
Manhattan / Riley County Preservation Alliance Newsletter

September, 2001

THE GOODNOW CABIN — AT THE CROSSROADS

by Barbara Anderson, President, Goodnow Park Cabin Coalition

The historic name of what we now call the Goodnow Cabin is the Bluemont Youth Cabin. It was constructed in 1937–38 as a National Youth Association (NYA) project. The NYA was one of the federal government's make-work projects of the 1930s. NYA project supervisors

on this effort were B. J. Conroy and S. D. Caughron, assisted by Harold Harper, the City Engineer. One hundred fifteen boys from Riley County relief families provided the labor for construction. As reported in *The Manhattan Mercury* of May 19, 1938:

“The project. . . served the triple purpose of providing part time work for the boys, bringing about the erection of a needed cabin, and providing training in stone building construction, carpentry and woodwork, painting and house decoration, installation of water and gas, electrical wiring, cement mixing and cement construction, grading and landscaping.”

The cabin was dedicated on May 20, 1938 to “Scouting and to the youth of the community.” The handwritten date on the source document (which appears to be a newspaper clipping mounted in a scrap book) is 3/11/38. This source goes on to describe a new rifle range used for Scout



marksmanship tests. The article also says the Scout house is furnished with benches and will seat 100 Scouts—although that seems a little hard to believe!

The article goes on to describe donors to the project—Manhattan Lions Club, Golden Belt Lumber Co., Griffith Lumber Co., Ramey Brothers Lumber Co., United Power and Light Co., and the Scouting Board.

At the time the cabin was constructed, the park included a trail up the hill, a lake, tennis courts and a baseball diamond.

The records don't indicate when it ceased being a Scout meeting place. It was in disrepair in 1991 when the Goodnow Park Cabin Coalition started leasing it from the City of Manhattan and began making repairs and maintaining it.

Over the last ten years, the Goodnow Park Cabin Coalition (mostly Ann Kosch) has done a tremendous job of repairing and maintaining the Cabin. Through much volunteer labor, a little paid labor, and many contributions of cash and materials from businesses, individuals, and organizations, the Cabin is now in good condition,

and the vandalism that was a real problem ten years ago has diminished significantly. The recent water study conducted for the City of Manhattan indicates that the water treatment facility in Goodnow Park will not need to be expanded, thus eliminating the conflict between the



preservation of the cabin and the potential need for expansion of the City's water treatment facility.

The Parks and Recreation Department has improved the trails leading up the Goodnow Hill and several "trail heads" are now located near the Cabin. The Cabin is currently performing a nice function as a passive recreation feature—not an actively used building, but a significant "place" nonetheless, that contributes to the character and experience of the hillside trails and park. In general, there has been a real effort on the part of the Parks and Recreation Department to make Goodnow Park a more hospitable park environment and the surrounding neighborhoods are more content than they were a decade ago.

We believe it is the right time to ask the City to take back the responsibility for the routine maintenance of the Cabin and have been meeting with various groups to see if they too think it is a good idea to pursue this course of action.

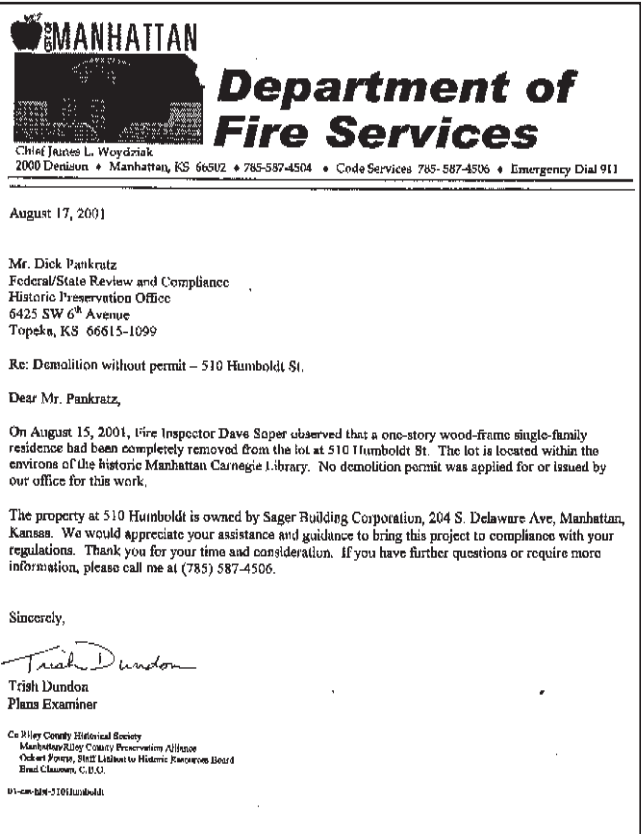


WHERE IS THIS HOUSE?

When no one came forward with the addresses of the fraternity houses we have been featuring in this column, your editor did a little sleuthing, first at the Museum and then by car, and now understands why there was only silence. Our June offering, the TKE house, used to stand at 1606 Fairchild. No longer. The Kappa Sigma house featured in the July issue, and mistakenly identified last month as the stone house at 11th and Laramie, instead stood at 1221 Thurston. Not any more. In 1931, Farm House, featured last month, was located at 1409 Fairchild. None of the houses remain. We have, however, found at least two houses pictured in the 1931 yearbook, and will show "before and after" pictures of those houses next month.



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August 17, 2001

Mr. Dick Pankratz
Federal/State Review and Compliance
Historic Preservation Office
6425 SW 6th Avenue
Topeka, KS 66615-1099


Re: Demolition without permit – 510 Humboldt St.

Dear Mr. Pankratz,

On August 15, 2001, Fire Inspector Dave Soper observed that a one-story wood-frame single-family residence had been completely removed from the lot at 510 Humboldt St. The lot is located within the environs of the historic Manhattan Carnegie Library. No demolition permit was applied for or issued by our office for this work.

The property at 510 Humboldt is owned by Sager Building Corporation, 204 S. Delaware Ave, Manhattan, Kansas. We would appreciate your assistance and guidance to bring this project to compliance with your regulations. Thank you for your time and consideration. If you have further questions or require more information, please call me at (785) 587-4506.

Sincerely,



Trish Dundon
Plans Examiner

City of Manhattan
Manhattan/Leavenworth County Preservation Alliance
Order of the Sons of the American Revolution
Local Chapter 1010
201-000-1010

According to *The Manhattan Mercury* of Sunday, September 9, 2001, the case referred to in the above letter, which was copied to the Preservation Alliance, has been referred to assistant attorney general M. J. Willoughby.

MANHATTAN COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE HOLDS FIRST MEETING

The first meeting of the Manhattan Comprehensive Plan Update Project Advisory Committee (PAC) was held on August 23, 2001. If you are computerized, go to the city web site:

<http://www.ci.manhattan.ks.us/Documents/4054/default.asp?id=4054>

or directly to the Manhattan Area Plan web page (www.manhattanareaplan.com) to find the names and addresses of the committee members, as well as reports of the meetings and dates for subsequent meetings.

Janet Throne, a member of the Committee, reports that the first meeting was mostly procedural. It included introductions of members, discussion of PAC roles and responsibilities, project schedule/workplan review, public participation plan review, and a quick exercise on preliminary issues identification.

MANHATTAN DEPOT — PHASE II



Our man on the spot, Mike Mecsari, reports that the second Phase of the Depot Renovation is about three-quarters completed. The roofing is under way, with possible delays only for specialized pieces of tiling. The exterior windows, as well as the doors, soffits, downspouts, and so forth, are being repaired and painted. Mike estimates a completion time of approximately two and a half months. Phase I consisted of repairs to the foundation.

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KEMPTHORNE

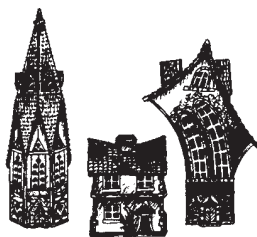
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ANNOUNCEMENTS AND NEWS

★ The **M/RCPA ANNUAL MEETING** will be held on Thursday, September 13 at the First Congregational church at Juliette and Poyntz. Dues date from that evening: \$15 for an individual and \$20 for a family. Checks should be made out to the Manhattan/Riley County Preservation Alliance, Inc. and either given to Linda Glasgow or sent to the M/RCPA c/o P.O. Box 1893, Manhattan, Kansas 66505. Questions? Call Linda at 785-565-6490.

★ Following the meeting, *dues-paying* members will tour Mel and Jan Borst's home at 1918 Humboldt. Wear your walking shoes, because we have been asked to park on Delaware and walk up the steps. There is not enough parking on the hill above without encroaching on the Borst's neighbors.

★ Have you volunteered yet to serve on a committee for the Holiday Historic Homes Tour? Many hands are needed. Select a committee of your choice and you won't face the prospect of being drafted for something less interesting. Also, committee members will be rewarded handsomely after the Tour. Curious? Call Linda Glasgow at 785-565-6490 to volunteer.

★ If anyone has news to put in future M/RCPA newsletters, please contact the Editor, Marolyn Caldwell, at 776-4862, or email marolync@flinthills.com.

ANNUAL MEETING: SEPTEMBER 13, 7:30 PM

M/RCPA
The Riley Co. Historical Society
2309 Claflin Road
Manhattan, KS 66502