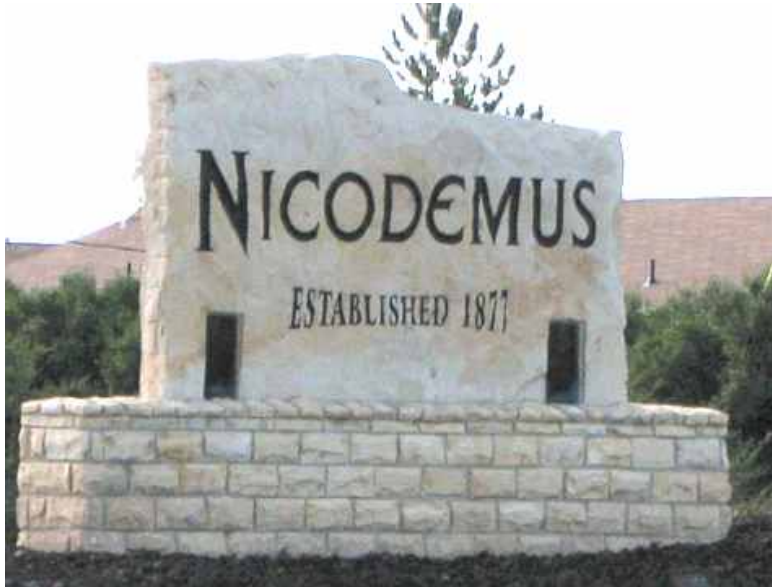


Nicodemus National Historic Site
304 Washington Avenue Nicodemus, Kansas 67625
(785) 839-4233
<http://kansastravel.org/nicodemus.htm>



Nicodemus Township Hall was a Works Progress Administration Project (WPA) started in 1934 and completed in 1939.

Nicodemus, Kansas was established in July, 1877 by Negro "ecodusters" from Kentucky. They lacked sufficient tools, seed or money, but managed to survive the first

winter. Some survived by selling buffalo bones, others by working for the Kansas Pacific railroad at Ellis, 30 miles away. Nicodemus was named after the first black slave to purchase his freedom in the United States.

By 1880 the all black community reached 400, and was the largest community established by freed slaves following the Civil War. By 1887, Nicodemus, Kansas had churches, stores, lodges, a school and two newspapers. After reaching a peak of 600 residents, Nicodemus failed because the railroad passed the community by, and the population slowly dropped. There are about 40 residents today, as well as several buildings being maintained by the National Park Service.

There is less to see and do at **Nicodemus National Historic Site** than I would like. Several of the remaining buildings are in disrepair and unsafe to enter. Others are not open to visitors. The Nicodemus National Historic Site Visitor's Center is somewhat interesting, but the displays take only a few minutes to read. There could be an important and fascinating story told at the Nicodemus National Historic Site. But I think there will be more to see and learn at Nicodemus in the future.

There is a Nicodemus Homecoming event is hosted each year on the last weekend in July.



Visitor Center located inside the Nicodemus Township Hall



St. Francis Hotel - Zach T. Fletcher's hotel was built in 1881 and is the original two story stuccoed portion of the building on the right. It originally featured a cut limestone appearance with a one story stone kitchen addition on the east. It also served as the site of the first post office in Nicodemus - the first recorded African American operated post office in the United States. At times a school and a stagecoach station operated out of the hotel.



Nicodemus African Methodist Episcopal Church - The A. M. E. Church was built in 1885 of limestone. It was later finished with stucco in the 1940s. It was closed for religious services in the 1950s.



Nicodemus First Baptist Church - The present structure was completed in 1907 and was built around an earlier and smaller church. The stucco exterior was added in the 1940s. After the exterior of the present building was completed, the older structure was removed piece by piece through the front door. The newer extension to the north was completed in the 1970s and contains the sanctuary used for services today.



Nicodemus Historical Society, 611 S. 5th Street, Nicodemus, Kansas 67625
(785) 839-4280



District Number 1 Nicodemus School, the first school established in Graham County, is a one story wood sided structure with a hipped roof. It was built in 1918 on the same site as the original school (built around 1887) which burned. The school closed in the late 1950s and children now living in Nicodemus commute to Bogue, Kansas.