

MIDWEST HISTORICAL & GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

ALERT

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DECEMBER 2025 – JANUARY 2026

Location

1203 N. Main
P.O. Box 1121
Wichita, KS 67201
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Library hours

Tuesday and Saturday
10 to 4 pm.
(library@mhgswichita.org)

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CHRISTMAS IN KANSAS - A CENTURY AGO!



Christmas in Kansas in the early 1900s was a mix of traditions and family values brought by various immigrants from their homelands. Gifts were usually handmade – lace border hankies, wooden toys, dresses, scarves, shirts, pants, cards to send to family and lots of food for the official Christmas dinner.

Christmas trees were cut down from nearby farm fields and brought into the home while strings of popcorn were sewn together and placed carefully around paper ornaments made by the children in the household. Pine cones, long and colorful ribbons were strategically placed to bring color into the hearth room. Many homes were still using lit candles on trees (even though it was dangerous) and stockings were filled with nuts, fruit and candy.

The Christmas dinner was a family affair and if no family was close then neighbors were invited to join in the holiday celebrations. The main course was usually turkey, goose, chicken or ham. Potatoes were a staple, especially for Irish families and desserts like pies, cakes, gingerbreads and even fruitcakes were growing in popularity (why I don't know!)

Families most often celebrated with church services. Christmas caroling around the neighborhood was a welcome sight and if the weather was cold, the carolers would be invited in for a cup of hot chocolate or hot tea! Many times, the carolers were accompanied by musicians who were carrying accordions, trumpets, clarinets and yes, cymbals on occasion to mark their finale. Often families would join in the singing before the carolers would move on carrying their lanterns before street lights were installed.

Christmas post cards, like the 1904 postcard above, became popular due to short messages that could be written on the back and the cost of sending them to love ones would only cost a penny. May the spirit of Christmas of years gone by be with you and your family this year – may you be blessed abundantly with health, love and peace in the New Year!

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

ARE YOU MAKING END-OF-YEAR DONATIONS? PLEASE REMEMBER MHGS!

As you make your end-of-year donations this year, please remember MHGS. We are a 501(c)3 tax-exempt organization. Your donations help us buy preservation materials, digitizing equipment and printer ink!

NEWS FOR YOU TO SHARE

Francene Davis Sharp, MHGS volunteer, has shared that the North Riverside Neighborhood is hosting a get-together on Monday, January 19, 2026 on the second floor at Woodland Methodist Church, 1100 W. 15th. This meeting is open to the public to hear Ken Spurgeon, author and Friends University professor, speak on the role Kansas played in the Underground Railroad and abolition movement in the mid-1800s. His presentation, *Bound for Canaan* will be educational and entertaining.

The Wichita-Sedgwick County Historical Museum is hosting a free lunchtime concert on December 23, 2025 from noon to 1 p.m. The concert is at the Clock Tower Carillon on the 5th floor of the museum – 204 S. Main St. in Wichita. They suggest the concert is heard best outside of the museum. The Bloomfield Foundation has sponsored this Carillon concert for over 50 years. The Museum also invites you to take advantage of free admissions on Sundays in December to see their Santa doll collection, miniature Christmas trees, holiday wreaths, and a Victorian Cottage Christmas. Their hours on Sunday are 1:00 to 5:00 pm.

NEW BOOKS

Call Number	Title	Series Info	Author	Date
R-669 017	Sioux Code Talkers of World War II		Page, Andrea M.	2017
R-667 013	The First Code Talkers: Native American Communicators in World War I		Meadows, William C.	2021
I-200 040	Tax Records: A Common Source with an Uncommon Value		Eakle, Arlene Haslam	1978
I-200 024	U.S. Military Records: A Guide to Federal and State Sources, Colonial America to the Present		Neagles, James C.	1994
A-620 010	The New Reference Atlas of the World			1921
Online – Link in Catalog	An Illustrated Historical Atlas of Putnam County, Missouri		Edwards Brothers	1877
Online – Link in Catalog	Yearbook of German-American Studies	German-American Studies		
Online – Link in Catalog	Yearbook of German-American Studies	Journal of German-American Studies		
Online – Link in Catalog	Yearbook of German-American Studies	Yearbook of German-American Studies		
R-665 054C	Echoes of Glory	C: Arms and Equipment of the Confederacy		1998
R-665 054B	Echoes of Glory	B: Arms and Equipment of The Union		1998

Call Number	Title	Series Info	Author	Date
R-665 054A	Echoes of Glory	A: Illustrated Atlas of The Civil War		1998
R-665 053 V3	The Civil War	V3: The Blockade: Runners and Raiders	Simons, Gerald	1983
R-665 053 V2	The Civil War	V2: First Blood: Fort Sumter to Bull Run	Simons, Gerald	1983
R-600 114	The Visual Dictionary of Ships and Sailing			1991
Online – Link in Catalog	Index to Mennonite Immigrants on United States Passenger Lists 1872-1904		Haury, David A.	1986
R-210 SG 006 1946	Parnassus	1946	University of Wichita	
R-210 SG 346	1974-2024 Ulrich Museum of Art at 50: Celebrating the Past, Present and Future		Mott, Teri	2024
R-210 SG 347	The Seamy Side: Vice in Wichita and Its Satellite, West Wichita, from 1870-1877		Harris, Charles F.	1969
R-210 SG 348	A History of Derby (1870-1934)		Crowell, Kay	1971
R-210 SG 349	Derby Past and Present		Blue, Lyle Raymond	1971
R-210 WB 06	Maple Hill Stories		Turnbull, Roderick	1961
R-210 WY 06 1984	Turner High School Class of '62 Reunion Booklet	1984		1962
R-600 126	The American Frontier: Pioneers, Settlers & Cowboys (1800-1899)		Davis, William C.	1992
R-600 127	True Tales of the Prairies and Plains		Dary, David	2007
R-600 128	The Great West		Neider, Charles	1958
R-630 075	Cheyenne Memories		Stands in Timber, John	1967

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2024-2025	
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VOLUNTEERS BEING RECRUITED FOR FOLLOWING POSITIONS

Two MHGS Board members for the position of secretary and treasurer. The *Alert* Newsletter editor position, social media/webpage coordinator, and volunteers to help staff the library on Saturdays. For more information, contact Ann Boll, Board Chairman at president@mhgswichita.org or Julia Langel, Librarian at library@mhgswichita.org.

**The library will be closed starting Tuesday, December 16, reopening on Saturday, January 10.
Please visit our Facebook page for more information on local groups and our Google calendar.
(All meetings held at the MHGS library – 1203 N Main, Wichita, KS)**

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP	FAMILY TREE MAKER SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP
Second Tuesday @ 1:30 to 3 pm Led by Julia Langel Topic in August: AI Assisted Writing	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

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Change Service Requested