

Museum

MEMOS

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Editor: Grace Kensa

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Cathy Haney

For those that don't know, Cathy Haney ran the Clay County Museum for 40 years and eventually earned the nickname 'Hat Lady'. She was instrumental in getting the Historical Society started in 1972. One of Cathy's goals was to keep history alive, especially to kids. Cathy sadly passed away in 2016 at the age of 75.

One of our goals since moving into the new museum was to honor her in some way. Cathy never wanted the museum named after her, but she didn't say we couldn't name something inside the museum after her.

Please join us on July 3rd from 2-4pm at the Clay County Museum as we dedicate the *Cathy Haney Research Library* in her honor. We invite you to come share stories of Cathy if you knew her, or come get to know her if you didn't. We will have all of Cathy's favorite refreshments as well.



We've got points!

Up until the end of March, the museum had a whole collection of points that we knew were Native American but couldn't tell you anything else about them. Thanks to two wonderful professors at the University of Kansas, we now know more.

Our collection of points contains a mixture of arrowheads, spear points, and a hide scraper with most ranging from the Paleoindian Period (12,000 to 8,000 BC) to Woodland Period (3,000 BC to 1000 AD). We were ecstatic to learn that there was also a clovis point within the collection. Clovis points are from the Paleoindian Period and were first discovered in Clovis, NM.



If you remember, the museum already has a clovis point on exhibit currently. The owner loaned it to us in 2023 with the possibility of donating it if his family didn't want it. They have finally come back saying that they are keeping it and want it back. So sometime soon that clovis point will be switched with our own.



Rotating Exhibit is Coming Together

The new Masonic exhibit is coming along nicely. With the help of local Mason, Alex, we are learning a lot as we go. We've had fun finding out that things we already had were actually Masonic.

Our Tool Shed is Popular

The Historic Graffiti Society, a non-profit from Washington state, reached out to us a few months ago. They were interested in photographing our tool shed used by the Rock Island Railroad here in Clay Center. They finally made it down here last month and spent a few hours taking photos for the book they are writing. They said “It is definitely the best-preserved shed we have ever seen, with the oldest hobo monikers.”

More on The Historic Graffiti Society can be found on their website: historicgraffiti.org

This is one side of the tool shed.



These are two examples of the hobo monikers they are talking about. The monikers cover the entire tool shed.



LOCAL LORE

There's a legend in Clay Center about William 'Buffalo Bill' Cody.

The Sells-Floto Circus and Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show arrived in Clay Center by train the morning of September 15, 1915 and set their tents up in Dexter Park. They performed two shows as well as had a parade through downtown. Buffalo Bill spent the off time telling stories of his time in the Wild West.

Local lore says that Buffalo Bill had a house here in town and that he was friends with some of the locals, possibly the Meeks. However, according to the deed records, William Cody never owned property here. I also haven't been able to find any newspaper articles that said he visited before or after the circus came to town.



Circled is the 'headquarters' for Buffalo Bill.



These are the tents set up by the circus in Dexter Park.

NEW ACQUISITION

We've been gifted some wonderful things from the local Masonic chapter as they clear out some of their older things. Some of the best things they've given us so far are various Eastern Star ceremonial lights.



STATISTICS From our Collection

26,251

Items in our
Photo
Collection

648

Photos of
Churches

5,419

Photos from
John Jensen

108

Photos of
WWI & WWII
Draftees

56

Photos of
Chautauqua

YOUR SUPPORT MATTERS

In recent years we've seen a decline in membership, both new and past members alike. As a non-profit organization we count on donations and memberships to keep us going. I know we've said this before, but we rely on supporters like you.

The Clay County Museum is very much running on a "bare-bones" budget. We do what we can to make the museum look nice and create good exhibits, but we don't have the funds to make it as great as we know it could be. We would also love to be able to bring in traveling exhibits, but we don't have an few extra thousand dollars sitting around to pay for one.

Recurring donations and memberships are the only way that our museum survives each year. We are looking at grants but they take time we don't always have as well as they aren't a guarantee or a long time solution.



Please Remember...

The Clay County Historical Society and Museum was created by citizens of your community who believed that their history mattered, your history mattered. Investing in your local museum and historical society is an investment in your children's future. By supporting your local Clay County Museum, you help ensure that future generations have access to their heritage. Your contributions help enhance educational programs, expand access to collections, and improve facilities, making your history more accessible and engaging for all.



Benefits

For All Members

- *Museum Memos*, our Quarterly Newsletter
- Special Event Information
- Invitation to our Annual Meeting
- Discounted Event Tickets
- 5% Discount in the Museum Gift Shop

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: _____

Email*: _____

*By providing an email address, you consent to receiving newsletters, event notifications, etc. from the Historical Society by email.

Memberships Support:

- Museum Operation
- New Displays
- Special Events
- Buildings on Heritage Row

Please:

- Add \$5 to your membership dues if you would like correspondence by mail.
- Make checks payable to Clay County Historical Society.

Levels

- ☐ Individual - \$15
- ☐ Family - \$60
- ☐ Patron - \$250
- ☐ Sponsor - \$500
- ☐ Benefactor - \$1,000
- ☐ Historian - \$3,000

All memberships are annual (12 consecutive months).
Memberships are tax-deductible to the extent provided by law.

MUSEUM MEMOS

Contact Us

Address

518 Lincoln Ave
Clay Center, KS 67432

Museum Hours

Tues - Sun 1:00 pm – 5:00 pm
Free Admission

Contact

(785) 632-3786
ccmuseum@twinvalley.net
www.claycomuseum.com

Museum Staff

Director: Jeff Gaiser

Curator of Artifacts: Diana Shaner

Curator of Documents: Grace Kensa

Board Members

President: Mike Bulk

Vice-President: Marlin Mugler

Treasurer: Terri Parry

Secretary: Linda Cunningham

Louise Yarrow

Nicole Liby

Lynn Greenlee

Brad Fowles

Pat Gilbert

Tom Nelson

Marcus Seirer

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