

KCA History and Traditions (Archives) Committee Report
Executive Council (Board) Meeting
November 2, 2005
Harold Hula

I met with Robert Knecht, Head of the Archival Arrangements and Description Section of the Kansas State Historical Society Center for Historical Research in regard to KCA archives. He expressed an interest in their being the recipient of the archival records of our organization. Although they also maintain reference materials originating nationwide, their focus is on materials directly related to Kansas.

The procedures for donating archives and preserving and organizing the materials are virtually the same as at the Spencer Library at the University of Kansas; they are standard procedures typical of professional historical research centers. Both organizations require “committed donations” of the materials; they inventory the materials and replace the boxes and folders with acid free materials; they try to preserve the existing organizational structure (system) of the materials, make box and folder lists, write summary reviews, develop Indexes of Archival Materials, do some digitization as is appropriate and as time is available, and work cooperatively with other historical research centers. I will bring some examples of the summary materials done at the Kansas Center for Historical Research to our November 2, 2005, meeting.

We can add materials from time to time as they become available. In addition, the Center would accept not only the KCA archives but also Region and Division archives if they decide to donate their materials in the future. These Division and Region materials could be maintained with their own identity but also connected to KCA.

Just a side note: if we were concerned about public access to any sensitive material, (although it would seem that we have little need for concern), we could request “controlled access”. For example, we might be appropriately concerned if KCA had records concerning investigations of unethical practices.

The Kansas State Historical Society Center for Historical Research is located at the Kansas History Center, 6425 SW 6th Avenue, Topeka, Kansas, 66615. This location is just off of I-70 near the intersection of I-70 and Wanamaker Road (Exit 356). The research room is open from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday. (It is closed Sundays, Mondays and state holidays). There is a large parking lot, which serves both this Kansas Historical Research Center and the adjacent Kansas Museum of History.

If you need additional information, contact me at (785) 232-4611 or email hulahl@Mindspring.com, or you may contact any of the following people at the Kansas State Historical society: Robert L. Knecht, Head, Archival Arrangement and Descriptive Section, (785) 272-8681, Ext. 304; Nancy Sherbert, Curator of Photographs and Acquisitions Coordinator, (785) 272-8681, Ext. 303; or Patricia Michaelis, State Archivist, and Director, Library and Archives Division, (785) 272-8681, Ext. 270.

Recommendations

1. That the KCA Executive Council discuss and select an archival agency at the November 2, 2005, “Board” meeting.
2. That the decision be announced to the members, and that we try to solicit as many materials and records as possible prior to the initial deposit at the archival agency location
3. That our initial contribution should include at least one copy of all available 20th century documents and materials through the 1999-2000 year that are available, with few exceptions. KCA may need to maintain copies of some more recent records for newly elected officers and leaders. Also, we need time to determine how to maintain and export electronic records, membership directories, etc.
4. That we establish a list of any items that should be excluded from the archival repository. My perception is that almost everything can go into the archival repository over time, but, for example, I want to be sure that it is appropriate for Charters and all financial records to be deposited. We can always add to the archives. It is difficult if not impossible to remove items.
5. That each year, a President’s Book be completed and, upon completion, a copy be forwarded to the Archives. This Book would include copies of officers and committee reports, relevant correspondence, programs, convention materials, and other material which the President would like to include., that would provide a summary of that year.

6. That we phase in a five-year pattern with most annual records being maintained in KCA for 5 years and then a copy (preferably the original) be transported to the designated archival repository. For example, the officers and committees would keep their records for five (5) years and annually turn over the oldest record.

[The apparent redundancy of items 5 and 6 may need to be explained. The President's Book is a summary and represents the year's activity. The other records are more extensive and could be filed categorically so that the treasurer's reports, the convention reports, the awards committee reports, etc. could be filed in their category and a researcher can follow the flow of the activity in their area of interest. A person could pull the file of all of the Secretaries' reports or all of the Treasurers' records, and so on. This is consistent with our historical and contemporary way of maintaining records.]

7. That we permit some duplicate material storage. For example, if Emporia State University wishes to continue to maintain a location for selected KCA records, then that would be possible.