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People

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PEOPLE

*“The one thing the Indian came nearer owning than any other, was the prairie.
He cast his shadow over that as the hawk did or the buffalo.
He and his inseparable pony dashed along like an arrow.”*

THE PRAIRIE AND THE SEA BY WILLIAM A. QUAYLE, 1905

For good or for ill, people have left their imprint on the Flint Hills, in the process contributing stories that help us understand our own influence over and responsibility toward this last remnant of tallgrass prairie. Some of these people and their stories are found in the essays in this section. Historian for the Osage Nation, Kathleen Auschwitz, tells of a buffalo hunting trail and a trading post that became the town of Towanda, while Crystal Douglas, Director of the Kanza Museum and Tribal Historic Preservation Officer, provides insight into the history of the people for whom our state is named. Although kafir corn is never grown in Kansas anymore, Joyce Thierer describes the heyday of this drought-resistant crop, which the people of Butler County celebrated by establishing a festival in its honor. After oil was discovered in Butler and Greenwood counties, boomtowns, with their distinctive cultures, sprang up, as described in an article by Christy Davis. Poet H.C. Palmer evokes the spirit of these boomtowns turned ghost towns. One of the more colorful characters to come out of Kansas was John R. Brinkley, the goat-gland doctor of Milford. Jan Farrar, a native of the Rosalia area, describes the competing clinics set up in Rosalia by Brinkley and his former associate, Dr. O.M. Owensby. Countyman’s Rodeo was a local institution in northeast Butler County for some three decades. Jim Hoy explains why this pasture rodeo evoked the romance and excitement of horses and cowboys for so many people. Sandy Dorsey first visited Teter Rock as a child. This monolith, depicted in a painting by Phil Epp, is a local landmark erected to honor one person but representing a way of life. The final article shares information about the Gottsch Ranches and their founder, Bob Gottsch.

OPPOSITE PAGE: READY FOR RAIN
Judith Mackey