



P.O. Box 245,  
 RUSSELL, KS 67665  
 785-483-6640  
 rchs@russellks.net  
 russellkshistory.com

**AGRICULTURE, ACADEMICS  
 & AUTOS MUSEUM**

825 N. Kansas Street

**FOSSIL STATION MUSEUM**

331 N. Kansas  
 (Historic Ave.)

**OIL PATCH MUSEUM**

North West Side of  
 I-70 & 281 Exit

**GERNON HOUSE**

808 N. Kansas Street

**HEYM - OLIVER HOUSE**

503 N. Kansas Street

**All entities available by  
 appointment year around  
 call 785-483-3637, or  
 785-445-4000 and leave  
 a message, or email  
 rchs@russellks.net  
 to set a date.**

Terri Middleton,  
 Museum Coordinator

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Tim Boxberger, President  
 Steve Boxberger, Vice President  
 Susan Shank, Treasurer  
 Sheila Thacker, Secretary  
 Dylan Palma, Display Coordinator  
 Board Members:  
 Karla Berry, Marsha Radke Brown

# SUMMER 2023

## 2023 Season to begin

The new building to the North and East of the AAA museum is almost completed. We hope to have some items in place to start our 2023 season which runs June 1 through September 1, 2023. The AAA museum will be staffed Thursday - Saturday 1-4pm.



West side of new addition.



South side entrance for large equipment.



Staff can take you to other properties as available. The Oil Patch will be open Thursdays 4-6pm, and Fridays 1-4pm. Arrangements can be made to visit any property in advance during off times hours.

A future ribbon cutting for the new

addition will be held this summer. Work on displays will continue with story boards and a history of agriculture in Russell County to be presented along with automobiles, military vehicles and farming equipment. As our volunteer staff is limited our many projects take time to complete.

## 100 Years of Oil in Russell County Anniversary this November

As the 2023 November anniversary approaches we are remaking the oil book first created in the 50's. We hope to highlight new images and information along with brief histories of local and industry companies

working in Russell County. The back page highlights our efforts and hope to have community involvement in this historic event that helped make Russell a thriving community. Please reach out to us to get involved.

## Prairie Heritage Educational Demonstrations

Our wonderful volunteers and teachers that put together our educational demos for the school kids are so appreciated.

They conducted Wash Day, Butter making and Kansas Day this last winter session. We value their knowledge and invite the younger generation of parents to get involved. See more pictures inside.



## Visitor Center Update...



The Splash Pad is very close for the installation of the bricks and surface area to be finalized and open for summer. The Visitors Center will have restrooms accessed from the outside, with a nursing room inside the center itself. The project had some obstacles but with the perseverance of the Revitalize Russell Committee enough donations and funds were raised to complete the project. Historic images will be reproduced for the inside and the CVB will help in providing brochures and marketing material for Russell County businesses and attractions. It will be a great amenity for our community members and visitors. We thank everyone that donated or provided funds.

## Historic Recognition

The Russell County Historical Society welcomes the Gernon House to the listing on the Register of Historic Kansas Places and is on the state's official list of properties deemed significant to our past.



The Nicholas Gernon house was also nominated and accepted to be on the National Register of Historic Places.

The Gernon House. Nicholas Gernon, one of the colonists to settle Russell, built Gernon House in 1872. In 1871, Gernon, a blacksmith, came with The Northwest Colony from Ripon, Wisconsin to establish a new community. Gernon and other colonists lived in the railroad boxcars that brought them until they could build their homes.

Due to the lack of available trees and lumber, the colonists were forced to use local limestone for construction. Many of these homes are still in service, as well as the courthouse, Fossil Station Museum, schools, and other prominent buildings. The walls in many cases measure over 24" thick. Several sidewalks were laid using limestone and are still visible today.

The house has been beautifully restored to its original condition and is a must see for visitors. The house is in need of painting and if you or your organization are interested, please notify the historical society. Donations to this project can qualify you for historic tax credits as well. The Gernon Blacksmith Shop site is adjacent to the house and a beautiful visitors center, Russell Rotary Splash pad, and historic play area named the Henri Wenthe Play Park are located where the site of the Blacksmith Shop once was.

## Oil Patch Damage

Damage to an Oil Patch artifact is a result of a catapulting semi-truck tire flying off the interstate at some unknown time in January. We are fortunate the building was not hit for the damage would have been substantial.



The Historical Society cannot run efficiently without volunteers. Volunteers do a wide variety of projects. From making archival materials accessible to the public, add artifact records to our database, host visitors at the museums, and help with school groups and events held at the museum.

## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES...

**Landscape or building checks and maintenance**

**Gernon House Painting**

**Historic information research and compilation.**

**Video & Interview Creators**

**We have a few projects suited for a group or organization that has muscle to move stored items to a new location.**

*Your time and talent is needed and welcomed.*

Call either **785-483-6640**  
or **785-483-3637**  
email: **rchs@russellks.net**  
for more information.

*Remember...you are making history today.  
Become a member of Russell County Historical Society!*



Prairie Heritage Educational Demonstrations

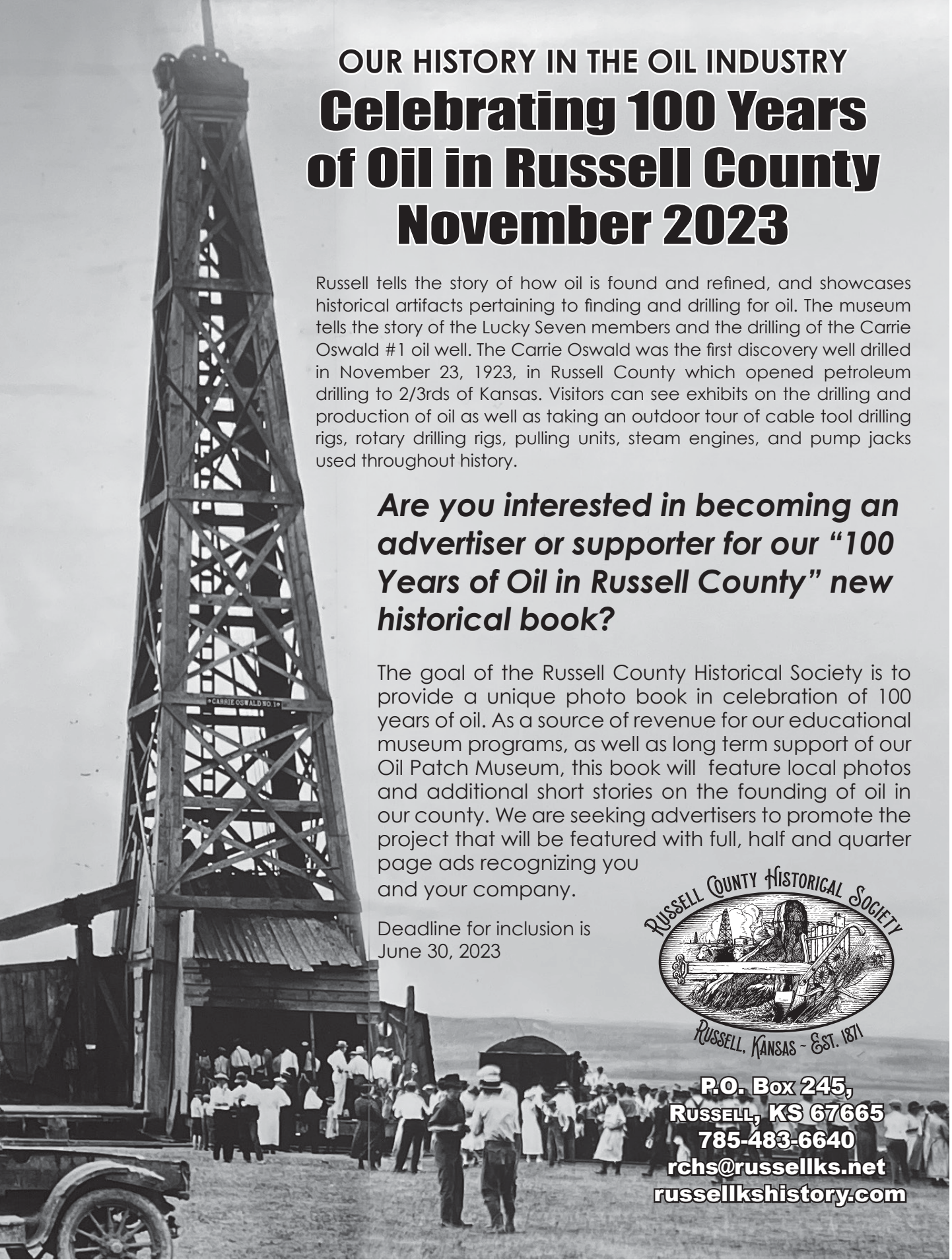
# Butter Making, Wash Day & Buttons

A huge thanks to the teachers and the school district for letting the kids participate. The Deines Cultural Center for hosting some of the demonstrations. These demonstrations are made possible by donors like you and our wonderful volunteers, Anne Coady, Patty Driscoll, Julie Bernard, Jill Stoughton, Mari Purdy, Susan Krug and those not mentioned.

*Thank -you*







# OUR HISTORY IN THE OIL INDUSTRY **Celebrating 100 Years of Oil in Russell County November 2023**

Russell tells the story of how oil is found and refined, and showcases historical artifacts pertaining to finding and drilling for oil. The museum tells the story of the Lucky Seven members and the drilling of the Carrie Oswald #1 oil well. The Carrie Oswald was the first discovery well drilled in November 23, 1923, in Russell County which opened petroleum drilling to 2/3rds of Kansas. Visitors can see exhibits on the drilling and production of oil as well as taking an outdoor tour of cable tool drilling rigs, rotary drilling rigs, pulling units, steam engines, and pump jacks used throughout history.

***Are you interested in becoming an advertiser or supporter for our "100 Years of Oil in Russell County" new historical book?***

The goal of the Russell County Historical Society is to provide a unique photo book in celebration of 100 years of oil. As a source of revenue for our educational museum programs, as well as long term support of our Oil Patch Museum, this book will feature local photos and additional short stories on the founding of oil in our county. We are seeking advertisers to promote the project that will be featured with full, half and quarter page ads recognizing you and your company.

Deadline for inclusion is  
June 30, 2023



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# RUSSELL MAIN STREET LAMP POST WALKING TOUR

*This guide was originally created by Russell Main Street, Inc.,  
which funded the Lamp Posts in Russell through donations.*

1. This memorial pays tribute to all Russell County Veterans who served their country. American Legion William Roe Post No. 99 Veterans Day Nov. 11, 2000.

2. Elmer Steinle - Thank you from your American Legion Friends of William Roe Post No. 99 Veterans Day Nov 11, 2000.

3. County - Russell County was Established, July 18, 1872. The Governor appointed the first Russell County Commissioners. The County Courthouse was located in Bunker Hill. Russell had the majority in the April 23, 1874, election and was declared the county seat. County officers were ordered to move all property belonging to Russell County.

4. Russell County Convention & Visitors Bureau - The CVB actively promotes Russell County attractions worldwide. The Russell County CVB receives its operating funds from a transient guest tax collected by the motels, hotels, inns and bed and breakfast establishments located throughout the county.

5. Robert and Lyla (Prater) Schmitt - We picked placement in front of the church where we were both baptized confirmed and married. St. John Lutheran Church has been an important part of our lives. The family farm south of Gorham, where we have spent most of our lives, is also rich in history. The Butterfield Overland Dispatch passed north of our farmstead.

6. The Horns of Russell, Fred M. and Bertha Henning Horn; Emanuel and Mary Milberger Dumler; Karl F. and Winifred Horn; Max P. Horn and Whilmetta Dumler Horn; Willima D. Horn.

7. To Alice Mills "Teacher" was high praise. She was proud and humble

almost to a fault. Alice had a way with words most of us Would "Die" for. To her legion of friends, she was a Legend. Her ability to recall names, lineage, and personal data was uncanny. Alice married Chet Mills. They enjoyed their short life together.

8. Jane Holland - For my son, Andrew C. Holland, and my daughter Jill A. Holt.

9. Alva and Margaretta Billings, Pioneer Oil and Gas operators lived in Russell from the mid 1930's to their respective deaths in 1950 and 1971. They loved Russell and everything about it. Their sons, Richard and Bob Billings, grew up in the family home at 120 Elm Street.

10. Masonic Lodge 177 - In memory of all past Master Masons and dedicated to all future Master Masons.

11. In Memory of Wilbur H. Morris, Sr. and Beulah B. Morris who in addition to an optometric practice of 26 years were active members of the First Methodist Church, W.S.C.S, Eastern Star, Masonic Lodge and Rotary International. By Dale M. Morris and Dr. W.H. Morris Jr.

12. The Ralph Jordan Family.

13. In Loving Memory of LaVern Becker by his wife, children, and grandchildren. Lavern Becker was a farmer and stockman in southern Russell County but took an active interest in the activities of The City of Russell and Russell County. He served as County Commissioner; Chamber of Commerce Director; Prairiesta Chairman; Main Street Board of Directors and 4-H Fair Board and Development Board.

14. David Ochs, 1987-1945, was born on a homestead farm in Southern Russell County, the son of Volga German immigrants. As a young man he acquired a business education in



photo by Susan Shank

Salina, then he served in the Army in World War I. Shortly after returning home, he left his farming interests and entered the automobile business with Victor P. Dolecek. In 1923 they obtained a Chevrolet franchise, later building a dealership at 7th and Kansas streets. David bought out his partner in 1939 and continued the business until his untimely death, He was greatly loved and respected by many, including. His five children, Ruth, Lawrence, Harlan, Kenneth, and Donald.

15. Dedicated to the faithful customers and employees that had made our business a success for the past 20 years and a Sears store and Hometown Brand Center. With deep appreciation to all, Richard and Anna Cross.

16. Roger William - Williams was mayor of the City of Russell from 1965 through 1985. He held city, state, and national offices during his time in Russell. Roger's greatest interests were his family, the First Christian Church, and the City of Russell.



# RUSSELL MAIN STREET LAMP POST WALKING TOUR

17. KRSL AM 990 Established 1956  
KCAV FM 95.9 Established 1965, Owner  
at the time West Central Radio General  
Manager Wayne Grabbe Russell County  
Man of the Year 1999.

18. In this native limestone and brick  
building in 1881, The L. Banker Merc.  
Co. was founded by Louis "Lou"  
Banker. Through wars, depressions, dust  
storms, oil booms and harvests Banker's  
was one of Russell's leading merchants.  
Housewives, farmers, oil patch hands  
and school children were our customers  
and were greeted as friends; For many  
they experienced buying on credit for  
the first time. On rare but necessary  
occasions even short-term cash loans  
were made to those in need. From  
christening to final rest, Banker's was the  
place to purchase all the family clothing  
and home furnishing needs., From  
the beginning; management and their  
employees were always enthusiastic  
supporters of any activities that were for  
the betterment of Russell. Bankers was  
always a hometown store.

19. G.W. and Maggie Barr Holland;  
Clifford R. and Lucile Heym Holland;  
Georgiana W. and D. Frank Bell; Herbert  
N. and Helen Shaffer Holland; Michael  
S. and Nancy Gaines Holland; Catherine  
and Georgia Holland.

20. Russell "Newsly" Townsley  
Curmudgeon, donated by Russ Townsley.

21. R.J. "Rudy" and Hermine (Deines) Woelk. Rudy was  
a prominent Russell Businessman and civic leader. He  
was active in the Chamber of Commerce chairing various  
committees., A past commander of the American  
Legion and president of the local Kiwanis club. He also  
headed one of Russell's oldest business firms started by  
his father in the early 1870's, Woelk Implement.

22. Alvina S. Deines (1909-1988) was born and raised in  
Russell County, Kansas. She was the eighth child of G.J.  
and Catherine Deines. As a young woman, she, along  
with her brother Hubert, spent a number of years on  
the staff of the Kansas City Star newspaper. She later  
returned to Russell to manage the family home, where  
she resided for the rest of her life. Alvina worked in the  
Deines Brothers Furniture business and was well-known  
in the community. She was a scholar of culture and  
history and was an active member of Russell's Prairie  
Study Club. Alvina never married but devoted most of  
her life to caring for her family and others.



photo by Susan Shank

23. Loren Dinkel for faithful service  
to his community. Russell City  
Council. 1977-1985; Russell Mayor  
1985- 1977 General Manager AGCO  
Inc. 1985-1996.

24. In Memory of Doran and Bina  
Dole-donated by Senator Bob Dole.

25. In Memory of O. H. "Herb"  
and Bertha Deines from their  
loving family.

26. Fern G. Moore was born, 1915, in  
Russell, Kansas: The youngest of the  
ten children of G.J. and Catherine  
Deines. In 1938 she married Russell  
businessman, Paul Moore. They  
were married 59 years and had one  
child: Kathleen born in 1948. Fern  
was active in the community and  
in the Deines family businesses for  
most of her life. She was a member  
of the First Congregational Church  
and served on the Board of Directors  
of the Deines Cultural Center until  
her death, age 81, in 1991.

27. Ruth Ochs Wolfe, 1920-1988, a  
Russell native and lifelong resident,  
actively volunteered her time and  
services to most worthwhile facets  
of community life, and was a  
staunch friend to many in the area,  
especially those in need, lonely or  
in sorrow. In 1980 she was named

Russell County "Man of the Year". Her husband, Donald  
E. Wolfe, moved from Oklahoma in 1937 to Russell,  
adopted it as his beloved home, and became a longtime  
local sports booster and a respected retired member of  
the Kansas oil industry. Ruth and Don were married in  
the Chapel of Trinity Methodist Church, 6th and Main,  
in 1939.

28. Donors: Jerome and June Deines are graduates of  
Russell High School and were married in Russell. They  
have three children and presently are residents and in  
business in Pauls Valley, OK. Jerome's parents (Mr. and  
Mrs. Bernhardt Deines) were engaged in farming south  
of Russell. June's Parents (Mr. and Mrs. Amos Norris)  
were engaged in the oilfield business in Russell (The  
Norris Tool Co.).

29. Bud and Barney Roberts.

30. In Memory of Charles W. and Catherine H. Shaffer,  
Daughter Helen M. Holland, Son Wilmer R. (Bub). He  
was a member of the "Lucky Seven" - Promoted the first  
oil well in Russell County.



# RUSSELL MAIN STREET LAMP POST WALKING TOUR

31. Anthony "Tony" Witt and Ethel M. Waudby Witt started their marriage on a farm southeast of Gorham, Kansas. When the oil boom hit Russell County, Tony had the courage and foresight to independently drill his own wells on his own land. With his success, he invested in land. He moved his family of six children, Evelyn Meckel, Beatrice Davis, Ellen Grass, Lorraine Wilson, Anthony Jr., and Cecil to Russell in 1933. In 1940, he built a beautiful large home on First and Main Street in Russell.

32. Father Charles L. Steier "Father Charlie"- Unless the Lord guard the city in vain does the guard keep vigil PSALMS 127:2.

33. Donald H. Dumler b. 3-18-1928. Third child of John and Amelia (Herdt) Dumler. 1946 graduate of RHS and served in the US Navy from 1950-1954 as part of the FT2 Fox Div. aboard the USS Rochester (CA-124). In 1956 he married Beverly Layton. He was the father of Nancy Lynn (b. 1967) and David Layton (b.1970). He worked at JC Penney and owned Baskin Robbins for 31 years. He was a Christian, a singer, a volunteer, a gardener, a husband, and a dad.

34. John O. Farmer, Inc. Gas and Oil Producers in Russell County since 1946. A family business founded by John O. Farmer II (1910-1989). The current President and Chairman of the Board is John O. Farmer III. The current Vice-President is John O. Farmer IV. Mary Lyczak and Victor Lyczak II are members of the board. Rosemary Farmer was a past member of the board.

35. Four Holland Generations of Law: George W., Herbert N., Michael S. and Michael S. II. Donated by: Michael S. and Nancy Gaines Holland; their children Michael S. II and Gene Gaines Holland.

36. In Loving memory of George W. and Maggie B. Holland, Russell Pioneers, From their grandson George W. Holland III.

37. GAMMA ZETA SORORITY was chartered in October of 1949 as GAMMA THETA, it started with 15 members. In 1978 they changed to an Exemplar Chapter and became GAMMA ZETA, and then in 1988 they became a Preceptor Chapter. Gamma Zeta Sorority is a branch of Beta Sigma Phi. With the money-making projects they contribute to many service needs in the Russell Community.

38. Cindy Ewing dedicates this lamp post to her parents Kate Lee and Ralph Ewing. Kate Lee Culbertson Ewing was raised in a pioneer family in Russell. She graduated from Russell High School in 1919. In 1937 she met and married Ralph and returned to Russell. Ralph worked for Banker's Dept Store and served as Russell County Clerk during the remodeling of the courthouse. They were team players supporting the arts, education, First Congregational Church and the Russell County Historical Society with their time, talents and resources, Kate Lee served as Russell's official city historian from 1982-1987.

39. In memory of Gottfried and Mollie Stricker by their children Rozella, Helen, Elmer, Lenetta, Harvey, Elsen, Glen, Bob, Mary Jane, Dean, Tom, Kathryn, Fritz.

40. UMB Bank has been a hallmark for financial products and services since 1879 when Rufus Crosby, a dry goods merchant in Valley Falls, KS., bought a small bank. That bank has expanded into UMB Financial Corporation, a multi-holding company with banking centers and offices across the Midwest with deep-seated values and strong ties to Russell, KS. In each of the Midwestern communities it serves, UMB still holds firmly to the virtue of sound, honest banking principles and a constant pursuit of innovation upon which it was built.

41. In Memory of Paul E. Ruggels 1928-2000 Chairman of the Board United National Bank (Southwind Bank). Loving husband, father and grandfather. A Man of honor.

42. Joe and Doss Schlageck, New Car Dealer, Real Estate Developers. Children, Tina - teacher; Joe Jr. - Doctor; and Susan - teacher and in real estate.

43. In loving memory of Bertha Henning Horn 1883-1975 and Frederick M. Horn 1876-1937 Parents of Max P. and Karl F. Horn immigrants from Germany in the late 1800's, proud to be citizens of Russell, Kansas.

44. Committed to Community Banking in Kansas. Sunflower Bank 740 Main Russell, Kansas.

45. Russ and Ruth Harvey - Russell, Kansas a community that works together through good and bad times; if you give your effort to it will repay tenfold; A Town That will never die.

46. Jim and Cheryl Line moved to Russell in 1963 with the Oil Industry; raised four children, Meridy, Rick, Steve, and Kristy. Jim was an Olympic athlete and Cheryl taught piano and accompanied numerous concerts and plays.

	NORTH	
9th	24	23
	25	22
	26	21
8th	27	20
	28	19
7th	29	18
	30	17
	31	16
	32	15
	33	14
6th	34	13
	35	12
	36	11
	37	10
5th	38	9
	39	8
	40	7
4th	41	6
	42	5
	43	
	44	4
	45	3
3rd	46	
	47	2
	48	
	49	1

Two Lamp posts at the City Pool, and One at the City Building



# RUSSELL MAIN STREET LAMP POST WALKING TOUR

47. The Shields Building site was originally the first Russell Hospital. When construction was completed on South Main, this hospital was converted to the Munsell Apartments until remodeled as offices for Shields Oil Producers in 1953. The refurbished building also housed Medical and Dental offices.

48. In loving Memory of Augusta Casing Crew-given by Fred J. Haynes.

49. Dr. Michael and Paula, Courtney and Christopher "Kit" Jones moved to Russell in 1989. Michael, originally from Livonia Mo. is a dentist. Paula, originally from Colby has been active "beautifying Russell one house at a time!" Our family feels very fortunate to have found Russell and to be a part of it. We have made many great friends. We are happy to

be able to give something back to the community.

50. Frank Perano, Public Works Director City of Russell 1955 to 1999, 44 years of dedicated service to the citizens of Russell, KS.

51. The first lamppost dedicated was to Earl L. Homewood, city Electric Director. Among the numerous electrical changes made under the direction of Homewood was an increase in power capacity from 17,500KW to 28,000KW, development of two industrial sites, a city loop, and the addition of two cooling towers. For his efforts and accomplishments in the municipal utility field statewide, he received the highest award given by Kansas Municipal Utilities, Inc., the Edgar P. Schowalter Award.

52. An Ornamental Lamppost is installed near the municipal swimming pool at Memorial Park in grateful appreciation of the generosity of Francis L. "Duke" Johnson. At "Duke's" death in 1984, he bequeathed the major portion of his estate in trust for the City of Russell to receive the income annually forever.

53. In Loving Memory of Karl and Winifred Horn "Proud to be from Kansas"



RUSSELL MAIN STREET INC.,  
director@russellmainstreet.com  
785-483-2897

## DOLE CELEBRATION

A new display "100 Dole photos" coming this July at Fossil Station Museum will present images from the public and museum artifacts. If you have any images or artifacts to share please contact us at the museum.

Landmark Celebration for a Legendary Leader, in Lawrence, KS - Dole Institute of Politics. July 22, 2023, marks 100 years since the birth of renowned Kansan, veteran, and statesmen, Senator Bob Dole. A two-day event featuring tributes, artwork and a promotional film are free programs and events for the public. Visit <https://doleinstitute.org> for more information.

## EXCITING NEWS!!!!

The Russell County Historical Society and Russell Specialty Books and Gifts have signed a contract with Arcadia Publishing to work together to produce a pictorial history of our amazing county. The book will be part of the Images of America series. It's all wonderful pictures with captions that tell the story of our county.

WE WOULD LOVE TO SEE YOUR PICTURES - The Historical Society has a fabulous bank of photos but that doesn't mean that we don't want to see YOURS too. If you have a picture that shows how people lived in times past - buildings, people at work, agriculture, energy, railroad, let your imagination be your guide.

Please look through your pictures and bring them to Russell Specialty Book and Gifts or email us the details of the original photo that you can get your hands on to [rchs@russellks.net](mailto:rchs@russellks.net) or [linda@russellbookstore.com](mailto:linda@russellbookstore.com) Please note our publisher wants crisp focus because otherwise it won't reproduce well. If you email us, be sure to include a phone number so we can get the story behind the picture as well

DO YOU WANT A COPY, HOT OFF THE PRESS? - The book isn't due to the publisher until September, but they are giving a very special discount if we pre-order at least 200 copies. We can get more if you've got a business or organization that would like to give them as member gifts, but the minimum is 200. Linda needs to hear from you whether you want to buy the book so she can decide how many to order.

FYI - All of the royalties from this book are going to the Historical Society, as are half of Russell Specialty Book and Gifts profits when they sell the book at the store so not only will you be getting a great book, but you'll be helping the Historical Society too.