The annual Kansas Archeology Training Program field school brought student and professional archeologists and 144 volunteers to a western Kansas hillside. By studying remains of the African American community of Nicodemus, a better understanding of the daily lives of these settlers can be gained.

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Heritage Trust Fund Grants Exceed $1.3 Million

KATP Searches for the Nicodemus Past

Battle of Punished Woman Fork Site Added to National Register

KSHS Participates in Honda Foundation Grant

Concordia Celebrates

CRD Hires Survey Coordinator

KANSAS PRESERVATION

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Jennie Chinn, State Historic Preservation Officer Virginia Wulfkuhle and Patrick Zollner, Editors

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The National Federation of Press Women recently awarded Kansas Preservation second place in its 2007 Communications Contest. Kansas Preservation was automatically entered in the national competition after earning its second consecutive first place award in the Kansas Professional Communicators (KPC) statewide competition. The awards are presented to designer and editor Tracy Campbell, who has produced Kansas Preservation and The Kansas Anthropologist for the past seven years.

The January-February and November-December 2006 issues were entered in the category “Publications Regularly Edited by Entrant (not internal or public relations).” KSHS staff editors were Public Archeologist Virginia Wulfkuhle, State Archeologist Robert Hoard, and Cultural Resources Division Director Patrick Zollner.

Volume 25 of The Kansas Anthropologist earned second place in the KPC contest under “Sections/Supplements Edited by Entrant-Infrequent.” The Kansas Anthropologist is an annual publication of the Kansas Anthropological Association, with support from the KSHS, and is also produced by Wulfkuhle and Campbell.

Both publications are printed by Hall Commercial Printing in Topeka. Campbell is a freelance editor and designer in Burlington, Kansas. She also earned an honorable mention at the state level for a newsletter produced for a Topeka nonprofit foundation.
Preservation in the News

This column is an occasional feature summarizing preservation-related stories that have recently made the news in Kansas. For confirmation or more information, the media source is credited. The KSHS staff is not responsible for the content of the news items, nor have all the details been independently verified. If you know of other Kansas preservation topics in the news, please contact us at cultural_resources@kshs.org or (785) 272-8681 Ext. 225.

The Topeka City Council recently authorized the city staff to begin the process of demolishing the historic Sumner School in Topeka. The actions of the city contradicted a 2002 covenant signed with the Kansas State Historical Society requiring the city to maintain and preserve the building through 2012. Currently vacant, Sumner School was listed as a National Historic Landmark in 1987 for its role in the Brown v. Board of Education Supreme Court case that led to school desegregation in the United States.

“Sumner—Beginning of end?” and “Sumner School—What a relief”
Topeka Capital-Journal, June 20, 2007 and June 25, 2007
www.cjonline.com

North of Ellinwood in Barton County, the Saints Peter and Paul Catholic Church was severely damaged by a tornado on May 4 that destroyed parts of southwest Kansas. The church in Ellinwood suffered the loss of the steeple and major damage to the bell tower, roof, and the interior.

“Ellinwood — one brick at a time”
The Hutchinson News, June 14, 2007
www.hutchnews.com and

“Tornado-damaged church awaits funds for repair and renovation”
The Lawrence Journal World, June 15, 2007
wwwljworld.com

Within the city of Pittsburg, Kansas, a local group has taken the initiative to bring life back to the Colonial Fox Theater located in downtown. The theater has been vacant for several years and is in need of structural and surface repairs. A local group is raising money to restore the theater to a usable and beautiful space.

“Foundation hopes for strong impact”
The Morning Sun, May 4, 2007
www.morningsun.net

A Wichita couple is learning about the history of their Victorian-era home as they continue its restoration. They are also finding that their efforts to preserve the 1887 Monroe-Mahan House on South Broadway can contribute to the revitalization of their neighborhood.

“Couple’s historic home a base for community activism”
The Wichita Eagle, June 26, 2007
www.kansas.com

Compiled by Kristen Lonard, state tax credit and National Register historian.
The Kansas Historic Sites Board of Review awarded $1,395,837 to 19 projects across the state for the 2007 round of Heritage Trust Fund (HTF) grants on May 19. The board reviewed 68 eligible applications requesting a total of $4,949,885.

As in previous years, the HTF program saw a large number of excellent applications, making the job of the review committee most difficult. As is usually the case, many applications focused on roofing, repair of historic wood windows, building stabilization, and masonry repair. The funded projects represent a diverse collection of Kansas properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places and/or Register of Historic Kansas Places.

The Thayer State Bank building, which currently houses the Thayer City Museum, will use a $43,200 grant to complete work started in 2005, including tuck-pointing and repair of stone copings, windows, and dentil molding. Thayer is in Neosho County.

The Belmont Place Homeowners Association in Wichita, Sedgwick County, received a $79,600 grant to restore the Belmont Arches to their former state of prominence. Belmont Place was Wichita’s premier residential area in the early twentieth century and was the first residential street in the city to have electric streetlights. The arches are located at the intersections of Belmont and Central and Belmont and Douglas.

A $36,448 grant to the Pony Express Preservation Society will be used to restore the front façade of a contributing building in the Seneca Main Street Historic District in Doniphan County. Andrew J. Felt, who later became lieutenant-governor, placed his name on the elaborately detailed two-story building constructed in 1880. The proposed project includes repointing and repair of stone sills; restoration of iron columns and lintels; and repair of exterior wood surfaces, crown molding, windows, and entrances.

Protection High School in Comanche County received $90,000 to restore 23 metal frame sash windows. The school...
is one of the few Kansas schools with all of the original windows still in place. Protection High School, with its centrally located grand ornamental entrance, is a gathering place for community and family activities. It was listed on the National Register as part of the Historic Publica Schools of Kansas multiple property submission.

Two properties constructed by workers of the 1930s Works Progress Administration (WPA) received funding. An award of $42,240 to the City of Paradise in Russell County will fund limestone repair and cleaning for the unique Paradise Water Tower. This WPA structure towers over the plains from its location on K-18 Highway, several miles west of U.S. 281. Located at the entrance to the City of Paradise, the water tower is still functional and gives the area its water supply.

Graham County received a grant of $56,000 for proposed work at the Antelope Lake project, constructed in 1933. This project will repair and restore the west and north shelter buildings, includ-
Julie Winters and Monte Wedel are the project administrators for renovations to the Riley County Courthouse in Manhattan.

Courthouse in Manhattan. Julie Winters and Monte Wedel are the project administrators for renovations to the Riley County auditorium. The Arkansas City Area Arts and finally became a three-theater ly competed for funding in this round of and research facilities.

Four county courthouses successfully competed for funding in this round of grants. The Kingman County Courthouse in Kingman will use $90,000 for roof shingle repair, gutters, downspouts, chimney repair, limestone and brick masonry repair, and portico roof and cupola repair.

A $90,000 grant to Riley County will help restore the clock tower of the Riley County Courthouse. In addition to repointing masonry and securing tower access, the project also includes replacing clock faces; substituting laminated glass for plexiglas; and installing new wood framing, wooden hands, transfer rods, and an automatic winding system.

The Hodgeman County Courthouse in Jetmore will use $90,000 to repair and repoint the front plaza and steps, and to repair four entrance doors. Additionally, glass panes will be restored and marble sills repaired.

Currently the only Cheyenne County building listed on the National Register, the Cheyenne County Courthouse in St. Francis will have east and west wing wall restoration, including capstone repair and tuckpointing. A $78,384 grant will replace problematic concrete steps and landings with limestone, the original building material.

Two former opera houses, currently serving very different functions, have been funded for 2007. The Emmett Kelly Museum Board and the City of Sedan received a grant of $76,320 for repairs to the Sedan Opera House in Chautauqua County. The proposal includes replacing pressed metal cornices, constructing a pediment, restoring windows, and repairing doors. The first floor of the building houses the Emmett Kelly Museum. A native of Sedan, Emmett Kelly (December 9, 1898-March 28, 1979) was an American circus performer, who created the well-known clown “Weary Willie,” based on Depression-era hobos.

The owners of the Shirley Opera House in Atwood, Rawlins County, manage the first floor of the building as the Aberdeen Steak House. They plan to use a $90,000 grant to repair the second floor to its former use as a performing arts center. Activities include repairing walls, windows, doors, and the pressed tin ceiling, and bringing floor joists to code.

The Pittsburg Public Library in Crawford County will use a $90,000 grant to repair the building’s clay tile roof and ornamental copper. The library was constructed during the era when Pittsburg’s economy was heavily dependent upon coal mining and labor unions thriving; subsequently, many local citizens objected to accepting steel industry magnate Andrew Carnegie’s “blood-stained gold” to pay for a community library. As a compromise, the library board agreed to leave the Carnegie name off the front of the building, opting instead to place a discrete plaque inside the front door expressing appreciation to Carnegie.

The Fort Wallace Memorial Association received a $90,000 grant to restore the Pond Creek Station at Fort Wallace in Wallace County.

Antelope Lake visitors will surely appreciate restoration work to two toilet buildings, along with a variety of other improvements.
When first established in September 1865, this post was called Camp Pond Creek. It was near the Pond Creek Station of the Butterfield Overland Despatch (BOD) in 1865 (see article below). The BOD reached across the plains from Kansas City to Denver, offering mid-nineteenth century travelers the fastest route to the West.

The Kansas Preservation Alliance (KPA) received $69,680 to restore the First National Bank Building 1889 in Smith Center. The Smith County building will have stones and bricks repaired on the main entrance and repair or reconstruction of the metal cornice. KPA acquired the building in 2004 through their revolving fund. This fund enables the KPA to return buildings to viable use and ultimately private ownership, while monitoring the preservation of the building in perpetuity.

St. Mary’s Catholic Church in Purcell, Doniphan County, will use a $90,000 grant to repair and restore ornamental stained glass windows. Protective coverings will be installed.

Pond Creek Station was one of the first stage stops constructed along the western portion of the Butterfield Overland Despatch (BOD) in 1865 (see article below). The BOD reached across the plains from Kansas City to Denver, offering mid-nineteenth century travelers the fastest route to the West.

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Fort Wallace (1865-1882)

When first established in September 1865, this post was called Camp Pond Creek. It was near the Pond Creek Station of the Butterfield Overland Despatch (BOD), several miles west of its later location on Pond Creek, a tributary of the Smoky Hill River. The fort was soon moved to a new site on the north side of the Smoky Hill. Named for General William H. L. Wallace who died April 10, 1862, from wounds received at the Battle of Shiloh, Fort Wallace was the westernmost and last permanent fort established in the state.

From 1865 to 1878, it was one of the most active posts in the Indian wars (Frazer 1980; Garfield 1931:56; Lee and Raynesford 1980; Oliva 1998a). “The small garrisons at Fort Wallace participated in more actual engagements with the Indians and were sent to the relief of more scout and escort parties than the soldiers from any other post in Kansas” (Montgomery 1928:203). Troops from this post served as escorts for stages and wagon trains along the Smoky Hill route and protected surveyors and workers during construction of the Kansas Pacific Railroad.

After years of dwindling use, Fort Wallace was ultimately abandoned in 1882. On July 22, 1884, President Chester A. Arthur signed a proclamation directing that a number of military reservations, including Fort Wallace, be transferred to the Secretary of the Interior for sale to the public (General Orders No. 80).

The site of Fort Wallace is now on private property. The old post cemetery, including a monument erected by soldiers in 1867 to honor their fallen comrades, is enclosed within stone walls in the Wallace Township Cemetery. The Fort Wallace Memorial Association operates a small museum on U.S. Highway 40, a short distance northwest of the fort site. While no professional archeological research has been completed at this site, amateurs associated with the Fort Wallace Memorial Association conducted excavations at the post in the 1960s.

A $13,965 grant to the McPherson County Old Mill Museum will be used to restore and replace the horizontal trim on the main and wing buildings of the 1904 World’s Fair Swedish Pavilion in Lindsborg. Donated to Bethany College in 1905, it served as a museum, gym, and home to the art department for 65 years. State or National Register designation does not require a property to be open to the public; however, many of these historic buildings are available to the public, or access is available by appointment.

The annual application deadline for the Heritage Trust Fund is March 1. For information contact the grants manager at (785) 272-8681 Ext. 215 or visit www.kshs.org/resource/grantsincentives.htm.

Pond Creek Station at Fort Wallace

References Cited


By Marsha K. King Archeologist II, Kansas Department of Transportation
In the Midst of the Wildflowers

KATP Searches for the Nicodemus Past

On the slope of a rolling hill covered with June and Buffalo grasses, Indian blanket, thistles, and poppy mallow, the Kansas Archaeology Training Program began the 2007 summer field school. Each day approximately 40 volunteers jumped on a trailer to ride through a field of amber wheat, blowing back and forth like soft currents on a shore. Most will remember the summer days with fond memories. Thorns in dirty socks, hot beams of the sun, long lost cell phone signals, and hitting the bench as the trailer rolled over the last bumpy rut in the road—these were the small discomforts that will fade into the distance. Recollections of a typical day in the life of the KATP volunteer most likely will include the Nicodemus song that initiated the first day’s orientation, the shade of the huge old cottonwood, baby toads in the excavation pits, and the fresh smell of dew on the grass in the morning. In particular, many will recall the inspiring story of the first African American pioneers of Nicodemus, their surrounding homesteads, and how touching their past was like getting to know them.
Nicodemus was established as an African American town in the heart of the Kansas prairie. For hundreds of freed slaves, this region represented the “promised land”—a chance to build a better future. In 1877, a group of seven men claimed a 160-acre town site along the Solomon River. As they recruited over the years, this small group of original settlers eventually grew to include more than 700 residents.

From early dugouts, constructed entirely underground, to partial above-ground structures with sod walls, to more substantial houses, these pioneers created a setting that expressed both their struggles and triumphs. The flowering of their town included a general store, post office, various local businesses, churches, and schoolhouses. Not until 1888, shortly after the major railroad companies decided to bypass Nicodemus, did the town witness a major commercial decline.

To explore the daily lives of these pioneers and gain a better understanding of what it was like to succeed on this frontier, the KATP 2007 worked on the Nicodemus District 1 School House (14GH103) and the Thomas Johnson/Henry Williams Farm site (14GH102). At the schoolhouse, a small group of volunteers completed excavations begun during the joint field program for Washburn University and Howard University. While they defined what was most likely a privy, the rest of the KATP volunteers went in search of archeological remains at the Johnson/Williams Farmstead.

Prelude to the Dig

Before the KATP field school began, a number of people investigated the area to see if it held potential for excavation. In 1983, the Historic American Building Survey (HABS) team assembled a series of maps of Nicodemus Township and the town site. This collection included maps of historic structures dating to the periods 1877-1900 and ca. 1920. In 2006, Sherda Williams, superintendent of the Nicodemus National Historic Site, and Angela Bates, director of the Nicodemus Historical Society, used the HABS report, oral traditions, and historical and archival information to identify potential archeological sites. They pinpointed 11 locations, including the Thomas Johnson/Henry Williams Farm (14GH102) and the Nicodemus District 1 School House (14GH103).

This information formed the basis for pedestrian surveys, informal metal detector surveys, and geophysical surveys in April 2006. The objective was to prioritize each site in terms of its potential for future archeological research.

Volunteers worked at the Thomas Johnson/Henry Williams farmstead on three key features: root cellar, house, and trash midden. Photo by Wendy Huggins.

Sunny Dig Days

In between eating gumbo at Shelly’s in Bogue or ribs drenched in Ernestine’s BBQ sauce, volunteers dedicated their time to lab analysis, the flotation station, and excavations. Throughout the two weeks, 144 volunteers came and went. In the field, they excavated 35 one-meter square units and 24 shovel test pits. Back in the lab at the Damar Junior High School, the lab crew cleaned 203 bags of artifacts and cataloged 125 bags of artifacts from the Johnson/Williams Farm site. They processed 180 bags of soil flotation, including those collected during the 2006 Washburn field season. In addition, they cleaned and catalogued 95 bags of artifacts discovered at the schoolhouse.

Representatives from the National Park Service, Washburn University, and the Nicodemus Historical Society visited the 11 sites. From there, Steven De Vore and Jay Sturtevant from the National Park Service Midwest Archeological Center conducted geophysical (magnetic, resistance, and ground-penetrating radar) surveys on the few that were deemed important.

After preliminary information was collected, Dr. Margaret C. Wood, assistant professor of anthropology at Washburn University, decided that the Johnson/Williams Farm and the Nicodemus District 1 School House would be good locations for the 2007 KATP field school. To confirm her assessment, she began testing at the Johnson/Williams site as part of the 2006 Washburn University archeological program. She soon discovered that the wealth of materials buried in this area needed her full attention; consequently, she postponed work at the schoolhouse and focused on the Johnson/Williams site.

During two weeks in the field in 2006, the Washburn team discovered two structures—a subterranean root cellar (Feature 1) and a hybrid semi-subterranean dug-out/sod-up building (Feature 2)—and 17 associated features. These yielded a sizable collection of nineteenth-century artifacts, confirming the suitability of this area for the 2007 KATP field school. In the small things underground, the Johnson/Williams Farm held secrets of the past that would tell more about the earliest Nicodemus settlers.

Dr. Flordeliz T. Bugarin of Howard University in Washington, D.C., is the principal investigator for the field school. She prepared this article and, unless otherwise noted, took the accompanying photographs.
site by the Washburn and Howard students and a few KATP volunteers.

The fieldwork focused on five areas within the Johnson/Williams site. Features 1 and 2, as previously mentioned, were already designated as significant structural features by the Washburn crew. The other three areas eventually became known as Feature 1077 (a trash midden or early dugout), Area 1 (the Basic Excavation Class assignment), and Area 2 (the untested metal detector section). Looking at these three areas across the landscape, one could see that their characteristics seemed suspiciously cultural. The sun highlighted their unnaturally flat orientation, positioned in the sloping face of the hill. Bordering the sides of one of the areas were two clearly visible mounds that seemed to shout, “This is a dug-out!”

Excavating in a checkerboard pattern of one-meter square units allowed the diggers elbowroom while collecting data in a controlled manner. In the Feature 1077 vicinity, discontinuous north-south and east-west trenches revealed a shallow trash midden associated with a thin layer of ash. While a wealth of artifacts came from the area, definite signs of a structure eluded workers and kept them guessing as to whether it was just a trash midden or an early dugout. Perhaps further testing will reveal a wall, structural materials, or building trenches.

Unlike Features 1, 2, and 1077, the other two areas lacked clear depressions, yet they nevertheless drew attention. In these two areas, Cleve Mulder of Salina conducted metal detector surveys. The hills were covered with pink and orange flags waving in the wind. Marking metal, they gave a strong indication that these areas were worthy of archeological investigation. Since the previous archival research and oral traditions hinted that a barn or dugout for animals existed on the farm, these areas seemed like ideal locations for another structure.

Students from Tim Weston’s Basic Archeological Excavation class were put to work in the flagged area east of Feature 1077, a part of the site called Area 1. The class opened eight one-meter square units in search of a long lost barn, remains of domestic animals, or food remains. It was hoped that the high concentration of metal detector flags might represent nails associated with a shed. Weston kept a watchful eye on the students and boosted their spirits when they found little more than rocks in their pits. Although they did find the occasional iron flake, their mantra became, “Negative evidence is still important evidence.” Although they uncovered few artifacts, future crews might find more information at lower depths or in the areas just south or west of their units.

Time did not allow excavation in Area 2, the second section of the metal detector survey. Because the first three features were presenting new questions everyday and yielding a sizable amount of data, the last area was left for future archeologists. The metal detector flags were mapped and their secrets left underground for the next season.

From a Cherub to a Sewing Machine

From a thimble-sized cherub to a sewing machine stand, the volunteers discovered the wonders of historical archeology. The Thomas Johnson/Henry Williams Farm site provided many clues about everyday life for African Americans living on similar farms.

At Feature 1077, Bill Olson from Lindsborg earned the nickname “Bottle Bill,” as he kept finding small perfume bottles, medicine bottles, and glass jar fragments. Others found various metal fragments and ceramic sherds. Tin cans and white ware ceramics tended to dominate the collection. As previously mentioned, at first glance this area seems to be a single component activity area illustrative of a burned trash pit. Deposits were associated with ash, filled with domestic artifacts, and fairly shallow.

In comparison, Feature 2 (the house structure) tended to be deeper and filled with more artifacts of various kinds, especially personal items. Cleve Mulder found a pressed metal cherub in this area. Others unearthed clay marbles, parts of farm equipment, shoes, and building materials. A few seeds were also found in different units.

Each day, Feature 2 offered clues relating to the steps the family took to build their home and the way in which it collapsed after abandonment. The most exciting find was the remnants of what are believed to be sod blocks. In the walls of some excavated units, thin horizontal and vertical lines of light tan soil outlined blocks of dark brown soil. They were clearly cultural markers. On the west side of the structure, the blocks sat
on top of each other to form a wall that would have abutted a limestone wall at the corner.

Furthermore, a clear thin line of plaster seemed to outline the interior of the west wall and line up with the edge of the north limestone wall. Excavations searched for the east and south walls. A limestone wall on the south was not found; however, the differences visible in the soil layers suggested that the south wall was made of sod. On the last day of the field school, with the slip of a foot, the west wall was discovered. It was another limestone wall that linked to the west corner of the north wall. Further excavation in the next field season will reveal the complete nature of the wall and the story of this dwelling.

Feature 1 (the root cellar) was the deepest structure and the most interesting in terms of the variety of remains from the past. Artifacts from this area included the base of a sewing machine, glass canning jars, and the skeletal remains of small animals. Structural elements consisted of part of the wooden door that was clearly defined by a metal hinge, pieces of a wooden floor, and circular supports carved into the walls for wooden beams.

Norman Dye from Meade claimed to smell smoked ham at the bottom of this feature. Perhaps the long-ago smells seeped into the soil or were captured in a small carved hollow at the base of the feature. Most likely the small cavern was a storage space for perishables like onions and carrots. Excavation in Feature 1 defined all of the walls of the structure, identified characteristics of the cellar interior, and collected a good number of artifacts to reveal the details of daily life for the Thomas Johnson/Henry Williams family.

The Nicodemus Past Travels to D.C.

Now the volunteers are gone. The features are backfilled, and the electric fence that protected the cows from deep open pits is down. While the grass grows back over the site, some of the remnants left by the Nicodemus ancestors will stay in Kansas, while others will travel to Washington, D.C.

Students at Howard University and other experts in the D.C. area will undertake further study of the Nicodemus pioneers. They will try to piece together a history of each artifact; identifying its manufacturer, origin, and function. They will also try to define any patterns in the materials. Their task is to understand how these artifacts came to Nicodemus, how they were used on this farm, what they symbolized to or reveal about the Johnson and Williams families, and what they say about African Americans living on the Kansas prairie. In the last stage of the project, researchers will try to connect the details collected in the field to broader questions about African American culture.

This final task will be more difficult if memories of the KATP 2007 are forgotten. In order to preserve the experiences of the field school, researchers will turn to three-dimensional (3D) modeling, video, sound recordings, and possibly a website to encourage public interpretation. The collected data will be used to create a 3D model of the excavation, including some of the characteristics of the site and the sounds of the volunteers. This visual technique will aid in analyzing patterns of artifacts from each stratigraphic layer, mapping frequencies of particular finds across the landscape, and reconstructing a timeline based on the depth of diagnostic pieces. With more funding, the 3D model can be developed for educational purposes, museum displays, and lab analysis.

Students will work on the visual production, as well as proposals for conference posters and designs for potential exhibits. Margaret Wood and Flordeliz Bugarin will present a joint paper to the Society of Historical Archaeology. A report on the possible sod blocks will be produced jointly by Bugarin and Kansas State University soil scientists DeAnn Presley and Michel Ransom, who are conducting tests on samples taken in Feature 2. Detailed descriptions of the collection will be included in a final report due to be published in The Kansas Anthropologist in 2008.

Through teamwork, the interest of the many KATP volunteers, and the support of various institutions, the Nicodemus past will be better preserved for future generations. The story of the Johnson and Williams families is one that inspires people from many backgrounds. Buried in the midst of the Indian blanket, archeologists found a small part of their past and a link to the positive contributions of early African American pioneers.

The NAACP youth group learns how to lay out a 1 x 1-meter unit in Feature 1077, the midden.
Ray Maxwell from Leavenworth sifts through soil looking for artifacts.

State Archeologist Robert Hoard and Norman Dye set up a prism pole for elevation readings within Feature 1, the root cellar.

Margaret Wood works on uncoving remains of a possible privy behind the Nicodemus District 1 School House (14GH103).

Volunteers travel through the wheat fields to get to 14GH102. Photo by Wendy Huggins.
Howard University students Brittany Gates and Kameron Arnett open a unit behind the District 1 School House.

Nancy Arendt from Colby and Brittany Gates work on Feature 1, the root cellar.

Mary Al Titus from Hutchinson digs in Feature 2, the house structure.

As James Bates looks down at the glass bottle found in Feature 1, he holds a piece of the past in his hands.

Howard University students Brittany Gates and Kameron Arnett open a unit behind the District 1 School House.
So who pays for all of this?

As you might imagine, launching a 16-day event in Kansas run by a professor from Washington, D.C. and featuring fieldwork, lab work, and classes in a town over 250 miles from Topeka takes a lot of planning—and a lot of money. This year the Kansas State Historical Society and the Kansas Anthropological Association were fortunate to have a very helpful partner, the National Park Service. Not only did Nicodemus National Historic Site Superintendent Sherda Williams provide significant staff and material support, she also cosponsored a successful application for funding through the NPS Challenge Cost-Share Program. This funding allowed the KSBS to bring in an expert in the archeology of African Americans, Dr. Flordeliz Bugarin from Howard University. Dr. Bugarin supervised this year’s Kansas Archeology Training Program field school excavation and will conduct the artifact analysis and write the comprehensive report for the 2007 field school.
The Battle of Punished Woman’s Fork
Nominated to National Register

The Battle of Punished Woman’s Fork (14SC306) is an archeological site that was the location of a pivotal confrontation between the U.S. Army and a group of Northern Cheyenne on September 27, 1878.

The Northern Cheyenne, under the joint leadership of chiefs Dull Knife and Little Wolf, had left the Darlington Agency in Indian Territory (present-day Oklahoma) earlier in September of that year and were attempting to return to their homes in Montana. A detachment of U.S. Army soldiers commanded by Colonel William H. Lewis from Fort Dodge, who had orders to capture and return the Cheyenne to Oklahoma, was in close pursuit. The Cheyenne stopped in the Ladder Creek valley, an area with which they were familiar from past hunting trips. They chose a narrow tributary, known today as Battle Canyon, where they prepared an ambush for the approaching soldiers by digging rifle pits above prominent ledges and concealing their horses. Colonel Lewis ascertained the Indians’ intentions and avoided entering the canyon, choosing instead to deploy his troops in the uplands west of Ladder Creek. The troops advanced northward across a series of ridges toward the positions occupied by the Cheyenne. After a protracted gun battle, during which both sides suffered casualties (including Colonel Lewis), the Cheyenne slipped away and continued their flight to the north. The core of the battle site was in Battle Canyon at a point where rock ledges and overhangs provided concealment for an ambush, along with some measure of protection. The confrontation at Punished Woman’s Fork was part of a much larger event, often called the Northern Cheyenne Exodus (and sometimes as the Dull Knife Raid), and had implications far beyond the Ladder Creek valley.

Acknowledging the importance of those events, the site was recently nominated to the National Register of Historic Places. KSHS Archeologist Tim Weston presented the nomination to the Historic Sites Board of Review at its meeting in Dodge City on May 12, 2007, and the board unanimously recommended that the site be placed on the National Register. The late Al Maddux, Bob Metzger, and Jerry Snyder prepared the nomination, with assistance from Historic Preservation Office staff. The following description is drawn from that nomination.

Background

In the late 1870s, the Plains Indian wars were coming to an end. For more than a decade, clashes between the U.S. Army and Native American tribes had
The Northern Cheyenne Exodus is a seminal event in Cheyenne history. The National Park Service views the Battle of Punished Woman’s Fork as the most significant engagement along the route of the Northern Cheyenne Exodus. (National Park Service map.)
Finally, the decision to return to their homes in Montana was made, and on the night of September 9, 1878, a group of 353 people (92 warriors, 120 women, and 141 children), under the joint leadership of Dull Knife and Little Wolf, slipped away.

taken place as settlers moved westward. The Cheyenne had become divided into northern and southern bands, especially after establishment of the Oregon Trail up the Platte Valley in the 1840s. The Treaty of Fort Laramie in 1851 set territories for the Plains tribes and recognized the two Cheyenne groups. Despite many defeats, the Plains tribes were still a formidable military force. A major turning point came in 1876, when Sioux and Cheyenne warriors at the Battle of the Little Big Horn defeated the 7th Cavalry.

To exact retribution and to bring a decisive end to all hostilities, the U.S. Army quickly moved onto the Plains in force. The Cheyenne, who had long fought the army, were defeated in November 1876 when a village in the Big Horn Mountains of Wyoming, led by Dull Knife, came under attack. This site, known as the Morning Star or Dull Knife village, represents the location of a pivotal event, one that precipitated the surrender of the Northern Cheyenne in the spring of 1877. After their surrender, 937 people were escorted (despite their objections) nearly 1,000 miles to the Darlington Agency in Indian Territory. There they joined the Southern Cheyenne, whose move to the area had been hastened by several military engagements, including a major defeat at the Battle of Summit Springs in 1869. Their surrender took place on March 6, 1875.

The Northern Cheyenne spent the winter of 1877–1878 in Indian Territory with their southern relatives under very difficult circumstances. Promised annuities were not delivered, and their numbers were reduced by malnutrition and sickness. Finally, the decision to return to their homes in Montana was made, and on the night of September 9, 1878, a group of 353 people (92 warriors, 120 women, and 141 children), under the joint leadership of Dull Knife and Little Wolf, slipped away.

As the Cheyenne moved northward into Kansas, they were involved in a series of raids and skirmishes in which several settlers were killed. Though pursued by soldiers from several army detachments, they escaped and continued moving northward.

On the afternoon of September 25, 1878, the Cheyenne arrived in the Ladder Creek valley, an area with which they were familiar from earlier hunting trips. There they camped for two days. Knowing that the army was in pursuit, they chose a narrow tributary, known today as Battle Canyon, and set about preparing an ambush for the approaching soldiers by digging rifle pits above prominent ledges and concealing their horses. Much of what is known about specific movements of units during the battle has been learned from a hand-drawn map of the battle prepared by Corporal Sharn of Company B, 4th U.S. Cavalry. His eyewitness account shows topographic features and posi-
tions of the combatants. Rifle pits were excavated above the canyon walls, from which warriors would have a clear view of the approaching soldiers, and some of their group (composed mostly of women and children) were sheltered in a small rock overhang.

The pursuing U.S. Army force from Fort Dodge consisted of 220 soldiers and scouts under the command of Lieutenant Colonel William H. Lewis. Colonel Lewis and his command approached the Ladder Creek valley from the south. They entered the valley, crossed the creek to its west side, and continued northward. After encountering some difficulties getting wagons through a low muddy area, they approached a side drainage known today as Landon Draw. Through the discovery of a recent campsite and observing movements of Indians in the valley, Lewis detected that the Cheyenne were concealed in the narrow draw known today as Battle Canyon. He also may have been aided by an early shot fired by a young warrior. After securing his wagon train in Landon Draw, he prepared for the engagement.

Rather than moving up through the narrow canyon into the ambush prepared by Little Wolf and Dull Knife, Lewis instead chose to deploy his troops in the uplands west of Ladder Creek. The troops advanced northward across a series of ridges toward the positions occupied by the Cheyenne in Battle Canyon. As the troops moved forward by means of several skirmish lines, the Cheyenne were driven back toward the rock overhang at the head of Battle Canyon, and it appeared that the soldiers would prevail.

As dusk approached, Lewis was leading his troops in a skirmish line along a ridge overlooking the ravine in which the Cheyenne had concealed their horses when he was struck in the leg by a rifle ball and seriously wounded. Captain Clarence Mauck, who then assumed command, broke off the attack and withdrew his troops to their camp. He apparently believed that the Cheyenne warriors would hold their positions through the night, so that his troops could continue the engagement in the morning. Under cover of darkness, the Cheyenne slipped away to the north, using the bottom of Battle Canyon as their escape route. To do so, they were forced to abandon at least 60 of their horses, many loaded with supplies. Captain Mauck and his command gave chase the next day, but the Indians outdistanced them. Lewis later died as he was being transported to Fort Wallace for medical treatment. Three other soldiers were killed, and several were wounded.

After the Battle of Punished Woman’s Fork, the Cheyenne continued northward and were involved in several raids and skirmishes in which additional set-tlers were killed. One of these is memorialized with a monument in Oberlin to the “Last Indian Raid in Kansas.” After crossing into southern Nebraska, the Dull Knife and Little Wolf bands separated. Those who chose to stay with Little Wolf spent the winter of 1878–1879 in the Sand Hills and ultimately made their way to Montana, where they surrendered near Fort Keogh on March 25, 1879.

Perhaps the best known part of the story involves the fate of the Dull Knife band, which was captured on October 25, 1878, and imprisoned at Fort Robinson in Nebraska. After the Cheyenne refused to return to Indian Territory, the fort’s commander confined them to an unheated barracks building in winter and cut off all food and water. On January 9, 1879, the Indians broke out of the barracks and escaped. Soldiers pursued them from the fort, whereupon most were killed. A few survivors (Dull Knife among them) were later captured northwest of Fort Robinson near Hat Creek Bluffs.

In the aftermath of the Northern Cheyenne Exodus, the views of the federal government and public opinion overall changed. Significant sympathy for the Indians’ position developed, despite lingering anger over the many raids that they carried out during their flight. Some of their leaders were tried in court for their actions but were not convicted. The survivors, including Dull Knife and Little Wolf, were ultimately allowed to return to their homelands in Montana. The Northern Cheyenne Reservation, which still exists today, was created in 1884, largely because of the Dull Knife and Little Wolf bands’ escape from Indian Territory.
Much of what is known about specific movements of units during the battle has been learned from a hand-drawn map of the battle prepared by Corporal Sharn of Company B, 4th U.S. Cavalry.
National Register Significance

The Battle of Punished Woman’s Fork archeological site is significant for its association with the Northern Cheyenne Exoduses. That event had national significance, as it ultimately brought about significant changes in policy toward Native Americans. Before that time, a series of military clashes had taken place between the Plains tribes (the Cheyenne among them) and the U.S. Army. Both the army and the tribes suffered casualties in these clashes, as did Euro-American civilians caught up in Indian raids.

In this context, the federal government, backed by public opinion, favored dealing harshly with the tribes and removing them to reservations in Indian Territory. Whether they wished to go or not. After the Northern Cheyenne Exoduses, the government and the public at large came to view the Indians’ situation more favorably. This change in attitude is particularly remarkable given widespread outrage among settlers and herders at the raids and killings perpetrated by the Indians during their northward trek. The Northern Cheyenne Reservation was later established at least in part because of the Indians’ flight from Indian Territory to their home territory in Montana.

The National Park Service views the Northern Cheyenne Exoduses as nationally significant for several reasons: most notably, the forced relocation of tribal peoples to Indian Territory in retribution for clashes with the army and the outrage of the Cheyenne at the culture clashes that took place over the previous two decades. It is also seen as a seminal event in Cheyenne history and culture, remembered in detail to this day. Because the Battle of Punished Woman’s Fork is one of the best preserved confrontation sites along the route of the Northern Cheyenne Exoduses, it is clearly of national significance. The National Park Service views the battle as the most significant engagement (and a potential National Historic Landmark) along the route taken by the Cheyenne, particularly because of the carefully orchestrated military tactics employed by the warriors, which represented an important departure from earlier engagements on the Plains.

Most archeological sites are nominated under National Register Criterion D for their potential to yield additional significant information, but that is not the case here. Artifact collecting is known to have taken place, both by collectors with metal detectors and by local historians seeking to understand combatant movements during the battle. These activities have compromised any remaining archeological evidence. Since no systematic archeological investigations have ever been carried out, the magnitude of disturbance and the potential for intact cultural deposits cannot be evaluated. Recent activities, though, suggest that the level of disturbance (especially in the core area near the monument) could be high.

In 1959, 1960, and 1961, local residents staged historical pageants at the battle site. People dressed as soldiers and Cheyenne warriors reenacted the battle before large audiences. Some rifle pits are represented by slight circular depressions and may be unaltered; however, others seem too well defined given the passage of nearly 130 years and may have been enhanced for the benefit of pageant audiences.

The Battle Site Today

The site is in northern Scott County, approximately 12 miles north of Scott City. It is situated about 1 mile from the southern boundary of Scott State Park and is accessible to vehicular traffic via a gravel road leading west from the main park entrance road. A stone monument marks the site, with a plaque describing the battle. At the time of the engagement, the surrounding valley slopes and uplands were all covered with prairie grasses.

The floor of Ladder Creek valley and some adjacent upland area were cultivated in the years since. Additionally, a network of section-line gravel roads, a few farmsteads, a church camp, and development associated with Scott State Park are situated nearby. Nevertheless, the immediate vicinity of the battle site remains in native grasses and is maintained in that state through regular grazing. The site’s rugged topography and relatively remote location have preserved its key features: the rock ledges above which the Cheyenne dug their rifle pits, a portion of the rock overhang (known locally as Squaw’s Den) beneath which the women and children took refuge during the battle, the Ladder Creek valley, the narrow floor of Battle Canyon, and the nearby uplands to the south across which the troops approached. From the vantage point of the rock ledges in Battle Canyon, the site maintains much of the setting that it must have had when the Cheyenne prepared their ambush and awaited the approach of Colonel Lewis and his command.

The nominated area (30 acres) is larger than that of archeological site 14SC306, which records only the rock overhang under which the Cheyenne women and children took refuge during the battle. The 30-acre nominated area corresponds to the property owned by Scott County since 1960 and operated as a county park. Nearby areas where relevant activities took place, most notably the uplands to the south from which the soldiers approached and established skirmish lines, are not nominated at this time. Nevertheless, the 30-acre parcel preserves the core of the battle site within which the most important features are located and where the most significant events took place: the overhang beneath which the Cheyenne women and children were sheltered, the rock ledges and high points upon which most rifle pits were placed, the draw in which the horses were concealed, and the ridge upon which Colonel Lewis was fatally wounded.

The Scott County Historical Society has maintained a long-term interest in the preservation of the site. The late Al Maddux, along with other members, researched and wrote about the battle and its place in the larger context of the Plains Indian Wars. The property was privately owned and used as ranch land by several owners in the decades following the battle. In 1960, landowner R. B. Christy deeded the 30 acres encompassing the core of the battle site to Scott County for one dollar, stipulating that the property be maintained as a historical park accessible to the public and that it not be fenced so that grazing might continue. Today, an easement exists for the road (maintained by the county) that crosses private land to reach the battle site. Grazing over the years has maintained the prairie grass cover with minimal encroachment by woody species.

Scott County maintains ownership of the property and is committed to its preservation. The Scott County Historical Society hopes to use National Register listing to enhance the site’s preservation and protection.
KSHS Participates in American Honda Foundation Grant

Kansas is one of only three states chosen to participate in an American Honda Foundation grant, awarded to Project Archaeology (www.projectarchaeology.org), a national heritage education program.

Sixteen teachers from the Kansas City, Kansas, area took advantage of the opportunity to take part in a workshop, which was held at the Shawnee Indian Mission State Historic Site in Fairway on June 28-29, 2007. Crystal Alegria, project coordinator from the national Project Archaeology office at Montana State University in Bozeman, was the lead instructor, assisted by KSHS Public Archaeologist Virginia Wulfkule. Project Archaeology coordinators from Missouri and Iowa attended the workshop, as did Michelle Stottlemire, education program coordinator in the KSHS Education/Outreach Division.

In the United States, African Americans are underrepresented in science careers and underserved in pre-collegiate science education. Billed as “Archaeology as Culturally Relevant Science Education,” this Project Archaeology workshop was designed for teachers of upper elementary, African American students. While imagining what the lives of their ancestors were like, students can practice scientific inquiry and use natural sciences to analyze archeological sites. The project objective is to improve science literacy among African American elementary students through archeological inquiry and expand inquiry-based archeology education to three culturally diverse urban areas.

Teachers received instruction in archeological science for the classroom and a complete curriculum guide, Project Archaeology: Investigating Shelter. On the first day, they practiced the basics of scientific inquiry (observation, inference, evidence, and classification), using authentic archeological data. The second day’s archeological investigation focused on the slave quarters at Thomas Jefferson’s Poplar Forest. The instructors guided workshop participants through the analysis of artifacts and historic structures using soil chemistry, spatial reasoning, ethnobotany, and zoology. The workshop culminated in an exploration of the ethics of scientific research on past cultures and peoples and engaged teachers in civic dialogue using the information gained through genuine inquiry.

The opportunity to pilot the Poplar Forest shelter curriculum in classrooms during the fall of 2007 was offered to participants. The Center for Science Teaching and Learning (CSTL) at Northern Arizona University has designed and will conduct the evaluation associated with the Honda Foundation grant. Through classroom visits and interviews with teachers and students, CSTL will collect and analyze data about how the archeological inquiry in this curriculum helps to improve science literacy among African American elementary students.

National Project Archaeology Director Jeanne Moe points out that archeology is interdisciplinary and humanistic by nature, so it is an innovative way to provide culturally relevant and inclusive science curricula for diverse audiences. It is an excellent tool for engaging youth in science education and associated ethical issues.

By Public Archeologist Virginia A. Wulfkule
Two Concordia historic sites are teaming up to celebrate local history by honoring the past and looking to the future in a four-day event beginning September 14, 2007. The joint celebration, entitled “Hand in Hand,” commemorates the 100th anniversary of the Brown Grand Theatre and the opening of the Orphan Train Museum and Research Center in the nearby newly rehabilitated Union Pacific (UP) Depot.

A Heritage Trust Fund grant from the Kansas State Historical Society in 2004 assisted with the exterior rehabilitation of the depot. Both properties are listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

The Brown Grand Theatre in downtown Concordia has operated as an entertainment venue since it opened in 1907. It now hosts more than 60 productions and events each year. Napoleon Bonaparte Brown, who settled in Concordia in 1876, built the theatre at a cost of $40,000. It opened on September 17, 1907, and featured the Joseph M. Gaites production *The Vanderbilt Cup*. The opening night program featured the following statement: “The entire structure has been erected by Concordia workmen; all the material has been either made or bought in Concordia; it belongs to a Concordia man; is a Concordia institution in every particular and it is the sincere hope of the builder that it may prove a source of education and clean entertainment to the people of Concordia for all time to come.”

Throughout the commemorative weekend, the theatre will host performances by the military band Go Big Red, magician Eric Vaughn, ventriloquist Angie Doyen Danner, and the Wichita-based cowboy band Prairie Rose Wranglers. Former Kansas Governor John Carlin will speak at the theater Sunday, September 16, about the...
Laura Waggoner joined the Cultural Resources Division in July as the survey coordinator. A May 2007 graduate of the University of Kansas, Laura has a master’s degree in urban planning. She completed her undergraduate studies in May 2005 at Kansas State University, earning degrees in modern languages, with a French emphasis, and psychology. Laura also studied French at the University of Aix-Marseille in Aix-en-Provence, France.

Laura worked at the City of Lawrence as the historic preservation planning intern. She reviewed Certified Local Government and Downtown Conservation Overlay District projects for compliance with preservation and design guidelines. She also helped survey and research the Oread Historic District, which includes more than 100 properties, for the National Register of Historic Places.

As survey coordinator, Laura looks forward to improving and updating the online survey database. She will work with consultants who are surveying historic resources through the Historic Preservation Fund grant process and communities seeking assistance for non-grant-funded survey work. While her preservation and architecture interests are many, Laura particularly enjoys studying adaptive reuse, Prairie style architecture, historic Kansas train depots, and downtown revitalization.
Happenings in Kansas

Game Faces: Kansans in Sports
Through December 30, 2007
Kansas Museum of History
6425 S.W. Sixth Avenue
Topeka, KS

Community and collegiate sports as well as
professional play are covered in this special
display on how sports create community
among disparate individuals.

Heritage Trust Fund Workshop
September 19, 2007
1 p.m.
Kansas Museum of History Classrooms

State Holiday - Labor Day
September 3, 2007
The Kansas History Center and Museum in
Topeka and all Kansas State Historic Sites will
be closed for the state holiday.

John Brown Museum Freedom Festival
September 15-16, 2007
10 a.m.-5 p.m.
John Brown Memorial Park
Osawatomie, KS

Reenactment of the Battle of Osawatomie
features first person narratives, weapons
and drill demonstrations, modern craft fair,
music, children’s activities, and food vendors.

Professional Archeologists of Kansas
Fall Meeting
September 1, 2007
1 p.m.

Burge Union, Room 309
University of Kansas
Lawrence, KS

Historic Fort Hays Days
September 21-22, 2007
1472 Hwy 183 Alt.
Hays, KS

Activities include rug weaving, Blue Sky
miniature horses, flintknapping, mountain men,
trappers, and living history demonstrations.
Admission is free. For details visit www.kshs.org/calendar or contact (785) 625-6812.

Heritage Trust Fund Workshop
September 25, 2007
9:30 a.m.
The Prairie Museum of Art & History
1905 S. Franklin
Colby, KS
www.prairiemuseum.org

KAA Mud Creek Chapter Artifact ID
Session
September 29, 2007
9 a.m.-3 p.m.
Coronado Quivera Museum
Lyons, KS

2007 Kansas Book Festival
October 5-6, 2007
Wichita State University
Wichita, KS
9 a.m.-3 p.m. Fri., 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Sat.
Free and open to all Kansans, the festival showcases Kansas authors and illustrators,
and features musicians and performers.

Heritage Trust Fund Workshop
October 9, 2007
9:30 a.m. and 1 p.m.
Ellsworth, KS
Location to be determined.

65th Plains Anthropological
Conference
October 10-13, 2007
Holiday Inn Convention Center
Rapid City, S.D.

Heritage Trust Fund Workshop
November 6, 2007
9:30 a.m.
Finney County Museum
403 S. Fourth Street
Garden City, KS

Heritage Trust Fund Workshop
December 4, 2007
1 p.m.
Independence Historical Museum
Eighth and Myrtle Streets
Independence, KS
www.comgen.com/museum

Heritage Trust Fund Workshop
January 8, 2008
1 p.m.
Kansas Museum of History Classrooms

Did you receive the May-June issue?

We apologize to our readers for any inconvenience caused by an error in our mailing system.
Unfortunately, some readers did not receive the May-June 2007 issue of Kansas Preservation (Vol. 29, No. 3). If the May-June issue did not reach you, please contact us and we will gladly send it.

In light of this error, we are attempting to clean up our mailing list. If you would rather not continue receiving Kansas Preservation, please contact us (doing so will not impact other Kansas State Historical Society mailings).

To receive your May-June issue, or to be removed from the Kansas Preservation mailing list, please contact the Cultural Resources Division at (785) 272-8681 or cultural_resources@kshs.org.