

Kansas Ornithological Society

BULLETIN

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HISTORY OF THE KANSAS ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

By Margaret F. Boyd

On April 28 and 29, 1973 the Kansas Ornithological Society observed its Silver Anniversary of Annual Spring Meetings. The spring meeting of 1974 will conclude the first twenty-five years of the organization. It seems appropriate that a research of the records be made for a presentation of its history.

During the 1940's several bird clubs were active throughout Kansas. Individual members from these clubs became acquainted in various ways — perhaps a newspaper article, or while observing birds in one another's territory, or while attending Kansas Academy of Science meetings.

As one Charter Member expresses it, "Each time we got together we talked of the need for a State Organization. Some of us had been members of such an organization in other states and that experience strengthened the desire for one to be formed in Kansas. The interest was established, so it took some forceful individual such as Charles G. Sibley, then Director of The Museum of Natural History at University of Kansas at Lawrence, to get the action started."

Initiated by Dr. Sibley, the first formal organizational meeting was held on Sunday afternoon April 3, 1949 in the office of L. B. Carson at the Central National Bank in Topeka with C. G. Sibley, L. B. Carson, I. L. Boyd, H. M. Hedges, A. L. Goodrich, R. F. Miller, and E. M. Nuss in attendance.

The following form letter dated April 13 was mailed to persons across the state who had shown an interest in ornithology.

Dear Colleague:

A statewide ornithological society in Kansas has long been a matter of discussion among those persons interested in birds. Many have expressed the opinion that it is time to translate the discussion into action. In order to take the initial step the undersigned group recently met and discussed the formation of such an organization. Before proceeding further it seems proper to contact as many interested persons as possible in order to determine the wishes of the majority. Would you therefore fill out the accompanying questionnaire and return it to Dr. Charles G. Sibley, Museum of Natural History, University of Kansas, Lawrence, who has agreed to serve as chairman pro-tem for the "Committee".

On Friday, April 29, 1949 at 4:00 p.m. a meeting of all persons interested in forming a Kansas Ornithological Society will be held at Kansas State College, Manhattan. This meeting has been scheduled for this time and place so that persons attending the meetings of the Kansas Academy of Science (Zoology section) can be present.

"Committee for Organization"

Ivan L. Boyd, Baldwin

L. B. Carson, Topeka

Harold C. Hedges, Kansas City

R. F. Miller, Baldwin

E. M. Nuss, Topeka

Charles G. Sibley, Lawrence

The organizational meeting was held as planned at Fairchild Hall, at the close of a Kansas Academy of Science session. In attendance were members and officers of various bird clubs, professors, students and interested persons who had learned of the meeting. Dr. Sibley called the meeting to order and stated the purpose of the meeting. He served as chairman by common consent and appointed E. Maurice Nuss of Topeka to serve as secretary pro-tem. The name "Kansas Ornithological Society" was adopted. Committees were formed for Nominating, Membership and Constitution and By-Laws. The date for the next meeting was set. Of the 36 persons present, seven have continued their interest in the organization to date: I. L. Boyd, H. T. Gier, R. F. Miller, Phil Menninger, E. M. Nuss, Richard Schmidt, and T. M. Sperry. Many of the other Founders were very active for years. Some are now deceased or have moved from the state.

Less than one month after the Organization meeting, the first annual meeting of The Kansas Ornithological Society was held in the Pine Room of the Student Union Building at the University of Kansas at Lawrence on May 21, 1949 at 3:00 p.m. Dr. E. Raymond Hall welcomed those assembled, on behalf of the University. Dr. Sibley served as temporary chairman and E. M. Nuss as temporary secretary. Dr. H. H. Harford read the constitution recommended by the committee. After due discussion on each of the 12 articles, they were adopted with the exception of Article 10 which was later rewritten.

The report of the Nominating Committee was read by Mr. Nuss. The following slate of officers was elected:

President - I. L. Boyd, Baldwin
Vice Pres. - H. T. Gier, Manhattan
Secretary - The Rev. Eugene W. Dehner, Atchison
Treasurer - L. B. Carson, Topeka
Editor - C. G. Sibley, Lawrence
Couneilors - Harold Hedges, Kansas City
Theodore Sperry, Pittsburg
Wm. R. Eastman, Jr., Hays
Ted Andrews, Emporia

One item of business considered was the question of affiliation with Kansas Academy of Science. Although this affiliation never transpired, K.O.S. has met each year the weekend following K.A.S. in the same town or one in close proximity.

It might be of interest that at this first meeting a picnic supper was served for \$1.00 per ticket. Due to rain the meal was re-scheduled from west of Potter Lake to the fourth floor of Dyche Museum. The Field Trip at 8:00 a.m. Sunday was a six car caravan to a booming ground of Prairie Chickens and to the Robinson Farm. There is no record of the species seen.

Sixty persons attended the first annual meeting and 139 persons paid dues the first year to qualify as Charter Members. Of these 139, twenty-three remain on the Membership Roll as of April 1973. They are: Amelia Betts, Ivan Boyd, Margaret Boyd, Helen Chewning, Elizabeth Cole, Henry Fitch, Wilma Gier, H. T. Gier, Raymond Hall, Mary Hall, Mrs. C. S. Hobson, Katharine Kelley, Grace Holcomb, Philip Menninger, R. F. Miller, E. M. Nuss, Esther O'Conner, Frank Robl, Richard Schmidt, T. M. Sperry, Bernice Tatum, Alexander Wetmore, Elizabeth Schnemayer (who passed away April 17, 1973).

The membership record grew from 139 Charter members to over 200 by 1956, 300 by 1957 and to 355 for 1973. Dues were \$1.00 in 1949. Sustaining Memberships at \$5.00 began in 1952 and advanced to \$6.00 in 1970. Regular dues advanced to \$2.00 in 1961 and to \$3.00 in 1967. Life Memberships began in 1968 at \$100.00 each, with 12 such paid members in the spring of 1973. Katharine Kelley was the first Life Member.

The office of Librarian was an addition in 1972 "with all scientific papers belonging to the Society deposited in the Dyche Reading Room, Museum of Natural History, the University of Kansas, Lawrence. Said publications available on loan to the Society members."

Date	Locality	Attendance	Species	Weather
12-10-50	Lake Quivira	34	45	cold
11-04-51	Topeka	22	66	rain
10-26-52	Baldwin	62	78	cold
11-01-53	Manhattan	50	59	good
10-10-54	Lake Quivira		108	clear
10-23-55	Lawrence	80	78	clear
10-28-56	Mound City		79	good
10-27-57	Lawrence		87	cool
10-19-58	Topeka	62	79	warm
10-11-59	Emporia	73	87	cloudy
10-02-60	Cheyenne Bottoms	86	93	good
11-12-61	Wyandotte Lake	75	72	cloudy
09-30-62	Cheyenne Bottoms	65	102	rain
09-29-63	Kirwin Nat'l. W. Ref.	44	70	cold
10-04-64	Marais des Cygnes	63	75	clear
09-26-65	Cheyenne Bottoms	68	115	foggy
09-25-66	Dodge City	25	74	
10-15-67	Lovewell Reservoir	63*	92	rain
09-29-68	Cheyenne Bottoms	113	131	good
10-11-69	Neosho Nat'l. W. Ref.	45	82	rain
09-27-70	Cheyenne Bottoms	140	134	good
09-26-71	Cheyenne Bottoms	100	125	good
09-27-72	Cheyenne Bottoms	128	110	good
09-23-73	Cheyenne Bottoms	115	136	good

**combined trip with Nebraska Ornithologists Union (26 people)*

Table 1. Data for first 24 annual fall field trips of Kansas Ornithological Society.

Spring meetings have been held in twelve cities — Lawrence (five times), Manhattan (four), Topeka (three), Emporia, Hays and Wichita (two each), and once each at Atchison, Baldwin, Pittsburg, Junction City, and Winfield (Table 2).

The first Fall Meeting was held at Lake Quivira on December 10, 1950 with 34 participants reporting 45 species. The highest composite list to date is 136 species compiled by 115 persons in attendance at Cheyenne Bottoms in 1973. Fall meetings have been held at fourteen different sites — seven trips to Cheyenne Bottoms, two to Lake Quivira, Topeka and Lawrence and one each to Baldwin, Manhattan, Mound City, Emporia, Wyandotte Lake, Kirwin National Wildlife Refuge, Marais des Cygnes Refuge, Dodge City, Lovewell Reservoir and Neosho Waterfowl Refuge (Table 1).

The highest Spring Count was 154 species at Junction City on May 7, 1967. A composite list of all species seen on spring counts shows a total of 252 species and about 241 species appear on a composite list of all fall counts. The yearly record of species seen is given in Tables 1 and 2.

The first publication of the K.O.S. Bulletin was in April 1950 with A. L. Goodrich as Editor pro-tem, since Charles Sibley, elected to the office, had by then moved to California. This issue was devoted entirely to the 1949 Mid-winter Bird Count reporting on the 14 stations that had 92 species and a total of 18,852 individuals. The 1973 Count had 26 stations with 137 species and 689,000 individuals. The second issue, printed in December 1950, had a photograph of those who attended and an account of the Second Annual Meeting which was held in Topeka. Since 1950, (only two issues published), there have been four issues each year, except in 1951 and 1956 when only three were published.

The first issue of the K.O.S. Newsletter was sent out in October 1963 with Max Thompson as Assistant Editor. Fifty-two issues have now appeared. Since 1967 the Newsletter has had its own editor, with Charles Ely and Max Thompson serving in this capacity.

DATES	CITY	LOCATION	ATTENDANCE Program F. Trip	Bird Species	Field Trip Weather
5-21, 22-49	Lawrence	KU			
4-29, 30-50	Topeka	Municipal Aud.	60	105	
4-21, 22-51	Manhattan	KSU	40	106	
4-19, 20-52	Newton	Bethel College	92	55	105
4-18, 19-53	Emporia	KSTC	64	40	125
5-01, 02-54	Hays	FHKSC	74	50	93
5-07, 08-55	Atchison	St. Benedict's			132
4-28, 29-56	Wichita	Wichita U			114
5-04, 05-57	Manhattan	KSU	105	95	131
5-03, 04-58	Baldwin	Grade School	116	90	135
5-02, 03-59	Lawrence	KU	100	80	142
5-07, 08-60	Pittsburg	KSC	91	50	132
4-29, 30-61	Topeka	Washburn U	109	80	123
5-05, 06-62	Wichita	Wichita U	65	75	127
5-04, 05-63	Lawrence	KU	78	70	135
5-02, 03-64	Emporia	KSTC	75	60	112
5-08, 09-65	Manhattan	KSU	102	105	129
5-07, 08-66	Topeka	Jayhawk Hotel	100	50	132
5-06, 07-67	Junction City	Ramada Inn	117	75	155
5-04, 05-68	Lawrence	KU	100	70	140
5-03, 04-69	Newton	Bethel College	141	90	139
5-02, 03-70	Winfield	Southwestern	126	96	144
5-01, 02-71	Manhattan	KSU	85	75	138
4-29, 30-72	Hays	FHKSC	91	67	113
4-28, 29-73	Lawrence	KU		85	111

Table 2. Data for first 25 annual spring meetings of Kansas Ornithological Society.

Year	President	Vice President	Secretary	Membership Secretary	Treasurer*	Bulletin Editors	Newsletter Editors
1949	Boyd	Gier	Dehner		Carson	Goodrich	
1950	Gier	M. Baker	Dehner		Carson	Boyd	
1951	Hedges	Andrews	Dehner		Carson	Boyd- Sperry	
1952	Andrews	Wooster	Dehner		Carson	Boyd	
1953	Wooster	Dehner	R. Baker		Carson	Boyd	
1954	Dehner	Porter	R. Baker		Carson	M. Baker	
1955	Sperry	Porter	Beals		Carson	M. Baker	
1956	Carson	Schwilling	Beals		Dingus	Tordoff- Hardy	
1957	Carson	Schwilling	Beals		Dingus	Tordoff- Hardy	
1958	Schwilling- Butin	Butin-Rice	Beals		Dingus	Hardy	
1959	Butin	Rice	Betts		Carson	Johnston- Barlow	
1960	Rice	Cole	Betts		Carson	Johnston- Barlow	Gaunt
1961	Rice	Cole	Betts		Carson	Johnston- Barlow	Gaunt
1962	Cole	Johnson	Betts		Carson	Johnston- Barlow	Gaunt
1963	Cole	Johnson	Betts		Carson	Johnston- Klass	Gaunt- Thompson
1964	Johnson	Parmelee	Holmes	Betts	Carson	Johnston- Klass	Rising
1965	Johnson	Parmelee	Holmes	Betts	Carson	Johnston- Klass	Rising
1966	Schwilling	Zimmerman	Holmes	Betts	Carson	Johnston- Klass	Rising
1967	Zimmerman	White	Holmes	Betts	Rice	Johnston- Rising	Ely
1968	Zimmerman	White	Challans	Betts	Rice	Johnston- Jackson	Ely
1969	Platt	Ely	Challans	Betts	Lewis	Ely	Thompson
1970	White	Ely	Fauhl	Betts	Lewis	Ely	Thompson
1971	White	Thompson	Fauhl	Betts	Lewis	Ely	Thompson
1972	Thompson	Platt	Franklin	Betts	Lewis	Ely	Thompson
1973	Thompson	Platt	Schulenberg	Betts	Lewis	Ely	Thompson

*Also Resident Agent for Kansas Ornithological Society Inc. during and after 1959.

Table 3. Officers of the Kansas Ornithological Society, 1949-1974.

The first Conducted Tour was sponsored in 1972. Eight K.O.S. members with Max Thompson as Leader went on a three week African Safari in August. Read the interesting account of the trip in issue 45 of the Newsletter.

The Horned Lark was adopted as K.O.S. Emblem at the Third Annual Meeting. Dr. Wayne Trimm, Manhattan, designed the cut which made its debut on the September 1951 cover of the Bulletin and is used on the Society's letterheads and membership cards.

The Society became incorporated in 1958 and each treasurer has acted as Resident Agent. During these first 25 years, 95 persons have served the organization as officers: for President, 17 men and women, seven of whom served two years; for Vice President, 17 men and women, with eight serving two years; for Secretary, 9 men and women, with one serving for five years, three for four years each, two for two years each and two for one year each; as Membership Secretary, one woman has served all ten years.

For Treasurer four men have served, with L. B. "Buck" Carson serving 15 years. Having also served two one-year terms as president, Mr. Carson also had the longest record of service in the organization, 17 years. Amelia Betts, presently serving her 15th year, has the second highest record.

As Editor of the *Bulletin*, Richard F. Johnston, one of seven editors, served 10 years. He was assisted by seven men, with two serving four years, two serving two years, and three serving one year each. As Newsletter Editor, two men have served, one for four years and one for two years. The office of Librarian, established in 1972, has been served by one woman.

Councilors, later known as Directors, number 42 men and women with H. T. Gier having served the longest with 8 years. Since 1951 the immediate Past President remained on the Council for one additional year. In 1970 the Council increased in numbers with the addition of appointive officers (*Newsletter* Editor) and Committee Chairmen, (Conservation, Membership, Publicity and Kansas Check List). Various officers are listed in Table 3.

Various other facets of the organization might be given in recording its history. Each might hold a specific interest for certain individual members. It might be the "10 Best Birds of the Year" list, outstanding programs, programs of banquet speakers, prominent visiting ornithologists, or special projects supported through the years. However, space does not permit this additional coverage.

These statistics are the cold facts of progress. The spirit of the organization is found in its purpose thus expressed; "to promote the study of ornithology, to advance the members in ornithological science, to promote conservation and to publish ornithological papers in the *K.O.S. Bulletin*." The purpose is fulfilled through involvement in conservation, field trips, mid-winter counts, inspiring and informative programs at each annual meeting and by sharing experiences through the *Bulletin* and *Newsletter*. A by-product of all these endeavors is the friendships which are made over the years.

The Founders and Charter Members who conceived and initiated the organization and all others as they joined its ranks have had a part in the history of The Kansas Ornithological Society. Through their cooperation, K.O.S. was privileged to celebrate its Silver Anniversary Annual Spring Meeting on the same campus as that of the first meeting but under considerably changed circumstances, such as a new wing of the Museum of Natural History, larger attendance and higher prices. However, the feeling of cordiality, singleness of purpose and zeal for more knowledge and keener understanding of bird life have not wavered from the intent of the Founders.

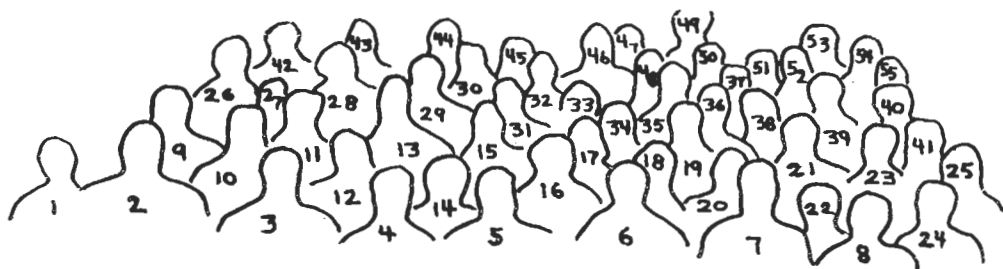


Figure 1. First Annual Meeting of Kansas Ornithological Society, Lawrence, Kansas, May 21, 1949.

- 1) Arthur Bridwell, 2) Harold Hedges, 3) Charles Sibley, 4) Ivan Boyd, 5) L. B. Carson, 6) H. T. Gier, 7) Eugene Dehner, 8) T. M. Sperry, 9) H. Wayne Trimm, 10) ?, 11) ?, 12) E. Maurice Nuss, 13) David Gordon, 14) Roberta Foote, 15) Arthur Goodrich, 16) Grace Holcombe, 17) ? 18) Elizabeth Fisher, 19) Rollin Baker, 20) Esther McWirter, 21) H. M. Harford, 22) Bernice Tatum, 23) Mrs. H. M. Harford, 24) Mary T. Harman, 25) Esther O'Connor, 26) ?, 27) Henry S. Fitch, 28) John Bishop, 29) Roger Olmstead, 30) Robert M. Hankins, 31) Wallace Good, 32) ?, 33) Mary E. Weeks, 34) ? 35) ?, 36) Richard Schmidt, 37) Margaret Fredrickson, 38) Mrs. Richard Schmidt, 39) Richard Harder, 40) Elizabeth Cole, 41) Margaret Boyd, 42) Otto Tiemeier, 43) M. Dale Arvey, 44) R. F. Miller, 45) Phil Menninger, 46) E. Raymond Hall, 47) Katharine Kelley, 48) T. W. Nelson, 49) ?, 50) ?, 51) Mary Hall, 52) Richard Fredrickson, 53) Helen Chewning, 54) Bert Chewning, 55) Dean Cole.

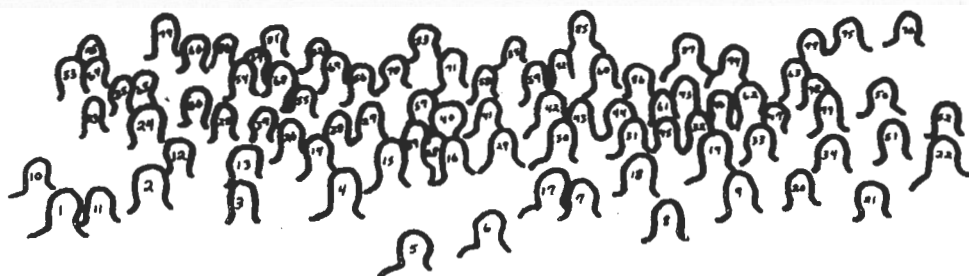


Figure 2. Twenty-fifth Annual Meeting of Kansas Ornithological Society, Lawrence, Kansas, April 28, 1973.

- 1) R. F. Miller, 2) Eugene Lewis, 3) Dwight Platt, 4) Charles Franklin, 5) Amelia Betts, 6) Jean Schulenberg, 7) Charles Ely, 8) Celia White, 9) Max Thompson, 10) Marion Mengel, 11) Margaret Schulenberg, 12) Ivan Boyd, 13) Ken Davidson, 14) Ron Klataske, 15) Mrs. Charles Ayers, Jr., 16) Charles Ayers, Jr., 17) Vin Leibengood, 18) Rebecca Leibengood, 19) Larry Nossaman, 20) Joan Challans, 21) Randy Willis, 22) Robert Mengel, 23) John Zimmerman, 24) "Woods", 25) Gary - Worthen, 26) Jerome Robins, 27) Calvin Cink, 28) Helen Franklin, 29) Katherine Hickok, 30) Stephen Hickok, 31) Robert LaShelle, 32) John LaShelle, 33) Grace Holcombe, 34) Dora Rennick, 35) Nicolai Riekstins, 36) Leide Riekstins, 37) Ruth Fauhl, 38) Eulalia Lewis, 39) Phebe Gates, 40) Pearl Dodd, 41) Marie Brehmer, 42) Beulah Paul, 43) Jeff Cox, 44) Dorothy Koch, 45) Heather Barber, 46) Peggy Barber, 47) Andrew Barber, 48) Dale Taylor, 49) Richard Schmidt, 50) James Parker, 51) Ethel Martin, 52) Mabel Willis, 53) Mrs. Wilfred Meier, 54) Walter Boles, 55) Mrs. Lorena Combs, 56) Geneva McFarland, 57) Bernice Tatum, 58) Pennie Von Achen, 59) Janice Conrad, 60) Fritz Koch, 61) Madge Hilbish, 62) Esther O'Connor, 63) Binion Amerson, 64) Wilfred Meier, 65) Wendy Balfour, 66) Orville Rice, 67) Avis Jackson, 68) Mary Hall, 69) Marno McKaughan, 70) Mary Louise Myers, 71) Ruth Breukelman, 72) David Conrad, 73) Glen Edwards, 74) Effie Lou Edwards, 75) Bill Duke, 76) Carl Edwards, 77) June McCallum, 78) Jananne McNitt, 79) William Balfour, 80) Nancy Barnes, 81) Richard Barnes, 82) E. Raymond Hall, 83) John Breukelman, 84) Marge Davidson, 85) Charles Edwards, 86) Katharine Kelley, 87) Roy Edwards.

Year	Director	Director	Director	Director	Librarian
1949	Hedges	Sperry	Andrews	Eastman	
1950	Hedges	Sperry	Andrews	Eastman	
1951	Goodrich	R. Baker	Henry	Robl	
1952	Porter	R. Baker	Henry	Gier	
1953	Schwillling	Sperry	Henry	Gier	
1954	Schwillling	Sperry	Stephens	Dingus	
1955	Schwillling	Ryan	E. Ruth	Dingus	
1956	Wooster	Ryan	E. Ruth	Butin	
1957	Crumley	Ryan	Reimer	Butin	
1958	Kelley	Ryan	E. Ruth	Wooster	
1959	Kelley	Johnson	E. Ruth	Wooster	
1960	Gier	Johnson	E. Ruth	Parmelee	
1961	Gier	Johnson	Ely	Parmelee	
1962	Holmes	Schwillling	Ely	Andrews	
1963	Holmes	Schwillling	Ely	Andrews	
1964	Zimmerman	Schwillling	Miller	Platt	
1965	Zimmerman	White	Rice	Platt	
1966	Edwards	White	Rice	Roth	
1967	Edwards	Platt	Thompson	Roth	
1968	Humphrey	Platt	Thompson	Roth	
1969	Humphrey	Gier	White	Roth	
1970	Edwards	Gier	Marshall	Roth	
1971	Edwards	Gier	Marshall	Roth	
1972	Martinez	Gier	Marshall	Schwillling	Fauhl
1973	Martinez	Myers	Marshall	Fretwell	Fauhl

Table 4. Directors and Librarians, Kansas Ornithological Society, 1949-1974

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to express my thanks and appreciation for the assistance given me in assembling this material to A. J. Betts, I. L. Boyd, C. A. Ely, C. H. Franklin, E. R. Hall, H. M. Hedges, R. F. Miller, R. Schmidt, and C. G. Sibley. Additional information to complete the three tables will be welcome.
1020 7th St., Baldwin City, Kansas 66006.

Kansas Ornithological Society

Officers for 1974-1975

President	Dwight Platt, R.F.D. 2, Newton, Kansas 67114
Vice-President	Jean Schulenberg, R.F.D. 2, Admire, Kansas 66803
Corresponding Secretary	Sondra Williamson, 316 Denison, Manhattan, Kansas 66502
Membership Secretary	Amelia J. Betts, Baldwin City, Kansas 66006
Treasurer	Eugene R. Lewis, 1285 MacVicar, Topeka, Kansas 66604
Librarian	Ruth Fauhl, 1923 Ohio St., Lawrence, Kansas 66044

Board of Directors

Tom Shane	1973-1974	Mary Louise Myers
Stephen Fretwell	1974-1975	John Breukelman

Editorial Board

Editor, <i>The Newsletter</i> ...	Max C. Thompson, Southwestern College, Winfield, Kansas 67156
Editor, <i>The Bulletin</i>	Charles A. Ely, FHKSC, Hays, Kansas 67601

Regular Membership, \$3.00 Student Membership, \$1.00 Sustaining Membership, \$6.00
Dues are payable January 1 to the Treasurer

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