

One of 44 Lecture Series

Mr. Polk's War: President James K. Polk and the Mexican War
presented by Dr. Gregory Hospodor

On **Thursday, August 23, at 6:30 p.m.** the National Archives at Kansas City will host Dr. Gregory Hospodor for a lecture titled *Mr. Polk's War: President James K. Polk and the Mexican War*. A **6:00 p.m. reception** will precede this event.

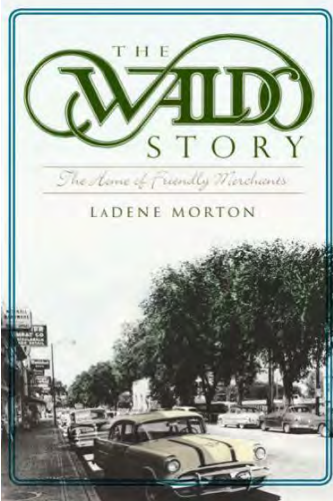
When he assumed office in 1845, James K. Polk, America's first dark-horse President, was a man on a mission. His goal was territorial expansion or, as he put it in his inaugural address, the extension "of peace over additional territories and increasing millions." President Polk vigorously pursued his territorial ambitions in the present-day American Southwest and Northwest, peacefully when he could, but through military means when necessary. As a result, Polk added more territory to the national domain than any other President. He also led the nation to victory in a war with Mexico from 1846-1848. Hospodor's lecture will assesses "Young Hickory's" career as a war leader, focusing especially on his character, his policies, his actions, and, the effect his efforts had on the country.



To make a reservation for this **free event** call 816-268-8010 or email kansascity.educate@nara.gov.

LaDene Morton to discuss

The Brookside Story and The Waldo Story



On **Thursday, August 30, at 6:30 p.m.** the National Archives at Kansas City will host LaDene Morton for a discussion and signing of her books *The Brookside Story* and *The Waldo Story*. A **6:00 p.m. reception** will precede this event.

The Brookside neighborhood's burgundy-and blue-striped awnings represent both a quaint corner of Kansas City where you can tread the creaky wooden floors of the Dime Store and a pragmatic philosophy that changed the way America planned its cities. Renowned developer J. C. Nichols's "plan for permanence" was built on his conviction that if a community could offer its residents everything they would want and need, build to high standards and plan for future growth, the community would last. The Brookside district has been giving the community everything it could want and need since 1919.

In *The Waldo Story*, Morten explains how Waldo has taken quite a journey from a wide patch of the Santa Fe Trail to one of Kansas City's preeminent neighborhood centers. Since 1841, it has been a battlefield, railroad hub, mill town, border town, suburb, urban hotspot - and always a place where anything could happen. Meet the Waldonians who carved their character into the land lying between Gregory Boulevard, Eighty-fifth Street, Troost Avenue, and State Line Road.

To make a reservation for this **free event** call 816-268-8010 or email kansascity.educate@nara.gov

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Upcoming Events

All events are held at the National Archives
400 West Pershing Road
Kansas City, MO 64108

- AUGUST 3 - 10:00 A.M.
GENEALOGY WORKSHOP:
BUILDING YOUR GENEALOGY TOOLBOX
- AUGUST 7 - 6:00 A.M.
ELECTION DAY: POLLING SITE
- AUGUST 9 - 10:00 A.M.
GENEALOGY WORKSHOP:
INTRODUCTION TO GENEALOGY
- AUGUST 18 - 5:00 P.M.
EXHIBITION CLOSING: *THEY'RE NOT GOING TO GET ME: CRIME IN THE 1930S*
- AUGUST 22 - 1:00 P.M.
GENEALOGY WORKSHOP:
COUNTING EVERYONE: USING FEDERAL CENSUS RECORDS TO FIND YOUR ANCESTORS
- AUGUST 23 - 6:30 P.M.
ONE OF 44 LECTURE SERIES:
MR. POLK'S WAR, DR. GREGORY HOSPODOR
- AUGUST 30 - 6:30 P.M.
AUTHOR EVENT:
THE BROOKSIDE STORY AND THE WALDO STORY, LADENE MORTON

Gems for Genealogists

The National Archives at Kansas City will be offering three free genealogy workshops in August.

Workshop Descriptions:

Building Your Genealogy Toolbox: Exploring National Archives Online Resources

Friday, August 3, 10:00 – 11:30 a.m.

This fast-paced class will provide a quick introduction to the National Archives' Online Public Access (OPA), Access to Archival Databases (AAD), and the National Archives website (www.archives.gov). Participants will gain familiarity with these tools and the resources they provide.

Introduction to Genealogy: Where to Begin?

Thursday, August 9, 10:00 – 11:30 a.m.

If you are interested in starting your family history research but aren't sure where to begin, this course will teach you how to start. The course covers the basics of what you need, where you can find information, what resources are available to assist, and how original records help tell your family's story.

Counting Everyone: Using Federal Census Records to Find Your Ancestors

Wednesday, August 22, 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.

Everyone counts! The census documents people from all walks of life: immigrants and store clerks to celebrities, inmates, and everyday people. This course will introduce beginning genealogists to the United States Federal Census while providing direction on how and where to start researching your family history. Learn to discover clues, codes, and other telling details about your ancestors' lives!

To make a reservation for these **free workshops** call 816-268-8000 or email kansascity.archives@nara.gov.



News and Notes

- **Election Day, Tuesday, August 7** - In 2012 the National Archives at Kansas City will be a voting location for those who live in Jackson County, MO, Ward 1, Precincts 6 and 7. Polling hours are 6:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.
- **Are you on the National Archives mailing list?** - If the answer is "no," then send us an email with your U.S. postal mail information or your address to kansascity.educate@nara.gov or call 816-268-8000. By providing your address, you grant the National Archives at Kansas City permission to send you information about upcoming exhibitions, special events, and programs. Per the Privacy Act of 1974, we will not share your personal information with third parties.
- **The Boys of Summer: Baseball All-Stars in the Archives** - Visitors to the National Archives at Kansas City can view a new special display of photographs and facsimile documents entitled *The Boys of Summer: Baseball All-Stars in the Archives*. The display is located in the main hallway on the concourse (lower) level near the *School House to White House* exhibition. During the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, baseball was the most widely played sport in the United States and became known as "America's game." It is no surprise, then, to find records relating to the game itself and some of the game's greatest players - Babe Ruth, Ty Cobb, Jackie Robinson, Mickey Mantle, and more - in the holdings of the National Archives. From military records to photographs with American Presidents to Federal court cases, the National Archives preserves forever the game of baseball and its star players' interactions with the United States government. The display will be available for viewing through the baseball season.



"They're Not Going to Get Me:" Crime in the 1930s

The Last Man Standing: Alvin "Creepy" Karpis

APRIL 18, 1967

Mr. Frank A. Massey,
U. S. Court Clerk
U. S. Courthouse
St. Paul, Minnesota 55102

Alvin Karpavicz
#9017 Box 1000
Steilacoo, Wash.
zip code 98388

Dear Mr. Massey:

I have this day signed a "withdrawal slip" for the amount of \$3.00 to be sent to your office to pay for copies of the following: RE: U. S. vs. Alvin Karpavicz, Alvin Karpis, et al No. 6258 - Third Division

1. Indictment - 4 pages - \$2.00
2. Judgement & Commitment \$1.00
Total-- \$3.00

This money will come from the disbursement office of the Federal Reserve Bank, San Francisco. At times there is a slight delay in the forwarding of the vouchers involved so I will appreciate it very much if you will accept this letter in good faith and send me the documents without waiting for the check to first arrive. Thank you.

Copies mailed 5-8-67
Stw S.

Alvin Karpavicz
Alvin Karpavicz #9017

cc: Parole Sponsor
Attorney
file



I certify that the above "withdrawal" slip has been signed and that the money will be sent.

G. M. Michael

Above: Letter from Alvin Karpis, U.S. v. John P. Peifer, alias Jack Peifer, et al., September 18, 1967. RG21, Records of the District Courts of the United States

Always the smartest of the bunch, Alvin Karpis was the last of the 1930s public enemies to be captured. Arrested in 1936 by none other than FBI director J. Edgar Hoover, Karpis was tried in six cases related to the Hamm and Bremer kidnappings and sent to Alcatraz Federal Penitentiary.

This letter dating to 1967, survives in one of those six court cases, and indicates that Karpis was interested in receiving copies of his original indictment from 1936. He was paroled just two years after this letter was written, and soon moved to Spain where he lived out his life. He died in 1979, having authored two books about his criminal exploits and time in Alcatraz. This letter and others relating to the crimes of the Barker-Karpis Gang are on display in the exhibit "They're Not Going to Get Me:" Crime in the 1930s. **The exhibition closes on Saturday, August 18, 2012.** To schedule a group tour call 816-268-8013 or email mickey.ebert@nara.gov.

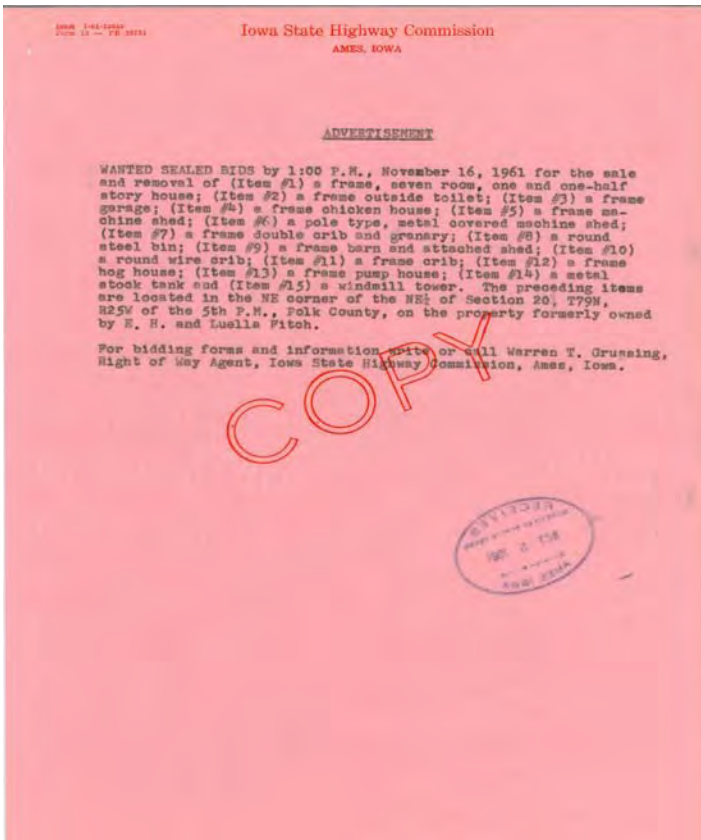
The Barker-Karpis gang was one of the most successful criminal enterprises in the 1930s. Initially successful at robbing banks and hijacking mail deliveries, they soon turned to the business of kidnapping.

Their first abduction was William Hamm, President of the Hamm Brewery in Minnesota. When this successful kidnapping netted them \$100,000 in ransom money and was blamed on another gang by inept police work, they turned their attention to more lucrative targets. Their next target was Edward Bremer, Jr., bank president and son of another St. Paul brewer. They successfully received a \$200,000 ransom in this kidnapping, but sloppy clean-up of the crime put the FBI on their trail.

The nucleus of the Barker-Karpis gang was made up of Fred Barker, Arthur "Doc" Barker, Harry Campbell, Volney Davis, and Alvin Karpis. Doc Barker was the first gang member arrested. Soon after, the Federal Bureau of Investigation tracked Fred Barker and his mother Kate to a house in Florida where a gunfight ensued and both were killed. Meticulous tracking, scientific methods, and new technology employed by the FBI led to the eventual arrest of the remaining gang members.

Hidden Treasures from the Stacks

A National Interstate Highway System



Above: A copy of a Bureau of Public Roads advertisement requesting bids for the sale and removal for property considered to be “right-of-way.”

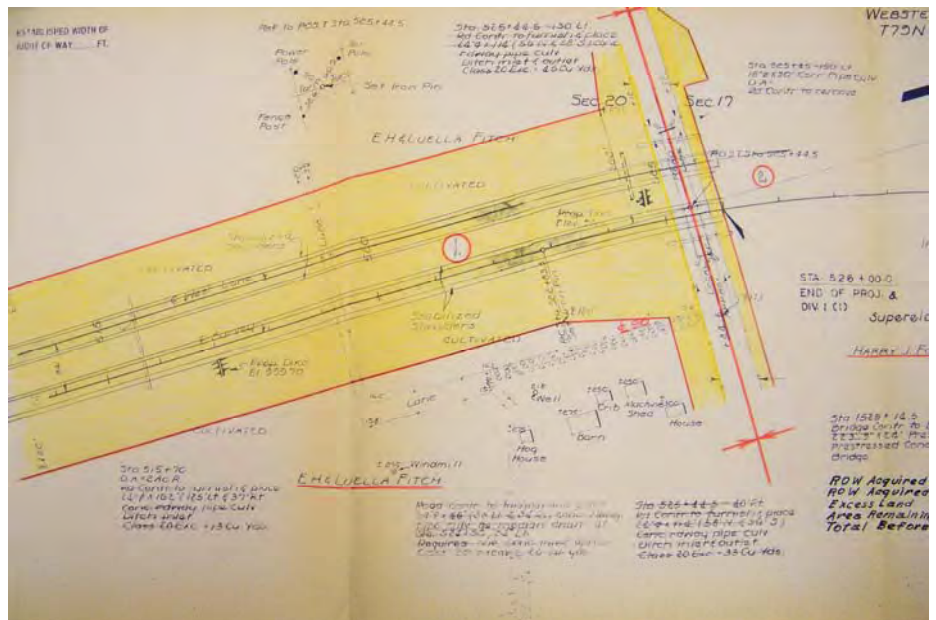
On June 29, 1956, President Dwight Eisenhower signed the Federal Aid Highway Act which allowed for \$25 billion to build a 41,000 mile national interstate system over what was supposed to be a ten-year period. Plans for an interstate highway system had been in the works since the late 1930s, but the government could never figure out how to fund the project. The Federal Aid Highway Act of 1956 created a self-funding program that made the Federal government responsible for 90 percent of the costs. Those funds came from motor-vehicle user taxes, Federal gas taxes, and a partial toll system.

In an address to Congress on February 22, 1955, President Eisenhower cited numerous problems with the current highway infrastructure and provided four reasons why he felt the country was in desperate need of an interstate system. He stated that accidents on the current highways cost the nation \$4.3 billion each year, the poor conditions of the roads increased the nation’s cost of doing business, and the projected increase in population would translate to a large increase of traffic jams. The President’s fourth concern was:

In case of an atomic attack on our key cities, the road net must permit quick evacuation of target areas, mobilization of defense forces and maintenance of every essential economic function. But the present system in critical areas would be the breeder of a deadly congestion within hours of an attack.

Building over 41,000 miles of highways was a huge undertaking that took 35 years to complete rather than the ten years mentioned in the Federal Aid Highway Act of 1956. The Bureau of Public Roads (BPR), which later became the Federal Highway Administration, oversaw this project. The project not only involved the building of the actual highways, but also securing the land necessary for the project which often was owned by private citizens.

The BPR and Iowa State Highway Commission placed ads in local newspapers requesting bids for the sale and removal of the buildings on property which was considered a “right-of-way.” A right-of-way is a piece of land that is acquired for transportation purposes. One way a right-of-way can be acquired is through easement. The Fifth Amendment of the Constitution states that the government must compensate an owner for the fair market value of any property acquired through easements. When the interstate highway project was finally completed in 1991 the 42,795 mile highway system cost an estimated \$128.9 billion dollars with Federal funds paying for \$114.3 billion.



Above: These plans depict how part of Interstate 35 would run through the middle of property owned by E.H. and Luella Fitch in Polk County, Iowa. RG30, Records of the Bureau of Public Roads.

The National Archives at Kansas City has thousands of documents related to the Bureau of Public Roads. For more information, email kansascity.archives@nara.gov or view the Archival Research Catalog at www.archives.gov/research/arc.

School House to White House

The Education of a President: Harry S. Truman and Dwight D. Eisenhower

Harry S. Truman

Harry Truman learned to read at home from his mother and attended several grade schools and high school in Independence, Missouri. "School House to White House" displays an example of Truman's eighth-grade writing. At the beginning of an essay titled "Courage," the future President, who would later be admired for his principled and honest approach to serving in the White House, quoted Emerson: "Behavior is the mirror in which each man shows his image." Outside the classroom, Truman was also a talented pianist and briefly considered a musical career. At age 39, Truman attended Kansas City Law School for two years while pursuing a career in public service.



Above: Harry Truman and members of his family in a farm wagon at Grandview, Missouri. (Harry S. Truman Presidential Library and Museum, National Archives)



Dwight D. Eisenhower

After attending public schools in Abilene, Kansas, Dwight D. Eisenhower entered the U.S. Military Academy in West Point, New York, beginning a long and distinguished military career. Later in life, Eisenhower remembered his family's emphasis on education: "From the beginning of our schooling, Mother and Father encouraged us [Eisenhower boys] to go to college. They said constantly, 'Anyone who really wants an education can get it.' But my father, remembering that he didn't become a farmer as his father had hoped, scrupulously refrained from suggesting courses of study." Eisenhower was a talented athlete in high school and at West Point before injuring his knee. "School House to White House" includes a photograph of Eisenhower on the Abilene High School football team.

To learn more about the presidents and view photographs and documents from their youth, visit *School House to White House: The Education of the Presidents*, on display through February 23, 2013.

Left: Eisenhower kicks the football at West Point. (Dwight D. Eisenhower Presidential Library and Museum, National Archives)



The National Archives at Kansas City is one of 15 facilities nationwide where the public has access to Federal archival records. It is home to historical records dating from the 1820s to the 1990s created or received by Federal agencies in Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota. For more information, call 816-268-8000, email kansascity.educate@nara.gov or visit www.archives.gov/central-plains/kansas-city. Find us on Facebook www.facebook.com/nationalarchiveskansascity

HOURS OF OPERATION

RESEARCH ROOMS: Tuesday through Saturday 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

EXHIBIT GALLERIES: Tuesday through Saturday 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Closed on Federal holidays. Hours are subject to change due to special programs and weather.