

1999: 1200 Series

Sunflower Journeys embarks on a “blue highways” tour of Kansas as the 12th season of this locally produced series premieres in January, 1999. These shows follow a scenic route of two-lane highways that loops around the state over the course of 13 programs.

As the series continues, *Sunflower Journeys* heads down the Flint Hills Scenic Byway, stopping at the Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve and the Flint Hills Rodeo before heading further into the hills on a covered wagon. Connie Dover and the Paul Winter Consort provide evocative musical tributes to the prairie before we leave the Flint Hills and continue on our journey around Kansas. Our route takes us on a wide loop around Kansas, visiting diverse sites on the periphery of the state. Some of the destinations include Fort Dodge; an archeological excavation in Meade County; the Prairie Museum of Art and History in Colby; and the historic frontier town of Weston, Missouri. Among the individuals profiled in the series are botanist George Washington Carver, philanthropist Dane G. Hansen and broadcast journalist Bill Kurtis. We will explore a wide variety of subjects ranging from the Civil War in eastern Kansas to the most recent acquisition of The Nature Conservancy in the western part of state.



Covered wagons roll through the Flint Hills, giving participants a taste of how pioneers traveled across Kansas in program #1203.

#1201: “Mission Valley to Mill Creek”

Flint Hills Special: Setting out on K-4 toward Dover, we encounter a delivery person who is pursuing his dream of publishing a magazine, which he calls *The Flint Hills Special*.

City of Native Stone, Alma: Then we move on to Alma to learn about the architectural heritage of this town that calls itself “The City of Native Stone.”

Ranching Heritage: Moving along Mill Creek to the southwest of Alma, we then explore the remnants of a small “ghost town” called Volland.

#1202: “Council Grove to Cassoday”

Flint Hills Scenic Byway: *Sunflower Journeys* explores this highway, which extends along Kansas Highway 177 from Council Grove to Cassoday, and learns how this stretch of highway gained its designation and what it offers to travelers. Two members of the local corridor management committee, Jan White of Council Grove and Rita Spinden of Strong City, reflect on the impact of tourism and the byways program on their communities.

Tallgrass Prairie Reserve: Find out how the National Park Service is developing a management plan for the new Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve in Chase County. Steve Miller, the National Park Service superintendent for the preserve, explains how this plan has evolved with input gathered at public

forums and from feedback provided by an advisory council. Barbara Zurhellen, preserve director for the National Park Trust, describes how and why her organization became involved with this site.

Strong City Rodeo: The Flint Hills Rodeo in Strong City is an annual event that recently celebrated its 60th anniversary. Elmore Stout, Andy Olson and Gene Peacock reflect on the local significance of this event, while rodeo historian Leah Hanson reviews the history associated with it.

#1203: “Matfield Green to Cassoday”

Flint Hills Wagon Train: *Sunflower Journeys* reflects on the experiences of the pioneers who crossed the prairie in covered wagons. Joining an overnight excursion of the Flint Hills Wagon Train near Matfield Green, folklorist Jim Hoy describes the forces that the pioneers encountered on their trek across the prairie. The trail boss for this outing, Denny Fluhardy explains how this particular wagon train attempts to recreate that experience.

Tallgrass Prairie Producers: Meet some of the local ranchers associated with the Tallgrass Prairie Producers, a cooperative that markets free-range, grass-finished beef. A founding member of the organization, Pete Ferrell of Beaumont, tells how this group evolved and how they intend to expand the market for beef products. The coordinator of this co-op, Anne Wilson of Elmdale explains why she feels this approach to beef production is healthy for consumers as well as for rural communities.

Connie Dover’s Prairie Song: *Sunflower Journeys* presents a special music video featuring a song called “Who Will Comfort Me?” Written and recorded by Connie Dover of Weston, Missouri, this song powerfully conveys the awe-inspiring beauty of a prairie sunrise and laments the loss of such spacious horizons. Taped amid the scenic hills of the Ferrell Ranch near Beaumont, the video revolves around a horseback ride that saunters up to a hilltop vista at dawn.

#1204: “Winfield to Runnymede”

Grasslands Symphony with The Paul Winter Concert: *Sunflower Journeys* travels to a pasture near Winfield where The Paul Winter Consort performs “Grasslands” in an outdoor concert with the Winfield Regional Symphony. Composed by cellist Eugene Friesen, who was born in Hillsboro, Kansas, this symphony pays tribute to the prairies and grasslands of the world. It includes literary excerpts narrated by Wes Jackson of The Land Institute and a Native American dance performed by Robert Hyatt.

First Female Mayor, Argonia: *Sunflower Journeys* tells the story of Susanna Madora Salter, who Argonia residents elected as the first female mayor in America in 1887. The story is told with the assistance of local historian Laura Earles as well as the current mayor of Argonia, Alan Brundage. Washburn University history professor Sara Tucker describes the impact this election may have had on increasing the participation of women in the political process.

English Settlement, Runnymede: *Sunflower Journeys* focuses on the brief history of an English settlement called Runnymede, which sprang up along the Chikaskia River in the 19th century. At the Runnymede Church, now located in the town of Harper, historian Vivien Minshull-Ford describes why wealthy English families sent their sons here and what they experienced after they arrived.

#1205: “Medicine Lodge to Minneola”

Gyp Hills Experience: A bit of cowboy poetry introduces a story about the mining of gypsum and the production of sheetrock, which is made from the gypsum. Barber County rancher Lonnie Garten and his wife Otie are among those who describe how the Gyp Hills have supported the mining industry here in addition to ranching and oil production.

Chief Theatre, Coldwater: A visit to The Chief Theatre in Coldwater demonstrates the challenges facing those small-town cinemas that continue to serve their local communities. Now open only on weekends with films targeted primarily to youngsters, The Chief still sells popcorn for 25 cents and candy for a nickel.

Kansas Archeology Training Project: *Sunflower Journeys* joins an archeological field camp near the small town of Fowler. Co-sponsored by the Kansas State Historical Society and the Kansas Anthropological Association, the excavation in progress here provides clues about the people who inhabited this region more than 600 years ago.

#1206: “Fort Dodge to Monument”

History of Fort Dodge: The history of Fort Dodge is recounted as we visit this historic site a few miles southeast of Dodge City. Originally designed to support troops, travelers and settlers in this part of Kansas, the fort eventually became a home for retired soldiers.

George Washington Carver: Explore the contributions of noted botanist George Washington Carver, who grew up in Kansas and farmed for a brief period of time in Ness County. An exhibit at the Ottawa County Historical Museum in Minneapolis provides extensive background on Carver’s accomplishments and his years in Kansas.

The Nature Conservancy: *Sunflower Journeys* explores a large ranch north of Lake Scott in Logan County. Recently acquired by The Nature Conservancy, the ranch represents a prime example of the shortgrass prairie that once extended across much of western Kansas. The director of the Kansas Chapter of The Nature Conservancy, Alan Pollom describes the organization’s objectives here and at its other preserves throughout the state.

#1207: “Colby to Logan”

Prairie Museum, Colby: *Sunflower Journeys* stops at the Prairie Museum of Art and History in Colby. Museum director Sue Taylor and former director Helen Smith explain how one woman’s zest for collecting provided this museum with a wealth of artworks and artifacts. We also learn how “the largest barn in captivity” was transported several miles to the museum grounds.

Minium Fossil Site: The journey continues east on U.S. Highway 24 to a farm near the small town of Morland, where a rich deposit of fossils several million years old have been discovered. Joe Thomasson, a paleontologist from Fort Hays State University, describes the diversity of animal and plant fossils found on this site, including such extraordinary items as the fossilized jaw of a rhinoceros.

Dane Hansen Museum, Logan: Learn the story behind the Dane G. Hansen Museum in Logan. Polly Bales, wife of Hansen’s nephew, describes how he amassed his wealth and created the foundation that built this impressive museum and art gallery, which hosts traveling exhibits from the Smithsonian.

#1208: “Stockton to Clay Center”

Carnegie Libraries: *Sunflower Journeys* steps back to examine the history of the public libraries in Kansas that were created with support from Andrew Carnegie, the wealthy steel baron. Stockton librarian Neola Breckenridge and Roy Bird, an author and library consultant, explore the changing role of the Carnegie Libraries in Kansas.

Town Forms, Beloit: We see how the street patterns and town centers of communities such as Beloit reveal much about the aspirations of those who founded them. Tom Schmiedeler, a geographer at Washburn University, explains why one city may have a town square while another has a more linear pattern in its business district.

Tobacco Free Kids: *Sunflower Journeys* looks at efforts to reduce teen smoking in Clay Center, where an adolescent health task force has been activated. Pam Kemp, director of Emergency Medical Services for Clay County, describes the manner in which the task force attempts to make teens aware of the ways they are seduced by tobacco companies.

#1209: “Manhattan to Troy”

Gus van der Hoeven’s Kansas: Gus van der Hoeven, an extension specialist in landscape and environmental horticulture at Kansas State University, shares his observations about the way we perceive and interact with the Kansas landscape. As he does in his popular radio commentaries on KKSU from Manhattan, he encourages people to “Stop, Look & Listen” to the world around them.

Wagon Journey: Nicolai Berezovski, a recent immigrant from the Ukraine, leads a covered wagon venture across Kansas, passing through northeastern Kansas on the final leg of a journey from Elkhart to Elwood. Don Wagner, a schoolteacher and country poet from Bennington, describes some of the people and places the group encountered on their trek.

Historic Barns, Doniphan County: *Sunflower Journeys* explores some of the picturesque barns featured in a self-guided barn tour organized by a group in Doniphan County. Cultural geographer Pete Shortridge and local historian Suzette McCord-Rogers provide background on these impressive structures.

#1210: “Atchison to Lawrence”

Lewis & Clark: *Sunflower Journeys* reviews the experiences of Meriwether Lewis and William Clark as they paddled up this part of the Missouri River with their Corps of Discovery in 1804. Historian Philip Thomas describes what the explorers encountered here, and members of a new local group explain the goals of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation.

Weston, Missouri: Historical novelist Frederick Chiaventone and local historian Etta Marie Brill convey the colorful history of Weston, Missouri — an active river port on the western frontier. Founded in 1837, Weston was a popular point of departure for pioneers heading west, but its commerce was dramatically altered by the Civil War and a major flood on the Missouri River.

“Ride with the Devil”: *Sunflower Journeys* focuses on the production of a feature film called “Ride with the Devil,” which dramatizes the conflict and tensions generated by the border wars between Missouri and Kansas at the time of Quantrill’s raid on Lawrence in 1863. Much of the film was shot in Pattonsburg, Missouri, where a reproduction of 1863 Lawrence was created using the existing buildings of a town destroyed by the floods of 1993.

#1211: “Osawatomie to Fort Scott”

John Brown—Adair Cabin: *Sunflower Journeys* stops in Osawatomie at the Adair Cabin in John Brown Memorial Park. Recently refurbished as a state historic site, the cabin reminds visitors of the days when John Brown violently crusaded against slavery, spending time here with his sister, Florella, who occupied this cabin with her husband, Samuel Adair.

Battle of Mine Creek: The story features a re-enactment of the only major Civil War battle fought in Kansas — the Battle of Mine Creek. Located near the battlefield, not far from the small town of Pleasonton, a new visitor center tells the story of this battle and provides visitors with an opportunity to follow interpretive trails around the battleground.

Ft. Scott Historic Site: The history of the frontier army at Fort Scott is revealed through a visit to the Fort Scott National Historic Site. Currently maintained by the National Park Service, this site contains 20 major historic structures and hosts periodic encampments and special events that provide a glimpse of what life was like at this historic fort.

#1212: “Pittsburg to Peru”

J.T. Knoll, Storyteller: A profile of J.T. Knoll, a raconteur and balladeer from Pittsburg. Through his column in the local newspaper and in presentations to local school groups, he encourages his audiences to compose and preserve stories about their families and communities.

Route 66 in Kansas: Travel along the short stretch of Route 66 that passes through southeastern Kansas from Galena to Baxter Springs. Stop at the Eisler Brothers store in Riverton to hear what local folks think about the legendary roadway and hear from a British tourist following the historic highway across the continent.

Hiking Guide to Kansas: *Sunflower Journeys* moves along a scenic trail near Elk City Lake with the authors of a new hiking guide to Kansas. Catherine Hauber and John Young describe some of the more memorable trails they encountered as they compiled this comprehensive guide, published by the University Press of Kansas.

#1213: “Sedan to Emporia”

Red Buffalo Ranch—Bill Kurtis: *Sunflower Journeys* explores the Red Buffalo Ranch near Sedan, recently acquired by veteran television journalist Bill Kurtis. Currently hosting a number of programs on the Arts and Entertainment Network, Kurtis reflects upon his broadcasting career and demonstrates why he still feels a special connection to this part of the world.

Tim McCoy—Hollywood Cowboy: We review the film career of Tim McCoy, a “B-Western” matinee cowboy movie star of the 1930s and ’40s. His son, Ron McCoy, teaches history at Emporia State University, where he is the director of the Center for Great Plains Studies.

“Sarah, Plain and Tall”: The third story takes us to a farm in Osage County, where filmmakers are at work on a production for the Hallmark Hall of Fame. Starring Glenn Close and Christopher Walken, this made-for-TV movie depicts life on a Kansas farm in 1918 and will be the third film in a trilogy that began with “Sarah Plain and Tall.”

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