



OLATHE HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

May 2016

Calendar

May 19, 2016
Olathe Then and Now
OHS General Meeting
Heritage Center
7:00 p.m.

Sunflower Wickets
June 3, 2016
1 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Fundraiser for support and enhancement of public programs at Mahaffie. For more information, please contact Tim Talbott at 913-971-5111

June 16, 2016
OHS Board meeting
Heritage Center
7:00 p.m.

If you would like to receive your newsletter by email, please contact the Olathe Historical Society at olathehistoricalsociety@gmail.com If receiving the newsletter by email, be sure to set your inbox settings to recognize this email as not being junk mail. Newsletters and meeting announcements can also be found on the Olathe Historical Society website at <http://www.olathehistoricalsociety.org>

Olathe Then and Now

On Thursday, May 19, Ken Roberts will present “Olathe Then and Now”, a program featuring photographs and stories about Olathe and how it has changed over time. This presentation has been featured at the annual Old Settlers Days. The program will start at 7 p.m. at the Heritage Center. Please join us and enjoy seeing and hearing about Olathe’s history.

Saving Our Stories of Summers Long Ago

Work continues on transcribing the oral interviews conducted by Olathe North students in the Distinguished Scholars program a few years ago. . As transcripts are completed, they are added to the Olathe Historical Society website under the Resources tab. Featured on page 3 of this month’s newsletter are portions of four interviews where summers long ago in Olathe are remembered



Olathe Swimming Pool lessons - 1949

Photo courtesy of Olathe Public Library and the Johnson County Museum

OLATHE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

BOARD MEETING

APRIL 21, 2016

Bob Courtney, Ann Johnson, Anne Seitz, Karen Beets, Max Beets, Ken Roberts, Vickie Holdman, Mary Jo O'Brien, Mary Cochran, Jayne Jones, Margaret Endecott

MINUTES

The minutes of the February 18, 2016 Board Meeting were approved as read.

NOTE

Minutes of today's meeting are not yet approved. If corrections are needed they will appear in the following bi-monthly newsletter.

Ken Roberts and Max Beets were welcomed to the Board. Both will add value in their new roles as board members.

FINANCIALS

The financial report was approved as read.

Thank-you and congratulations to Ann Johnson and Karen Beets for the GRACE BILGER exhibit currently in the display case in the Olathe Historical Society area in the Heritage Center.

CORRESPONDENCE

Dr. William Cox of Joplin, Missouri donated several stamps of historical buildings in the "Olathe" of the early 1900's. These will be added to our collection.

Thank you notes were received from the Mahaffie Foundation for our participation in the Mahaffie Gala and from the Friends of the Library for our participation in the Novel Tea.

Delores and Wally of Wyoming are donating a Hyer's Boot box which was mailed to them with a quilt inside in the 1950's.

OLD BUSINESS

Volume 5: Old Settlers, Chief Black Bob, Civil Rights, and Early Olathe Churches is selling well. Two more films are presently in production: "Trails through Johnson County" and "Railroads in Olathe".

The Olathe Memorial Cemetery is currently being surveyed in the hope that it will be named a National Historic Site.

Elections and replacements were made at the March general meeting. The OHS board is as follows:

Bob Courtney President (15-17)

Maureen Donegan 1st VP (16-18)

Jayne Jones 2nd VP (15-17)

Margaret Endecott Secretary (16-18)

Vicki Holdman Treasurer (15-17)

Board Members

Mary Jo O'Brien (16-18)

Karen Beets (16-18)

Ann Johnson (16-18)

Mary Cochran (15-17)

Max Beets (16-17)

Ken Roberts (16-17)

Collections Report

Collections meetings will be April 27 and 28 at 10:15 a.m. at the Heritage Center.

Divided shelving is needed for picture storage.

NEW BUSINESS

SUNFLOWER WICKETS will be held Friday, June 3, 2016. The Board approved sponsoring a field for the benefit of the Mahaffie Farm and Stagecoach Stop.

The next display in the exhibit area of the Heritage Center will be titled OLD SETTLERS. This new display can be seen in September, 2016.

The Board approved having a deaf interpreter at each community meeting.

Next General Meeting-May 19-7pm

Next Board Meeting-June 16-5pm

Adjourned

Saving Our Stories

Here are some memories of summers long ago in Olathe as recorded in the Saving Our Stories project, 2005-2008. Summer meant everything from hard work to free time for swimming and neighborhood games for many, although for African Americans in Olathe, as in most towns in Kansas at the time, those activities were restricted by segregation, providing a different experience.

Lee Shriver – Olathe High School Class of 1956
“Everyday life while I worked in the store; we had the swimming pool...everything was real close to town, nothing was scattered out, like it was now. We had the swimming pool, we could go swimming a...we made a lot of our own entertainment: the kids would get together in the neighborhood, we would play softball in the street, we'd play hide and seek, we'd play kick the can, we'd sit around and read comic books, we'd play cowboys and Indians. That was back when Roy Rogers...you kids have probably never heard of Roy Rogers and Gene Autry and all that, but that was back when they were popular. Movies were cheap; you could go to the movies. Then when I got old enough I went to work in the hardware store: I clerked in the store and waited on customers, dusted, stocked, stocked shelves and stuff. It was a...typical day where you could go to the library and get books to read, like I say, everything was close in. downtown was the hub of the...hub of the town and everything wasn't scattered out like it is here in Olathe now.”

Harley Haskin (married in 1932)

“Well prior to the movie theaters the chief cultural opportunity was when the Chautauqua came to town. Chautauqua was a big tent location. It was a summer...it would be here about a week and then move somewhere else. And it had a...pretty high class entertainment. They'd bring in some good singers and I don't know if they ever had any opera, but it was a...Olathe's cultural opportunity.”

Arbie Glover – born 1929

You got the swimmin' pool down there but we couldn't swim in it. We'd go down there and sit on the side and look through the fence and your daddy was allowed to pay taxes on it but they don't allow us to swim in it. So you know those kind of things say, “well to a kid, something different between us now, why is it I can't go down there, but you can go down there. Or you go to the theater and you got to sit on the left side ten rows back and if those rows were filled you wait for the second showing. But you couldn't sit in the center aisle or on that side over there...But its...Olathe was no different than most cities...there's a lot of people say well no we didn't have that where I was from...we never felt that...well there's about two families in that town and they were treated just like everybody else. But when you get to a town that has 50, 60, 70, 80, 150 Blacks; there's a difference.

Mary Cochran – born in the 1920s

“Being a farm kid a...my social circle was 4-H and church and those were the people that we worked with. When the drought was and the depression was so bad a...my brother was four years older than I was and a...badminton had just come into play. Well nobody had any money to buy rackets and so my dad...my brother and some of his buddies hunted around the farm and they found some plywood and some broomsticks and they made us badminton paddles. Now what are we going to do for a net? Well my uncle who stored things at our farm house said well there's a net...a tennis net up in the store room so get it out so they did. So they did that so that was our...that was our sports. Then a...the next year crops still were not good and there wasn't any hay in the hay loft and so we all were wanting to do something and so...roller skating was a big then. And so my dad said well if you kids want to clean up the hay loft and get any hay over that was in the corn there well you can sweep that up there and skate up there. That whole summer we skated in the hay loft...the whole crowd...the whole neighborhood came...and skated.

Olathe Historical Society

Officers

President	Bob Courtney (15-17)	764-2494
1 st Vice President	Maureen Donegan (16-18)	782-0960
2 nd Vice President	Jayne Jones (15-17)	764-8039
Secretary	Margaret Endecott (16-18)	782-0269
Treasurer	Vicki Holdman (15-17)	764-5076
Historian	Anne Seitz	768-6954

Board of Directors

Mary Cochran (15-17)	829-5078	Karen Sutton Beets (16-18)	
Ken Roberts (16-17)		Ann Johnson (16-18)	829-2299
Mary Jo O'Brien (16-18)	782-4270	Max Beets (16-17)	