

# PIONEER PRESS

Vol. 39 #3

September 2021

## THANKS STEP FOUNDATION

The Nemaha County Historical Society received a grant from the STEP Foundation for \$2,022 to help pay for the refurbishing of the exterior of the military museum. Cathy Holthaus, grant writer, explained that “the original stucco facade, on all exterior walls of the Military Museum, is deteriorating. There are multiple cracks in the plaster and in some places the plaster stucco is falling off the building. Cracks in the plaster allow moisture to enter the interior and will cause damage to the interior walls. The west wall is in the most serious need of repair. However, the other three walls are in the same need of repair.”

## Military Museum

With the help of Dick Miller, the exterior of the Military Museum is being refurbished. The intricate trim is being painted in army green and red. Details on the columns are also being outlined in the military colors. The columns and all wood trim is being painted, the stucco repaired and the windows re-glazed. So far, over \$10,000 has been spent on the exterior of the building.



## Saying Goodbye

Board member, Karen Holthaus, will be leaving the board in March as she moves to be closer to her children and grandchildren in the Kansas City area. Even though Karen will be greatly missed, we wish her well.

## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Since Karen is the one who enters most of the recently received items into our computer system, Karen’s departure will leave a big void at the museum. Thus, we are looking for volunteers that would be interested in learning our computer system or interested in preparing signage and/or visuals for our displays or perhaps writing and publishing this newsletter and other items for the society.

## Nemaha County Historical Society Museum

### Hours

Tuesdays—10 am to 4 pm

*If Increment Weather, Call First*

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## 2021 OFFICERS

President:	Anita Heiman
Vice-President:	Karen Holthaus
Secretary:	Patty Byers
Treasurer:	Raymond Thieme
Membership:	Alma Ackerman

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Alma Ackerman	Karen Holthaus
Anita Heiman	Ilene Enneking
Patty Byers	Cathy Holthaus
Raymond Thieme	Joyce Olberding
Robert Ackerman	Karen Niehues
Marcia Philbrick	Mark Hermes

## N.C.H.S. VOLUNTEER STAFF

Diane Rottinghaus,	Tours: 785-336-2680
Ilene Enneking	Archivist-Curator
Karen Holthaus.	Research & Obituaries
Raymond Thieme.	Scrapbook
Richard Schmitz	Tractor Cruise

## OUR MUSEUMS

Sheriff’s Residence / Historic Jail / School Room

113 N. 6th, Seneca, KS 66538

Temple of Honor Military Museum

33 N. 6th, Seneca, KS 66538

Annex 1—113 N. 6th, Seneca

- Archives
- Burger Display
- Rotating Displays
- Obituaries
- Glass Negative Collection

Annex 2—113 N. 6th, Seneca

- Agricultural Displays
- Civilian Conservation Corps
- Beautician
- Medical
- Railroad
- Photography
- Seneca Public High School

Phone: 785-336-6366

Email: nchs@rainbowtel.net

**PLEASE RENEW TODAY!**

**Help Us Fulfill Our Mission!*****To Collect, Preserve and Promote the History of Nemaha County***

- **Join**—An annual membership helps us maintain our buildings and the collections housed in them.
- **Participate**— Volunteer to help with our events
- **Sponsor**— We value our business partners and the support they provide thru their sponsorships
- **Donate**— CASH, Garage Sale Items, Time
- **Tour**— Come out and enjoy our various sites

But most of all help us continue to collect the history of the county by donating (or lending so we can digitally copy) church histories, school histories, scrapbooks, letters, military documents, diaries, deeds, wills, family histories, business photos, business histories, and personal memories.

**Recent Activities**

- *8th grade history students toured military museum*
- *High school history students toured military museum*
- *Military museum open house on Nov. 9th*

We would like to thank everyone who visited our military museum. We would also like to thank the following sponsors who helped fund the installation of heating and air conditioning along with the vendors who assisted with this project allowing the museum open for these events! We would also like to thank Matt Diehl of the Seneca Courier Tribune for publicity regarding the project.

**Heating and Air Conditioning Project****DONORS**

- Tom Hilbert - State Farm Insurance
- Albert Winkler Memorial
- Freda Dobbins
- Mrs. Merlin Deters
- Nemaha Central Elementary/ Middle School
- Patrick Oembring
- Koch & Company
- Dr. Mike Jones

**DONORS**

- Ag Partners
- Margaret Rethman
- Koch's Service
- Nemaha Valley Motors, Inc.
- Cathy Holthaus - H.E.M.I. Electric

**VENDORS**

- Eisenbarth Plumbing
- Suther Building Supply
- H.E.M.I. Electric

**Amazon Smile**

If you order items from Amazon, please consider using the link below and help us earn funds to support the museum.

<https://smile.amazon.com/ch/48-0871820>

**Connect with Us**

Web site: <http://nemahacountyhistoricalsociety.com/>

Facebook: [Nemaha County Historical Society](#)

[Museum Catalog](#): Archive link on web site

[Donate via PayPal](#)—Link on web page under NEWS

[Join Us](#)—link on web page under NEWS

[Genealogy](#) – Link under PEOPLE

[Amazon Smile](#)—Help us earn money while shopping

**Thank you For Your Support!**  
**Join Us This Year by Renewing Your Membership**

### Kansas Honor Flight#83

Our very own board member, Raymond Thieme, was honored to be part of the Nemaha county veterans participating in Kansas Honor Flight #83 in September. Ray was joined on the flight by fellow Nemaha countians Jerry Odum, Elmer Lackey and Steve Holthaus. We thank you and all veterans for their service to our country.

We would also like to thank the **Seneca American Legion** for their efforts to help sponsor these flights to Washington, D.C. for our veterans.



Jerry Odum                      Elmer Lackey                      Steve Holthaus                      Ray Thieme



Steve Holthaus                      Elmer Lackey                      Col. Jeff Steinlage                      Jerry Odum



Sabetha parade to honor Raymond Thieme - KHF83



Raymond Thieme at KHF83 banquet

**Help Us Continue to Archive Our History — Join — Donate — Volunteer**

### World War I Photograph

Have you seen the photo of five world war 1 generals on display in the military museum? If so, do you know the story behind this photo?

Thanks to Facebook and posts by both Union Station Kansas City and the World War 1 museum, we have learned the back story to this photo.

On Nov. 1, Union Station Kansas City posted “One hundred years ago today, on November 1, 1921, more than 100,000 people came together to see the five World War I Allied Commanders dedicate the site of the Liberty Memorial. All five of these leaders arrived by train at Union Station. It was the first time in history they had been together in one place. Serving as a lasting monument to all who had served in World War I, the Liberty Memorial opened to the public in November 1926. It went on to receive designation as a National Historic Landmark in 2006 and recognition from Congress as a national memorial in 2014.”



The National WWI Museum and Memorial also posted about the event, “100 years ago today, Kansas City dedicated this portion of land to forever be a place to remember and honor their war dead. The city had raised the funds in a massive fundraiser in 1919, raising over 2 million dollars to create what would become one of the largest and well-renowned memorials of World War I, quickly garnering international attention. The city's efforts were honored on Nov. 1, 1921, when the commanders of 5 Allied nations of WWI gathered here, together for the first time, for the site dedication.”

Present for the 1921 site dedication were Gen. Jules Marie Alphonse Jacques of Belgium, Gen. Armando Diaz of Italy, Marshal Ferdinand Foch of France, Gen. John J. Pershing of the United States and Adm. David Beatty of Great Britain. These are the generals in the photo on display in our military museum.



**Help Us Continue to Archive Our History — Join — Donate — Volunteer**

## Korean War

*Courier Tribune 12 March 1951*

### **Vincent Rethman to Lieut. Col.**

#### Commands Bomber Squadrons on Guam

Seneca has a lieutenant-colonel.

He is Lieut-Col. Vincent C. Rethman, who has been recently promoted from Major ‘Vince’ is the son of Mrs. Elizabeth Rethman of Seneca.

He enlisted in the air corps 10 years ago this month, graduated in air schools the following October and was assigned to P-38 fighter planes. He had a year of active service as a fighter pilot in England and North Africa, and was awarded the Air medal, three Oak Leaf clusters, and the Distinguished Flying Cross.

He is a graduate of the Command and General Staff school at Fort Leavenworth, and has his Master’s degree from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Vincent has been on Guam for over a year, commanding six B-29 bomber squadrons. Mrs. Rethman is with him at Guam. If present orders are not changed, they will be back in the states in August.

The picture of Vincent taken several years ago is outdated by his new rank.

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### **From a Seaman to Lieut. Comm’dr**

#### Is Record of Charley C. Gilbert of Wetmore

Washington, D.C. — A Kansan who has worked his way up through the ranks from apprentice seaman to Lieutenant Commander in the U.S. Navy was recently assigned to headquarters Military Air Transport Service (MATS), in the Nation’s Capitol.

LCDR Charley C. Gilbert, USN, son of Mr. And Mrs. Charles (Bert) Gilbert of Wetmore, assumed the post of deputy chief of MATS Naval officers branch in January. He is the brother of Mrs. T. J. Glover of 612 Chester st., Topeka.

Graduating from Wetmore Rural High School, Gilbert entered the service as an enlisted man in October 1933. After service aboard the aircraft carrier USS Lexington and with various aviation squadrons, he was assigned to flight training at Pensacola, Florida He received his wings as an enlisted aviation pilot in 1941 and was commissioned the following year.

During World War II, Commander Gilbert saw service as a patrol squadron pilot in the North Atlantic and South Pacific. He is also a veteran of post war occupation duty in Japan.

Commander Gilbert is married to the former Hazel E. Blagg, daughter of Mrs. Julia Blagg of 12662 Walnut st., Garden Grove, Calif. They reside in the Washington area.

The Commander’s organization MATS, is a world-wide air route command, composed of personnel and equipment from both the U.S. Air Force and Navy. It is supporting United Nations fighting forces in Korea with an around the clock airlift of critical cargo and personnel to the Far East and the air- evacuation of American wounded to U.S. hospitals.

(The above article and picture are form the Office of Public Information, Military Air Transport Service, Washington, D.C.)

## Highway 63

The Courier Tribune  
22 Feb 1934

### Work Order for No. 63 Mule-Power Project

To Use Minimum of Machines in Moving  
dirt—Geo. Bennett was Here

A work order has been issued for Highway 63 and Tuesday George bennet, sub-contractor for the earthwork, was here making preliminary arrangement for a highway camp.

The Nemaha county Re-employment office had not been notified up to yesterday when men will be needed but such a request is expected at any time, depending of course on weather conditions.

Nothing has been learned about a work order for the building of the bridge cross Tennessee creek. This contract is held by S. B. Murphy of Centralia. The George Bennett Construction Co., is the same firm which built Highway 36 West of Seneca. Contractor Bennett is quoted as saying while here that mule power will be depended upon for the greater prt in moving dirt. Mr. Bennett said this is a requirement of the Public Works administration. Two tractors will be permitted. Mr. Bennet arranged for a mule camp to be located on the top of the hill just east of the home of George Hutton. He said more than 50 head of mules will be used.

The first contract on No. 63 calls for earthwork on five and a half miles of road beginning at the northeast corner of Seneca and extending as far south as the gateway of the Julius Tangeman farm, just north of the proposed dam site at Kampler.

### May Complete Road in 1934

A Right of Way Engineer Is Here Now

There are good reasons to believe Highway 63 will be constructed all the way from Seneca to Corning in 1934. This news seems to be well founded from the fact the Highway Department now has Engineer Dole on the ground making surveys for right of way. The road survey proper was made last summer. The next is to check the center line of the roadway as first surveyed with the section lines. This gives the department actual figures on how much land must be purchased to give the proper width of roadway. The next step will be the work of an attorney who will make the actual purchases or institute condemnation in behalf of the state. Recent conversations of Senecans with members of the highway department indicated 63 would be completed as soon as fresh allotments of money are available. It would appear events are rapidly approaching a peak of interest in the matter of the proposed lake park development on 63 at Kampler. From the first, it has been the plan to coordinate the state highway department and the fish and game commission in the building of a dam and spillway in lieu of a fill and bridge. Attempts will be made this week to arrange a conference with state officials so that definite information can be gained. The proposed dam might be made a part of the Corning roadwork. It seems more probable, however, it would be a distinct project because of the necessity of conserving funds by the use of a CCC camp.

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# 2022 Nemaha County Historical Society Membership Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

## THANK YOU for your support!

_____ Individual Membership (newsletter sent by e-mail) \$20.00/yr	\$ _____
_____ Individual Membership (newsletter sent by mail) \$25.00/yr	\$ _____
_____ Business Membership \$35.00	\$ _____
_____ Silver Sponsor \$50 to \$99.00	\$ _____
_____ Gold Sponsor \$100.00	\$ _____

### Contribution:

Military Museum \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Military Museum—Handicapped Restroom \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Military Museum—Restoring stucco on outside \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Society Needs \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Memorial In memory of \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*Nemaha County Historical Society is a 501C3 non-profit organization. Contributions are tax-deductible.*

Thank you for your interest and support.

**Nemaha County Historical Society, Inc.**

**113 North 6th, PO Box 41**

**Seneca, Kansas 66538**

## 2021 PLATINUM BUSINESS MEMBERS

Ackerman Lock & Key

Judy Deters

Nemaha Valley Motors

## 2021 GOLD SPONSORS

Ag Partners  
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First Heritage Bank  
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Koch & Company  
Koch's Service  
Life Care Center

Nemaha County Farm Bureau  
Patrick & Brenda Oenbring  
Robert Pillmeir  
SBS Insurance  
Anthony Sedlaceck  
Seneca Wholesale  
State Farm Insurance  
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Kenneth Sudbeck  
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Young Backhoe & Trenching

## 2021 SILVER SPONSORS

Jim & Carol Kohake  
Nemaha Valley Community Hospital

S&S Automotive  
VFW

## 2021 BUSINESS MEMBERS

American Legion  
Courier Tribune  
Medical Arts Pharmacy

Rainbow Communications  
Ray's Apple Market  
Schmitz Drive Thru Liquor & Deli

Seneca Sanitation  
Stallbaumer Lumber

### **Nemaha County Historical Society**

113 North Sixth Street  
P.O. BOX 41  
Seneca, KS. 66538

Museum Phone: 785-336-6366  
E-Mail: [nchs@rainbowtel.net](mailto:nchs@rainbowtel.net)

We are on the Web at:  
[www.nemahacountyhistoricalsociety.com](http://www.nemahacountyhistoricalsociety.com)

**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**