# MANHATTAN/RILEY COUNTY PRESERVATION ALLIANCE NEWSLETTER

# A Visit to the K-State Campus: 100 Wilson Court



In every membership year our organization's most generous benefactors are offered a special event as a thank you for their substantial financial support. This year's event was a tour of President Kirk and Dr. Noel Schulz's residence at 100 Wilson Court on the Kansas State University campus.

Upon arrival Alliance members were greeted and urged to socialize and explore the house's public rooms. The experience was enhanced by K-State Distinguished Professor (and Alliance member) Dr. David Littrell's cello music.

Before long it was time to gather in the living room. President Kirk Schulz and Dr. Noel Schulz each gave welcoming remarks. Membership committee chair Debbie Saroff thanked the Schulzes and presented Dr. Noel Schulz with a copy of Land Grant Ladies, a history of K-State's first ladies written by K-State Assistant Professor of Secondary Education Dr. Michaeline Chance-Reay (also a member). Debbie then presented the couple with a bound copy of Digging K-State by Emerita Professor of Anthropology Dr. Patricia O'Brien (Alliance president).

Next Dixie West gave a history of the presidential residences (reprinted on pages 2 and 3 of this newsletter). Dixie was also responsible for the flower arrangements and buffet table display of photos of the presidential

#### DECEMBER, 2009

residences through time.

Dr. Noel Schulz, who is a professor in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, explained that the house's public rooms are now furnished with pieces owned by the University.

The public rooms are newly painted. The dining room walls are upholstered with fabric to enhance the room's acoustical properties. The wood floors have been refinished and laid with several area rugs. Window treatments in the living and dining rooms are coordinated. A kitchen island was removed to provide better circulation when a large crew caters events.

Dr. Noel Schulz guided the group through the house's public and private areas, from basement to third floor. Jay Nelson of the Strecker-Nelson Gallery assisted by providing expert commentary on the artwork chosen for display in the house.

The Preservation Alliance is indebted to the entire Schulz family for the gift of their time just one day after the presidential inauguration. We are proud to count them as members of our organization and we wish them much happiness in the years ahead as they enjoy the pleasures associated with living in Kansas State University's presidential residence.

The Preservation Alliance is also indebted to its membership committee for organizing this event. Debbie Saroff (chair), Judine Mecseri, and Dixie West deserve our heartfelt thanks for their service.

# The KSU President's Home at 100 Wilson Court A Talk Given by Dixie West on September 25, 2009

Good evening to you all.

The home of Noel and Kirk Schulz, an English style house constructed of locally quarried native Kansas limestone, was built in 1923.

The home was built as a memorial to Davies Wilson, one of the founders of Manhattan, Kansas. Wilson was a member of the State Legislature and promoted Manhattan as the location of Kansas State Agricultural College.

In 1912 Wilson's widow, Mehitable, bequeathed \$20,000 to the College to be used at the discretion of the State Board of Regents.

In 1922, then President William Jardine convinced the local Administration that the money could best be used towards construction of a president's house. With an additional \$9,391 the Board of Administration voted that the residence "shall be known as the

Davies Wilson Memorial and that a suitable memorial tablet should be placed on the wall bearing witness to the generosity of Mehitable C.C. Wilson, the donor, and to the scholarly culture, pioneer courage, and lifelong public spirit of Davies Wilson...." You see this plaque as you enter the front door to the house.

The wooded area selected for 100 Wilson Court was the former campus arboretum that has significance in and of itself. Elbridge Gale, member of the first Board of Regents and professor of horticulture and botany from 1871—78, operated a nursery north of Lover's Lane on the northeast side of the present campus. When the college was moved from its original location to the current campus, the nursery was incorporated into the campus. The arboretum proper was established when over 100 species of exotic trees and shrubs arrived from the Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University. The arboretum was a source for landscape materials and practical training in nursery management for decades. At one time the campus boasted some 4,000 trees and the residence. To save money, campus labor was employed in college shops to build the three-story 3,500 square foot structure. The original house was enlarged by 1,102 square feet in 1998 when the original garage was turned into living space and a new garage built. All light fixtures are original to the house.

You might wonder why there was no president's home on campus prior

> to 1923. In fact, the first president's home was the Preston House, a stone structure erected in 1866 bv Mrs. Preston, the widow of Rev. N.O. Preston who in 1863 was appointed Professor of Mathematics and English Literature at K.S.A.C. That house and approximately 40 acres, the Preston farm, were purchased from Mrs. Preston for \$7,000 in 1871 as part of the move of the college from the original campus on College Hill to



numerous bushes, but since then, many hardwoods have given way to parking lots and sidewalks. According to sources, the campus landscaping reached its zenith during World War II when German POW's cared for the grounds.

Cecil "Baldy" Baker, a university architect from 1917 to 1923, drew the plans for 100 Wilson Court and specified that the structure look like a house, but it should blend in with the rest of the campus. This follows a pattern of K.S.A.C. professors designing campus buildings and the State Architect approving them under his signature. Once architectural plans were drawn, it was estimated that it would take \$42,000 to actually build its present location.

On a side note, there was a Mrs. Foster who owned acreage along side Mrs. Preston, but Mrs. Foster was unwilling to sell her parcel. A parson was thence dispatched to Mrs. Foster's house to request that Mrs. Foster have a change of heart. Legend has it that as the reluctant land owner churned butter, the parson prayed for Mrs. Foster and the agricultural college. The power of prayer evidently worked and Mrs. Foster the next day relinquished the farm land for a higher purpose.

Presidents Anderson and Fairchild lived in the Preston House as did several professors until it was enlarged in 1920 and became the College hospital. 3

The home was situated beneath what is today the north wing of Lafene, just south of Leasure Hall. Lafene, once the campus hospital, now houses the English Department and Student Counseling.

The Preston House was used as the President's House from 1871 to 1885 at which time a new, larger stone house for the President was erected northeast of Anderson Hall, the current location of Holton Hall.

The second President's house, designed by Professor J.D. Walters, professor of Industrial Drawing, was struck by lightning and burned down in 1895. The president's house was ultimately destroyed because the campus lacked 100 feet of hose to adequately deliver water to the burning structure. When the Agricultural College requested funding to build a new president's house, the regents refused the request but did provide money to purchase 100 more feet of hose.

Between 1895 and 1923 when 100 Wilson Court was built, the presidents lived off campus.

When a new University presidential family moves to 100 Wilson Court, they may decorate and furnish the home as they please. The first floor, the public space for entertaining, consists of a reception hall, living room, dining room, kitchen, butler's pantry, a sun parlor, and a screened sun porch. The Schulzes have selected original artwork by Kansas artists for the public space. The second floor is the private quarters of the president and his family.

If walls could talk, I would opt for the third floor. This upper story served as living quarters for a maid and butler in the 1940's. Since then the third floor has housed numerous campus visitors including alumni, Landon Lecturers, a supreme court justice, General Dwight D. Eisenhower, congress people, Red Skelton, and Truman Capote who stayed here for a time while researching for a book he would title **In Cold Blood**—about a murdered Kansas family. Seminars have been taught in the home, carolers come at Christmas, and during the 1960's there was threat of student protesters marching to the doors.

After researching the activities associated with the President's house, I tend to disagree with the 1975 Collegian reporter who stated: "A lovely setting of course, but how lonely it must be sometimes for the family in an almost-glass house."

Every September the monarch butterflies, during their annual migration, return to fill

the gardens surrounding 100 Wilson Court. Apparently, there have been fifty to one-hundred thousand in the yard at one time. This annual pilgrimage prompted former KSU President Jon Wefald to change the name of the nearby Oak Grove Street to Butterfly Lane.



The Schulz family is now a part of the rich history of 100 Wilson Court. And we wish them well in their years ahead at Kansas State University. And we thank them for sharing this beautiful historic structure with us this evening.

#### Historic Resources Board

Eight members of the Preservation Alliance attended the October 26th meeting of Manhattan's Historic Resources Board (HRB).

The HRB reviewed a request by the owner of 831 Leavenworth, the First Presbyterian Church, to demolish the house. Representatives of the Church stated that the house had been "all used up" by the Manhattan Emergency Shelter which had occupied the building for twenty-five or so years. The Church wishes to retain the garage associated with the property and to replace the house with a columbarium, a place for respectful storage of cinerary urns (urns holding cremated human remains).

The HRB review took place to assess the effect of this plan on the environs of the Robert Ulrich House, 121 North Eighth Street, and the Woman's Club Building, 900 Poyntz Avenue, both on the National Register. Alliance members and neighbors opposed the proposal.

The HRB unanimously found that the plan to demolish 831 Leavenworth did not meet the Standards and Guidelines for Evaluating the Effect on Environs provided by the Kansas State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). Standards one through four were cited. These guidelines speak to the character, historic use, historic significance, and compatible reconstruction (should demolition be warranted). The request next went to the SHPO which provided a similar decision.

The First Presbyterian Church has the option of appealing to the City Commission for a demolition permit.

The house is pictured on page 4.

### At the Annual Meeting

The annual meeting was held on September 10<sup>th</sup> at Manhattan's Union Pacific Depot with between 25 and 30 members in attendance. Outgoing board member Barbara Anderson was warmly thanked for her service. New and renewing board members whose terms will expire in September of 2012 were elected. The board, in turn, elected the officers for the coming year.

The newly elected board members whose terms expire in September of 2012 are Kathy Dzewaltowski, Gary Ellis, Michael Mecseri, Dori Milldyke, Marina Pecar-Krstic, Gina Riffel, and Chuck Tannehill.

Officers for 2009 – 2010 are Pat O'Brien, president, Debbie Nuss, vice president, Kathy Dzewaltowski, secretary, and Barbara Poresky, treasurer.

The evening's speaker, Christy Davis, has deep roots in Kansas. She graduated from Kansas State University and has, for much of the past decade, worked in the public sector as a preservation planner and Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer. In 2006 she founded her own historic preservation consulting firm which specializes in assisting property owners in designating their properties and funding their preservation projects.

Christy's talk, entitled "Death by Design," presented the history of funeral home architecture from the time when funerals took place at home, coffins could be purchased at local furniture stores, and embalming, if chosen, was performed in the home.

Funeral parlors—large houses located conveniently close to hospitals—came into fashion in the early twentieth century. Their motorized hearses often served double-duty as ambulances.

Through the years medical care and the funeral industry became more institutionalized and professional. Funeral parlors came to be called "mortuaries" and mortuary businesses tended to outgrow their large houses. It is now not unusual to see the original funeral parlor house totally encased in new construction. As the mortuaries grew, so did their parking lots.

Christy illustrated her talk with photos from across the state including

#### 2009–2010 Officers & Directors

Kathy Dzewaltowski—Secretary Gary Ellis Sara Fisher Linda Glasgow Michael Mecseri Dori Milldyke Debbie Nuss—Vice President Pat O'Brien—President Marina Pecar-Krstic Barbara Poresky—Treasurer Gina Riffel Debbie Saroff Chuck Tannehill La Barbara Wigfall

some from early-day Manhattan. She challenged the audience to speculate why new mortuary construction lacks windows.

The program concluded with questions and answers. We thank Christy for giving us the premiere of this presentation.

An audio recording of the annual meeting program is available at http://comunitybridge.blogspot.com/2009/09/death-by-design-history-of-funeral.html



The front porch stone work, a character-defining feature of 831 Leavenworth, was tampered with between the Historic Resource Board's denial of a demolition permit and the State Historic Preservation Office's decision. The photo on the left was taken on November 2, 2009. The photo on the right was taken on November 7, 2009.

# M/RCPA Membership Roster 2009–2010

**<u>\$15+ Student Level</u>** – Hillary Glasgow.

<u>\$35+ Maintenance Level</u> – Phil & Dawn Anderson, Art Craft Printers & Design, Richard & Sylvia Beeman, Charlene Brownson, Preston & Diana Chapel, Cheryl Collins, Mike & Janet Danenberg, Nancy Danner, John & Bonnie Devore, Dan & Latane Donelin, Lelah Duskin, Glee Eggers, Calvin & Genie Emig, Rev. H. Wayne & Beverly Fink, Sara Fisher, Janice Flanary & Carolyn Arand, Mary Ann Fleming, Enell & Bernd Foerster, Corina & Cornelius Hugo, Jean Hulbert, Pat & Rita Keating, Eileen & Bradley Koehn, Marianne Korten, Eugene J. Laughlin, Bob Linder, Elaine & Robert Mohr, Linda Morse, Richard & Jeanne Jaccard Parker, Mary & Lawrence Pollack, Jerry & Martha Powell, Dr. M. C. Reay, Lauren W. Ritterbush, Doug & Rachelle Routh, Donna Schenck-Hamlin, Susanne Siepel-Coates & Gary Coates, Geri & Todd Simon, Chris & Ann Smith, Richard & Kimberly Smith, Brenda Spencer, Carolee Stark, Dr. Stephen Stover, Bob & Julia Strawn, Joan Strickler, S.G. & J.A. Tilley, Patricia & Ray Weisenburger, La Barbara Wigfall, Alvin & Edna Williams, J. Willingham.

<u>\$100+ Historical Level</u> — John & Sheri Adams, Anderson Knight Architects, P.A., Bowman Bowman Novick, Inc., Jacquie Brewer, Mick Charney, Commerce Bank-Manhattan, The Ebert Mayo Design Group, Architects, Frances Ellis, Gary & Paula Ellis, Andrew & Rebekah Glasgow, Marjorie Heyne, Mark & Ann Knackendoffel, Dr. David Littrell, Marilyn McCord, Karen & John McCulloh, Michael & Judine Mecseri, Dori Milldyke, Jayme Morris-Hardeman & Brian Hardeman, Marina Pecar-Krstic, Barbara & Ernie Peck, Virginia Quiring, Sharon & Charles Reagan, Christopher Renner, Dan & Mitzi Richards, Verlyn Richards, Gwyn & Gina Riffel, Tom & Karen Roberts, Rich & Penny Senften, Mike & Karen Sheffield, George & Julie Strecker, Karolyn K. Tacha, Chuck & Marsha Tannehill, Barbara Withee.

<u>\$250+ Preservation Level</u> — Barbara G. Anderson, Mary Dean Apel, Mimi Balderson, The Chef Café, Lincoln & Dorothy Deihl, David & Kathy Dzewaltowski, Jana & David Fallin, Larry & Linda Glasgow, Jean Bigbee Hill, Hittle Landscape Architects, Roger & Linda Johnson, Master Landscape (June Schnittker, Al Alspach, Jeff Chaffee), McCullough Development, Inc., Debbie Nuss & Brad Fenwick, Patricia J. O'Brien, The Palace, Barbara Poresky, Prairiewood Retreat & Preserve, Steve & Deborah Saroff, President Kirk Schulz & Dr. Noel Schulz, Steve & Whitney Short, Ron & Dixie West.

#### <u>\$500+ Landmark Level</u> -

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MANHATTAN/RILEY COUNTY PRESERVATION ALLIANCE				
ANNUAL (2009-2010) MEMBERSHIP ACCEPTANCE				
THE M/RCPA IS A TAX EXEMPT 501(C)(3) OR MAKE YOUR CHECK PAYABLE TO M/RCPA AND SEND TO P.O. BOX 1893,			\$35+ \$100+ \$250+ \$500+	STUDENT MAINTENANCE HISTORICAL PRESERVATION LANDMARK
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# Effective, Popular, and Threatened: The Rehabilitation Tax Credit Program

The tremendously popular state rehabilitation tax credit program, begun in 2001, has preserved hundreds of historic Kansas properties through redevelopment.

At the end of the last session, faced with a terrible budget deficit, the Kansas legislature chose to limit all investment tax credit programs and placed a cap on the dollar amount of rehabilitation tax credit certificates that can be redeemed within any one year.

Because of the tax credits, preservation projects have provided work for the construction industry when financing was unavailable for new construction. This has been particularly important to the economy because preservation projects are more laborintensive than new construction projects.

Project funding relies on a stable, predictable tax credit program. Uncertainties introduced by this cap have caused financing for proposed projects to dry up. Dozens of shovelready projects throughout the state are now on hold.

The Kansas Preservation Alliance (KPA), the statewide 501 (c) (3) preservation advocacy organization, is sponsoring an economic impacts study of the state's rehabilitation tax credit program.

The KPA has contracted with Rutgers University's Center for Urban Policy Research (CUPR) to document the effect that the rehabilitation tax credit program has had to date. The CUPR is known nationally for its expertise in the field of preservation economics. It has already produced economic impact of historic preservation studies for many states, including Oklahoma, Missouri, and Nebraska.

The economic impacts study will be provided to all state legislators, key staff, and administrators before the legislature convenes in January.

The KPA is funding this study through an Historic Preservation Fund Grant from the State Preservation Office. The grant match—almost \$19,000—was raised by asking for donations from preservationists from throughout the state whose donations normally provide operational funds for the organization.

December, 2009

The KPA is proving its worth to the preservation community through its extraordinary organizational efforts. Now the KPA needs our help. The M/RCPA is a member of the KPA and urges individuals—particularly our own members—to join the KPA as well. A student membership in the KPA is \$15 per year. An individual/ family membership is \$36 per year. Other membership categories are listed on the website kpalliance.org.

The KPA's mailing address is 12120 State Line Road, Suite 128, Leawood, Kansas 66209. The KPA is a 501 (c) (3) organization. Dues are tax deductible as permitted by law.

How have rehabilitation tax credits affected Riley County? Pictured below are some structures that have been enrolled in the program. Actual total project dollar amounts are listed for projects that also have dates. Estimated total project dollar amounts are listed for projects listed as "open."



Hulse-Daughters House, 617 Colorado \$355,000.00 open



Lyda-Jean Apartments, 501 Houston \$170,000.00 2002





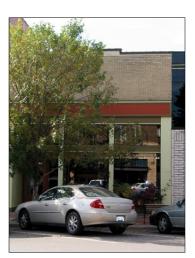
Fox Building, 311 Poyntz \$176,000.00 2004



312 Poyntz \$246,292.49 open



Wharton/Coles Building, 323 Poyntz \$10,000.00 open



417 Poyntz \$250,000.00 2002



Smith Building, 406 Poyntz \$176,050.00 2003



Higinbotham Building, 403—407 Poyntz \$99,775.00 2002 & 405 Poyntz \$280.770.00 open



Shortridge Bldg., 321 Poyntz \$122,329.02 2002

The Manhattan/Riley County Preservation Alliance supports investment in local historic properties because we believe preservation is a public good.

Historic preservation makes environmental sense. The maintenance and re-use of historic buildings keeps them from ending up as waste material in our landfills. Building materials used in the past were often of a higher quality than like materials available today. For example, superior grade lumber from old growth timber, once abundant, is now either very expensive or completely unavailable.

Historic preservation makes economic sense. The rehab tax credit program leverages three dollars in private investment for every one dollar of public investment. Because preservation projects are particularly labor-intensive, they create more jobs than new construction. This is important in any economy and especially important in a time of high unemployment.

Historic preservation meets human needs. Preservation promotes a distinction of place, continuity with the past, and a sense of stability as we face the future. Who doesn't need that?





# A Visit to the Strong House, 1916 Beck Street in Manhattan

The descendants of Henry and Elenora Strong have deep roots in Riley County. The connection of the family to its history is made more tangible through the recent purchase of the historic stone house at 1916 Beck Street in Manhattan.

First, a little history: Henry Strong, born in 1831 in Bolton, Connecticut, came to Manhattan in 1856. Early on he worked as a freighter or "bull whacker," driving wagons from Leavenworth to Santa Fe and along the Smoky Hill Trail to Denver.

In the spring of 1858 Henry made his way back to Connecticut to marry his second cousin, Hariette Elenora Strong, born in 1835, also in Bolton, Connecticut. After their wedding on June 1 of 1858, they settled into a log house at the foot of Bluemont Hill west of today's water pumping station.

Henry was a master mason with a quarry near his house. The quarry supplied stone for some of Manhattan's most prominent buildings, including Anderson Hall. Henry was also a farmer and dairyman; his was the first dairy in the area. He had a pasture located just north of Bluemont Hill. He also had the largest apple orchard in Kansas.

Family lore holds that before and during the Civil War the Strongs were part of the Underground Railroad between Topeka and Nebraska City which helped escaping slaves avoid capture from bounty hunters. Henry dug a cave in a tree and brushfilled ravine near his home to shelter escaped slaves. Since harboring escaped slaves was a federal crime, this was dangerous work. In later years the cave was used to store apples.

Henry was called to active service during the Civil War. Elenora traveled back to Connecticut with twoyear-old Grace while expecting her third child. It is speculated that Henry sent his family east so that Elenora could both care for her ailing mother and take advantage of a safe haven in time of war.

Elenora was an educated woman who had attended both Mount Holyoke College and the State Normal School in New Britain, Connecticut. She taught school in Eastbury, Connecticut, before her marriage. Upon arriving in Riley County she held a small private school in her log home where she taught the boys of the area.

One pupil was S. Wendell Williston

who went on to graduate from Kansas State Agricultural College in 1872. He earned an M.D. Degree and became Professor of Anatomy at Yale University. He also earned a Ph.D. and became a Professor of Paleontology at the University of Chicago.

The county's original Strong School, the first public school to be organized, started in 1862. School was held in the loft of the Strongs' stone barn. Later Henry donated the stone to build a proper school which was named the "Strong School."

After a fire destroyed their log house, Henry and Elenora built their stone house in 1867, near the barn. This is the house that has recently returned to family ownership.

Henry and Elenora had six children: Freddie Robinson, Grace Rosette, Clayton Noah, Evangeline Hortense, Fairy Josephine, and Emory Wells Hyde. Freddie died of cholera at age 9 months. Emory died of lockjaw at age 6. Married daughter, Evangeline "Vangie" Hortense Strong Baxter died on December 22, 1891, at the age of twenty-three under mysterious circumstances. She was found hung in the apple orchard, a probable suicide which was sensational news in the community.

Vangie and her two children, Emory Serano Baxter and Mabel Evangeline Baxter, both born in the Strong house, were living with Henry and Elenora before Vangie's death. The children's father, Fred Baxter, was working a mine surveying job in Cripple Creek, Colorado. It fell to Henry (sixty years old) and Elenora (fifty-six) to take on the responsibility of raising Emory (age 3) and Mabel (age 6 months).

Mabel grew into the role of grandmother's helper. "Elenora cooked huge vats of apple butter each fall for both local consumption and shipment. Later, her granddaughter would work with her and Mabel would remember the autumn air being filled with the sweet, spicy aroma of apple butter bubbling in the large vats. They would also prepare jars and jars of applesauce each fall, and so, at an early age, Mabel was cooking applesauce-something that she would become famous for some ninety years later."

The above quote is from the late Bonnie Jean Hoerner's family history titled **Pioneering on Route 66 and**  **Beyond.** The book is available for sale at the Riley County Historical Museum and may be checked out from the Manhattan Public Library.

The family applesauce recipe has been adapted for large scale commercial production and Mabel Baxter Hoerner is widely remembered today in the persona of "Grandma Hoerner."

A large highway sign at Interstate 70's exit 324 directs visitors to Grandma Hoerner's 37,500 square foot production facility including warehouse, offices, and a retail store. The company's success can in large part be attributed to the Strong apple orchard and family applesauce recipe.

Elenora Strong died in 1917 and Henry in 1922 . John and Rosa Nachtman purchased the house and barn in 1924. In 1944 Rosa Nachtman, by then a widow, sold the house and barn sitting on thirteen acres to George Beckenhauer. At that time the school desks were still in the barn's loft. The barn was razed in 1954 with the stone being used in building two nearby rental houses.

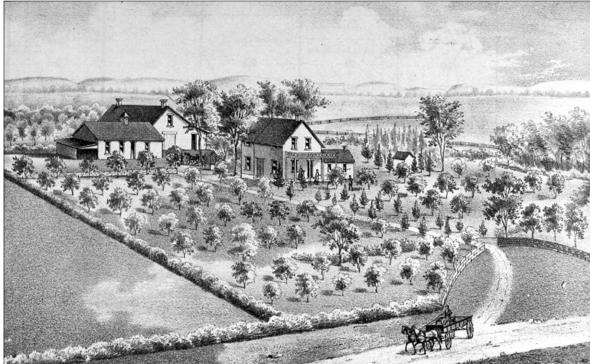
Strong descendant Rachelle Routh (great great great granddaughter of

Henry and Elenora Strong) has felt an attachment to the house throughout her life. When the Beckenhauers were ready to sell, Rachelle and her husband Doug purchased the property, reuniting the house with the family.

On November 7th the Kansas Historic Sites Board of Review placed the Strong House on the Register of Historic Kansas Places. The Board will consider recommending the house for National Register status at a future meeting.

The house is now available as a short term rental (nightly, weekly, etc.) subject to the rental regulations of the City of Manhattan. The designation as a "rental unit" is distinct from that of "bed and breakfast." Accommodations include two bedrooms with queen-sized beds, a fully equipped kitchen, laundry room with washer and dryer, bathroom, study, and upstairs sitting room. The house has cable television and Internet access. There's a grill and outdoor seating area. For more information go to www.stronginn.com. Rachelle Routh can be reached at 785-313-5167 or r\_routh@hotmail.com.

The Strong property pictured in Riley County's 1881 plat book. Section 7 Township 10 Range 8



M/RCPA P.O. Box 1893 Manhattan, KS 66505-1893

## Run Off By A Roundabout



The house at 330 Bluemont was relocated to a lot at 3751 Stewart Farm Road in Wamego on September 24, 2009.



330 Bluemont front walk detail.

Photos taken September 19, 2009

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