

SNAPSHOT WICHITA PHOTO COLLECTION

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mhgswichita.org

Library Hours:

Tuesday and Saturday
10 to 4 pm.

[\(library@mhgswichita.org\)](mailto:library@mhgswichita.org)

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I'm going to let you all in on a little secret...I've had a project for five years that I haven't told you about. After a week in which four different people called to see if we had a photo of "my uncle's bar" or "the church where my grandparents got married" or "the restaurant where my mom had her first job" (none of which we had), I got a bit obsessed with getting photos of Wichita buildings. I love getting donations of family photo collections, both for the pictures of people and for the pictures of local churches, houses and businesses. Unfortunately, we don't get enough of these to satisfy my obsession!

So, I had a totally crazy idea. In addition to searching for older photos, I would do what I could to make sure that there are LOTS of photos of Wichita buildings starting now. I wanted them digital, in color, at a useful resolution, properly labeled as to address and date, and available without significant copyright restrictions for researchers and writers. And the only way to get those photos was to take them.

Which brings us to today, five years later. The Snapshot Wichita collection, part of the MHGS digital collections site, has more than 3,400 photos, mostly taken by me. I've got another 600 or so to process and post, and I take more almost every week. I even track the stories in the newspaper about places that are about to close and hurry over to get photos before they disappear.

Doesn't Google already do this? Well, yes and no. I use Google maps a lot, and I've noticed that there are several issues with it. First and foremost, the photos legally belong to Google, so you have to ask them if you'd like to use them. Second, the photo resolution is awful – have you ever tried to copy one of their photos into a Word document? – and sometimes there's a delivery truck in the way. Third, the address labeling is pretty good but not perfect, especially on corners where it sometimes guesses. And fourth, their purpose is to show you what's there now, not necessarily what was there 10 years ago. It's not really an historical repository.

Now that I know the project works, I'd like to invite all of you to help build the collection. Let's make it really easy for the researchers and writers of 50 years from now to find good illustrations for their books, articles and websites!

Julia Langel, the mad photographer

SNAPSHOT WICHITA PHOTO GUIDELINES

Want to help?

- The collection includes photos of buildings, commercial vehicles (I love the ones with colorful signs) and public events. My guide is to take the kinds of pictures a person might want as illustrations in historical articles or family histories.
- As far as possible, photos should include the entire building, either straight on or from a corner that shows both front and a side. Think documentary, rather than artistic.
- As few people and vehicles as possible in building photos. No kids, except for public events like parades. (I can blur out license plates if they are unavoidable.)
- All photos will be restricted for one year; photos of private residences will be restricted for five years (this isn't a legal restriction, just an attempt to balance a sense of decency against the fact that photos taken from public streets aren't private.)
- All photos should be labeled with location (street address preferred), neighborhood, date, people and/or event names (if appropriate), photographer, and copyright.
- The only editing should be cropping and color correction, plus blurring out license plates. Again, think documentary rather than artistic.
- All photos will be available for download and non-commercial use from the mhgswichita.org website. I use a non-commercial Creative Commons license from creativecommons.org.

Send your photos, along with as much information as you can, to photos@mhgswichita.org!

(Have a stash of older photos you'd like to contribute? Contact Julia at library@mhgswichita.org and we can talk about adding them as a collection on their own – named for the photographer or collector. We can help with digitizing prints, negatives and slides if they aren't yet digital.)

ANNUAL MHGS MEETING SCHEDULED FOR APRIL 13, 2024

We will have our annual membership meeting on Saturday, April 13, at 1:30.

If you are a member, please plan to attend. This is a great time to meet the other members of MHGS and learn about what's going on! Plus, refreshments will be provided!

At the meeting, we will conduct elections for President and Treasurer (nominations will be accepted from the floor.) We'll also report on our activities for the last year, preview some plans for the coming year, and lay out some volunteer opportunities we really need help with. Remember, you need to be a current member to vote!

If you are unable to attend the meeting please send in your proxy vote prior to April 8, 2024.

Membership renewals are due! Please renew if you haven't already! You can find the form at <https://mhgswichita.org/wp/become-a-member/>

NEW YEARS RESOLUTIONS

1. No man is truly well-educated unless he learns to spell his name at least three different ways within the same document. I resolve to give the appearance of being extremely well-educated in the coming year.
2. I resolve to see to it that all of my children will have the same names that my ancestors have used for six generations in a row.
3. My age is no one's business but my own. I hereby resolve to never list the same age or birth year twice on any document.
4. I resolve to have each of my children baptized in a different church—either in a different faith or in a different parish. Every third child will not be baptized at all or will be baptized by an itinerant minister who keeps no records.
5. I resolve to move to a new town, new county, or a new state at least once every 10 years—just before those pesky enumerators come around asking silly questions.
6. I will make every attempt to reside in counties and towns where no vital records are maintained or where the courthouse burns down every few years.
7. I resolve to join an obscure religious cult that does not believe in record keeping or in participating in military service.
8. When the tax collector comes to my door, I'll loan him my pen, which has been dipped in rapidly fading blue ink.
9. I resolve that if my beloved wife Mary should die, I will marry another Mary.
10. I resolve not to make a will. Who needs to spend money on a lawyer?
11. I resolve to leave lots of family photographs, but never to inscribe the names or relationships of those in the pictures.
12. In the above manner, I will enshrine myself and my progeny to the whims of all those descendants who wish me to be more like they believe they are.

unknown

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Library open Tuesday & Saturday 10 – 4 Email library@mhgswichita.org

Please see the Google calendar or our Facebook page for more information

GENEALOGY ROUNDTABLE SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP	FAMILY TREE MAKER SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP
Second Tuesday @ 1:30 to 3 pm Led by Julia Langel	Third Saturday @ 2 pm (not every month) Led by Donna Londeen
PHOTO MYSTERIES	DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION AND SONS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION
Third Tuesday @ 1:30 to 3 pm Led by Rex Riley	Fourth Tuesday @ 1:30 pm Led by Twila Ackley Brown

Midwest Historical and Genealogical Society

P.O. Box 1121

Wichita, Kansas 67201

Change Service Requested