

# Speaking of Kansas

## Washburn Center for Kansas Studies



## Kansas Studies Newsletter

Spring 2016

### Kansas Studies Courses Fall Semester 2016

- **GL103C Historical Geology**, 3 credits, 5:30-6:45pm, MW, ST-118, Gilliland
- **HI397 Internship in History Agencies**, XA, Goossen  
*Prerequisites:* HI111 and HI112 and 6 hours upper division History and consent
- **IS340A Kansas Studies**, 3 credits, 5:30-8:00pm T, HC-021, Schmiedeler
- **PO107A KS and US, State & Local Gov't**, 3 credits, 9:30-10:45am TR, ST-007, Peterson
- **PO307 Intern-State & Local Gov't**, 3 credits, XA, Beatty  
*Prerequisites:* PO107 and Jr. or Sr. Status and/or consent of instructor

## Fall semester KS Studies offering

Kansas Studies is offering a three-credit, upper-division-level class this fall on **Tuesday evenings** from **5:30-8:00 PM**. The course, **IS 340 (CRN 32672)**, is an Interdisciplinary Studies course that will be team-taught by eleven professors, and is one of the few upper-level courses that has been approved as a general education course. Drs. Pembroke and Stephenson are providing funding for honorariums for the instructors. Center for Kansas Studies Director **Tom Schmiedeler** recently discussed the course with a student reporter from the **Washburn Review**. The Center is excited about the opportunities this class will afford enrollees in receiving a rich education—and three upper-division credits—in aspects of Kansas arts, anthropology, archaeology, geology, geography, history, natural resources, politics and religion. Please help us spread the news and encourage enrollment in this special class.

Enroll in this exciting Multi-Disciplinary upper level course:  
**Kansas Studies (IS 340)**  
General Education course — held Tuesday evenings, 5:30 - 8:00 PM

- the arts
- anthropology
- archaeology
- geology
- geography
- history
- natural resources
- politics and religion

For information about the course and the Kansas Studies minor please contact:  
Dr. Schmiedeler at [tom.schmiedeler@washburn.edu](mailto:tom.schmiedeler@washburn.edu)  
or stop by his office at Henderson, 225. **Offered Fall 2016**

Tom Schmiedeler, Director  
785-670-1559  
[tom.schmiedeler@washburn.edu](mailto:tom.schmiedeler@washburn.edu)

Deborah Altus, Human Services  
Tom Averill, English  
Bob Beatty, Political Science  
Patti Bender, Health  
Roy Bird, KHC Speaker  
Marcia Cebulka, Playwright  
Jeannie Chinn, KSHS  
Charles Cranston, Mass Media  
Virgil Dean, KSHS  
Tambra Eifert, Geology  
Kelly Erby, History  
William Gilliland, Geology  
Rachel Goossen, History  
Chris Hamilton, Political Science  
Robert Hull, Finance  
Reinhild Janzen, Art  
Jim Kelly, KTWU  
David Kendall, KTWU  
Gabrielle Lunte, Modern Languages  
Bruce Mactavish, History  
Judith McConnell-Farmer, Education  
Eric McHenry, English  
Linsey Moddelmog, Political Science  
Marguerite Perret, Art  
Mark Peterson, Political Science  
J. Karen Ray, English  
Leslie Reynard, Communication  
William Roach, Business  
Tom Schmiedeler, Geography  
Robin Shrimplin, History  
Bradley Siebert, English  
Sarah Smarsh, English  
Margaret Stewart, English  
Marydorsej Wanless, Art  
David Winchester, Mabee Library  
Margaret Wood, Soc./Anthropology  
Carol Yoho, SCHS

Center for Kansas Studies  
[www.washburn.edu/cks](http://www.washburn.edu/cks)

# Glenda Taylor: Intrepid Ceramic Arts Explorer

**T**he Mulvane Art Museum's exhibition *Prairie Memories: The Art of Glenda Taylor* (March 19 - May 14, 2016) pays homage to this Kansas native. Her work epitomizes her life as an arts explorer whose creative work is firmly rooted in nature and the land.

Her chosen medium of ceramics provided her with the opportunity to explore the endless variety of natural forms. By utilizing earth (clay), water, fire and air, she followed her deeply rooted instincts and created works that resonated with the land. The prairie landscape with its endless vistas and rolling terrain etched itself into her consciousness from childhood. Those experiences are evident in examples of Glenda's work throughout this retrospective exhibition.

Glenda began working with clay in her early teens, digging it from outcrops on her ancestral Kansas farm, experiencing the natural textures and plasticity of the material by rolling, pinching and molding forms. These childhood experiences resonated throughout her life and gave her an inherent creative base as an artist and art educator.



Over time, Glenda, in effect, became an artist alchemist, melding the earth elements of earth, water, air and fire to create ceramic works that echoed her fascination and love of the Kansas landscape. Glenda

by **Robert Harrison**  
IAC, WABA, NCECA  
Fellow



da also took her visual exploration of Kansas further through her love of bike riding. She became a *wind chaser*, keenly observing and mentally filing visual images while participating in the sport she loved. Some of these images took form in her studio as ceramic objects ranging from utilitarian pottery to figurative sculpture. Glenda's ceramic work varied from soft and visually fragile to hard-edged and strong, again reflecting her wide experience of nature's wonders. Her talents developed through time, experience and practice, and she became proficient on the potter's wheel and hand techniques. She knew her materials and took creative risks while exploring a wide range of clays, from earthenware to porcelain, and firing techniques, from low-temperature electric to high temperature atmospheric firings.

Glenda's creative drive as an intrepid arts explorer was a tremendous asset to her career in art education and showed her students by example what it meant to be a successful maker as well as an outstanding educator. The wide range of work in this exhibition serves as a testament to her curiosity and willingness as an artist to explore and create.

## Work in the Exhibition

Observing Glenda's work chronologically and starting with *Umbrella Stand* and *Pitcher* from the late 1970s and early 1980s, one sees the virtuosity of her early wheel-thrown creations coupled with the luminous surfaces of ash-glazed, stoneware firings. These strong, energetic and robust forms illustrate a ceramic aesthetic that blossomed nationwide during this era; it was the coming-of-age of the contemporary American studio ceramic movement.



## Glenda Taylor — cont.

*Dance*, *Tattooed Torso* and *Night Sky* from the mid-to-late 1980s demonstrate Glenda's maturation of style. Shifting her techniques from wheelwork to hand building, these tall elegant figurative vessels exemplify her ongoing exploration of form with muted surfaces and decorative elements that invite the viewer to carefully consider the connection between humans and nature. The deep undulations of the folded clay surfaces create hybridized landscape figures.



In the early 1990s Glenda pursued another area of creative exploration, mixing materials and combining metals with clay. The small 1992 bronze and porcelain pieces merge powerful vessel-like, tornado forms with triangular sections of furrowed, farm fields indicative of real life events that capture the power of nature. Her choices of contrasting materials, textures and colors resonate with the viewer.

*Prairie Memories: The Creek* from 1995 uses the wheel-thrown tornado form and contrasts it against a glazed hand-built section of creek, perhaps drawing on the memory of one of Glenda's own Kansas farm experiences. This work shows a dynamic of strength contrasted with the elegance and grace of an artist that has a solid command of her technical abilities and sculptural concepts.

Continuing her exploration of mixing materials and moving onto the wall, in *Golden Dreams* and *Treasure*, circa 1996, Glenda stretches out, both figuratively and creatively, challenging herself and the viewer to look at the landscape in cross section and from above. Elegant waves of undulating prairie landscape in muted natural tones and satin surfaces are punctuated with brass wire and a glass tornado

vessel. *Cauldron* and *The Well* from the same period, show her versatile abilities in transposing flatter, wall-oriented work into freestanding, three-dimensional, sculptural work. Reduced down to a minimalist use of line and shape, the hand-built forms and earthenware surfaces of this group of work are refined, serene and reflective.

In the early-to-mid 2000s Glenda returned regularly to her ceramic roots as a potter, making functional work with zeal and gusto. Her two teapots from 2005-2006, along with a variety of pitchers, plates and drinking vessels, are a testament to her love of the material and her years of honing her practice. These works are simply beautiful and full of life in form and palette, highlighting Glenda's talent with her ability to move back and forth between pottery and sculpture.

*The Seasonal Cycle* captures annual changes in the Kansas landscape utilizing generous slabs of clay, textured surfaces and slips and glazes applied with enthusiasm and confidence. These are keen observations and interpretations of nature's cycle of life and death.



Glenda's *Youthful and Aging Figure* series from 2009-2010 are examples of her mature work coming full circle, from the slender, hand-built pieces of the late 1980s to these elegant, full-bodied, figurative vessels of both wheel-thrown and hand-built porcelain. The sensuous folds and curves of the human body as vessel

combine with surfaces that exemplify her inherent theme of nature and landscape.

*Floral Inspirations*, 2013, is a series of paper thin porcelain cups and saucers that recall the delicacy and ephemerality of flowers. According to Glenda,

"My current exploration of content and form is exciting, challenging, and a little frightening. Recently, I have expanded the forms to include more direct reference to flora and the precarious existence of plant



## Glenda Taylor — cont.

life. It is difficult to face the truths revealed through physical representation of decay and decline. Is there anything positive that I can express through this work? Is there beauty to be found in the process of dying? Only through making the work, will my questions be answered.”

I consider these pieces some of her strongest work, where thoughts, memories, ideas, material and creative abilities combine to provide us with an artistic legacy: **the intrepid artistic exploration in clay of artist-educator Glenda Taylor.**



## Marydorsey Wanless: a Retrospective 3-14-16 to 7-2-16

by Connie Gibbons, Director, Mulvane Art Museum

“Photographs are perhaps the most mysterious of all the objects that make up, and thicken, the environment we recognize as modern. Photographs really are experience captured, and the camera is the ideal arm of consciousness in its acquisitive mood.”

--Susan Sontag

**Marydorsey Wanless** is a visual artist utilizing non-traditional, alternative photographic processes. Tintype, gum bichromate, cyanotype, and installations assembled from the fragments of images are just a few of her methods as she explores nature, life, and the world around her. A retrospective of her photographs is currently on exhibit at the Mulvane Art Museum through July 2, 2016.



Process is a vital part of Marydorsey’s work. Tintype and gum bichromate has an inherent patina of age, and for her, it is this reflective reference to the past that provides the frame-

work for her photographs. Even the digital photographic prints made from images captured on her iPhone have been treated with filters to assume the appearance of a rustic past. “*Photography has always recorded the passage of time,*” writes Marydorsey. Furthermore her work is “documentary in nature, catching the fleeting moments of the nostalgic past. It is a continuous search for times gone by; the yearning for a slower lifestyle focusing on relationships, reflections, and simple acts of living.”



A series of gum bichromate photographs done over many years documents beach towns, seaside resorts, and small intimate villages. Gum

bichromate can be a tedious and temperamental process requiring several days to complete, but the end result is expressive. The images in Marydorsey's beach series are a reflection of



her memories of quiet places filled with “hot, cold beer, long walks in the sand, and the touch of a loved one.” There is a sense that these are snapshots plucked from the pages of the family album, and there is a subtle irony at play in them. The light and the vibrant and unnatural color shifts garnered by the paint pigments of the gum process, reinforce the sense of a time long gone, mundane moments, the quiet of a remote beach, and the artifacts of recreational pursuits. The purposefully exposed brush strokes that frame the edges remind us of the artist's presence and the nature of the process, while insisting they are not windows onto the world but rather exist as objects from the past they portray.

*Lumbago* is assembled from a series of tintype tiles that frame the artist's hands on her back. The tiles are assembled into a grid, and collectively they signify her personal journey through aging. Variations in color, contrast, brightness, and shape create a visual rhythm within the repetition of form. Marydorsey uses tintypes to document her aging process because the nature of the tintype lends itself to the narrative in the work. “I find it to be the perfect medium,” she says. “Its history connects early photographic portraiture. Its mirror-like surface reflects and draws in the viewer. Its emulsion unpredictably decomposes and decays like skin.”

Using her iPhone and digital ‘apps,’ Marydorsey documents the backroads, and nature of Kansas prairie. Using filters, she creates

evocative moments that celebrate textures of rural environment. The vintage look of the photographs remind us of the harsh elements of the region, and they exist as slivers of moments rich with history. For Marydorsey, the Kansas landscape is unpredictable and unexpected, and her photographs of the backroads capture deep moments of inspiration and reflection.

*The Morning Walk* is Marydorsey's latest work. In 2014, she spent a month on the campus of Maitland Art and History Museum in Florida.



Each morning, she walked the campus, photographing intimate moments, textures, gardens, animals, and architecture. Two years and fifteen hundred handmade gum bichromate tiles later, an installation was completed. Mounted with pins like butterflies, the 2.5

inch-square tiles float across a 12 x 8 foot white field and create a wandering rhythmic pattern that echoes the light, movement, textures, colors and shadows of those morning strolls.

Through years, Marydorsey has explored her environment through the lens of her camera. She prefers using the experimental and alternative

processes for production of her photographs because it relates to her beginnings as painter and allows her to be more expressive.

**Demonstrations and gallery talks are scheduled in conjunction with the exhibition and include:**

**Demonstration: Tri-Color Gum Bichromate over Cyanotype**

Wednesday, April 13, 10:00 – 11:30 and  
Tuesday, May 17, 12:00 noon

**Brown Bag Conversation:  
Reflections On Photography**

Join us for a conversation with **Marydorsey Wanless, Judith Sabatini, and Dan Coburn**

Thursday, May 12, 12:00 noon





# Kansas Day 2016 Speaker: Duane Goossen

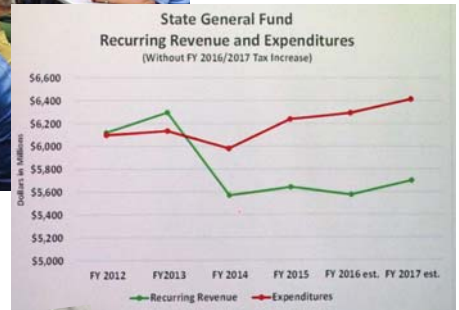
**K**ansas Day speaker was **Duane Goossen**, Senior Fellow with the Kansas Center for Economic Growth. He spoke in Henderson Hall, Washburn campus, on **Kansas Day, Friday, January 29, 2016**, concerning **“The Kansas Budget: Are We Really in Kansas Anymore?”**

While representing Marion and Chase counties for seven terms in the Kansas House of Representatives, Goossen became recognized as a moderate Republican and a voice of reason on budgetary matters, and an expert on the state’s finances. Eventually he was chosen to be Director of the Kansas Budget Division in the governor’s office, serving in that capacity for twelve years. He left that position with the advent of the Brownback Administration, but continued to be a voice of clarity and reason regarding Kansas’ precarious fiscal situation.

Now an independent consultant, editorialist and blogger, Goossen presented attendees with an honest but bleak overview of how the State of Kansas is headed for financial headaches...if not ruin.



Duane Goossen



Visit [www.kansasbudget.com](http://www.kansasbudget.com)

## Garden Plots Reception

**Tom Averill**, Washburn English professor; his daughter, **Eleanor Goudie-Averill**, Lawrence Arts Center Dance Artist-in-Residence; and **Juliet Remmers**, University of Kansas Dance Instructor, performed at the opening reception of **"Garden Plots,"** an exhibition at the **Mulvane Art Museum** consisting of writings by Tom and drawings by **Clinton Ricketts**, adjunct professor of design, drawing and printmaking, of the Washburn Art department. The reception was on **Friday, December 4, 2015**. The evening's performance was supported financial in part by the Center for Kansas Studies. It was well-attended and both the recitations and dancing were enjoyed.



# CKS Meeting Summary

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**February 4, 2016**

**F**ellows of the Center for Kansas Studies met for their winter meeting at 12:30 p.m. on Thursday, February 4, in the Lincoln Room of the Union. Present at the meeting were **Tom Schmiedeler, Julie Myers, Deborah Altus, Will Gilliland, Tom Averill, Rachel Goossen, Marguerite Perret, Marcia Cebulka, Dave Kendall, David Winchester** and **Carol Yoho**. After a brief discussion of the remaining budget, Director **Tom Schmiedeler** encouraged Fellows to contribute items to the spring newsletter and set the deadline for submissions at April 15. He requested that Fellows teaching Kansas Studies courses submit their courses to him by Friday, February 9, so that he could submit them by the deadline of the Vice President's Office and to **Carol Yoho** so that she can prepare advertising of them for early student enrollment in the spring. He noted that the course "Kansas Studies," first taught in the spring of 2015, is among the Kansas Studies courses scheduled to be taught this fall and he encouraged instructors to promote this course to their students.

**Julie Myers** of the Mulvane announced the exhibition "Glenda Taylor: Prairie Memories," which will be on view at the Mulvane Art Museum from March 15 to May 15, 2016. The opening for the exhibition is March 19 from 2-5 pm. Because the exhibition is a comprehensive perspective on Glenda's work in ceramics, those planning the exhibition wish to create a gallery guide. Julie requested funding from the Center in the amount of \$750 for an honorarium for the writer of the guide and for printing. Fellows approved her request.

**Dave Kendall** spoke of a documentary film project he is producing through his company Prairie Hollow Productions titled "Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve: A Flint Hills Love Story." The documentary is scheduled to premiere in the fall of 2016 in conjunction with the twentieth

anniversary of the Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve in Chase County. The focus of the film will be on efforts to create a national park site and the special affinity many Kansans express for the Flint Hills. Public screenings are being scheduled in Manhattan, Emporia and El Dorado prior to the broadcast premiere on WIBW/Channel 13 in December. Dave noted that the Flint Hills Discovery Center Foundation, sponsoring organization of the project, has received major grants from the Kansas Humanities Council and from the Trusler Foundation of Emporia, plus private contributions. Dave requested financial support from the Center for the project. Fellows decided to give what was possible from the remainder of this year's budget, but to support the project at a higher level from the Center's budget in the fall.

**Tom Averill** announced the possibility of having a showing of a film based on his short story "The Musical Genius of Moscow, Kansas" sometime this semester at Washburn. The Center had previously funded filming and editing of the short story. The film, currently in production is expected to be about 22 minutes in length, could premier in either the NOTO district or on the Washburn campus sometime this semester.

The meeting adjourned at 2:00.

*Minutes provided by* **Tom Schmiedeler**



**Spring Burning**, as seen from the KS Turnpike, April, 2016.

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TOPEKA, KANSAS 66621

Department: Geography

Center for Kansas Studies

*Speaking of Kansas*

Spring 2016

## Western Kansas Marine Fossil Display

by **William Gilliland**, Adjunct Instructor of Geology

**A new display of western Kansas fossils** can now be viewed in a display case in the west hallway of **Stoffer Hall**, Washburn campus. These marine fossils are a record of some of the life that lived in the **Cretaceous Age, Western Interior Seaway**. The dry High Plains of Western Kansas were once below sea level; as a result, museums around the world display Cretaceous marine fossils from Kansas.

**Marvin Rolf** was a mathematics professor for many years at Fort Hays State University. His hobby was collecting sharks teeth in western Kansas, but he also collected other fossils, rocks and minerals. On one of these field trips Marvin and his son Leland found a mosasaur that was curled in a circle. This fossil was donated to and excavated by Fort Hays State. Rolf took other trips with George F. Sternberg, one of the members of the Sternberg family of

dinosaur, fossil-hunting fame. The Sternberg Museum of Natural History at Hays is named in honor of George F. Sternberg.

Much of the collections of Marvin Rolf were donated to Washburn University by the Rolf Family, to be used in educating students and the public about the geologic history of Kansas. In this display you can view vertebra, teeth and other remains of the marine reptiles, sharks and fish that lived in the lost sea of Kansas. Due to the soft lime mud at the bottom of this warm seaway, smaller oysters (*Pseudoperna*) often attached themselves to the shells of large clams (*Inoceramus*). Marvin Rolf also found a few fossil pearls that were formed in the large clams.

Other material from the Rolf Collection will be displayed at a later date, including fossil ivory from an Ice Age mammoth and a bison skull.



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