

Kaw City Museum Officers and Board Members for 2015-2016

President ----- Jack Godberson
Vice-President ----- Rick Fleharty
Secretary ----- Diana Wise
Treasurer ----- Carolyn Godberson
Co-Treasurer ----- Annette Pittman
Three-Year Term: Nita Ford, Rick Fleharty, Jim Deakins.
Two-Year Term: Diana Wise, Annette Pittman, Barbara Stevens.
One-Year Term: Dorothy Smith, Jack Godberson, Crystal Douglas, Carolyn Godberson.

Sunday, May 24, 2015 the museum will be open from 10 am until 5 pm. The previous Saturday and the following Monday, the museum will be open from 1 pm to 5 pm, as will all following Saturdays and Sundays through the summer months. Arrangements to open the museum on other days can be made by calling (580) 269-2085 or (580) 269-2092.



Kaw City Museum
P.O. Box 56
Kaw City, OK 74641-0056

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

The Kaw City Museum is a tax-exempt, non-profit organization, operated entirely by donations. Your memberships, donations and brick orders enable the museum to maintain its buildings and grounds and to grow. The museum board thanks each of you for your continued support. We are striving to make the museum all it can be for you and your families.

Family Membership ----- \$10
Donor Membership ----- \$25
Founder Membership ----- \$100
Patron Membership ----- \$200

“Buy a Brick” - \$50 each (Tax Deductible)

Purchaser Name _____
Address _____
City _____ ST _____ Zip _____
Date _____ Write Brick Message In Spaces Below:
Space limited to 3 lines at 13 letters (counting spaces) per line.

Kaw City Museum News

A PUBLICATION OF THE KAW CITY MUSEUM

SPRING 2015

Vice President Has Local Kaw Indian Roots

United States Vice President Charles Curtis, grandson of Chief White Plume of the Kanza Indians, lived with his grandmother, Julie Gonvil, on the Kanza reservation near Council Grove, Kansas after the death of his parents. The fascinating story of how Charles saved a Kaw Indian village is recounted in the Kay County History book, *Rooted in the Past, Growing for the Future*.



Charles Curtis, United States Vice President 1929-1933

Charles was only eight years old on June 2, 1869 when his village came under attack by a band of several well-armed and mounted Cheyenne Indian warriors. Charles knew the way to Topeka where military authorities were stationed. He told the chief and he would sneak through the ever-tightening line encircling the village and go for help. The little boy slipped away in the night, made his way past enemy warriors, then walked, ran and stumbled the 57-mile foot race to save the village. At the point of complete exhaustion, he made it to Topeka and told

his story to the commanding officer. The troopers immediately headed for the village. As the blue coats bore down on the Cheyenne warriors, they fled the area. From that moment on Charles became the hero of the Kaw Indians.

Charles later moved to Topeka so he could obtain an education. He lived with his grandparents on his father's side. However,

in 1874 he wanted to go back to his grandmother Julie, who had relocated to Washunga, Indian Territory. The first night Charles was in Washunga, Julie called him to her wagon for a very serious discussion. She said if he ever expected to make anything of himself, he needed to return to Topeka and continue his education. If he stayed with her, his only schooling would be related to riding ponies.

Curtis later wrote, “No man or boy ever received better advice. It was the turning point in my life. How wise was that dear old grandmother, who had lived all her life on an Indian reservation”.

Charles passed the bar exam at age 21. Three years later he became county attorney. In 1892 he was elected to Congress and in 1928, Charles Curtis became Vice President of the United States, serving alongside President Herbert Hoover.



The train travelers pictured above are part of large group of people invited to attend the Hoover and Curtis inauguration in 1929. Standing third from the left is Mr. Littlewalker and his son. Charles Curtis' cousin Bell Auld is standing on the right side of the group of three women with Mrs. Littlewalker behind. Pawnee Bill is to the right of the women and standing far right are Kaw area ranchers, Ike Clubb and Hugo Milde.

Kaw City Museum Annual Reunion

Sunday, May 24, 2015

Join us for our annual reunion on Sunday, May 24 at 2:00 pm in the Brill Building of the Kaw City Museum. Tour the buildings and hear about the museum and the latest activities. Perhaps you'll even win a door prize at the conclusion of the business meeting!

The doors of the Brill Building will open at 10 am. Refreshments will be served until closing at 5 pm. Please register at the desk so we have an accurate account of visitors and be sure to pick up a name tag and wear it. You may also purchase an annual membership to the museum which is the museum's main source of income. Museum memberships allow us to keep the lights on and the doors open.

Check out the name bricks in the walkway between the Depot and the Brill Building. Our "Name Bricks" are a wonderful way to honor or memorialize family and friends. Our next order will be made following this year's reunion.



Mystery of Huge Water Bill Solved

Unusually large water bills for the museum quickly caught the attention of board members last fall, and an investigation was immediately launched. They finally were able to "dig up" the answer - tree roots had invaded a water pipe, causing a big and costly leak. The museum is fortunate to have dedicated board members who volunteered to make the repairs. Pictured are Jack Godberson, Rick Fleharty, Darrel Cells and Gordon Smith, husband of board member Dorothy Smith.

Chief White Plume's portrait wearing his Peace Medal hangs in Washington D.C. The medal and this miniature portrait are on display in the Kaw City Museum, courtesy of Tommy Dennison. Many of the wonderful Indian artifacts in the museum are from his collection.



Cook Books, History Books and Kaw City DVD's Available

The museum cook book is a wonderful collection of recipes gathered from friends of the Kaw City Museum. The pages are filled with favorite family recipes, many of which have been passed down from generation to generation. At \$15, the cook books make wonderful gifts.

The beautifully designed, two volume History of North Central Oklahoma books are filled with hundreds of interesting stories about Kay County's early days. It is an amazing collection of photographs and articles chronicling individuals, families and events from the Kaw area. The books are out of print now, so purchase yours before they are gone. The entire \$50 purchase price of the books goes directly to the Kaw City Museum.

Also available is a DVD filled with pictures of the early day Kaw City from Bob Cline's collection. Cline gathered photographs from hundreds of sources and copied them for the use of Kaw City Museum. Many of the photographs are in the North Central Oklahoma History book. The museum continues to collect old photographs of the families and buildings from old Kaw City. If you have any of these rare photographs and would allow the museum to copy them, please contact Annette Pittman, PO Box 2719, Frisco, TX 75034 or annetepittman@mac.com. The DVD's can be purchased for \$15.

Famous Painting Resurfaces

Christ And The Children, a world-famous oil painting by Franck Kirchback, hung in the lobby of the Clubb Hotel in Kaw City from 1925 to 1947, as a part of Laura Clubb's art collection, which was said to have been "the finest privately owned art collection in the world". The paintings could be viewed 24 hours a day, seven days a week at no charge. In 1947, Mrs. Clubb donated her beautiful paintings and collection of rare books on art and artists to the Philbrook Art Center in Tulsa, Oklahoma so her collection could be kept together and be available for the enjoyment of the people of Oklahoma.

Philbrook built a special room to display *Christ and the Children* to accommodate its nearly 10' by 12' dimensions. The impressive canvas covered one entire end of the room, with smaller paintings from the Clubb Hotel filling the other three walls. Dozens of additional paintings hung throughout the art center, but there was not enough room to display the entire Laura Clubb collection at one time. It had filled the walls of the two-story lobby and dining room, the mezzanine and all hallways of the four-story Clubb Hotel.

Christ And The Children hung in that special room at Philbrook Art Center until a few years later when the museum remodeled and there was no longer a wall large enough to display the painting. It was taken down, rolled up and stored in a large room below the galleries and eventually sold. Many people familiar with the collection, including Laura Clubb's family, wondered through the years what had become of the magnificent piece of art. It was somewhat of a mystery. That was, until last year.

By chance, Shannon Goff, Laura Clubb's great-great-granddaughter, happened to hear a podcast by Nashville art columnist Eric Miller, following a visit he made to the Philbrook Art Center in 2011. The podcast featured his fascination with Laura Clubb, wondering how a woman from such a small town in Oklahoma could amass such

a collection of art from the world's masters. One thing led to another, and Miller ended up interviewing Annette Pittman, Laura Clubb's granddaughter, who grew up alongside the paintings in Kaw City. Two years later, that podcast interview which mentioned *Christ and the Children* was listened to by Jean Dommermuth, an art conservator in New York City. Pieces were coming together ...Dommermuth was researching the Clubb collection because she had recently been involved in the restoration of one of its paintings...*Christ and the Children*!

Miller introduced Dommermuth and Mrs. Pittman via email, and for the first time in many years, Laura Clubb's family would know where the painting was. Where it had been and details of when and how it changed hands remain a mystery. But *Christ and the Children* is now owned by the Dahesh Museum of Art in New York City, a museum dedicated to collecting 19th and early 20th century European art. The painting underwent a complete restoration and was recently displayed at New York City's Biblical Arts Center.



Photo of Christ and the Children during the restoration process.