WORKING TO PRESERVE HISTORY
by DarlAnn S. Rial, Corresponding Secretary

The Board of the Nemaha CO. Historical Society, Inc. held their May 12, 2015 quarterly meeting at Bancroft. After a tour of the Bancroft Depot Museum, President Anita Heiman made a presentation to the Bancroft Museum Board in appreciation of all the work they have completed.

Bryant Stallbaumer presented preliminary plans for his Eagle Scout project involving flags to be displayed at the Military Museum. Jonathan Stallbaumer presented his preliminary ideas for his Eagle Scout project involving a farm equipment display to be housed in Annex II. Both Eagle Scout candidates will come to the August 11th Quarterly Meeting with further plans.

Treasurer Raymond Thieme reported Tax credits of $4,076, earned for Temple of Honor roof work has been purchased by Community National Bank and a Kansas Humanities Council grant of $10,000 has been awarded to NCHS to preserve the Strathman Photography Collection of glass plate negatives. Benjamin Epps, KSHS Photographer and KHC consultant for the project came to inspect the negatives and gave instructions for the project. Diane Rottinghaus and Joyce Olberding held a tea party at Country Place Assisted Living Facility. Librarian Karen Holthaus reported that the Werner Genealogy Research Center has now been moved to Annex I for easy access. Patty Byers reported that two brochures are ready for printing and she will apply for Tourism and Travel funds to pay for the expense. Building maintenance Supervisor Robert Ackerman reported that shelves have been built in the men’s restroom to store paint and the Honeyman cabinets are being prepared for display in Annex I.

Funds and an order for bronze colored letters that read, “Military Museum”, for the front of the Temple of Honor were approved at an executive board meeting on June 23rd. After some discussion, the board also agreed to turn on the water and sewer at the Temple of Honor for the next 3 months starting July 15th with an expected monthly expense of $24. Bob Ackerman reported on his continuing research into saving electricity by the installation of LED light tubes into the current light fixtures in Annex I.

An effort to help us identify the people and places in the F.J. Strathman photography collection, there will be an open house on Sun. afternoon, Oct. 4 from 2 to 5 in Annex One at 113 N. Sixth St. in Seneca. Perhaps there is someone, or even a location that you might be able to recognize.

F.J. Strathman was an artist from a long line of Strathman family photographers and because of his reputation of artistically capturing the perfect likeness of his subjects, his business grew each year to a greater circle of patrons. A large number of his photos of pioneers were used by Ralph Tennal in his 1916 publication of the History of Nemaha CO. In describing his work, Tennal strongly commended Strathman's half-tone plates for the painstaking care taken in making such excellent likenesses so necessary to the use of the engraving department.

In an effort to preserve and save his work for posterity, we have dedicated ourselves in this task through the help of a Kansas State Humanities Council Grant, a nonprofit cultural organization that connects communities with history, traditions and ideas to strengthen civic life. The grant has already provided us with a professional to work with our volunteers who has guided us in the process of cleaning, scanning, printing and storing these glass negatives for our patrons.

MEMORIALS

Nemaha County Historical Society, Inc.

OCTOBER OPEN HOUSE

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BANCROFT DEPOT MUSEUM  By Freda Dobbins

The Bancroft Depot Museum had another successful Annual Picnic on Sunday, June 28, 2015. The weather was almost perfect! The music started early in the afternoon and continued until late in the evening. There was a slight pause as everyone enjoyed the meal and especially the homemade ice cream. Later there was another pause in the music for the very interesting program, “Old & Forgotten Kansas & Missouri Places” by Dennis and Nicole Oelschlaeger from Tonganoxie, KS. They included places such as America City and Ellinwood, KS., as well as Sumner, MO. You might want to check these out as possible places to visit.

On display for all to see was the quilt top given to the museum by Ken Wykert of Circleville, with names of many early Bancroft residents embroidered on it and authentically quilted to the time when the top was created. At any time in the future should you want to see this, please ask the person in charge at the time of your visit to show it to you because for its protection it is stored in a protective container.

This year the museum continues to be open from 2 to 4 every Sunday afternoon through September 27. If you are not able to come during this time, contact 785-866-5288 or 913-608-5197 to arrange a time to visit the museum. Remember, to get to the museum, take KS. Highway 9 west of Goff to KS. Highway 62. Turn south on 62 and proceed 3 miles to 24th Road, turn left, or east for 3 miles. The museum is just east of the intersection of 24th and 'S' Roads.

OCTOBER 2015 EVENING AT THE MUSEUM

N.C.H.S. Member David L. Tangeman of Topeka has accepted our invitation to be a guest speaker on Wednesday evening at 7, October 14. His program topic is “A Visit From A World War I Doughboy.” David reports that he has done this same program for elementary students and with our presentation being for an adult audience we therefore can expect something more on our level. Like all of the previous Evenings At The Museum programs, this is free-to-the-public and will be taped by Rainbow Communications for local TV broadcasting.

WYANDOTTE CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION PART X

Minority Leader of the Wyandotte Constitutional Convention of July 1859, Samuel Stinson was considered on of the brightest men at the convention. Physically, he was a little, wiry, black haired man who had come west from the state of Maine, and, with his oratory, keen wit and a knowledge of parliamentary law, he made himself felt in the deliberations. For John J. Ingalls, it seemed that he sat up at night to look for new adjectives to use in his sarcastic speeches. At 6 feet, this 26 year-old man studied Webster's dictionary more than any other man in this part of the country. At the convention the following officers were elected: president, J.M. Winchell; president pro-tem, S.O. Thatcher; secretary, John A. Martin; assistant secretary, J.L. Blanchard; sargeant-at-arms, G.F. Warren and chaplain, W.R. Davis.

Brown CO. Genealogy Moment NO. 459

...........a story awaits you at
The Nemaha County History Museum
113 North Sixth Street • Seneca, Kansas
785-336-6366
Martin Vahsholz was probably born in 1675 at Zwillip, Pomeranian, under Electors of Brandenburg, and buried in the church cemetery in 1725 at Zwillip. He was a peasant farmer in the territory of Prussia. The village was near Kolberg on the north coast of Germany. The Vahsholz name was spelled without a 't' but Christian Vahsholtz in 1811 signed his name with a 't' on his immigration papers into America.

Christian Vahsholz probably was born in 1705 and died in 1753. He was the son of Martin Vahsholz, in Zwillip, and also a Bauer, or peasant farmer of Hof #10 (house number). Pomeranian, Prussia. Christian was buried in the church cemetery there, an Evangelical Lutheran. A son, Erdmann, was born to him in 1747 and died Sept. 1807. His first marriage was to Rosina Rackow and his second marriage was to Marie Rackow. Of the two sons born to Erdmann and Rosina, Christian Vahsholz b.1784, married Dorothy Elisabeth, b.1785 on April 13, 1804. Dorothy was a cousin to her husband. Of the six children born to this union, were these two sons, Christian D. Vahsholz in 1811 and Friederich Wilhelm in 1815.

The father failed to leave a will at the time of his death. The traditional law of Prussia stated that the home place went to the oldest son and the girls received the household goods. Friederich Wilhelm, the second son, was promised the home place by his mother whenever her husband died. Since Christian D., the oldest, was not yet the legal owner yet he could not borrow money against the place to pay off the others as they demanded. The oldest son, Christian, let them have Hof #10. Legal process would have taken seven years for settlement.

The mother had the right to live in the upper floors of her home until her death irregardless if it fell into the hands of strangers. Friederich Wilhelm Vahsholz lost the Hof #10 to Varchmann and Griesbach. All of the six children migrated to America, except the oldest daughter, Henrietta Marie Vahsholz and the second son, Friederich Wilhelm who moved to Degow, Prussia.

In about the year 1530 in Pomerania, Prussia, a beautiful church was built for the large congregation of 500 to 1,000 members. This structure was built with the best stone, reddish-brown in color. They were of a flat composition, hard to fit by hand for a good job. In this church the folks heard God's word preached loud and clear. The sermons on Sundays were long.

One of John Vahsholtz's nephews visited the area after W. W. II and reported that the church was still standing and nearly every gravestone had the name “Vahsholz” inscribed on it.

THE HARTMAN FAMILY TREE

Fred H. HARTMAN, Sr. (a.k.a. H. Fred)
b.23 Nov. 1835 at Hagen, Sahmburg, or 6 Lippe, Macklenburg, Prussia.
May 1919 at farm home about 9.5 miles north of Seneca, KS.

Fred came to New York and then Chicago at the age of 19 to avoid conscription into the German Army. His brother, Henry, came to America for the same reason a couple of years earlier. Fred stowed away in a barrel on the ship and after a day or so at sea he was discovered. Then he had to work his fare off. In those days that wasn't so easy.

Their mother watched him leave and as he passed her window for the last time she gave him a bit of advice. “Be always clean and righteous until your cool grave and don't wander a fingers breadth from God's way.”

Fred passed away on a Tuesday morning, at the farm home, at the age of 83 years, 6 months and 27 days. He came to America in 1852, landing at Albany, New York, and then traveled west to Chicago, Illinois. There he met Bertha Eloise Vahsholtz, and was wed to her on September 18, 1863. The couple met at Crete, Cook County, Illinois. They lived in that area for 6 years before coming to Seneca, Kansas in March 1868, and after a year residence in Seneca, Kansas at what was known as the Smith House, or Hotel, they moved to the farm about 9.5 miles north of Seneca. They lived in an old log cabin on the farm until the bigger house was built.

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Back in the 1930's, Robert Stroud, a prisoner at Alcatraz and an ardent student of Ornithology and painting was supported strongly by Sabetha Herald Editor Ralph Tennal to continue with his studies while incarcerated. A woman named Cora Finney from Emporia, Kansas knew of Stroud's correspondence to a magazine where she was employed. Because of this relationship, it became possible for Ms. Finney to give to Tennal on behalf of Robert Stroud, a painting of his entitled “The Princess of Prussia.” This painting hangs today in Sabetha's Mary Cotton Public Library for all to see and appreciate. Robert Stroud was also known as “The Bird Man of Alcatraz.” Taken from the History of the Mary Cotton Public Library, 915 Virginia St. Sabetha.

This story of the village of Kampler located at one time near Seneca is based upon historical facts provided by Bill (Willie) Vondenkamp and Leta Tangeman donated to the Nemaha CO. Historical Society Museum's research library in 1982.

Eight children would be born to Elizabeth Bernadine and Arnold Von Dem Kampe, who were married at Lohne, Germany in 1849. Arnold died of pneumonia at the age of 53, leaving Elizabeth with five children. These five children immigrated to America where Elizabeth would join them, later at the age of 78 in 1906 she passed away and is buried at the St. Bede Cemetery at Kelly.

Herman Von Dem Kampe was the sixth child born to Arnold and Elizabeth. Although his youthful activities are not recorded, his father died when he was only 8 years old. It is known that Herman acquired a Fifth grade education and later worked on the Zuider Zee, before immigrating to America at the age of 19.

Herman arrived in Nemaha CO., near Seneca, in 1889. He left Steinfeld, Germany 3 months earlier; having crossed the Atlantic, passing through immigration at New York, and traveled by train through a country where he could not yet speak the language. This trip cost $88.00.

Nemaha CO. contained many families that had immigrated from Germany. Herman found work with the Joe Bergman family. (Joe's son Henry would later marry Herman's daughter Josephine.)

After 5 years of working as a farm hand, Herman was able to purchase 80 acres near Baileyville. Herman and his bride Lizzie, lived on this farm for 2 years and their first child, Catherine was born there in 1896. Herman had met Lizzie (Elizabeth) at a house party in 1894. Lizzie was the daughter of Charles Krogman who had immigrated from Germany in 1858. Charles had acquired 763 acres of land becoming a leading citizen of Nemaha CO, as one of its largest land owners.

Herman and Lizzie moved to a farm of 120 acres near Seneca and it was at this farm that these 2 daughters were born, Josephine in 1898 and Rose in 1899. With the purchase of 160 acres, Herman and Lizzie moved again in 1900 one mile east and four miles south of Seneca, Flanking his property on the west was the South Fork of the Nemaha River with the Kansas City & Northwestern Railroad on the east side. Herman farmed the quarter section and took his grain to Seneca, where dealers there bought the grain sending it by rail to Kansas City. In 1900, the business of farming was as poor as were the prices for grain.

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In 1901, Herman found a portable grain elevator. Soon after, he proposed a business venture to his neighbor, William Winkler. Herman had petitioned the railroad to install a switch and lay track on his farm. With Winkler agreeing to help financially, it was in the Fall of 1902 that the farmers began selling grain to Herman at what became the Kampler Switch.

Business was good at Kampler, and soon, Herman was buying and selling other farm products. By 1904, Herman realized that Kampler would have to grow, and to raise capital, he sold his north 80 acres to Bill Madison for $4,000. Herman bought Winkler's share of the elevator and was now in business for himself.

The first building project at Kampler was a new house because not only was there another daughter, Clara born in 1901, Herman's mother had come from Germany to live with them. The ideal location for this new home would be closer to the Kampler Switch. So Herman made arrangements with Jake Chestler of Seneca to build him a house for $1,500. The main floor had a living and dining room, kitchen and a bedroom with 4 more bedrooms upstairs each measuring 16 feet square plus a full basement. Although the house was not equipped with running water or electricity, it had 2 stoves for heating and another as a cook stove.

It was again in 1905, that Herman contracted with Chestler to build a store 50 yards from the house and near the main road. This store was stocked with commodities from Kansas City, as well as flour, sugar, tobacco, coffee, etc. Farm implements for sale were displayed behind the store.

Because of his business dealings, Herman had become such good friends with Seneca banker, George Williams that in 1905 when Lizzie delivered their first son, he was named William George. Also at this time, the Kampler store was doing well because farm implements could be purchased cheaper than in Seneca and were delivered free to the new owners by way of the Kampler “Hack”. By 1908, Herman was selling wagons, manure spreaders, binders, disks and other farm equipment. From the local area producers, he was buying milk, eggs and livestock for sale to be sold in Kansas City.

Once again, Herman contracted with Chestler as he wanted a grain elevator to replace the portable one. This new grain elevator at Kampler with its new Morris/Fairbanks engine had become the tallest building in the area because from the top of it one could see St. Bede in Kelly as well as the spire of St. Peter & Paul in Seneca.

With the completion of the construction of the house in 1906, Herman's mother passed away. New arrivals to their family came with the birth of Anna in 1906 and son Tony in 1908, which brought the total of Herman and Elizabeth's family to 9 children.

In addition to trading, Kampler had become a community social center because after church on Sundays families would drive their buggies and wagons tying them up at the hitching posts at the store where the adults visited while the children played in the barn, elevator and around the railroad cars. The railroad spur at Kampler was about 150 yards long and although Herman warned them to stay away, the kids loved to play on top of the cars. On one Fall evening, 8 year old Willie and some friends were playing tag on top of the railroad cars when he slipped. Falling down between the cars, Willie landed on the coupler breaking his ribs. Years later, he recalled crawling from the elevator to the house with two broken ribs.

Continued on page 6
GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN continued from Page 5

This was at a time when money was scarce, the store and elevator at Kampler Switch issued DUE BILLS minted on aluminum that soon became the trading coin of the area. In addition to the store, house and elevator at Kampler there was an implement shed, corn cribs, lumber yard, cream station, barn and stock yards. Cream cans from Kampler were loaded onto a train car that took them to the butter factory at Goff, KS.

Four more children were born to Herman and Lizzie with Leo in 1910, Vince in 1912, Walter in 1914 who died in infancy, and Martha born in 1915. With a large family and a thriving business center, Herman and Lizzie had become prominent citizens of Nemaha CO.

In 1916, Herman was crushed beneath a wrecked car near the state line and died a week later after having been transported to St. Mary's Hospital in Kansas City, MO. Willie and the other children tried to help their mother in the years following their father's death as Kampler was loosing money as hired help proved to be unworthy. In 1920, with her health failing Elizabeth sold Kampler and purchased a 160 acre farm near Axtell where she could raise her family. Elizabeth died at this farm at the age of 58.

THE HARTMAN FAMILY TREE continued from page 3

They received this farm, in part, for building the stone house on the Simon Bloss farm. In the Fall of 1871 Fred hauled lumber from White Cloud, Kansas, a small town on the Missouri River, to build the bigger house to replace the log cabin they had been living in.

Even after they moved to the farm he continued his carpentry work in Seneca. He helped build some of the earliest buildings in Seneca. It was not unusual to have to dodge stray Indians going and coming from town. One never knew how friendly, or how drunk, they might be.

They resided on this farm for 45 years. Nine children were born to them...with six on this farm. Fred was a member of the Lutheran faith church. In fact, he was one of the founding members of the church that stood 1.5 miles east and a half mile south of his farm.

He and Bertha celebrated their golden anniversary in 1913. The couple passed away at this farm home and are buried at the Freiden's Evangelical church cemetery about a half mile north of the farm. Fred's death was due to the infirmity of his many years.

They, like the Wiesedeppe's, lived through many crop failures and hardships. In 1868 and again in 1883 the grasshoppers took everything. For those years they lived on cornbread made with just water. In those days a milk cow was considered a luxury.

Bertha Eloise VAHSOLZ HARTMAN was born Dec. 25, 1842 in Zwillip, Pomeron, Prussia and died Nov. 11, 1915 at farm home about 9.5 miles north of Seneca, Kansas. She came to Chicago, Illinois, with her parents, when she was 18 years of age. She met her future husband, Fred, at Crete in Cook County, Illinois. They were married there on Sept. 18, 1863. She took care of her aging parents for a number of years. Her father, Christian VAHSOLZ, and her mother Dorthea, passed away at her home. She was a faithful member of the Lutheran faith church. The cause of Bertha's death was apoplexy, or nowadays known as a stroke and she lived only for a few days afterwards.

Vahsholz and Hartman family information came from the N.C.H.S. Genealogy Library.
Josephine WALDER was born in Zurich, Switzerland, April 2, 1838, and died at Bern, Kansas, Jan. 22, 1905, at the age of 67 years, 9 months and 10 days. In 1882 she moved with her family to Monroe, Wis., where they lived for two years, and then moved to Valley Falls, Kansas, where her husband died. On August 6, 1888, she was married to Christian BLAUER and has since made her home in Bern. Her extended illness with asthma and a fall, hastened the end, which came Sunday morning. She leaves her aged husband, one daughter, Mrs. Richard CONRAD. She has been a member of the E.A. Church for years and the services were held from the church Tuesday by Rev. G.A. MANSHERDT and interment made in the Four Mile Cemetery.

Mrs. John EHRNSAM left Wednesday to visit relatives in different parts of Nebraska. Mrs. HANSON was up from Sabetha to see her daughter, Mrs. POLAND and baby, who have been on the sick list. Miss Susie KAUFFMAN was here on her way home from a visit with her brother in Lincoln, Nebr and relatives and friends in Omaha and Beatrice.

Mrs. Henry POPPE was called to DuBois on account of the serious illness of her granddaughter, the little child of M/M Fred KORBER.

Mrs. Emil EICHENBERGER, of Tribune, Kans., came to visit her aunt and uncle, M/M Wm. Miller, Sr. and other relatives. Mrs. C.A. HASENYAGER was called to Omaha Sunday on account of the serious illness of her sister.

The infant son of M/M Jake Ayers died last Friday morning of pneumonia. Funeral services were held at the home Sunday afternoon.

John DURNER came up from Garnett, Kans., and while here purchased a house from J.T. SLUSHER, and will move here the first of March. They were not satisfied down there so he will come back here to live.

Ethel MINGER was six years old last Saturday.

We are sorry to hear of the death of M/M J. AYERS' little son, Paul Emerson AYERS.

Bennie CORDILL of Bern, spent Saturday and Sunday with his brothers, Everet and George CORDILL.

Carl KRAMER and August KORBER surveyed their land last week, which they recently purchased of E. SCHREAR.

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PROGRESS ON THE PICTORIAL HISTORY OF NEMAHA CO. BOOK

There is not much progress to report on. I collected a great deal of photos from the Albany Historical Museum which was good as what I got would not be duplicated by the collection at the Nemaha CO. Historical Society museum. I was fortunate to receive a large quantity of photos owned by the Tennal family that were once editors and publishers of the Sabetha Herald in the 19th and 20th centuries.

Quite nearly all of the Albany photos cannot be used because of their age and the manner they have been stored and although all of the N.C.H.S. photos receive much better care they are also old and some not usable as well. Our communication with the managing editor of this book has not been the best and in order to please her we have scanned all of the photos three times at three different levels of intensity and still there is no positive progress. There is a bit of attitude on behalf of the editor that I continually get from our phone conversations as she continually has to be corrected that I am in Kansas and not Nebraska. She falls so easily into that archaic easterner attitude that it is all the same.

I have recently been presented with photos that the editor has approved but she as well as I realize that they may never cover enough ground to substantitate a county history covering the 150 year time span that I originally planned to do. Now she proposes that the 150 years be reduced which would make it be representative of the 20th century covering a limited subject matter. But at the same time the editor wants all of the photos we have already scanned three times scanned again. To satisfy the publisher, they will send me the equipment to do this re-scan providing that I am willing to do it.

I have been advised by the volunteer staff at the N.C.H.S. on the obvious futility of all of this. At this time I have not come to any decision as to the direction that I am planning to follow. Quite frankly, due to what we have all been going through, it has almost ceased becoming fun to work on this project.

Arcadia Publication Author
Greg Newlin