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# MANHATTAN/RILEY COUNTY PRESERVATION ALLIANCE NEWSLETTER

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DECEMBER, 2007

## A LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT LINDA GLASGOW

This past month I have been reading **The Flight of the Creative Class** by American economist and urban studies theorist, Richard Florida. In his first book, **The Rise of the Creative Class**, Professor Florida generated a great deal of interest in his ideas on urban regeneration.

Florida sees each community as being in competition for human talent in the global economy. Open, tolerant societies that embrace diversity and harness the full creative potential of every human being are best positioned to succeed economically in today's world. A city's best strategy is to attract and retain high-quality talent and to avoid a narrow focus on infrastructure projects.

Quoting Florida in **The Flight of the Creative Class**: "I roundly criticize

public boondoggles like stadium-building efforts and large-scale downtown revitalization plans . . . real economic development is people-oriented, organic, and community-based."

Florida's theories have elicited both praise and controversy. I recommend this book as a thought-provoking and relevant read.

The Manhattan Urban Area Planning Board, at its December 3rd meeting, once again denied Dial Realty's proposed amendments to the downtown redevelopment area's planned unit development. The issue will go to the City Commission on Tuesday, December 18th, at City Hall, 7:00 p.m.

I hope to see you at the meeting. Yes, I know it's the holiday season and everyone is busy. I'm sure that Dial is

counting on that.

If the future of downtown Manhattan is important to you and you want a downtown you can be proud of, please make the effort to attend the meeting and speak your mind.

Even if you choose not to speak, your presence will send a message: the citizenry is awake and alert and supports the downtown expansion plan that better integrates with the historic downtown core.

### *Upcoming Events*

Winter Social Pot-Luck Dinner  
Monday, December 17th  
Manhattan's U.P. Depot  
6:30 - 9:00 p.m.  
All members are invited.

Manhattan City Commission Mtg.  
Tuesday, December 18th  
City Hall  
7:00 p.m.

The public is urged to attend.

January M/RCPA Board Meeting  
Thursday, January 10th  
Manhattan's U.P. Depot  
All members are welcome.

Second Annual Historic Summit  
Thursday, February 21st  
Manhattan's U.P. Depot  
Time to be announced.

## *An Invitation: Winter Social*

Alliance members are invited to attend the pot-luck dinner to be held on Monday, December 17th, 6:30 p.m. at Manhattan's Union Pacific Depot.

Please come and be part of our annual gathering. The evening promises to be festive, relaxing, and delicious—all in a candlelit, elegant setting.

Table service and drinks will be provided. Please make enough food for six to eight people and remember to bring a serving utensil with your dish.

While most trees lose their leaves and almost vanish from the landscape with the season, a few remain. We call them Ever Green.

Our historic buildings are like the evergreens around us. While other remnants of the past fade away, a few structures remain, quiet sentinels of the past, but also harbingers of beauty in the future. Let's celebrate the season by honoring the evergreens all around us and the people who care for them.

# *A Short History: A Manhattan Woman and the House She Built*

*By Dixie West*

Who was Sophia Jarbeaux and why does the house that she built so long ago still speak to us today?

Born in 1830, Sophia Jarbeaux emigrated from Sweden to the United States as a child. Married at what must have been an early age to William C. Jarbeaux, a Kentucky born teamster seventeen years her senior, Sophia gave birth to their first child, Susan, at the age of 16. Seven additional siblings would bless the marriage.

Census records reveal that the Jarbeaux family was living in Manhattan by 1865. In late November, 1868, the family received donations of clothing, potatoes, fruit, and groceries from a group of "good" people in the community. This is probably the year that William Jarbeaux died leaving Sophia a widow with a large family to support.

Susan, the first-born, would go on to teach at the Rocky Ford one-room schoolhouse. Mary, another daughter, married a local, wealthy landowner, J.P. Shannon. In 1874 Sophia Jarbeaux married Andres Nagling, a Swedish born emigrant like herself. By 1880 the Jarbeaux/Nagling family was living in Colorado.

The life of Sophia Jarbeaux would have probably gone unnoticed in Manhattan history except for the fact that 136 years ago this widowed woman built a small, fourteen by sixteen foot, stone dwelling at a cost of \$500.

This house, 402 Bluemont, stands on the northwest corner of the intersection where the City of Manhattan and the Kansas Department of Transportation plan to install a roundabout for traffic control. The reconfiguration predicates

destruction or removal of the house.

With so few historic stone houses remaining in the Manhattan community, it seems a shame to destroy this structure.

Many of us forget that during the nineteenth century lumber was a precious commodity on the Great Plains while limestone was a local, abundant, and fireproof resource.

Limestone is a sedimentary rock formed over millions of years by biological, chemical, and physical processes. The sediment, composed mostly of fossil shells, accumulated in warm seawater. Over millions of years these sediments were buried, mineralized, compressed, and became cemented together to form limestone. Generally limestone, composed mostly of calcium carbonate, is the skeletal remains of marine invertebrates. These skeletal remains, fossils, and associated sedimentary features provide clues as to the environment of the particular limestone.

Nineteenth century pioneers to the Flint Hills discovered a vast grassland where trees were scarce and commonly found only along stream valleys. However, beds of limestone, exposed along the hillsides, were a readily available building material.

By removing the overlying soil, drilling holes into the rock with hammer and drill, and then, using wedges, limestone blocks of the required size were obtained. This "feather and wedge" technique was both time and labor intensive. Horse-drawn wagons transported the stone from the quarry to the building site.

Some limestone, like the fence-post

limestone of west central Kansas, are, when "fresh," relatively soft and more easily quarried than other limestone. After exposure to the atmosphere the surface of "fence-post" type limestone hardens and becomes very durable and virtually indestructible.

The Sophia Jarbeaux house is constructed from blocks of Cottonwood limestone that was, and still is, exposed here in Manhattan. The Cottonwood limestone is a common component of stone structures in Manhattan: houses, fences, porches, and even the first curbstones along Houston Street.

Geological studies suggest that the Cottonwood limestone formed in warm shallow seas around 300 million years ago when what is now Kansas was near the equator.

Limestone was also used to make lime cement by burning broken pieces of it in kilns. This lime cement was then when mixed with sand and water to "glue" the building stones together into load-bearing walls.

With today's building practices, concrete is a fast and relatively inexpensive way to put up a structural wall, so few people can afford or are willing to take the time to construct the traditional mortared stone walls that are so labor-intensive.

Instead, a concrete structural wall is erected first, and thin, flat stones are "glued" onto the face of the wall with cement mortar. Metal tabs in the main concrete structural walls are mortared between the thin slabs of stone to tie everything together otherwise the stone would just peel off the concrete

Continued on page 3

# *A Board Member's Remarks Before the City Commission, November 20th, 2007*

*By Debbie Nuss*

My name is Debbie Nuss and I reside at 1419 Humboldt. I am here tonight speaking on behalf of the Manhattan/Riley County Preservation Alliance as our president, Linda Glasgow, was unable to attend. I am here to speak to Item M on tonight's consent agenda.

The mission the Manhattan/Riley County Preservation Alliance is to engage the community in the active preservation of its historic resources. The Charleston Principles serve as our guidelines.

Three of the eight guidelines speak specifically to your decision tonight to approve the agreement for the acquisition of the property at 402 Bluemont, the Sophia Jarbeaux House, built in 1871 at a cost of \$500.

Guideline #3 is to create organizational and regulatory...mechanisms to facilitate preservation and **provide the leadership to make them work.**

Guideline #4 is to develop revitalization strategies that capitalize on the existing value of historic residential and commercial neighborhoods and properties...without displacing existing residents.

Guideline #5 is to ensure that policies and decisions on community growth

and development respect a community's heritage and enhance overall livability.

In keeping with those guidelines, the Manhattan/Riley County Preservation Alliance first urges the City and its contracting partners to in the future obtain historic preservation environmental clearances at the proper point in the process rather than relying on exceptional permission based on hardship.

Second, the Preservation Alliance expects the City to move and preserve the three houses affected by the Fourth and Bluemont roundabout construction.

Members of the Preservation Alliance board met this past Saturday and brainstormed about ways to move or preserve the Sophia Jarbeaux House at 402 Bluemont.

Consistent with Goal #2 in the City's Comprehensive Land Use Plan, which is to encourage the renovation and adaptive use of historic structures, we were able to come up with a couple of what we believe are viable options and would be happy to share and discuss those options with City staff.

Third, the Preservation Alliance

would like the public to see the timetable for the roundabout construction as well as the preliminary plan and timetable for changes on Fourth Street north of Bluemont.

We believe the public's interests would be best served if that information is made available on the City's website and updated on a regular basis, not unlike the information made available about the downtown redevelopment.

And finally, the Preservation Alliance would like to recognize the excellent work of the City's Historic Resources Board and urges the City to make better use of this resource in order to be proactive rather than reactive on historic preservation issues.

Not unlike the situation with the Strasser House, we cannot afford to continue to throw away another irreplaceable structure like the Sophia Jarbeaux house as the price for "progress."

Thank you.

Debbie Nuss began her service on the M/RCPA Board of Directors in September of this year. She has played an active role in the League of Women Voters and has served on the USD 383 school board.

## *A Short History about a Manhattan Woman and the House She Built*

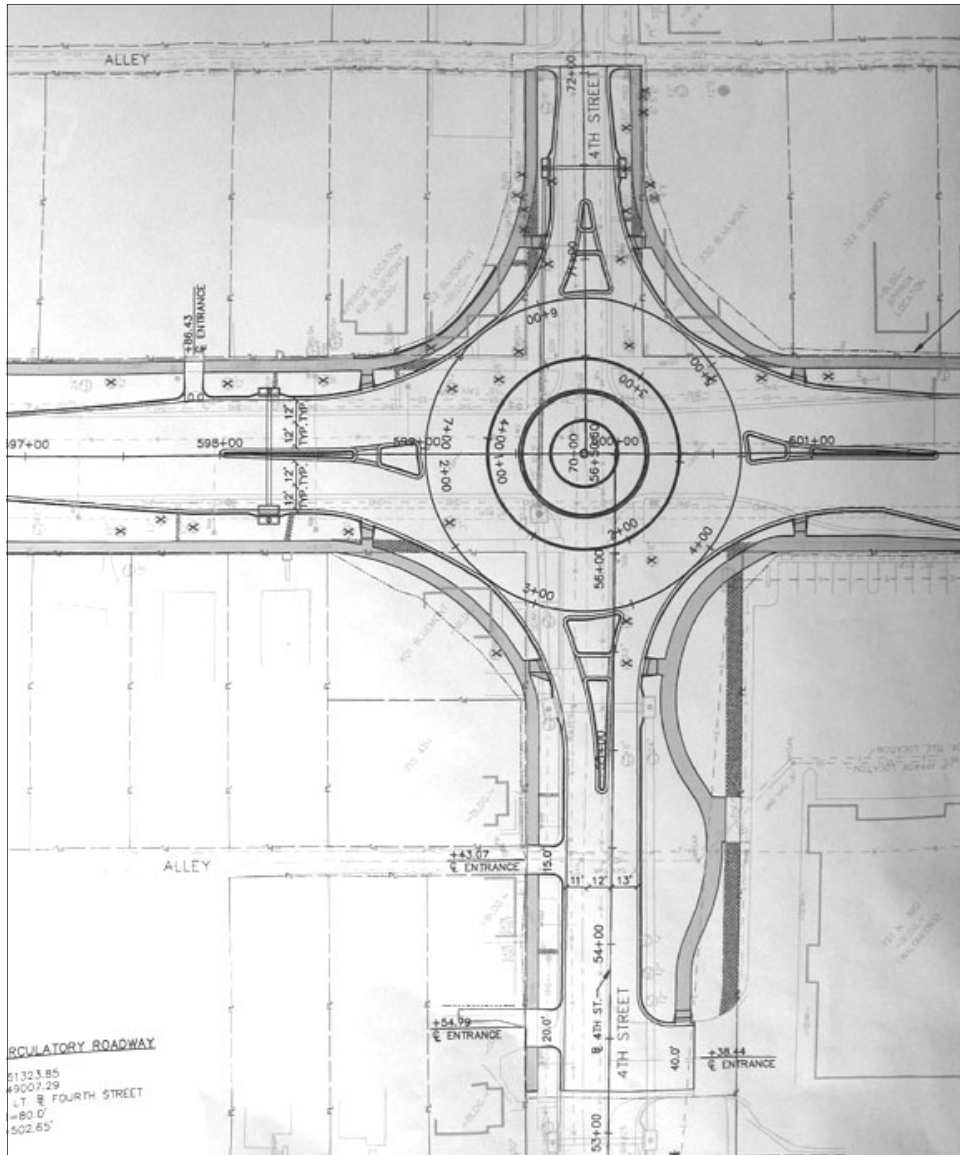
Continued from page 2

wall. The result is a wall that appears to be solid stone, but real stone, if any, is only a thin, exterior veneer.

Although Sophia Jarbeaux has been largely forgotten, the stone building erected with much sweat and labor

stands as a memorial to nineteenth century life as well as the necessity for structural creativity embodied in the settlement of the Great American Prairie.

Note: Patricia J. O'Brien provided genealogical history of Sophia Jarbeaux. Ron West, invertebrate paleontologist, provided information on the limestone structure of 402 Bluemont.



**Fourth Street & Bluemont Roundabout  
Plan by HWS Consulting  
(north at top)**

The plan for the proposed roundabout at Fourth Street and Bluemont shows how the three houses (northeast, northwest, and southwest corners) will be affected by construction of the roundabout. The southeast corner is part of the Walgreens property. A signalized intersection would require as much space as the roundabout due to turn lanes.

## *The Charleston Principles*

On October 20, 1990, members of the national historic preservation community met in Charleston, South Carolina, at the 44th National Preservation Conference sponsored by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The "Charleston Principles" were adopted unanimously.

The principles provide guidance for local government programs in the conservation of community heritage.

1. Identify historic places, both architectural and natural, that give the community its special character and that can aid its future well-being.
2. Adopt the preservation of historic places as a goal of planning for land use, economic development, housing for all income levels, and transportation.
3. Create organizational, regulatory, and incentive mechanisms to facilitate preservation, and provide the leadership to make them work.
4. Develop revitalization strategies that capitalize on the existing value of historic residential and commercial neighborhoods and properties, and provide well-designed affordable housing without displacing residents.
5. Ensure that policies and decisions on community growth and development respect a community's heritage and enhance overall livability.
6. Demand excellence in design for new construction and in the stewardship of historic properties and places.
7. Use a community's heritage to educate citizens of all ages and to build civic pride.
8. Recognize the cultural diversity of communities and empower a diverse constituency to acknowledge, identify, and preserve America's cultural and physical resources.

## *Depot Project*

The M/RCPA's Depot Committee is examining enhancements that could be made to Manhattan's U.P. Depot in order to increase the public's enjoyment of the building.

If the Committee's ideas are met with approval by the City, the Committee is prepared to write a grant proposal in 2008.

If you would like to donate to a grant match, please send your tax-deductible contribution, labeled "Depot Fund" to the M/RCPA at P.O. Box 1893, Manhattan, Kansas 66505.

## *Courthouse Clock*

The Riley County Historical Society continues to solicit funds for the Riley County Courthouse Clock Fund grant match.

A Heritage Trust Fund grant has been received and work on the project has begun.

If you would like to make a tax-deductible donation towards the restoration project, please send your contribution to the Riley County Historical Society, 2309 Claflin Road, Manhattan, Kansas 66502. Please label your donation "Courthouse Clock."

## *Historic House*



This gingerbread (actually graham cracker) Goodnow House model was constructed by architecture students and displayed at the Beach Museum on December 6th. (See page 6 story.)

## 2007—2008 Officers & Directors

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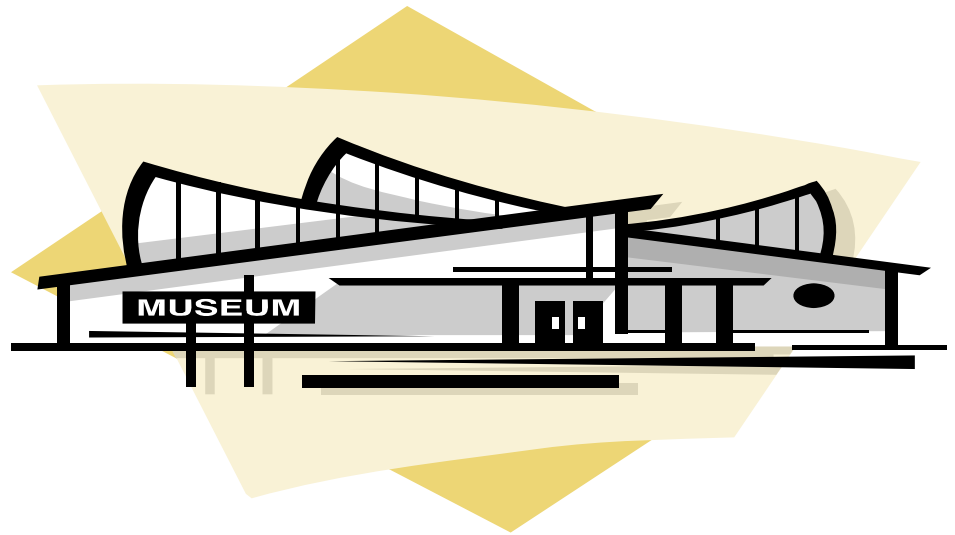
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## Riley County Historical Society Contemplates Museum Expansion

On the evening of December 6th, the Riley County Historical Society (RCHS) hosted a design study presentation for an expansion to the Riley County Historical Museum (RCHM).

Kansas State University College of Architecture professor David Sachs' fifth year architecture students worked on the project all semester.

RCHM director Cheryl Collins accompanied David Sachs and the students on a tour of museums which included the Kansas Museum of History in Topeka, the Johnson County Museum in Shawnee Mission, and the Frontier Trails Museum in Independence, Missouri. In a second trip Professor Sachs and the students visited the

Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, the Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art, and the Liberty Memorial.

On two previous occasions the students presented their ideas and refinements to representatives of the RCHS and RCHM. The December 6th program for the public was the culmination of the project.

An appreciative crowd braved the cold and snow to attend the presentation which was held at the Beach Museum of Art on the K-State campus.

Preservationists recognize that excellence in new construction is a benefit to the community. Ideas developed by the students may well find their way into the eventual building expansion.

### THE BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP

**\$15 STUDENT**  
Newsletter  
Education seminars

**\$35 MAINTENANCE**  
All of the above benefits

**\$100 HISTORICAL**  
All of the above benefits plus  
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November 2, 2007,  
private tour and reception at  
Castle Kimble (for 2 people)

**\$500 LANDMARK**  
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## Good News From the IRS

Fall of 2007 marked the end of the M/RCPA's five year Internal Revenue Service (IRS) "advance ruling period" to determine if our 501 (c)(3) status will be as a public charity or as a private foundation. M/RCPA treasurer Barbara Poresky provided the IRS with information on the M/RCPA's funding sources.

The IRS, in a letter dated October 31, 2007, has informed the M/RCPA that it

continues to be exempt from Federal income tax under section 501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Furthermore, based on the information submitted, the M/RCPA is now permanently classified as a public charity.

This ruling is important because classification as a public charity is somewhat more advantageous than classification as a private foundation in terms of income tax deductibility.

# M/RCPA Membership Roster 2007-2008

**\$15+ Student Level** –

**\$35+ Maintenance Level** – Beverly Azer, Greg & Mary Bell, Charlene Brownson, Marolyn Caldwell, Diana Chapel, Cheryl Collins, Kitty Cool, Mike & Jan Danenberg, Nancy Danner, Lelah Dushkin, Glee Eggers, Calvin & Genie Emig, Endacott Lighting, Gene Ernst, Mary Ann Fleming, Bernd & Enell Foerster, Peggy Frazier, Conn & Di Harrison, Chuck & Charlotte Herr, Robin & Barbara Higham, Corina Hugo, Jean Hulbert, Mark & Ann Knackendoffel, Eileen & Brad Koehn, Julie Lea & Chris Parsons, Debbie Madsen, Elaine & Robert Mohr, Frances Nedwed, Bill Pallett, Lex & Patty Pearson, Mary Don Peterson, Lawrence & Mary Pollack, Gerald & Martha Powell, Roger Reitz M.D., Lauren W. Ritterbush & Family, Richard & Kimberly Smith, Steven Stover, S.G. & J.A. Tilley, Cheryl Walters, Patricia & Ray Weisenburger, Georganne & Warren White, Edna Williams, Judy Macy Willingham, Van & Barbara Withee.

**\$100+ Historical Level**– Barbara G. Anderson, Art Craft Printers & Design, Mimi Balderson, Jane Bowers, Bowman Bowman Novick, Inc., Commerce Bank, John & Bonnie Devore, Dan & Latane Donelin, David & Kathy Dzewaltowski, Fran Ellis, Gary & Paula Ellis, Howard, & Ann Erickson, Rev. H. Wayne & Beverly Fink, Brian Hardeman & Jayme Morris-Hardeman, Kathleen & Don Heon, Marjorie Heyne, Joyce Hoyt, Pat & Rita Keating, Vladimir Krstic & Marina Pecar-Krstic, John & Cindy LaBarge, Eugene Laughlin, Jon & Lila Levin, Master Landscape, Inc., John & Karen McCulloh, Bruce McMillan AIA Architects P.A., Michael & Judine Mecseri, Deb Nuss, Virginia Quiring, Tom & Karen Roberts, James Sherow & Bonnie Lynn-Sherow, Suzanne Siepl-Coates & Gary Coates, George & Julie Strecker, Chuck & Marsha Tannehill.

**\$250+ Preservation Level**– Burke & Margery Bayer, Larry & Linda Glasgow, Jean Hill, Hittle Landscape Architects, McCullough Development, Patricia O'Brien, Mr. & Mrs. Perry C. Peine, Barbara Poresky, Russell L. Reitz MD, Verlyn Richards, Gwyn & Gina Riffel, Steve & Debbie Saroff, Karen Sheffield, Steve & Whitney Short, Ron & Dixie West, Gary & Sharon Younger.

**\$500+ Landmark Level**– Phil & Margaret Howe.

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MANHATTAN/RILEY COUNTY PRESERVATION ALLIANCE

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- \$15+ STUDENT
- \$35+ MAINTENANCE
- \$100+ HISTORICAL
- \$250+ PRESERVATION
- \$500+ LANDMARK

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