

**Freedom's Frontier Heritage Area  
Minutes from September 14, 2006  
The Chapel at Old Jefferson Town, Oskaloosa, Ks.**

**Attendees:**

Mary Asher	Mound City
Ola May Earnest	Linn Co. Historical Society
Ron Harris	1 <sup>st</sup> Territorial Capitol & Geary Co. Historical Society
Dennis Toll	Manhattan CVB
Kerry Altenbernd	Black Jack Battlefield Trust
Clif Gordon	Wakefield Museum
Deborah Barker	Ottawa
Dale Nimz	Lawrence
Cheryl Collins	Riley County Museum
Dian Niehoff	Baldwin City
Michael Stubbs	Wabaunsee Co. Historical Society
Chris Meinhardt	Constitution Hall, Topeka
Doug Jones	Shawnee Co. Historical Society
Erin Jeschke	Pott. Co. Eco. Dev.
Cheryl Thorp	Platte Co. CVB
Alexis Radil	Mahaffie Stagecoach Stop
Melissa Fisher Isaacs	Johnson Co. Museum
Susy Ross	Tonganoxie Historical Society
Fred Leimkuhler	Tonganoxie Historical Society
Katie Carlgren	Wabaunsee Co. Eco. Dev.
Sue Gervasini	Leavenworth Co. Historical Society
Leslie Rocha	Leavenworth Co.
Keyta Kelly	Leavenworth Co.
Pat Dill	Doniphan Co. Historical Society
Suzette McCord Rogers	Doniphan Co. Historical Society
Sally Hatcher	Leavenworth Preservation
Judy Billings	Lawrence CVB
Betty Leach	Oskaloosa
Julie Frisbie	Jefferson Co. Historical Society
Teresa Harker Woodhead	Jefferson Co. Historical Society
Emma Crites	Fredonia
Eileen Robertson	Humboldt
John Nichols	Miami Co. Historical Society
Sue Pridemore	NPS
Debbie White	Lawrence CVB

**Welcome and introductions:**

The meeting was called to order by Judy Billings at 10:00a.m. Thursday, September 14. Julie Frisbie, Jefferson County Historical Society, welcomed attendees and introduced other members of the society. She shared a part of their Mission Statement, “working together to be better than we can be on our own”, which also applies to the Heritage Area Group. After remarks by several members of the Jefferson County Historical Society, Judy Billings introduced Sue Pridemore from National Parks Service and attendees introduced themselves.

S. Pridemore shared an email she received from Cheryl Thorp from Platte Co. Missouri, thanked Cheryl for the wonderful note, and ask us all to remember, “There is no right way to tell a story, no wrong way to tell a story, but always a better way. There is a story for every period of time.”

After being reminded of our mission, we broke into committees, Building Bridges; Civic Engagement; Resources and Landscapes, for one hour.

**The general session** was called to order following committee reports at 11:20 a.m. by chairperson, Judy Billings.

**Approval of agenda and August minutes:**

Alexis Radil pointed out that the Missouri-Kansas Border Network meeting at Mahaffie Stagecoach Stop and Farm will be September 16 at 10:00 a.m., not November 16 as reported in the minutes.

Kerry Altenbernd made a motion to accept the agenda and minutes as corrected. The motion was seconded by Cliff Gordon and passed favorably by voice vote.

**Financial Report:**

Treasurer, Martha Parker was not present. J. Billings stated that with the exception of perhaps a small amount of interest, there had not been a change in the treasury balance since the last meeting.

**Other Committee Reports:**

**Tour Committee:** In the absence of chairman, Don Traub, Deb Barker reported for the committee. Minutes of the Tour Committee/BKHA Meeting

Date & Time: September 27, 2006, 2:00 – 3:30 PM

Location: Old Depot Museum, Ottawa

Attendees: Arnold Schofield, Erin Jeschke, Deborah Barker, Paul Bahnmaier, Diane Niehoff, Doug Jones and Don Traub.

Old Business:

- 1) Accepted Minutes of our August mtg.
- 2) Kelli Hilliard, Group Tour Manager, KDC, will be at our Oct. meeting in Lawrence.
- 3) Paul reported on his attendance at the MO-KS /Border Coalition meeting and that their next meeting will be held in Butler, MO on 10/11.
- 4) Arnold reported on his Blue/Grey Tour “narrator” job and the logistical

planning that was necessary for that tour. This precipitated a discussion on the State of Missouri's planning activities for the upcoming Sesquicentennial of the Civil War, as well as the four established Civil War organizations within the State that are preparing for that event. Missouri's preparations are in sharp contrast to the lack of planning and organization within the State of Kansas, which is a matter of concern for the Tour Comm. as well as the total organization, and will be brought up at the next general meeting in October.

5) We continued our discussion of funding opportunities for our committee's media products originally brought to light by Judy Billings at our August meeting. Don reported on his discussion with Julie Mulvihill of the Kansas Humanities Council, and Regina Nichol of the KS Dept. of Commerce. The monies from KHC would be a "gift", while the other source would be either an "Attraction Development Grant" or a "Tourism Marketing Grant". We will have to wait and see what happens with the KHC funding opportunity and the Dept. of Commerce, Travel and Tourism grants are always open.

6) A question arose concerning the transitioning of the non-profit status of the original organization, Kansas Territorial Alliance, and the transfer of that status to the newly created Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area organization. Is a transfer of that non-profit status possible or must the new organization apply for its own non-profit status, and how will that activity impact the Tour Committee's funding opportunities for production support of the our information media? Don will talk with Judy B. about the concern.

7) We continued to focus on the development of the John Brown and Civil War tours and divided into two subcommittees that will each concentrate on a tour. The John Brown tour committee is: Deb B., Doug J., and Diane N.; the Civil War tour committee is: Arnold S., Paul B. and Don T.

New Business:

1) Arnold discussed the opportunity for this committee to join with the Kansas State Historical Society in the production of a Civil War brochure, and he will report on this possibility next month.

2) In a discussion about actively including Missouri in the development of our tours and the fact that there are numerous MO groups, Arnold suggested Jim develop the Civil War tour. Arnold will contact him and report back at the next meeting.

3) Because of the increased activities due to the upcoming holidays we have changed our Nov. meeting date to Nov. 29 in Ottawa.

4) The October meeting is scheduled for Lawrence, October 25, 2:00 – 3:30 PM.

Submitted by Don Traub, 9/11/06

**Bleeding Ks. Tour:** Debbie White reported on a recent Blue and Gray tour by a group of historians that visited a part of the proposed heritage area and were very impressed. She reminded us that there will be many different levels of tours and that we will need to learn to paint the interpretation picture so they can see our story without costumes, or physical structures. J. Billings reminded us that we want to be ready and able to go to the sites! We want to get into connecting the stories so we are ready for the groups to come.

K Altenbernd suggested that we be concerned with feedback from the visitors, think about the customer, the tour planner, and communicate what the story is and let them decide what they want to see.

**Oral report by Eileen Robertson:** E. Robertson shared her experience of a taped interview with Junior Gerken of rural Humboldt. Gerken's grandfather served in Humboldt's Home Guard during the Civil War. Gerken still lives on the land his grandfather, Hoermann Heinrich Gerken, homesteaded in 1862, shortly after coming to Free State Kansas from Missouri.

Robertson reminded us that our story is more than the just the landscape, a site or a battle, it is also about the people.

J. Billings challenged each of us to think about the importance of "oral histories" and seek out the "Jr. Gerkens" in each of our areas and record their stories.

**Adjournment:**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:45 p.m. and members of the group were invited to enjoy lunch next door at "The Friendly Kansan" restaurant.

Respectively submitted,  
Diane Niehoff, note taker for the day