



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Annual Pie Eaters event brings ragtime music, auction to Ottawa on November 6

Ottawa, Kansas—One of the Franklin County Historical Society’s most popular and longest-running events is bringing live music, an auction, and lots of home-baked pie to Ottawa .

The 2016 Conclave of the Esoteric and Terrible Order of Pie Eaters will be held Sunday, November 6, at 7 p.m. at Elliott Hall, which is part of the First Baptist Church at 410 South Hickory in Ottawa, Kansas.

The event finds its roots in 1868, when Ottawa University’s Tauy Jones Hall was under construction. Many classes were held at a house on the corner of Second and Hickory, which also served as a boarding house for unattached men. The greatest drawback of living in this boarding house was the unpalatable food.

What evolved from this shared dislike for the menu was an unusual fraternal organization that called itself the Esoteric and Terrible Order of Pie Eaters. Each month, these men gathered to have some fun and eat a good meal. As the group evolved, so did their rules. No women allowed. No married men allowed. Members of the Grange were the enemy, and because the Grangers were known for eating Granger Cake, the E&TOoPE was committed to eating pie.

Their ambitions didn’t end there. The Pie Eaters had grand plans of doing away with currency and paying with pieces of glass, banishing all women to New Jersey, and achieving world domination while wearing pie plates around their necks and calling each other by titles like the “Grand Gyrasticutas” and the “Grand Gabster.”

Today, the Pie Eater’s greatest legacy is an annual gathering and the consumption of pie. Audience members will be invited to witness the ancient initiation rites and sample a variety of locally home-baked pies. Ragtime historian, musician and artist Brian Hawkins will play the audience through the history of ragtime music.

In addition, this year’s event will include an auction. Items include a like-new copy of the 1993 *History of Franklin County Vol. 1*; a framed reproduction of an 1884 Franklin County Fair poster, an authentic WWI-era poster, an authentic "Roster of the Boys in Blue" 1800s framed list of Franklin County men

who served in the Civil War, authentic J.B. Muecke photos, and up to ten hours of Franklin County research performed by the FCHS. (None of the items up for auction are part of the FCHS collection.)

Tickets are \$12 and can be purchased online at <https://squareup.com/store/old-depot-museum> or in person at the Old Depot Museum. For more information, contact the Old Depot Museum at (785) 242-1250. Unlike the original Esoteric and Terrible Order of Pie Eaters, the FCHS welcomes everyone, including women and married men.

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