



MANHATTAN/RILEY COUNTY PRESERVATION ALLIANCE NEWSLETTER

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Remembering the 1993 Flood

During the summer of 1993, Manhattan and areas across the Midwest experienced a major flood event, which many long-time residents will remember. Storms regularly dumped multiple inches of rain, drenching the landscape and elevating water levels at the Tuttle Creek Reservoir.

By the end of June, rising waters had sparked concerns, and by mid-July, flooding had become a reality. Small ponds had formed in low-lying areas, and more water was expected as the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers began to release water from the reservoir. The Corps wanted to prevent water from topping the spillway gates because the Corps wouldn't be able to control the water if it did. The Corps' strategy was to wait for the water level to crest and then release water as quickly as possible. The release of water created flooding in areas downstream.

Flooding occurred in multiple locations, including the Dix Addition in Manhattan, Nelson's

Landing, Ashland Bottoms, Hunter's Island, along Hwy 24 east of Manhattan, along Hwy K-18 west of Manhattan, and in neighboring communities. Downtown Manhattan, which was under water during the 1951 flood, was protected from the flooding because of the levee built in 1957. Manhattan's water treatment and



Flooding along the Kansas River in 1993. The photo is courtesy of the U.S. Geological Survey.

sanitation facilities were also protected by the levee. Emergency preparedness officials predicted a 100-year flood and estimated 2,000-5,000 homes would be impacted.

On July 19th, the lake level at Tuttle Creek Reservoir was 1,135.6 feet, and the level for mandatory release of water was 1,136 feet. The Corps began releasing water at 20,000 cubic feet per second (cfs). This was the first and only time the spillway gates were opened to release flood water. Inflows to the reservoir measured 40,000 cfs, which meant the lower outflow volume couldn't be sustained and

would need to increase to match the inflow. A Corps official stated, "... the situation has become a matter of deciding who is going to be flooded, not whether they will be flooded" (Cherrie, "Outflow").

Residents in impacted neighborhoods were encouraged to evacuate, but no one was forced to leave. Once they left, residents

were not allowed to return for their own safety, and streets were blocked off to discourage sightseers and to keep access clear for emergency personnel.

Volunteers turned out in droves to fill and place sandbags to help fellow citizens protect their properties. Volunteers assembled at the Headquarters Fire Station on Denison Avenue and were bused to afflicted

areas to stack sandbags. The fire station was filled with food donated by restaurants and other residents for the hardworking volunteers (Shaffer) as everyone tried to do their part to help. At one point, the sandbag operation was able to fill 6,000 bags per hour (Felber), and at times, there were more volunteers than sandbags to fill. In the span of a single weekend, 130,000 sandbags were distributed, supplies quickly ran low, and another 100,000 bags were ordered (Manning, "Not").

The Red Cross established a shelter for evacuees at the KSU Student Union. Two hundred cots were set up in the ballroom, and (*continued on pg. 2*)

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The Board of Directors meets the second Thursday of the month, and members are welcomed to attend.

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the Union was prepared to house up to 350 evacuees. The Red Cross also operated shelters at the Crestview Christian Church, Rock Creek High School, the Ogden Baptist Church, and St. Bernard's Church in Wamego (Braun). Ft. Riley housed 100 military families at King Fieldhouse (Cherrie, "Post"). One Ogden evacuee staying at the Union described how quickly the water advanced, saying one minute the water was 100 yards from his home, and the next minute it had almost reached his residence. He was a soldier and fled the rapidly rising water so quickly that he wasn't able to grab his uniform (Braun).

In addition to the aforementioned food donations, local residents and businesses offered help to evacuees. Businesses with trucks and vans offered to help flood victims move their belongings. Others offered cardboard boxes and storage space. The Manhattan Town Center Mall and Northview Elementary served as collection sites for supplies to help flood victims. The West Stadium parking lot on Denison Avenue was available to evacuees to store their vehicles. Volunteers stepped forward to help families with child care at the shelter locations ("Need").

National Guard troops already stationed in the city helped with the flood efforts. As the waters rose, volunteers built a levee surrounding the Dix neighborhood with help from the National Guard's heavy equipment. The goal was to raise the sandbag levee to 1,013 feet above sea level to keep out water backing up in the Blue River. Residents of the Dix Addition didn't want to give up the fight to protect their homes, and one resident was quoted in *The*

Manhattan Mercury as saying, "Somehow we need to get the message across that we're not going to take it anymore" (Bathke, "Residents").

By July 23rd, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers had increased the outflow from the Tuttle Creek Reservoir to 60,000 cfs, and despite the efforts to save the Dix Addition, the Dix neighborhood was lost to flood waters. Sandbag levees that were holding back water the day before failed against the force of the surging water. The water leaked through the sandbags or found a route around them, and quickly the sandbags were inundated and barely visible (Bathke, "Dix"). The makeshift levee had failed, but it was credited with buying time for residents to move out their belongings and with reducing the extent of flood damage. Water on Casement Road rose to four feet deep. Exhausted Dix residents packed up their belongings and vacated. Mayor Roger Maughmer said, "We're now talking about a 500-year flood" (Scott, "There").

By July 28th, flood waters had started to drop, as had the elevation at Tuttle Creek Reservoir. Residents in a few of the affected areas were allowed to return to their homes. Outflow from the reservoir continued, which contributed to portions of the Dix neighborhood still being under water, but some Dix residents were able to return to their homes. Those who returned found smelly slime in their yards or water still in their basements. The city provided dumpsters to collect flood-damaged

Right, people investigate the erosion caused by water released through the spillway in 1993. The photo is courtesy of the U.S. Geological Survey.

items, and city employees removed sandbag levees to release trapped water (Manning, "City"). The Corps began to gradually reduce the outflow from the reservoir as water levels dropped. The number of evacuees sheltered in the Union slowly dwindled.

According to the Red Cross, approximately 500 claims related to flood loss were made in Riley County (Manning, "Meeting"). The Federal Emergency Management Agency bought out approximately 400 residences locally. Across the Midwest, the cost of flood damage was estimated at \$12 billion (McNamara), and local estimates were over \$17 million in property, \$5 million in agricultural losses, and \$5 million in roads and bridges (Manning, "Senator").

On August 9th, the spillway gates at Tuttle Creek Reservoir were closed, and the carved channel left behind became known as "Tuttle Canyon." Described as a "geologist's dream," the canyon was created by water rushing through the gates and causing erosion, exposing layers of rock and fossils and creating pools and waterfalls (Scott, "Waters"). Some of the newly exposed rock formations were 240 million years old. The canyon became a popular spot for residents and school children to explore.

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By early September, some flood victims were still in the clean-up phase as they strived to return to a sense of normalcy, but the worst was behind them. Many of Manhattan's citizens had experienced hardship and loss, but they also noted a greater sense of community and neighborliness, which continued even after the flood waters receded.

Bathke, Joe. "Dix goes under." The Manhattan Mercury. 23 July 1993: A1.

Bathke, Joe. "Residents will fight on to save Dix homes." The Manhattan Mercury. 21 July 1993: A1.

Braun, Walt. "A hangout turns shelter." The Manhattan Mercury. 19 July 1993: A1.

Cherrie, Victoria. "Outflow could hit 40,000." The Manhattan Mercury. 19 July 1993: A1.

Cherrie, Victoria. "Post houses 100 military families." The Manhattan Mercury. 21 July 1993: A4.

Felber, Bill. "Slattery: Federal aid soon on the way." The Manhattan Mercury. 25 July 1993: A1.

Manning, Todd. "City re-opens Dix to families." The Manhattan Mercury. 2 August 1993: A1.

Manning, Todd. "Meeting the area's flood needs." The Manhattan Mercury. 27 August 1993: A1.

Manning, Todd. "Milford outflow to 37,500." The Manhattan Mercury. 25 July 1993: A1.

Manning, Todd. "Not enough bags, too many sightseers." The Manhattan Mercury. 19 July 1993: A5.

Manning, Todd. "Senator here to see flood toll." The Manhattan Mercury. 10 August 1993: A1.

McNamara, Nick. "Collins: '93 flood showed 'resilience' of Manhattan, Riley County Communities." 1350KMAN.com. 1350 KMAN, 18 July 2018. Web. 22 July 2018.

"Need help, can help." The Manhattan Mercury. 25 July 1993: A1.

Scott, Mark. "Evacuation." The Manhattan Mercury. 19 July 1993: A1.

Scott, Mark. "There will be substantial damage." The Manhattan Mercury. 23 July 1993: A1.

Scott, Mark. "Waters create 'Tuttle Canyon.'" The Manhattan Mercury. 10 August 1993: A1.

Shaffer, Erica. "Volunteers abundant to help fill sandbags." The Manhattan Mercury. 20 July 1993: A4.

Historic Home Tour

In every membership year, the M/RCPA offers special tours of historic properties as benefits for providing financial support to our organization. This summer's special event was a tour of Sunset Cottage, located at 727 Sunset Avenue, which is a short-term/vacation rental.

The historic home was built in 1933 in the Tudor Revival Style. The first floor exterior features stone, the second floor is stucco, and wood siding is in the gables. The house is owned by Capstone3D Development Studio and was recently renovated top to

bottom.

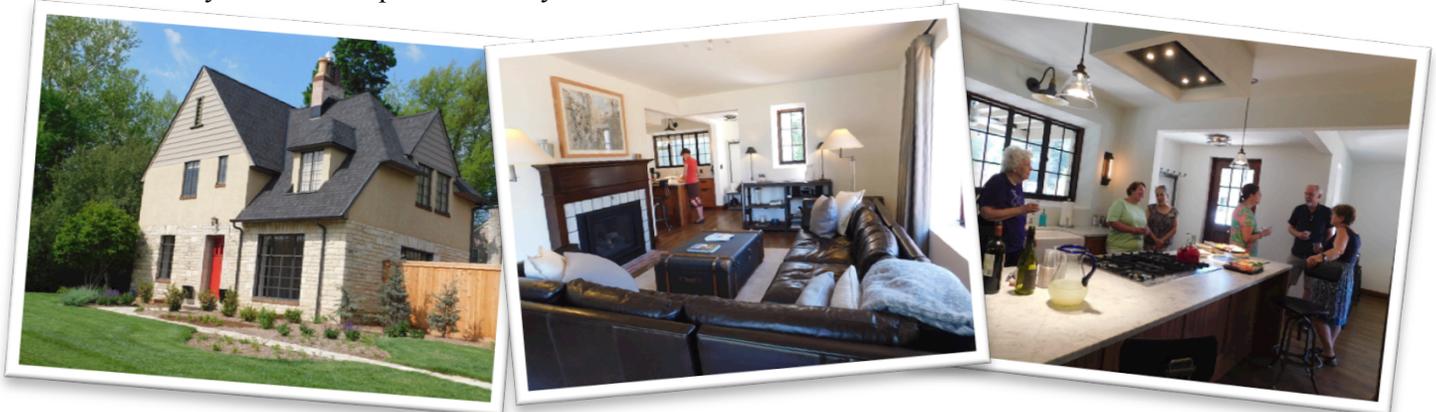
The home's kitchen is one area that was extensively renovated. The kitchen was opened to the living area, while still maintaining and being mindful of the original floor plan and flow of the house. A large island was added, and effort was made to conceal appliances so they wouldn't detract from the kitchen's historic character. As an antidote to appliance-heavy kitchens found in most modern homes, drawer-style refrigerators that tuck below the counter were selected, and other small appliances were hidden in a handy closet. The result is a

cleaner, simpler look that harmonizes with the kitchen's historic nature.

Another feature of the renovation was the retention of the original iron-framed, multi-paned casement windows. The windows were carefully and expertly refurbished and are now a stand-out feature of the house.

The M/RCPA would like to thank Capstone3D Development Studio for hosting the event and sharing the historic home.

Left, the exterior of Sunset Cottage. Center, the living room. Right, M/RCPA members chat in the renovated kitchen.



Update on Historic Pott County Courthouse

by Ruby Zabel

Citizens in Westmoreland and Pottawatomie County continue to watch, wait, and wonder when the fate of the 1884 Pottawatomie County Courthouse will be determined. Even after 15 long, tumultuous months, Pottawatomie County Commissioners continue to be tight-lipped about this topic.

After a push to allow voters a voice at the polls, citizens were told at the Sept. 11, 2017 commission meeting that a General Election ballot question on whether or not to preserve or demolish the Courthouse would be considered advisory only and would require a separate election at an approximate cost of \$40,000-50,000. The county would not undertake this.

In November 2017, a coalition of "Citizens for Courthouse Conservation" adopted bylaws and organized with a board of directors and officers. Since then the Citizens for Courthouse Conservation (CCC) coalition has partnered with the Kansas Rural Communities Foundation, a 501(c)(3) non-profit charitable corporation, to provide an efficient mechanism through which individuals, families, corporations, nonprofit organizations, and private foundations can donate and support CCC in their mission to educate citizens of the historical, aesthetic, and economic value the 1884 Courthouse contributes to the community, the county and to the region.

On Nov. 13, 2017, just five days before a hearing by the Kansas Historic Sites Board of Review for listing the 1884 Courthouse and jail on the Register of Historic Kansas Places, the Pott County Commission unanimously voted to oppose the nomination. The commissioner in District 2, which includes Westmoreland, said they were fearful that placement on a historic registry would limit the county's options for

either replacing or remodeling the building.

On Nov. 18, 2017 the Kansas Historic Sites Board of Review voted unanimously in favor of the 1884 Courthouse's nomination to the National Register of Historic Places, and final acceptance was granted on Jan. 5, 2018. This makes the Courthouse eligible for the Kansas rehabilitation tax credit of 25% for qualified expenses. Additionally, the Heritage Trust Fund could provide matching grants. Renovation guidelines for historically designated properties would need to be considered and followed and would impact the costs, but they would also guarantee an appropriate renovation process, appropriate materials, and continued integrity of the historic Courthouse property.

On April 16, 2018 CCC members went before the County Commission to request access to the Courthouse for the purpose of having an engineering firm update a 2009 assessment of the structural integrity of the building. Commissioners instructed the county counselor to call the engineering firm to determine if it would be a conflict of interest since the county held the initial 2009 contract and the CCC would hold the 2018 contract. Access to the Courthouse was denied at that time, and the contract has since expired.

The 2009 report, as a public record, is available by request from the Pott County Office of Administration and reads, "As a whole, this structure appears to be in fairly good condition considering its age and lack of maintenance it has received through the years. In order to keep a structure in serviceable condition, it must be watertight. . . It is our opinion that with the recommended repairs made and a good maintenance program initiated that this structure should provide many years



Pottawatomie Co. Courthouse,
built 1884.

of satisfactory service."

Recommended ADA compliance, structural repairs, and waterproofing were estimated in 2009 to be about \$913,500 and included installation of an elevator, fire escapes, emergency lighting, and stair rails, rebuilding the jury box and judge's bench, etc. Exterior maintenance included tuckpointing stone on the entire building, rebuilding and replacing window arches, replacing broken stone, re-grading the building perimeter, gutter and downspouts, repairing and strengthening roof trusses, purlins, and rafters, additional floor joists in the south addition, reworking floors on the main level, re-plastering vault ceilings, and repointing interior basement walls.

It appears that none of the recommended maintenance was ever done, as apparently all capital improvement funds were spent building the Justice Center. Yet, commission members continue to place fault on the building for being out-of-date, lacking elevators and central heating and cooling, and for not being functional in today's world. In the words of one commissioner, "I think we've put a couple dollars' worth into it, just general maintenance, to keep the doors from rusting shut."

Most county offices in Westmoreland, except Public Works and the Health Department, are located in the Justice Center or the County Administration Building. *(continued on pg. 5)*

Peace Memorial Auditorium Rededication

Sunday, Oct. 7, 2:30 – 4:00 p.m.

A rededication of Peace Memorial Auditorium, 1101 Poyntz Avenue, will take place on Sunday, Oct. 7, 2:30 – 4:00 p.m. The program will include a rededication of the memorial auditorium and music by the Thundering Cats Big Band as well as other musical performances.

In 1946, Manhattan voters approved a bond to construct Peace Memorial Auditorium as a “living” memorial to the Riley Countians who served in World War II, the 101 servicemen who were killed, and also to the county’s early settlers.

By 2013, most citizens were unaware of the memorial aspect of the auditorium, and the city made plans to relocate offices to the auditorium and to remove the stage and the permanent seating. The M/RCPA and other citizens advocated for saving the auditorium and renovating it.

The Friends of Peace Memorial Auditorium have been working the past few years to raise funds to renovate the auditorium and create a memorial wall. The M/RCPA’s grant funds helped finance refurbishing the permanent seating. The memorial wall was dedicated Nov. 2017, an accompanying electronic kiosk was recently completed (visit www.peacememorial101.org to see the online version), and improvements to the main auditorium are underway this summer.

The rededication is free and open to the public.

Right, the memorial wall in the foyer.



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Currently, remodeling is underway in the Pottawatomie County Ambulance Service in Wamego to accommodate both County Emergency Management and the County Fire Supervisors. Additionally, a new Buildings and Grounds Operation building has been projected as a 2019 Capital Improvement Project. Once these personnel are relocated, the 1884 Courthouse will be vacated.

Is the commission’s plan to allow the building to deteriorate or wait for a water infiltration event that would compromise the structure so that demolition could be deemed the only solution? CCC fears this, as the latest Pott County Capital Improvement Projects list for 2022 includes \$250,000 in fees for an Administration Building Design and shows no line items for Courthouse stabilization, maintenance, or updates.

In 1993 the county purchased the school property north of the Courthouse and most offices serving the public (Appraisers, Clerk’s, Register of Deeds, Treasurer’s, etc.) were moved there, leaving District Court and related offices in the Courthouse until they also relocated to occupy the newly built Justice Center in 2013. Because of this, many citizens in Pott County have never been inside the 1884 Courthouse, never purchased a marriage license there, recorded a

property deed, paid their taxes, or renewed vehicle tags. They are totally unaware of its unique and special history, a stalwart symbol of Pottawatomie County’s heritage having served its purpose well for over 125 years, its sturdy walls the very reason for the existence of the Westmoreland community. Yes, totally unaware of this history and service as many citizens are new to the county, noting that two-thirds of Pottawatomie’s population have moved into their homes since the year 2000; the median population age is 34.8, and nearly 30% are age 18 and under.

CCC feels, unequivocally, that a viable solution to looming facility needs would be to restore the 1884 Courthouse to a historically correct state-of-the art office building for Administration and Board of Commissioners, etc. leaving the public service offices housed in the County Administration Building. Yes, this Courthouse restoration may have a price tag of \$4 million, but a new facility built to house all county offices would perhaps be \$10-14 million (based on required square footage). Tax dollars could be saved by saving the 1884 Courthouse!

You are encouraged to join the Citizens for Courthouse Conservation in their efforts to preserve this revered symbol of Pottawatomie County’s heritage. To learn more, visit the web site <https://www.historicpottawatomiecountycourthouse.org/>.

Kansas Preservation Conference

The 2018 Kansas Preservation Conference will be held in Lawrence on Sept. 20-22. Visit the web site <https://www.kshs.org/p/2018-kansas-preservation-conference/14644> for more details and registration information.

Historic Summit

The tentative date for the 2018 Historic Summit is Wednesday, Oct. 3, and the location will be the Manhattan Public Library. More information will be provided as the date approaches.

The Historic Summit is a cooperative effort between the M/RCPA, the Riley County Historical Society and Museum, and the Historic Resources Board.

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Update on Historic Pott County Jail

After the Pottawatomie County Courthouse and jail were added to the National Register in January 2018, the Broderick Family and Community Education group, which is a service unit of Extension, decided to make the jail their annual community project.

The group developed an idea to renovate the former jail for use as a welcome center for the Northern Flint Hills. The Northern Flint Hills offer scenic drives, limestone structures, and over a dozen state or nationally listed historic sites. A welcome center would help visitors learn more about the area.

Repurposing the jail into a welcome center would involve repairs to the fascia and soffits, installing a heating and cooling system, sandblasting the ceiling, and providing furniture. In the short term, the Broderick FCE

would like to erect a weatherproof guest signature box where visitors could sign their names, indicate where they were from, and add comments.

The State Historic Preservation Office approved the guest register box's installation, and it is anticipated to be installed in September and will be paid for by the Broderick FCE group.

The Broderick FCE received cost estimates for roof repairs and soil stabilization around the jail to mitigate deterioration of the foundation, and the group has provided copies of the estimates to the Pott County Commission. In July, the Westmoreland City Council drafted a letter to the county commission, indicating its support of the Broderick FCE's jail project.

The group has also printed informational brochures about the historic Pottawatomie County

Courthouse and jail and distributed the brochures in key locations in the county as well as local museums.

The Broderick FCE hopes to gain the support of the governing bodies of other communities in the county and allied groups, like the Citizens for Courthouse Conservation, to move forward with restoring and repurposing the historic Courthouse and jail.

Dru Clarke, co-chair of the Broderick FCE annual service project, provided information for this article.



Above, the historic Pottawatomie County jail. The photo is courtesy of Dru Clarke.