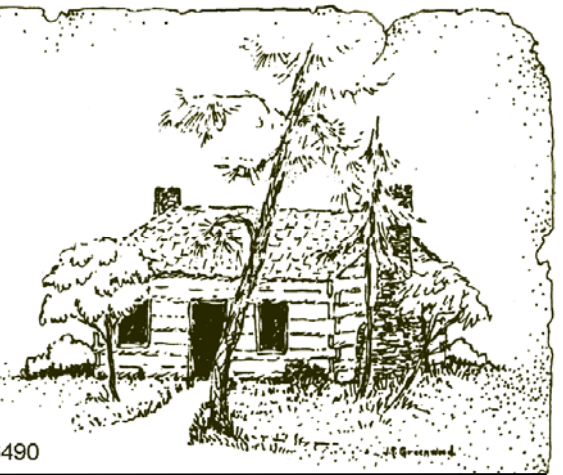


# The Riley County Historical Society and Museum

2309 Claflin Road Manhattan, Kansas 66502 Telephone: 785/565-6490



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## Rocky Ford School now on National and State Historic Registers

Rocky Ford School is now on the National Register of Historic Places. Originally built in 1903 as a replacement for an earlier structure, this one-room schoolhouse is a reminder of Riley County's 19th and early 20th century educational system. The school is a one-story, gable-roofed, native limestone struc-

ture exhibiting the vernacular style of many Midwestern country schools. After a 1927 fire destroyed all but the stone walls, the school was rebuilt in a manner to maintain its architectural integrity.

When you enter the furnished school through its west door, it is easy to imagine the teacher

at her desk welcoming students for the day. Rules for teachers and students are displayed in the entry along with pictures of students. One group photo dates to 1908.

In 1987 the Manhattan School District No. 383 gave the Rocky Ford School to the Riley County Historical Society. Founded in 1914, as

a non-profit organization incorporated in the State of Kansas, the Society collects, preserves, and displays historical records and items of Riley County and the State of Kansas by encouraging interest in local history. Its partial mission includes educating local and state citizens, including students.



We are forming a "Pals of the Rocky Ford School" to help with funds needed to work on walls. Donations can be mailed to the Riley County Museum, 2309 Claflin, Manhattan, KS, 66502. Please put "Rocky Ford School" in the subject line of your checks.

### Rocky Ford School

- Located near Manhattan Kansas
- 1967 Barnes Road, Intersection of Tuttle Creek Blvd. and Barnes Road
- Measures 38 x 26 feet
- Originally built in 1903
- Belongs to RCHS since 1987

## Some reminiscences from one-room school days

Here are some excerpts from letters we have received about attending a one-room school. These were not people who had attended Rocky Ford but were from one-room school attendance.

“I went kicking and screaming! My way of life was being changed by force.” My sister Virginia had gone to school for three years. She rode our horse “old pet”. I had always set in the saddle and reined Pet as I rode around our par-

ents pasture, but this time Dad set me behind the saddle. I stayed only after the real good “butt warming”, richly deserved. Dad's final words as we departed for school were, “If you don't mind the teacher and you get a spanking, you'll just think it was a spanking when you get home”.

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My first day was especially memorable. At the end of the morning classes when the noon hour

rolled around, our teacher reminded me that it was now time for me to run home for lunch. Looking around the room and noting that no one else was leaving, I stood my ground and emphatically shook my red-head 'No! The teacher advised me that the agreement was for half days only, at which point I lifted my little foot and kicked her right in the shins and then proceeded to spit at her! Luckily my dad was driving a

tractor in the field across from the school. (could he have anticipated trouble from his feisty little off-spring?) Brother ran through the field to get dad who arrived with a big grin on his face. He playfully flipped me up on his shoulder as we headed for the tractor and home. Despite all, I was allowed to continue and so at age five I went to kindergarten in a one-room school. Do you know.... I always loved school.

## Historical Society restoring and maintaining school

The RCHS is restoring and maintaining this old Rocky Ford school. Work has included removing vines on the exterior, replacing the roof, and repairing and installing glass doors in the school's built-in bookcases. A generous Riley County family recently donated a piano for the school room, and a flag now flies on the

school's flagpole during special occasions. Currently we are starting repair to the interior of the building by having the ceiling cracks and holes refinished. It has been in quite a mess and so have the side walls but only enough money has been generated to do the ceiling. We are planning to have some events this sum-

mer and fall. We hope all of you can come and see what remains to be done. Once the interior is finished, Riley County school children can once again attend the school to participate in historic schoolroom and playground activities and gain insight in historical experiences of youngsters of the past.

### If you attended a one-room school:

Consider sending Riley County Historical Society some school house memories to include in a teacher's booklet to share with today's students.

## Rocky Ford School events planned

We are planning to have a silent auction as a fund raiser at the next RCHS dinner on the April 17. See next page for more information on the dinner. We have several items that would

be wonderful additions to your cat connected collection from Rocky Ford.

Some events we are working on for the school will be an open

house mid-July and perhaps an October event for fall. You will get more information on dates as schoolhouse conditions become clear.

Please consider joining the Pals of Rocky Ford School. See form on back of this newsletter.

Committee members are: Arlene Hopkins, Rosalie Thompson, Doug Tippin, Glen Lojka, Jim Rhine, Dixie West, Herman Kastner, and Carolyn Kelly.

# Riley County Historical Society

## RCHS Quarterly Meeting April 17 features silent auction for school

There will be a silent auction at the Riley County Historical Society quarterly dinner meeting at Nelson's Landing in Leonardville on April 17. This silent auction will raise money for the Rocky Ford School. The dinner is at 6:30 p.m. The cost is \$15.50 per person. Call the Historical Museum for reservations or more information — 785-565-6490.

There will be a program after the dinner at approximately 7:15 p.m. on the history of Leonardville by Kevin Larson. Mr. Larson is past president of RCHS and current Trustee of the Museum. We hope everybody who is interested in Rocky Ford School will consider attending this event.



SCHOOL DAYS  
SCHOOL DAYS  
GOOD OLD  
GOLDEN RULE  
DAYS!

## Rural Schools of Riley County provides information on Rocky Ford School

*Rural Schools of Riley County*, written by Jim Bogart, Roger Brannan, Doris Setterquist, Charles Setterquist, and Doug Tip-pin provides the following information on school attendance, subjects taught, and test questions asked.

Students from the first to eighth grade attended the school, and subjects taught included orthogra-

phy, grammar, reading, geography, writing and arithmetic. In 1895 12 students attended the school, and the teacher earned \$30.00 per month. Classes were held on a six-month basis. Seventeen young scholars attended the school in 1929, and the teacher received \$100 per month for an eight-month teaching period. By 1945 a mere 10 students were en-

rolled, and a grand total of 78 volumes filled the library shelves.

Eighth graders of the past were required to take a test at the county seat before they could advance to high school. Listed are some of the questions asked.

1. Give the advantages to you of writing a neat, rapid and legible hand.
2. Name five selections in

Eighth Grade Classics studied this year and the author of each.

3. Explain States Rights, Nullification, and Succession.
4. Write two simple, two complex, and two compound sentences.
5. State the number of cubic feet in a ton of thoroughly settled hay. Give the rule for finding the hay in a mow.

Riley County Historical Society  
2309 Claflin Road  
Manhattan, KS 66502

### **PALS OF ROCKY FORD SCHOOL 2012**

You are invited to become a Pal of Rocky Ford School. A \$25 minimum for yearly membership is to help with the funds to restore the building. Any other donation you wish to contribute is much appreciated.

\_\_\_\_\_ \$25.00

\_\_\_\_\_ Other

All donations are tax deductible.

Please make your check to Riley Co. Historical Society and designate "Pals of Rocky Ford School" in the subject line. Mail to Riley County Historical Society, 2309 Claflin Road, Manhattan, Kansas 66502

Indicate your name as you wish it to appear in RCHS publications.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

Please check if you would like your donation to be anonymous: \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for caring about our one room school.