



NEWS

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www.kshs.org/sesquicentennial/

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TERRITORIAL SESQUICENTENNIAL PROJECTS PLANNED

Salina Hosts State Commission Meeting

SALINA—The state's Territorial Sesquicentennial Commission met last week to continue its planning effort for commemorative projects in 2004. The nine-member commission is chaired by Judge Deanell Tacha and also includes Constance M. Achterberg, Jack E. Dalton, Larry M. Hatteberg, Yolanda Lopez, Hal G. Ross, Gail Kuehl, Karen Seaberg, and Karen Swisher. The 28-member advisory committee met in conjunction with commissioners. The commission and advisory committee were appointed in 2002.

The major focus of the commission and advisory committee is to develop projects toward the commemoration of the Kansas Territorial Sesquicentennial and to find funding to support the projects that are identified.

A highlight of the commission projects is a gala to be held Friday, April 2, 2004 at the Kansas History Center. The co-chairs of the gala are former Senator Bob Dole and Governor Kathleen Sebelius.

In addition, numerous projects are planned to encompass each region of the state and engage all Kansans. Each of Kansas' 105 counties will take part in a commemorative tree planting as part of the state's Territorial Sesquicentennial celebration. The trees will be planted at county courthouses on Arbor Day, April 23, 2004.

The Kansas Forest Service at Kansas State University and the Kansas Nursery and Landscape Association are partnering to sponsor the tree planting with the Kansas Territorial Sesquicentennial Commission. Counties will choose native trees appropriate to their region. Participating nurseries and garden stores will supply the trees. Plaques will be placed by the trees as part of this commemorative event.

In addition to the tree planting event, the Kansas Territorial Sesquicentennial Commission has outlined many other themes and events. The commemorative themes are drawn from the Territorial Period but continue to inform us as modern day Kansans. They are: The Land and Its People, Encounters and Conflict, Self-Determination and Popular Sovereignty, and Vision and Legacy.

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Curriculum materials for the schools exploring the events and the people of the Territorial period will be a major emphasis of the commission projects. The commission also is planning an official gala for April 2004. A web site was launched in April 2003 at www.kshs.org/sesquicentennial. The commission will support the Territorial Chautauqua developed by the Kansas Humanities Council. Promotional packets will be developed to provide communities with ideas about planning their own events. A bookmobile project will be supported that would go to selected communities in the state. A multimedia program based on the commemorative themes is planned for middle schools. Students will be encouraged to write essays based on sketches or photographs from the Territorial time period. A bronze cast of the Kansas-Nebraska Act is being planned for the statehouse grounds. The actual Kansas-Nebraska Act will be the centerpiece of a Special Exhibit on Territorial Kansas at the Kansas Museum of History.

Kansas became a territory in 1854 with the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act. The Kansas Territorial Sesquicentennial Commission was created to give focus to a commemoration of the seven-year struggle that led to Kansas' entry into the Union as the 34th state. An advisory commission also was created to provide input.

For further information about the Kansas Territorial Sesquicentennial Commission, contact the Kansas State Historical Society at 6425 SW Sixth Avenue, Topeka, KS 66615; 785-272-8681; TTY 785-272-8683; www.kshs.org/sesquicentennial.