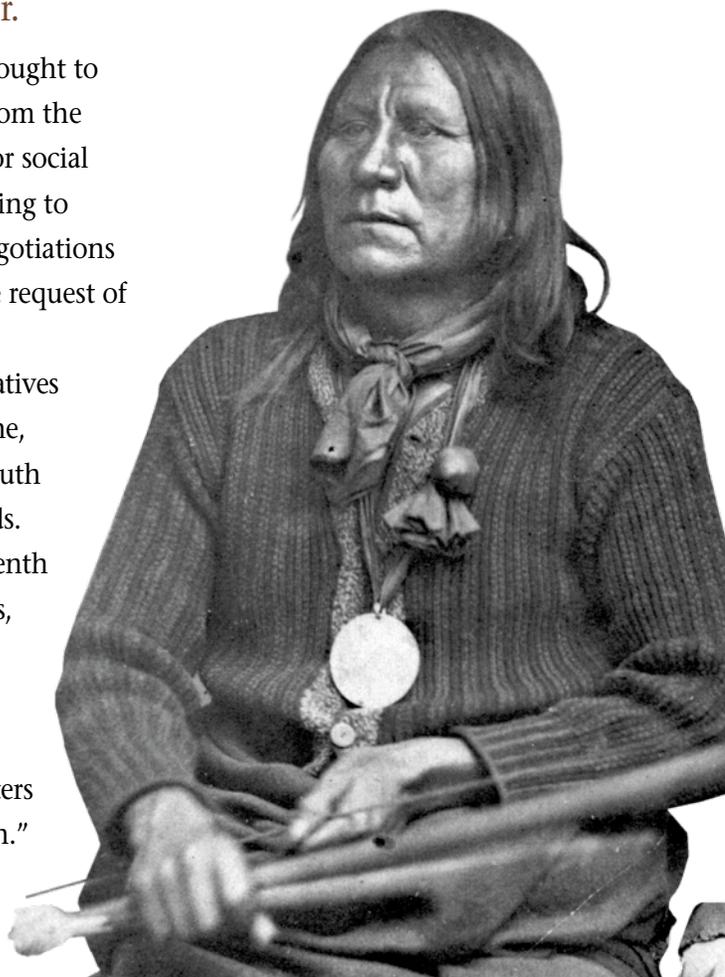
Scenes and incidents of the council, by James E. Taylor, published in *Frank Leslie's Illustrated*, in 1867; below, Satanta, 1860s.

Black Kettle of the Cheyenne, Little Raven of the Arapaho, and Satanta of the Kiowa were waiting when members of the Indian Peace Commission arrived at Fort Larned on October 11, 1867. The tribal leaders hoped to relocate the important Plains Indian council to a traditional Indian ceremonial site near the Medicine Lodge River.

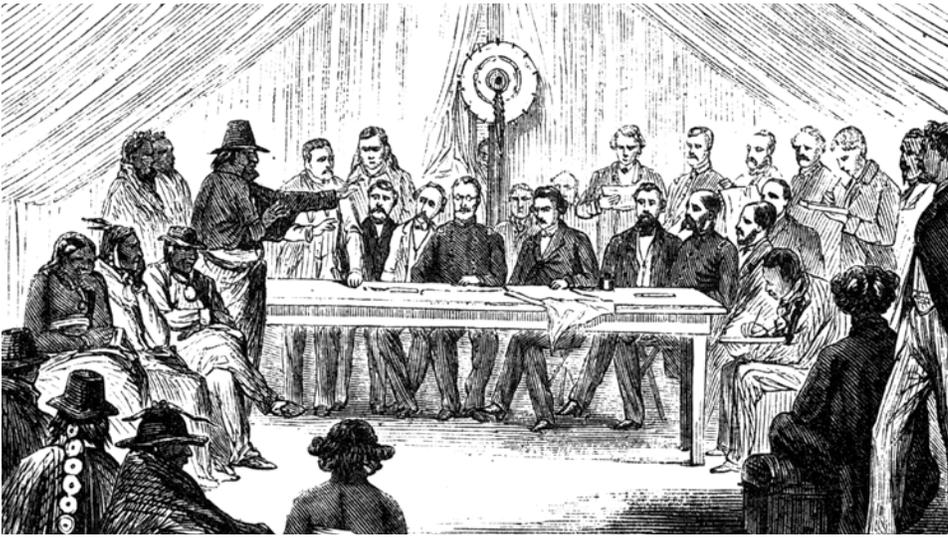
The commission, established earlier that summer by Congress, sought to end Plains Indian wars by removing the tribes to reservations far from the routes of westward expansion. Its report blamed the government for social and legal injustices, treaty violations, corruption of agents, and failing to meet legal obligations. Commissioners hoped that more honest negotiations with native peoples would lead to lasting peace. They agreed to the request of the tribal leaders.

At the fork of the Medicine Lodge and Elm creeks tribal representatives from the Cheyenne, Arapahoe, Comanche, Kiowa, and Kiowa-Apache, gathered in numbers as great as 5,000 to 15,000. Located 70 miles south of Fort Larned, the treaty site was in a grove of elms and cottonwoods. The commission's large entourage included 500 members of the Seventh U.S. Cavalry, an artillery battery with two Gatling guns, state officials, Indian agents, newspaper reporters, and 100 wagons filled with gifts for the tribes.

Margaret Adams, who was half Arapaho and fluent in English, Kiowa, and Arapaho, served as an interpreter for Little Raven. Reporters noted her "crimson gown, specially worn for this important occasion."



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES



The Medicine Lodge Peace Treaty site was listed in the National Register of Historic Places and designated a National Historic Landmark in 1969. The Kansas Historical Society administers the National Register program, find more at kshs.org/14635.

At 10 a.m. October 19, 1867, tribal leaders and commissioners began to address the council. Reporters described and depicted the gathering of participants. Satanta gained the nickname “orator of the plains” for his eloquence.

“All the land south of the Arkansas belongs to the Kiowas and Comanches and I don’t want to give away any of it,” said Satanta of the Kiowa. “I love the land and the buffalo, and will not part with it.”

“We were once friends with the whites, but you nudged us out of the way by your intrigues and now when we are in council you keep nudging each other,” said Black Kettle, speaking for the Cheyenne. “Why don’t you talk, and go straight, and let all be well?”

“I want to live and die as I was brought up,” Ten Bears said, speaking for the Comanches. “I love the open prairie, and I wish you would not insist on putting us on a reservation.”

“We are glad to hear you express confidence in us and to be assured that you will follow the good road we shall give you,” said commissioner and U.S. Senator John B. Henderson of Missouri. “We will not abuse that confidence. What we say to you may at first be unpleasant, but if you follow our advice it will bring you good and you will soon be happy.”

Treaties with the Comanche, Kiowa, and Apache tribes were signed on October 21. The Cheyenne and Arapahoe tribes signed a similar treaty a week later. The treaties cleared the way for railroad construction, relinquished land claims between the Platte and Arkansas rivers, and approved reservations in present-day Oklahoma where tribes would farm using equipment from the government. A last minute concession allowed the Kiowa and Comanche to hunt on their former lands in Kansas and Texas.

The council did not produce the lasting peace that participants had hoped. Years of conflict followed as the reservations were established, tribes relocated, and treaties were contested.

Trail Saddle

Gus Bellport purchased this saddle in San Antonio, Texas, in 1867 and used it in his role as wagon master, responsible for delivering wagons of merchandise to the Medicine Lodge Peace Treaty from Fort Leavenworth. He wife and daughter donated it to the Kansas Historical Society after his death in 1933. See more at kshs.org/10380.



From Lawman TO OUTLAW

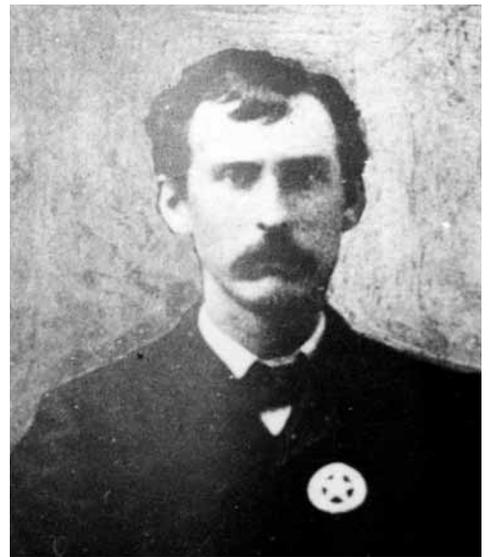
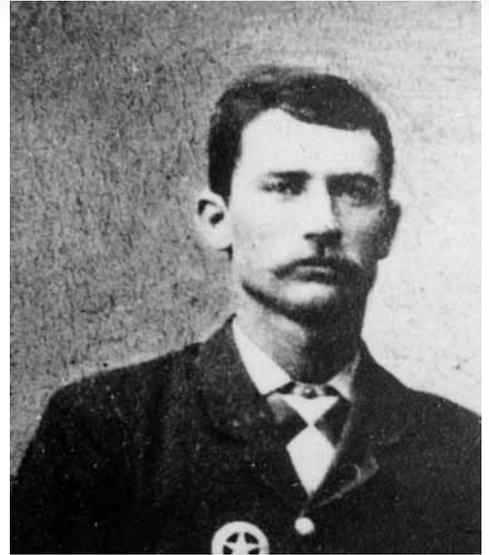
A heavy rain was falling on the morning of Wednesday, April 4, 1884, when the Medicine Valley Bank opened as usual. Cashier George Geppert was settling the monthly accounts. Bank president E. W. Payne was working at his desk.

“Hold up your hands,” a voice yelled from the front of the bank. “I thought it was some of the boys joking,” Payne said, “but then I saw Geppert with his hands up.” As Payne reached for his revolver he saw three men, then four shots were fired. Two hit Geppert, and one hit Payne. Geppert managed to close the door to the bank vault before he died. Payne sustained a mortal wound but said before he died that the armed men were not familiar to him but “the one at my window I thought I had seen. He had on a slicker and had the collar pulled up over his chin.”

Marshal Sam Denn quickly reached the bank and opened fire on the gang. Amid gunfire, the four men abandoned the robbery, mounted their horses, and rode south out of town. Within a few minutes a group of 12 local men followed in pursuit. They tracked the gang two miles to a canyon in the Gypsum Hills where the robbers surrendered about two hours later. Back at the town jail, the captured men were photographed with their pursuers, while an angry group of citizens called for them to be hanged.

The community was shocked and dismayed to learn the identities of the men. The gang leader, Henry Newton Brown, armed with a Winchester rifle, was the celebrated city marshal in Caldwell, a Sumner County cowtown, some 70 miles to the southwest. He was so popular that citizens had presented him with the rifle used in the robbery, engraved with gold and silver inlay, the

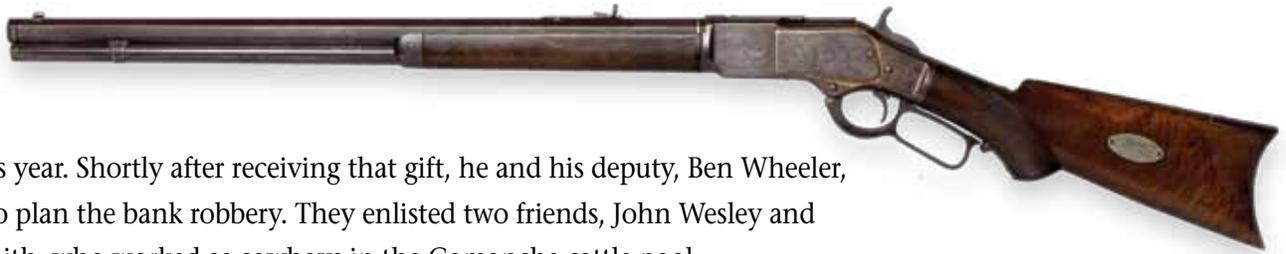
The community was shocked and dismayed to learn the identities of the men.



Top to bottom, Henry Newton Brown and Ben Wheeler.



Top to bottom, Medicine Lodge posse that captured Henry Newton Brown gang; Brown's rifle.



previous year. Shortly after receiving that gift, he and his deputy, Ben Wheeler, began to plan the bank robbery. They enlisted two friends, John Wesley and Billy Smith, who worked as cowboys in the Comanche cattle pool.

The four gang members confessed to their plan and Brown composed a letter to his bride of a few weeks, Alice Maude (Levagoood) Brown. In it he encouraged her to sell his things, but to keep the Winchester. Local citizens incensed with the killers armed themselves and broke into the jail that night, overpowering the deputies. When the prisoners tried to run, they quickly shot Brown; then strung the other three up in a nearby tree.

Maude Brown gave away the gun, which was eventually sold to a collector. In 1977 it was donated to the Kansas Historical Society. It can be seen on display in the Kansas Museum of History.

*He was so popular
that citizens had
presented him with
the rifle . . .*

Kansas Museum of History

Visit the Museum in Topeka and discover more about the state's past. More at kshs.org/museum.

Largest Range of Cattle



Several cattle ranchers decided to pool their cattle and grazing lands in Barber and Comanche counties in 1870. Four men, Jess Evans, Wylie Payne, Richard Phillips, and Andrew Drumm combined their 10,000 to 12,000 acres of land, along with open public lands, and about 26,000 head of cattle. The cooperative occupied 1.5 million acres in south central and western Kansas and northern and central Oklahoma and would become the largest fenced range in the United States.

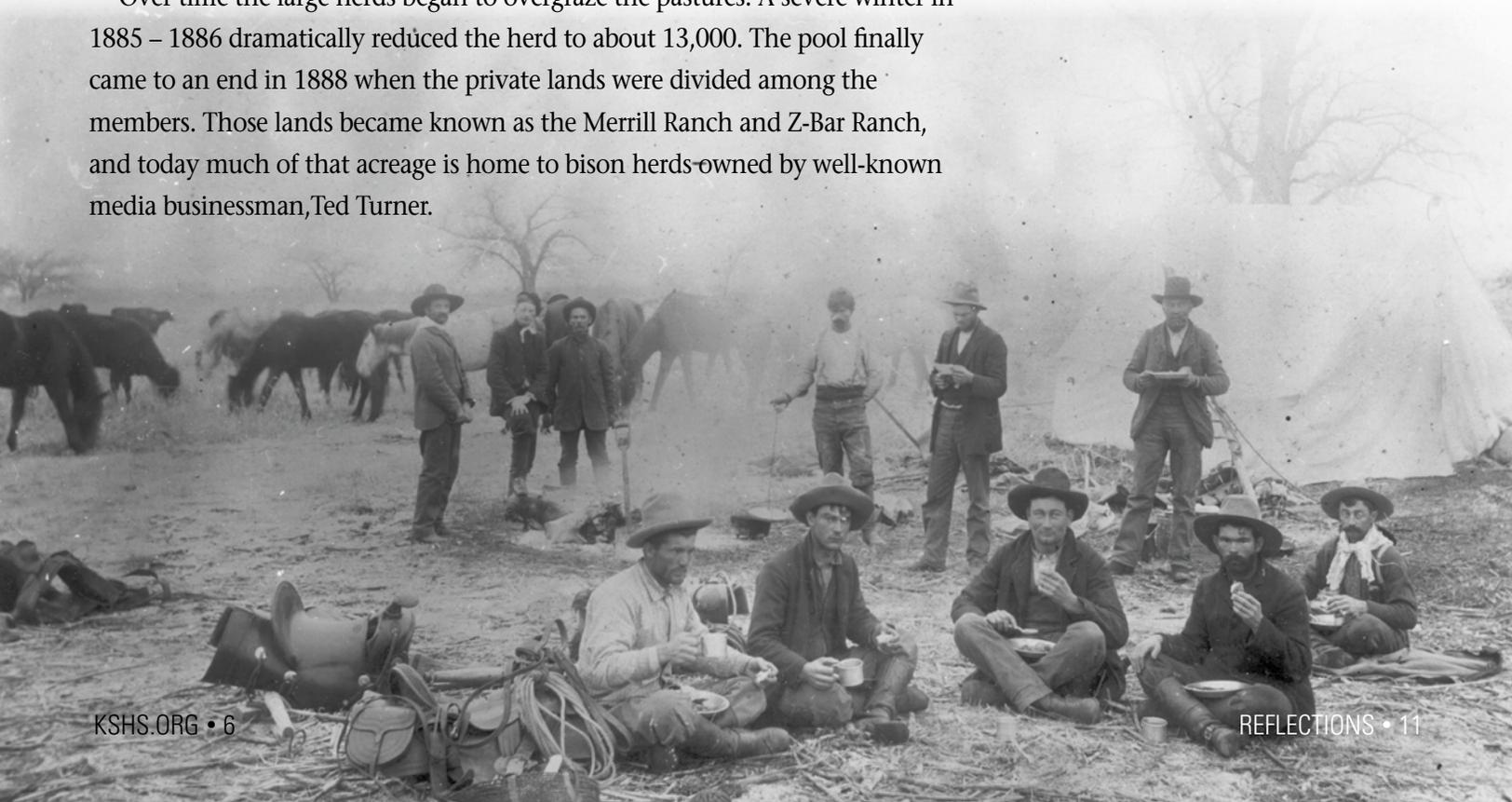
The Comanche pool established a ranch house and main headquarters in what became the town of Evansville. The barbed wire fence protected and secured the cattle from the Texas longhorn drives. Grazing was available only to the members' cattle, and the herds grew to about 80,000 head. Hundreds of cowboys and horses were needed to tend the herds. The three regional camps had warehouses to supply the workers who lived in dugouts or sod houses on the range.

Over time the large herds began to overgraze the pastures. A severe winter in 1885 – 1886 dramatically reduced the herd to about 13,000. The pool finally came to an end in 1888 when the private lands were divided among the members. Those lands became known as the Merrill Ranch and Z-Bar Ranch, and today much of that acreage is home to bison herds owned by well-known media businessman, Ted Turner.

Comanche Cattle Pool

When the U.S. army prevented cattle drives from crossing the Oklahoma Strip, a group of residents in Comanche and Barber counties formed the Comanche cattle pool. The pool gathered all local cattle into one great herd grazing on jointly held fenced land. The fattened cattle would be shipped to markets across the country. Expenses and profits were divided based on the percentage of cattle ownership.

Top, barbed wire from a ranch in Protection; below, cowboys work in the Comanche cattle pool, both from the Kansas Historical Society collections.



Mills and Mines of Gypsum

Robert Hay was a geologist and writer who explored and wrote about Kansas. His 1888 article published in *Harper's Weekly* provided descriptions and illustrations of Barber County's mansard-like hills of gypsum rock. The gypsum deposits along the Medicine River were exposed through dynamite blasts during construction of the Santa Fe railroad in 1887.



Faces of gypsum bed are exposed in the west opening of the Best Brothers' quarry.

Brothers William and Thomas Best, living in England, read the article and sent a delegate to Barber County to investigate. The report to the Best brothers said the article had under represented the resource. They opened their plaster company in Sun City in 1891 and soon gained a reputation for producing a superior quality of cement.

Over the years hundreds of workers were involved in the process of drilling, blasting, shoveling, and carting the gypsum into bins that were shipped to a mill in Medicine Lodge. William's son, John, took over the business in 1926, which he sold to the National Gypsum Company in 1938. Production continues today at the Barber County plant. The gypsum bed, which is about 30 feet thick, provides quality building materials including around 1.3 million square feet of wallboard and 130 tons of plaster each day.



To Preserve the Family: Carry Nation

Carrie Amelia (Moore) Gloyd learned of the impact of Alcoholism as a young woman. Her first husband was a Civil War veteran and heavy drinker. He died, leaving her with a young daughter and an uncertain future.

Her second husband, David Nation, was a lawyer and a preacher. He practiced law in Texas; she managed a hotel and became involved in the temperance movement. After violence erupted, the couple decided to move to Medicine Lodge where he was hired as a preacher in 1888. The couple was hopeful that Kansas would provide better opportunities.



Above, Carry Nation, who changes the spelling of her name later in life as part of her commitment to help preserve the family; right, Nation's water-stained diary entry mentions her charitable work in Medicine Lodge.

*I believe we are now settled
for life. . . . I have been
studying Osteopathy and
practice some . . . Next week
I go [to] . . . Kiowa to
organize As I am Co.
President of Barber of
the W.C.T.U.*

Carry Nation, 1900

While David served as the Christian church pastor, Carrie organized civic and religious groups. She formed a county chapter of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) and was elected president.

In December 1889 the couple bought a one-story yellow painted brick home in Medicine Lodge. She led Sunday school classes, spoke at WCTU conferences, and organized charitable giving. Her strong convictions often came in opposition to others in the community and church. When David's church position was terminated, he was hired to preach and lecture in Holton. Carrie invited the community to a final speaking engagement in March 1890.

I will leave Medicine Lodge in a few days, and as there are many of my fellow travelers that I have not had the opportunity of speaking to about the great salvation, it is my earnest desire to do so next Sunday at half past three in the afternoon. I will speak at the court house if God wills.

Mrs. Carrie Nation

The Nations returned later that fall and Carrie organized a sewing and school room in the Medicine Lodge community, asking for donations of clothing that could be mended and donated to the poor. She taught women and children to sew, knit, and crochet to donate to others. Through her charitable work, she learned how other families had suffered from alcoholism.



Carry Nation, pictured while living in Medicine Lodge.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

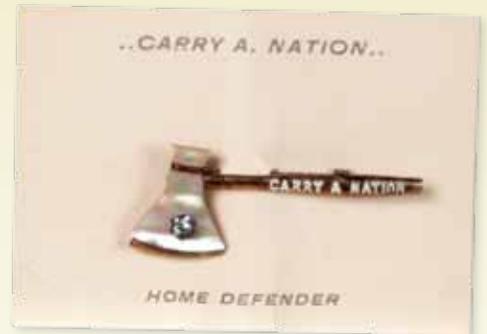
The Carry Nation Home in Medicine Lodge was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1971 and was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1976. The programs are administered in the state by the Kansas Historical Society. Find out more at kshs.org/14635.

Carry Nation's home is operated as a museum by the Medicine Lodge community.

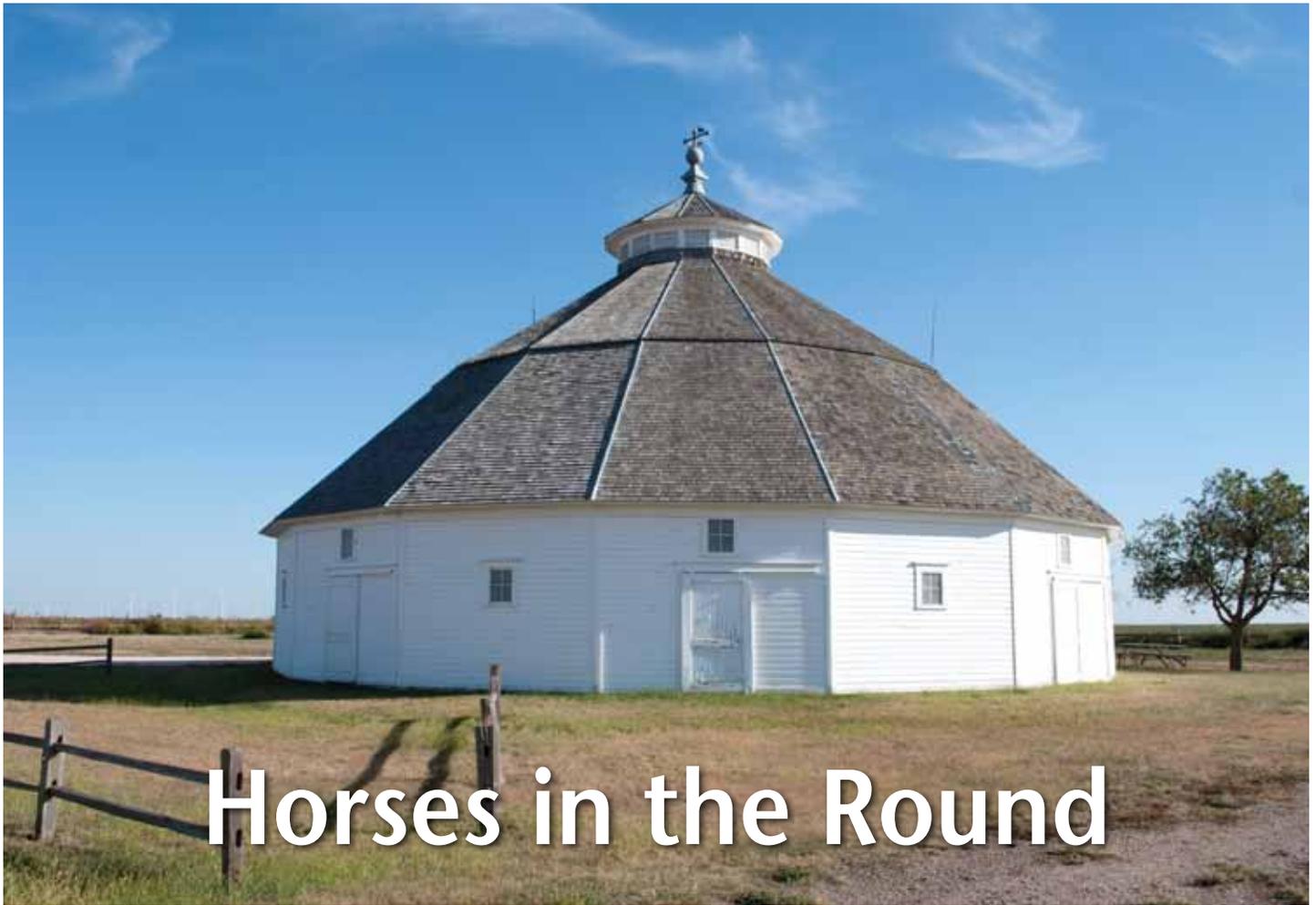


Carrie saw an opportunity with the Kansas prohibition law, which took effect in 1881, and she became more resolved to see it enforced. She and three other women accused a Medicine Lodge pharmacist of selling alcohol and they destroyed a whiskey barrel on the premises. When she debated Seventh Day Adventists to show them the “evil of their ways” in 1896, some insisted her oratorical skills were so well honed that “Mrs. Nation literally skinned her opponents.”

She claimed that a religious experience led her to travel 25 miles to Kiowa to break windows in the saloons. Saying that she would Carry A. Nation, she changed the spelling of her first name and led raids in Wichita, Enterprise, and Topeka. Posing with a hatchet, she became an international lecturer. The Nations were divorced in 1901 and Carry sold the Medicine Lodge house the following year. She used the proceeds from the sale to open a home for women in Kansas City, Kansas.



Left, Nation pictured with her purse in London, circa 1905; the purse was donated with many of her other personal belongings to the Kansas Historical Society in 1999.



Horses in the Round

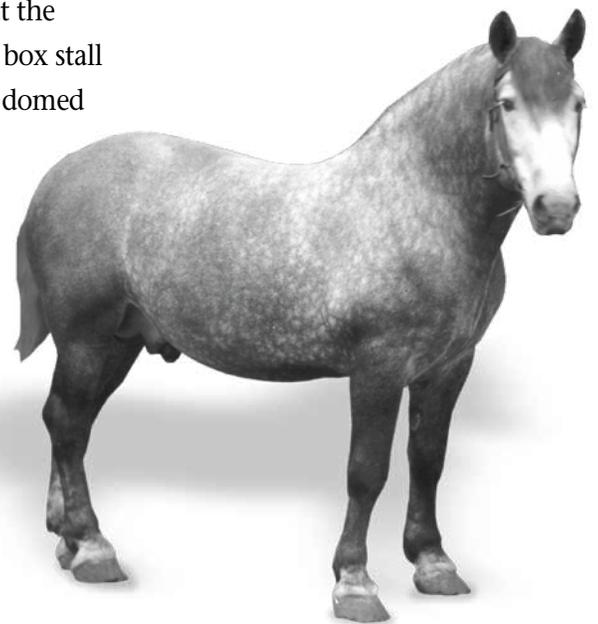
Henry W. Fromme, a German immigrant, settled in Kiowa County in the late 19th century. He wanted a barn to house his numerous draft horses, and commissioned a local carpenter, William “Pat” Campbell, to build a barn.

Constructed between 1908 and 1912, the barn was built of white pine and features 14 trapezoid shaped stalls, each 14 feet long and 14 feet wide at the exterior end. Two horses could occupy each of the stalls. An additional box stall was reserved for his prized Percheron stallion, Bouquet. The barn has a domed roof, cupola, and 13-foot-wide wagon area surrounding the center granary. It spans 70 feet in width, 50 feet in height, and has 16 equal sides, making it a polygonal rather than round barn.

Fromme was interested in making improvements for his farm. He used an eight-horse rig with two horses abreast, requiring the driver to use four sets of reins. He owned one of the first tractors, then one of the first combines in the area. His Model F Buick was the second automobile in the county.

The property was sold to the Birney family in 1954. It was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1987 and has received Heritage Trust Funds for stabilization, both programs are administered by the Kansas Historical Society.

Below, a Percheron stallion similar to the one owned by Fromme.



Proving the Superfortress IN PRATT



B-29 Superfortress bomber, 1945.

Kansans were asked to accept an important role in keeping America safe after the bombing of Pearl Harbor in 1941. Wichita's Boeing facility was producing new bombers, the B-29 *Superfortress*. Four Kansas army air fields were created to carry out testing and training for the new model in what would be called the Battle of Kansas.

The Pratt Army Airfield was one of these new facilities. Construction began in October 1942. By spring 1943 the field eventually contained 72 barracks that could house 3,060 soldiers, plus eight quarters to serve 522 officers. Hangars, barracks, mess halls, and a recreation center were among the base's buildings. Military leaders, mechanics, and civilian experts came to Kansas to oversee the effort.

Pratt became a full-time air base and the first detachment of 12 soldiers arrived in February 1943. The base was dedicated to special B-29 combat training for multiple bombardment groups headed overseas. After the army detected problems with the new model, the base was required to make seven modifications onsite. Boeing mechanics were called in to assist with production, which was completed in a period

of five weeks. To meet the army's April 15, 1944, deadline, they worked day and night on a 24-hours basis, sometimes outside and during brutal Kansas winter weather. Each B-29 was flown for a period of at least two hours to break in the new engine and verify the modifications.

Pratt's Norden Bombsight Storage Vaults were another part of the war effort. The one-story concrete buildings provided secure space to store, maintain, and issue these classified instruments used to set sights in precision bombing. One two-vault building was created to support a squadron with 12 aircraft. A second five-vault building was added as the base's mission expanded. The bombsight was listed in the National Register of Historic Places, administered by the Kansas Historical Society, in 2012.

The Parachute Building, with simple functional design, was used to maintain and prepare parachutes for soldiers during bombing missions. The platoon serving at Pratt consisted of seven women and one man. Two of the women were members of the Women's Army Corps. Their work was critical in the mission of the Pacific Theater. Workers checked each parachute for stains from gas, oil, or grease and holes or tears. Any hole that was less than 12 inches in length would be repaired. Parachutes with larger tears were replaced. Riggers were required to fold 65 yards of silk, and hundreds of feet of nylon suspension lines into a pack that could fit into a hip pocket. The building was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 2009.

These remaining buildings serve as reminders of the state's critical role during World War II.

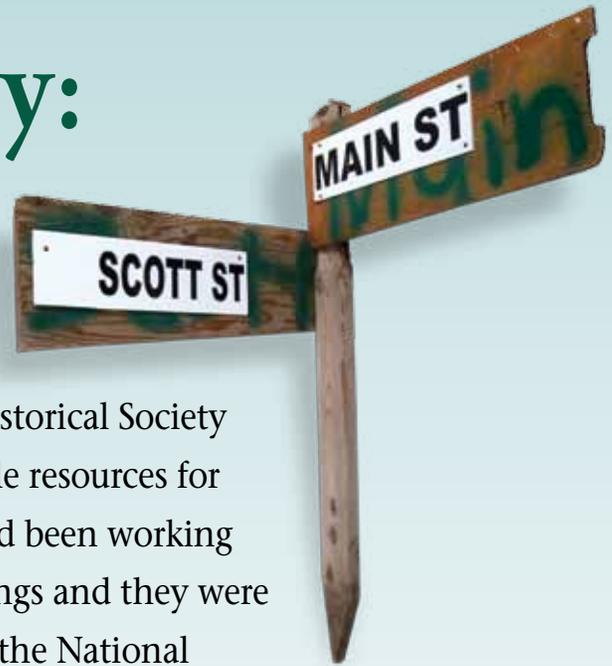


Above, Bombsight storage vaults; below, Pratt Army Airfield, 1943.

The site was listed in the National Register of Historic Places, administered by the Kansas Historical Society, in 2012.



Honoring History: Greensburg



People in Greensburg contacted the Kansas Historical Society on May 3, 2007, to learn more about available resources for historic properties. Community members had been working toward a plan to preserve several downtown buildings and they were interested in beginning the application process for the National Register of Historic Places.

On the next day an EF5 tornado leveled 95 percent of the city and killed 11 people. The worst of an outbreak that produced 84 tornadoes that week in the Great Plains, this storm had wind speed in excess of 200 miles per hour, was 1.7 miles wide, and on the ground for nearly 22 miles. One commercial building, the courthouse, and portions of the residential area survived.

Working closely with then House Minority Leader Dennis McKinney of Greensburg, the Historical Society consulted with community members to learn what remained of historic buildings, records, and objects. With the city building and library destroyed, the Historical Society shared microfilm copies of local newspapers and government records from the collections and helped provide referrals for stabilizing water damaged documents.



Top, the community erected these signs to help with navigation after the 2007 tornado. They were later donated to the Kansas Historical Society; above, this button was a souvenir from the Big Well in Greensburg, which was donated to the Kansas Museum of History in 2014; left, the corner of Main and Florida, circa 1920.

Greensburg's Big Well was the city's only property individually listed in the National Register. The well, listed in 1972, was left intact, but the visitor center and gift shop were destroyed in the tornado. A new structure opened in 2012, once again providing tours into the historic hand-dug well.

Greensburg High School had been included in a building survey of schools in 2004. The red brick building with stone detailing, constructed in 1922, was destroyed. The red brick United Methodist Church, built in 1912, was vacant when it was destroyed. Three Lustron houses were part of a thematic listing. All of these post World War II pre-fabricated metal houses were destroyed. They are described and pictured on the Kansas Historic Resources Inventory, kshs.org/khri.

The S. D. Robinett Building was the only commercial building to survive the tornado. Home to the First State Bank, it was not listed in the National or State Register and was heavily damaged in the storm. The two-story brick structure, built in 1915, housed a variety of businesses including a jewelry store, ice cream parlor, gift shop, confectionary, and finally the bank in 1990. Listed in the National Register in 2009, the building was then eligible for more than \$56,000 in state tax credits and nearly \$25,000 in federal tax credits. The building became the core of the downtown rebuilding effort, where it once again houses a retail business.

These historic resources provide valuable context and help to honor the past amid Greensburg's remarkable rebirth.

Surveying Communities

A survey of local historic resources can be a first step in determining the potential for an area to be listed as a historic district in the National Register of Historic Places or the Register of Historic Kansas Places, administered by the Kansas Historical Society. The information can be helpful for a community's planning and disaster preparedness. Find more at kshs.org/14669.



One of three Lustron houses destroyed in the 2007 tornado.



Left, Robinett building, right, Kiowa County Courthouse, as they appear today.

Member Highlight

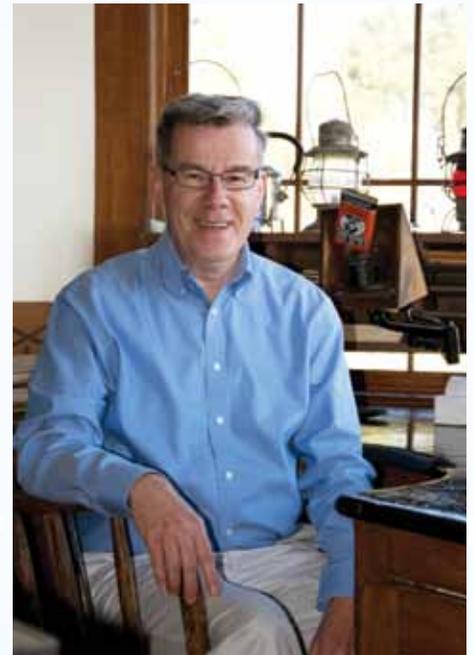
Dave Webb

Growing up in Protection in Comanche County, Dave Webb was drawn to the trains he saw passing through the area. As a pre-teenager he pursued his passion through reading 19th century newspaper accounts of the railroads. “I soon learned that most all of our county’s newspapers had been preserved at the Kansas Historical Society,” he said, “and I knew that someday I wanted to be a part of an organization dedicated to keeping Kansas’ past preserved.”

Webb graduated from Southwestern College in Winfield with a bachelor’s degree in elementary education and a minor in history. For many years he taught school in the intermediate and middle grades in Scott City, Garden City, and Protection. “I didn’t get to teach Kansas history as such,” he said, “but involved as many Kansans as possible in our social studies curriculum, along with some Kansas-oriented math and language arts.”

In 1984 Webb began working summers at the Kansas Heritage Center in Dodge City, while still teaching. Within a few years that position became full time. He wrote and designed *Santa Fe Adventures*, an activity book, in 1989, now in its sixth printing. In 1992 he co-authored *399 Kansas Characters*, about famous Kansans, which was reprinted several times. His latest co-writing project, *999 Kansas Characters: Ad Astra*, was included in the Kansas State Library’s 2015 Kansas Notable Book List. The writing team is planning a follow-up book on Kansas movers and shakers.

Webb joined the Kansas Historical Foundation in 1981 and became a life member. In 1994 he was elected to the board of directors, where he continues to serve.



Dave Webb is a life member of the Kansas Historical Foundation.



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Leave a Legacy

Join the Kansas Heritage Circle, the bequest recognition society.



To learn more please contact Tom Ellis at
785-272-8681, ext. 210; tellis@kshs.org.

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Hotel Roberts

This eight-story Art Deco hotel was built in Pratt in 1930, financed in part through a public subscription campaign. The community hospital was located on the eighth floor. It was renamed Hotel Parrish in 1959, and operated until 1970. The lobby features Art Deco fixtures, plaster medallions and ornaments on the walls, and terrazzo floors. The property was listed in the National Register of Historic Places, administered by the Kansas Historical Society, in 2015. Find more at kshs.org/14635.

