



## Did you know?

In 1867 the largest earthquake in the history of Kansas, estimated at 5.1 on the Richter scale, was reported near Mount Mitchell. But don't worry, it has been terra firma around here ever since.

Wamego is the southern most area in which the glaciers from the last ice age transported material. The large red boulders are Sioux Quartzite and are indigenous to regions in South Dakota and Minnesota.

The large boulder near the bandstand in the Wamego City Park came from a nearby farm and is estimated to be 300,000 to one million years old and to weigh 20 tons.

The pond in the City Park is shaped like a whale and once served as the public "swimming pool." The island is actually the eye of the whale and the dirt excavated to create the lake was used for the hill where the historic Schonhoff Dutch Mill now stands.

## Oregon Trail Park - continued from inside

way 24, then three miles north on Onaga Road. Turn left on Oregon Trail Road and the cemeteries are approximately a half mile. The Cholera Cemetery is just west of the Louis Vieux Cemetery, on the eastern bank of the Vermillion River, and the Louis Vieux Elm is on the west side of the river.



Actual ruts left behind by the thousands of wagons traveling the trail can still be seen near the hand painted silo at the Oregon Trail Nature Park

The Oregon Trail Nature Park is five miles east of Onaga Road on Oregon Trail Road.

For guided tour information call (785) 456-2040.

## Mount Mitchell

As part of the Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area, Mount Mitchell represents a significant link to the Bleeding Kansas story, Territorial Kansas and the Underground Railroad.

Hike to the top of this stately hill and you will be surrounded by undisturbed native prairie. Also at the top stands a brass plaque in commemoration of the Connecticut-Kansas Colony, also known as the Beecher Bible and Rifle Colony, which settled in the Wabaunsee community.

A new parking lot and self-guided walking tour of the area will open in 2008.

Located 3¼ miles south of Wamego, near the junction of K-18 and K-99 highways.

## Custom Tours

For more information about the area's history, call the History Museum at (785) 456-2040.

Day tours and two day tours of Wamego are also available. Call 1-877-292-6346 for details.



To learn more about lodging options, custom tours, and group rates for all attractions contact:

Wamego Convention & Visitors Bureau

529 Lincoln Ave

Wamego, KS 66547

Phone: 785.456.7849

Toll Free: 1-877-2-WAMEGO

(1-877-292-6346)

www.visitWamego.com

EXPLORE WAMEGO'S

# HISTORY



Find out what shaped Wamego and the surrounding area: the Oregon Trail, the Civil War, the railroad, and more

## Schonhoff Dutch Mill

Standing sentinel in the City Park is one of Wamego's best known landmarks, the Schonhoff Dutch Mill.

The mill, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, was originally located 12 miles north of Wamego.

Built in the 1870s, a young immigrant, John Schonhoff used it to grind grain until the late 1880s. In 1924 the mill was dismantled, each stone was numbered and moved into town using 35 horse-drawn wagons, where it was reconstructed in the City Park.

It is located next to the Historical Society Museum in City Park (4th St, 2 blocks east of downtown).

## Wamego History Museum and Historic Village

This complex of authentic buildings from the 1800s and history museum traces the evolution of Wamego and Pottawatomie County from the first inhabit-



The Schonhoff Dutch Mill in Wamego's City Park is the state's only operating stone windmill

ants, the Konza and Potawatomi Indians, to the history of the Underground Railroad in the area, and items from the Columbian Exposition of 1893.

The Historic Village consists of authentic buildings from the 1800s moved in from across the county, including a one room school house, a log cabin built in the late 1850s, the first jail in Pottawatomie County, and several other historic buildings which sit nestled under large cottonwood and sycamore trees along the east side of City Park. The park is also home to several statues from the Columbian Exposition and is one of the top-rated picnic spots in the state.

They are located in City Park, two blocks east of downtown.



Enjoy dinner and a show, or just stop by to view paintings and other artifacts from the 1893 World's Fair at The Columbian Theatre

Mon-Sat 10am to 4pm,  
Sun 1pm to 4pm

Call (785) 456-2040 for tour information and appointments. Two-day tours of the Wamego area are also available upon request.

## Columbian Theatre

The Columbian Theatre was built in 1895 by J.C. Rogers, a local banker and merchant, to house artifacts he brought back to Wamego from the 1893 Columbian Exposition at the Chicago World's Fair. Rogers operated the two-story limestone building as a vaudeville theater and it's fitting that today, after a \$1.8 million restoration in 1994, the Columbian Theatre again is a venue for live theater.

The Columbian Theatre not only still houses many of the Columbian Exposition artifacts, but is also home to Swogger Gallery. The art gallery shows rotating art and historic exhibits throughout the year.

521 Lincoln Ave · (785) 456-2029  
Tues-Fri 10am to 5pm  
Sat 10am to 3pm

Show schedule and tickets are available online at [www.ColumbianTheatre.com](http://www.ColumbianTheatre.com)

## Chrysler Birthplace

Wamego is the birthplace of Walter P. Chrysler, the founder of Chrysler Corporation. The original home, where Walter lived until he was three, has been moved to the intersection of Highways 24 and 99, where it will become the new Pottawatomie County Visitor's Center.

## Beecher Bible and Rifle Church

When the Kansas-Nebraska Bill passed in May 1854, it allowed Kansans to have a say about whether they would be a free or a slave state. Many from outside the state came to Kansas to influence that decision. One group, known as the Connecticut-Kansas Colony, arrived with Sharps rifles provided by the congregation of Henry Ward Beecher, the well-known minister from Brooklyn, NY. The colonists joined with earlier settlers and founded a church in Wabaunsee, now called the Beecher Bible and Rifle Church. It not only still stands, but still holds Sunday services.

Wabaunsee and the Beecher Bible and Rifle Church are located



Walter P. Chrysler was born in Wamego in 1875



The Beecher and Bible Rifle Church still holds services every Sunday

3½ miles south on Highway 99, then 2½ miles west on K-18, south on Elm Street for 1/3 mile.

For more information or tours call (785) 456-2040.

## Oregon Trail

This historic trail passed a few miles north of Wamego. Wagon ruts from that time can still be seen in places.

Other remnants of the trail include the Louis Vieux Cemetery and the Cholera Cemetery. Vieux, a member of the Potawatomi Tribe, operated a ferry across the Vermillion River for travelers on the trail. Vieux and members of his family are buried at the cemetery.

The Cholera Cemetery consists of several stones marking the graves of travelers who succumbed to cholera.

Just across the Vermillion River, the world's largest elm once stood and no doubt provided shade for weary travelers moving along the trail. What is left



The Wamego History Museum in city park – along with several buildings from the 1800's – is part of Historic Prairie Village

of the tree has been preserved for future generations.

A few miles east of the cemeteries, along Oregon Trail Road, is the Oregon Trail Nature Park, which offers hiking trails, picnic tables, a shelter house and panoramic views of the Kansas River Valley. The Jeffrey Energy Center Lake sits just over the hill to the north and provides a year-round home for water fowl.

The Louis Vieux Cemetery is located four miles east on High-

continued on reverse,  
center panel

