

Nomination of Margie Reed for the KAA Lifetime Achievement Award

February 2009

The members of the Mud Creek Chapter of the Kansas Anthropological Association nominated Margie Reed to receive the KAA Lifetime Achievement Award, and the honor was confirmed by the executive board. Together with her late husband Harold, Margie has been a constant presence, supporter, and worker at state KAA events since joining in 1967. She was also one of the founding members of the Mud Creek Chapter, which was formed in 1974. Margie has proven her dedication to the KAA organization in many ways.

Margie Blackburn was born in the town of Portis, Kansas, in 1939. She grew up in the city of Salina and was educated in Salina schools, graduating from high school in 1957. Margie married Harold Reed in the same year. The couple have 4 children and 11 grandchildren. In the early 1970s the Reeds purchased a millwork contracting business, Central Millwork. Margie served as secretary and bookkeeper for the business until it was sold in 1999. Besides KAA, Margie has participated in several other civic organizations and is a member of Belmont Christian Church. Margie has been a helper for Boy Scout activities and an adult leader in 4-H. She is a member of the Salina Community Theater Guild and was twice president of the Saline County Historical Society.

Together with Harold, Margie served on the committee that designed the KAA Certification Program in 1974. This program followed the model of the Arkansas Amateur Training Program and was revised in 1993. Again, Margie and Harold were on hand to help the Certification Committee with the revisions. This comprehensive program is a measure of achievement in archeological skills and understanding. In 1994 Margie and Harold Reed became two of the first three people to successfully complete all categories of certification. (Nadine Chaney was the other recipient.)

Margie has participated in 29 (all but three) of the Kansas Archeology Training Program field schools. She has worked on all types of sites and cultural areas of Kansas prehistory, as well as historic sites. With so much experience, it is no wonder Margie has often served as instructor to novice crew members. Her *forte* is profiling, so she frequently served as profiling instructor.

As a member of the Mud Creek Chapter, Margie has held most chapter offices, except treasurer, more than once over the years. She has always been willing to take a leadership roll in chapter activities and has presented many programs for the group. Naturally as chapter secretary, she submitted numerous chapter reports to the *KAA Newsletter*. As a chapter activity, Mud Creek members conducted a systematic survey of the Turkey Creek drainage in Dickinson County. Margie participated in this work and had a part in describing the findings in the 1996 issue of *The Kansas Anthropologist*.

Margie was a true partner in Harold's archeological investigations. While he surveyed Saline and surrounding counties for sites, she accompanied him. When one was asked to present a program, the other assisted. They did few things as individuals, and as a family activity, archeology was perfect for them.

Margie has given many talks and demonstrations at schools in Saline, Ottawa, Dickinson, and McPherson counties. She is always willing to share her knowledge and experiences. No doubt she has influenced many by her enthusiasm for archeology.

Outside of KAA Margie worked as a paid crew member for Tom Barr in excavations at the Pottawatomie Baptist Mission and for John Reynolds and Barry Williams on survey teams in

the Council Grove area. In January and February of 2002, Harold and Margie served as volunteers for the National Park Service at the Hubbell Trading Post near Ganado, Arizona. Margie led tours in the house, and she and Harold helped set up and photograph items for the Hubbell web site. Excited by their experience there, the Reeds gave a living history presentation at the 2002 KAA Annual Meeting at Kanopolis. They played the parts of John Lorenzo Hubbell and Dorothy, his daughter-in-law. Margie also has enjoyed playing the part of Civil War-era women in reenactor groups. She participates in a Civil War Roundtable in Salina and has spoken to the group about KAA investigations at Fort Harker (14EW310) and the McGee-Harris Stage Station (14OS399) on the Santa Fe Trail in Osage County.

Margie is an accomplished amateur videographer and has filmed a number of KAA field school classes and Kansas Humanities Council lectures. These include Tom Witty's "Kansas Prehistory," John Reynold's "Kansas Prehistory," and Randy Thies' "Quantrill's Bones." Perhaps her most significant film was of Tom Witty and Harold Reed examining and discussing the Salina Burial Pit just prior to its closing.

Margie's personal investigation and expertise has been in the realms of Plains Indian beading and Navajo rugs. Margie became interested in beading in the 1970s. She learned the art of beading through reading books on the subject, experimentation, and study of examples in collections and museums in the region. She has completed many significant projects and has been instructor for the Boy Scouts' Order of the Arrow beading skills at least 10 times. At about the same time that she started beading, Margie began collecting Navajo rugs. She bought her first authentic rug in the Sailina area more than 30 years ago and subsequently added to her collection on the many vacations that she and Harold took to the Southwest through the years. Although she has trimmed down her collection, she now has between 15 and 20 historic hand-loomed Navajo rugs, dating from 1860 to modern times. She has documented her collection and had it evaluated by an expert at Hubbell Trading Post. Margie is a serious collector and has studied not only identification but also the processes involved in the creation of a Navajo rug. She has always been intrigued with the Native Americans' ability to create a design with no written pattern or instructions, a true art. At KATP 2009 Margie will share her knowledge of Navajo rugs by teaching part of the Artifact Description and Analysis course.

In 2003 the Reeds established for the KAA organization the Harold and Margie Reed Publication Fund. Upon Harold's passing in 2005, a significant bequest was added to the fund. Five percent interest from these investments and donations made by others to the fund are to be used for reporting and publication of findings at KATP or other KAA projects. In 2008 Margie created the Reed Family Kansas Archeology Training Program Field School Support Fund, a \$17,000 bequest in the form of investments. Proceeds from this account and donations to it are to be used by KAA to support principal investigators and associated research costs of the KATP. Clearly the establishment of these funds demonstrates the dedication of Margie and Harold Reed to the causes of KAA and archeological research.

Margie cites Tom Witty and Milton Reichart as her two main influences or mentors in her pursuit of archeology. As state archeologist Witty came to realize that he had to teach amateur archeologists and KAA members the correct way to go about archeological investigations, from laying out a grid to the excavation of features. Margie and Harold Reed were looking over his shoulder every step of the way. Milton Reichart was meticulous, skillful, and efficient in his digging procedures. For 30 years he was ever-present at KAA digs and a wonderful example to follow.

When asked about high points during her life in KAA, Margie recalls the first KATP at Scott County in 1975 (14SC302, 14SC1). Everyone camped together, and there was tremendous camaraderie and fellowship. In that particular year friends shivareed the Reeds in their tent on their wedding anniversary. She says years when everyone camped together are remembered as the best. "The KAA life is a great life for a family: a good family hobby."

Bibliography

Mud Creek Chapter

1996 A Limited Archeological Survey of Turkey Creek Drainage, Dickinson County, Kansas. *The Kansas Anthropologist* 17(1):1-77.