
MANHATTAN/RILEY COUNTY PRESERVATION ALLIANCE NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY, 2010



Bluemont School principal's office
with original built-in cabinet.
Penny Sturr, Interim Principal,
Spring 2009.

A Report on Renovations to Manhattan's Historic School Buildings

by Kathy Dzewaltowski

Preschool, will be undergoing improvements.

Wilson, which was built in 1924, is the first of the older buildings to begin the planning process. Bruce McMillan is the project architect, and approximately \$4.4 million are budgeted for improving the building. Current plans call for a new addition on the southeast part of the building, renovating the interior, and keeping the exterior of the older limestone portion of the building intact.

The older buildings all have historical features which are unique, provide them with important character, and which will hopefully be retained. For example, Bluemont and Theodore Roosevelt Elementary Schools were built with principal's offices on the top floor, which included an outer office for a secretary, built-in cabinets with glass-fronted doors, and a school safe. Over the years, modern, more expansive principal's offices were created elsewhere in the buildings, but the former principal's offices are still intact and in use in some manner at both schools. At Roosevelt, the woodwork in the original office is unpainted with the original finish. The original principal's offices are small

by today's standards, but they provide historical character and an important connection to the schools' educational pasts and an understanding of how schools functioned. Ideally, the original principal's offices will be retained, but it's easy to see how they might be vulnerable to being eliminated in favor of creating a restroom in that location, incorporated into a nearby classroom to increase its square footage, or converted into space for mechanical systems.

Scattered throughout the older buildings are other original features, such as built-in cabinets, slate chalkboards with the original framing, plaster walls and ceilings, wood banisters, original cloakrooms, and many architectural details on the limestone exteriors. As the improvement projects move forward, the retention of irreplaceable historical features will help to keep USD 383's schools vibrant and will provide each school with a unique identity.

Kathy Dzewaltowski is a member of USD 383's Citizen Facility Care Committee. She is also a member of the Manhattan/Riley County Preservation Alliance's board of directors.

Last November voters approved a bond for improving the schools in USD 383 and many of those projects are now underway in one form or another.

Two schools, Amanda Arnold and Ogden Elementary Schools, have completed the planning process and have already started on construction.

As the district's schools undergo facelifts to meet the needs of twenty-first century students, hopefully the architects, parents, staff, students, and administrators are mindful of the historical treasures that still exist in the older schools and are planning to retain them.

All of the district's older buildings, including Bluemont, Theodore Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, Manhattan High School East Campus, Eugene Field Head Start, and College Hill

2009—2010

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Downtown District Light Trial

At the January 25th Historic Resources Board meeting, Manhattan City Engineer Rob Ott reported that the City of Manhattan has embarked upon a Poyntz lighting energy efficiency project in which the 100 watt high pressure sodium streetlights will be replaced with 51 watt light emitting diode (LED) lights. LEDs are predicted to have a brighter appearance at a lower wattage while providing truer colors to the nightscape. LEDs are expected to reduce the City’s electric bill.

This stimulus project is being funded by a \$288,379 grant from the U.S. Dept. of Energy. One hundred and eighty streetlight fixtures will be replaced within three years. The poles will not be changed.

On February 15th two test fixtures (meaning the acrylic pieces) will be installed on the light pole located on the northwest corner of Third and Poyntz.

The purpose of the test is to allow the public to determine if the color of the light, the color of the fixture, and the style of the fixture are appropriate to Manhattan’s downtown historic district. There is also a concern about the fact that “dark sky” caps on the LED fixtures will prevent the distribution of light to the upper half of downtown buildings.

The public is invited to view and comment upon the test fixtures by March 8th. Comments should be directed to Rob Ott at 587-2415 or at ott@ci.manhattan.ks.us.

2009 Depot Statistics

Courtesy of Manhattan Parks & Recreation Department

Month	Total # Rentals	Total Rental Hours	Fees Collected	Refunded	Revenue	# People
January	14	52	\$2,623	\$630	\$1,993	645
February	7	29.25	\$1,309	\$210	\$1,099	366
March	15	44.5	\$1,762	\$350	\$1,412	598
April	21	90.5	\$3,626	\$490	\$3,136	957
May	23	85.5	\$4,215	\$560	\$3,655	1,204
June	15	79.5	\$3,764	\$490	\$3,274	830
July	16	71.5	\$3,127	\$560	\$2,567	833
August	20	75	\$3,335	\$560	\$2,775	1,139
September	11	51	\$2,385	\$420	\$1,965	620
October	22	84.5	\$3,575	\$490	\$3,085	1,127
November	15	51	\$1,747	\$280	\$1,467	605
December	20	97.5	\$4,425	\$840	\$3,585	1,155
TOTALS	199	811.75	\$35,893	\$5,880	\$30,013	10,079

A Visit to Aggieville's Historic Palace Drug Store

Members of the Manhattan/Riley County Preservation Alliance who joined at the \$100 level and above were invited to a holiday preview and tour of Aggieville's historic Palace Drug Store last November 5th.

The Palace provided finger-sized samples of their pizza and yummy desserts. A local musical group, Woodwinds Anonymous, provided festive music.

Dixie West made a presentation to the group on the building's history:

Several years ago, we met in a castle—Kimble Castle. This evening we are gathered in The Palace, a Lifestyle Store with in-store Café, owned by Ben and Phyllis Pease and Kevin and Penny Peirce. Amanda Purdom is a partner in the business. We wish to thank these people who honor the history of this building and who have so graciously welcomed us to view and tour their restoration efforts. And we wish to thank Kail Katzenmeier of Capstone Development Group who performed the recent remodel of this noble building. You are all to be commended.

One cannot talk about the history of the Palace without explaining the history of Aggieville. In the late nineteenth century Aggieville was a nearly vacant low swampy area that college students traversed between the Agricultural College and the downtown shopping district on Poyntz Avenue. Originally envisioned as a Faculty Row, college professors, including Dean J.T. Willard, owned homes in the vicinity of Moro Street during the late nineteenth century.

Circa 1900, energetic developers

discussed creating a college business district along Bluemont and Moro streets. College students were tired of long, dirty slogs through muddy streets to acquire basic goods and services downtown. Although Bluemont Street seemed the optimal location for a college business district, the lower price of land on nearby Moro attracted investors. The first business in Aggieville was a student exchange renamed the Students' Cooperative Association with a book exchange and dining hall.

In 1908 seven businesses lined the muddy "stragglng street" along Moro. From 1908 to 1912 the business district gradually grew with developers visualizing "a modern little city, serving college people and others who settled in the then desolate western part of town" (from **Swamp to City in 20 Years**: 1923). In 1910 the trolley connected downtown and Aggieville via Vattier and Moro Streets, and by 1912 the last of the residential homeowners, Dean J.T. Willard, pushed by nearby business growth, sold his home and moved to Poyntz Avenue. In the same year the Aggieville business district was considerably improved when Moro Street was paved.

Although the Palace Drug store found a home in Aggieville, the cur-

rent location is not its first address. In 1913 R.B. (Barney) Youngcamp, proprietor of the Manhattan Bottling Works, constructed the first two story up-to-date building in the 1100 block of Moro. Here the Palace Drug Company, Roger's Clothing store, the Student's Barbershop, and Askren's jewelry store were located.

A Palace Drug store already existed downtown but the owner wished to increase business by establishing a suburban store in Aggieville. The suburban Palace Drugstore was well equipped, although somewhat smaller than the downtown store.

Special note was taken of the modern soda fountain installed in the Aggieville store. A post office substation was located in the drugstore. The second floor was finished for a college dance hall, a very popular gathering place. That building was also used as a lodge room and a place for holding meetings.



When the original Palace Drugstore building was constructed, the 1913 edition of the Daily Mercury newspaper described a thriving Aggieville. "One of the of most active business sections of the city of Manhattan is the suburban village of Aggieville. Located at the very entrance of the college gate, where every business house is within easy access of every student, this little village has grown to a thriving business section of Manhattan. Five years ago there was no such thing as Aggieville. There was one building where the prosperous city now stands. It was a frame structure and was occupied by the cooperative bookstore.

- Gradually, business houses were built until today (1913) Aggieville has:
- 4 grocery stores
 - 2 bookstores
 - 1 candy kitchen and ice cream parlor
 - 2 restaurants
 - 1 drug store
 - 1 clothing store
 - 1 department store
 - 1 jewelry store
 - 1 racket store
 - 1 furniture store
 - 2 barber shops
 - 1 laundry
 - an electrical supply house
 - The Aggieville bakery
 - 2 tailor establishments, and
 - 1 shoe shop

The stocks of merchandise carried by these stores is as complete as the stocks carried in any of the stores in the larger cities. The suburban city is surrounded by pavement, which is due in a great measure to the fact that the businessmen have been persistent in their efforts to build a city and build it well. "

Aggieville's Palace Drug found a new home in 1929 when Forrest and Harold Forrester (owners of both downtown and Aggieville drugstores) constructed the steel and concrete building at 704 N. Manhattan.

The Palace exterior is glazed terra



The Palace in 1938, located at 704 North Manhattan. This was the store's second Aggieville location. The arrow points to the unusual stained glass above the awning.

Photo courtesy of the Riley County Historical Society

cotta blocks that resemble limestone.

A green, gold, and amber stained glass window, set in a pattern that related to the shapes of keystones above the window, was originally located across the front of the building. The current owners dream of

installing an accurate reproduction of this window.

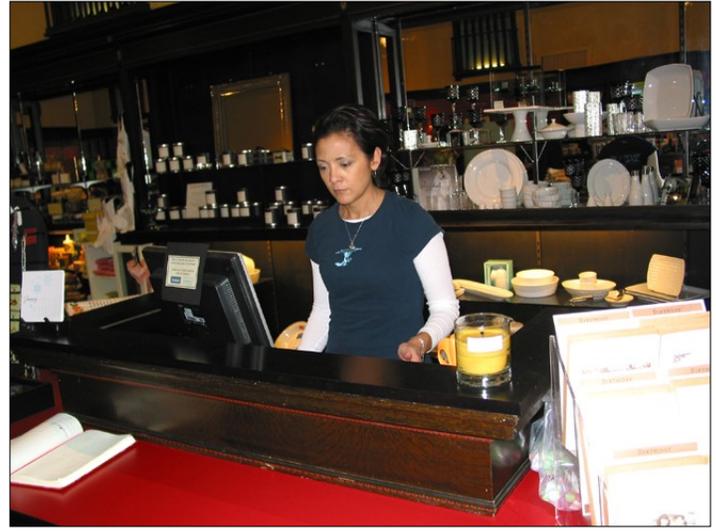
The interior walls are stuccoed terra cotta blocks and the original chicken wire mosaic tile floor is intact. Part of the original serpentine and marble counter remains. The other half was



The color photos were taken on January 14, 2010



Co-owner Kevin Peirce at the grill



Co-owner Phyllis Pease behind the counter

dismantled for a private residence and part was turned into commemorative tiles.

The cases along the south wall, with egg and dart molding, are original and Capstone Development carried that molding through to reconstructed parts of the bar.

It is suggested that Mrs. Forrester wanted interesting “balconies”

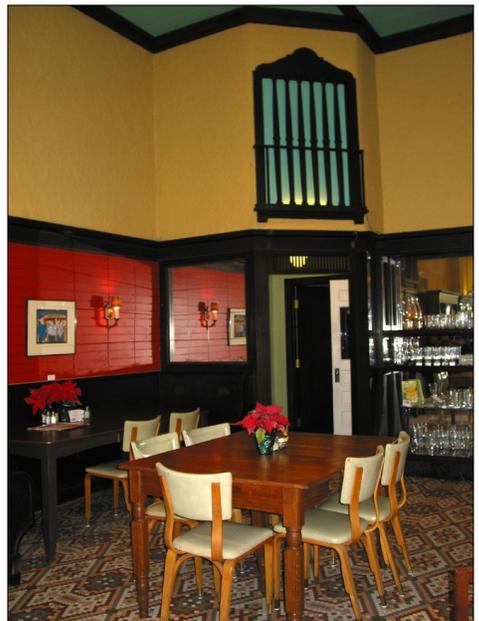
around the room as they reminded her of a New York City theater.

A tall door in the southeast corner of the building once led to a courtyard where folks could enjoy their ice cream and drinks.

The original pharmacy counter was along the northeast side of the store. Six of the original bar stools were found in the basement crawl space.

Three of the original ice cream chairs are still in use.

The building’s original blueprints are in the collection of the Riley County Historical Society. After studying the plans the building’s owners were pleased to find their layout and use of space is remarkably similar to the building’s original design.



The Palace
 Home Décor—Kitchenware—Gifts—Pizzas—Sandwiches—Salads
www.thepalaceaggieville.com
 785-539-7654

Wolf House Dining Room Project

The Wolf House Museum, located at 630 Fremont Street, is one of Manhattan's cultural treasures.

Exhibits at the Wolf House Museum are designed to inform visitors about domestic life in Manhattan in the 1880's. How did people manage before electrical service, piped-in water, and sewer hook-up? How did people warm themselves in winter and cool themselves in summer? What was it like to cook on a wood stove? What clothing fashions were in style and what entertainments were popular? How did people decide how to decorate their houses before Martha Stewart and HGTV?

In addition to providing tours to the general public, the Museum hosts all local fourth graders for a special educational tour each spring. The hour-



Wolf House dining room before restoration

Photos courtesy of the Riley County Historical Society

long program is designed to provide content that integrates into the State's teaching standards for history at the fourth grade level. History comes

alive through demonstrations designed to engage student interest in a specific historical time and place. It is hoped that the experience also inspires an interest in history in general.

A minimum of thirty-six docents are required for the fourth grade tours which take three days to complete. Over 500 fourth graders from public and private schools visited the house in 2009.

The Wolf House Complex is the largest artifact owned by the Riley County Historical Society. Its day-to-day operations are managed by Edna Williams, the Museum's curator.

Plaster walls and ceilings in the house are in need of repair and repapering, an expensive undertaking. The Riley County Historical Society has decided to move ahead on the dining room as part of its "one room at a time" strategy.

Local craftsman Jim Roper was hired to prepare the walls and ceiling for reproduction period wallpaper appropriate to the 1880's. Jim also



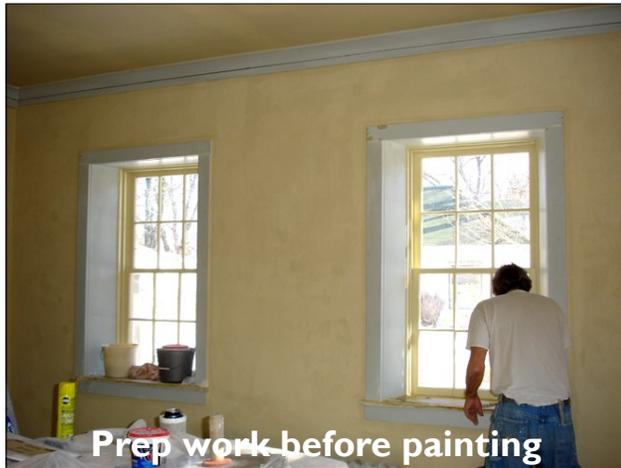
Jim Roper, Cheryl Collins, Edna Williams, Gary Yuschalk, and Larkin Mayo discussing the dining room project on January 4, 2010



Scraping wallpaper



1951 flood line revealed



Prep work before painting



painted the dining room's woodwork in a color appropriate to the time period.

New reproduction period wallpaper has been selected by Edna Williams, Corina Hugo, and Riley County Historical Museum director Cheryl Collins with the assistance of Gary Yuschalk and Larkin Mayo, co-owners of Victorian Interiors of Abilene.

Gary and Larkin are experts in the decorative styles of the 1880's. They completely restored the Lebold Mansion in Abilene and have run it as an historic house museum for the last decade. The Lebold Mansion, a National Register property, has been an important cultural attraction in Abilene and has gained wide recognition through feature articles in **Victorian Homes Magazine** and **Victorian Decorating Magazine**.

Although the Victorian Interiors company will soon relocate to the east coast, Gary and Larkin will remain an

important resource for the Wolf House Museum's continuing restoration in years to come. Their company supplied the reproduction period wallpaper for the previous Wolf House project in the lower and upper front hall. As with that project, Gary and Larkin applied the wallpaper, an exacting, specialized process.

Historic house restoration projects require special expertise, attention to detail, and financial resources. This project has been accomplished with a grant from the Caroline F. Peine Foundation. The Riley County Historical Society provided the grant match and a new RCHS interest group, Friends of the Wolf House Museum, has been organized to publicize the need for targeted donations to speed the Wolf House's restoration along.

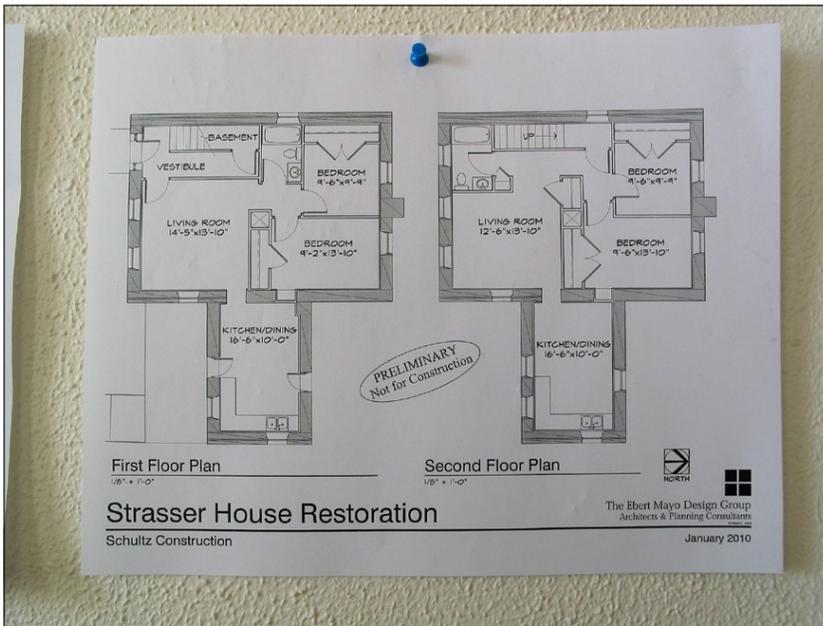
With the continued support of the community and the Friends group, it is hoped that restoration can be ongoing.

To support the Friends of the Wolf House interest group please send a check to the Riley County Historical Society, a 501 (c) (3) organization. Write "Wolf House" on the comment line. Suggested levels of giving are \$15, \$35, \$100, \$250, \$500, \$1,000, and \$1,500. The Riley County Historical Society's address is 2309 Claflin Road, Manhattan, Kansas 66502.

Members of the Friends of the Wolf House are being provided with some special opportunities to enjoy local historical attractions as a thank you for their financial assistance.

The first Friends event was a tour of the historic Strasser House, 326 Laramie, before renovations began (see page 8). Additional events will be announced in the future.

The Wolf House remains open during renovations. Hours are 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. on Saturdays and 2:00 to 5:00 on Sundays. Group tours may be arranged by calling 785-565-6490. Admission is free.



Strasser House News!

Twenty-five Friends of the Wolf House toured the historic Strasser House (326 Laramie) on January 17th, hosted by McCullough Development, Inc., the new owner, and Schultz Construction, the contractor. Architectural services are being provided by Ebert Mayo Design Group.

The house will remain a duplex with one unit per floor and it will be integrated into the Strasser Landing complex of new apartments to line the east side of Fourth Street immediately north of the Strasser House.

The project will proceed with guidance from the State Historic Preservation Office using the Secretary of Interior Standards for Rehabilitation.



M/RCPA Membership Roster 2009 – 2010

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\$250+ Preservation Level – 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.

\$500+ Landmark Level –

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- \$15+ STUDENT
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Shovel Ready

The Kansas Historical Society was prepared with plans to restore the Goodnow House State Historic Site when stimulus dollars became available through the Kansas Department of Transportation. The Caroline F. Peine Charitable Foundation and the Kansas Partnership Sites Tax Credits program are assisting with funding.

The J.A. Lyden Construction Company of Topeka has begun the interior restoration of the Goodnow House. Interior demolition has been completed. The original plaster that was cracked and the 1970's era drywall have been removed, exposing the limestone. The house's secrets are being revealed. For instance, previously unknown flue pipes have been found showing that the house originally had many wood or coal stoves used for heating.

Work began in early January. It is unclear when the house will reopen to the public; the best guess is early summer.



Dan Prosser and Terry Marmet of the Kansas Historical Society
Consulting with Brad Lyden of J.A. Lyden Construction on
January 20, 2010, in the Goodnow House foyer.