



MANHATTAN/RILEY COUNTY PRESERVATION ALLIANCE NEWSLETTER

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2016 Kansas Legislature Session Begins

The 2016 session of the Kansas Legislature has begun, and as in years past, the M/RCPA will monitor activities and keep members informed about any proposed legislation that may impact historic preservation.

One item that preservation advocates will be watching is the state's historic rehabilitation tax credit. Kansas established the historic rehabilitation tax credit program in 2001, and since then, tax credits have proven to be a valuable tool for rehabilitating historically registered structures. In 2009, a study commissioned by the Kansas Preservation Alliance and other preservation organizations about the tax credit program concluded that Kansas receives substantial benefits

from projects aided by tax credits in the form of millions of dollars invested in the state's economy and the creation of thousands of jobs. The 2010 Legislative Post Audit also showed that the historic rehabilitation tax credit contributes to economic development and revitalizes neighborhoods.

At the conclusion of the 2015 legislative session, the Special Committee on Taxation recommended that exemptions and tax credits be evaluated and a sunset process developed. When the Interim Tax Committee met in November 2015 to review exemptions and tax credits to develop a potential timetable to sunset many of them, the historic rehabilitation tax credit was

mentioned. No legislation was proposed, but given the many issues surrounding the state's budget, exemptions and tax credits face the potential of being phased out.

The Friends of Historic Preservation, which is a coalition of preservation advocates, has a paid employee who works at the Statehouse to educate legislators, to advocate, and to lobby if necessary. She has already been working to educate new legislators about the value of the historic rehabilitation tax credit.

The M/RCPA will keep members informed of Statehouse activities that might affect historic preservation in the event that action is needed.

Winter Social

On January 22nd, over 30 M/RCPA members attended the Winter Social event, which was held at the Houston Street Cottage in the Houston and Pierre Streets Residential Historic District. Members enjoyed great conversation and delicious appetizers prepared by Coco Bolos.

Michael and Judine Mecseri, owners of the 1904 Houston Street Cottage, served as hosts and shared information about the renovations they had made to the historic cottage, which is now a vacation/short-term rental. Improvements made to the cottage were recognized in 2013 with a Historic Preservation Building Award.



All Faiths Chapel: The “Living” Memorial at 60

All Faiths Chapel (originally known as “All-Faith Memorial Chapel” and not “Faiths”) on the Kansas State University campus was dedicated in the spring of 1956 and will celebrate its 60th anniversary in 2016.

Following World War II, there was a desire to build a memorial in honor of the 5,000 Kansas State students who had served and the 200 who had been killed in the war. The decision was made to construct a memorial chapel, which would be a “living” memorial. After World War I, there was a national sentiment to create memorials of a “useful nature,” as opposed to traditional memorial statues and monuments, and that sentiment continued after World War II (“Living”). Memorials of this type were known as “living” memorials.

The 1947 *Royal Purple* noted, “A big drive was begun last fall to finance a Memorial Chapel. When the necessary funds are raised, the building will be erected on the east side of the campus . . . It will serve as a useful memorial to K-State students who served in the war.” The Alumni Association sponsored fundraising drives on campus, in large cities, and in Kansas counties. The 1947 *Royal Purple* shows numerous clubs, fraternal organizations, and dorms involved in raising funds for the memorial chapel, and the senior class of 1947 pledged to purchase a window for the chapel (*Royal Purple*, 1947).

When sufficient funds had been raised to start the project, a dedication and groundbreaking ceremony took place on Oct. 25, 1947, during the week of Homecoming activities.

Attending and speaking at the ceremony was General Dwight D. Eisenhower, and a crowd of 25,000 turned out to hear him speak. General Eisenhower turned over the first shovel of dirt at the groundbreaking ceremony, alongside Dr. L. F. Payne and Eisenhower’s brother, Kansas State Pres. Milton Eisenhower (*Royal Purple*, 1948).

The groundbreaking marked the start of the construction of the Danforth Meditation Chapel, which was the first section planned of the larger World War II memorial chapel. The meditation chapel gets its name from William Danforth, founder of the Ralston Purina Co. and also founder of the Danforth Foundation. The Danforth Foundation contributed to the construction of the meditation chapel and to a total of 24 chapels around the country, primarily on college campuses (Griffiths).

Danforth Chapel was completed and dedicated on Oct. 9, 1949, and immediately experienced heavy use. The first wedding took place on Oct. 29, 1949, Mass was held twice a week in the chapel during Lent, and all the while, fundraising efforts continued with the goal of raising the needed funds to build the larger section of All (continued on pg. 3)

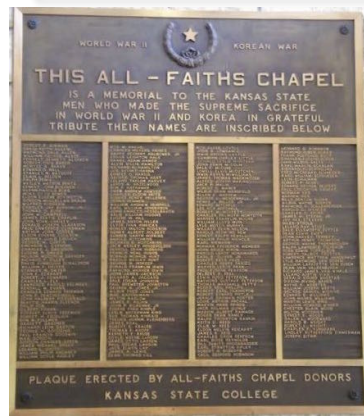
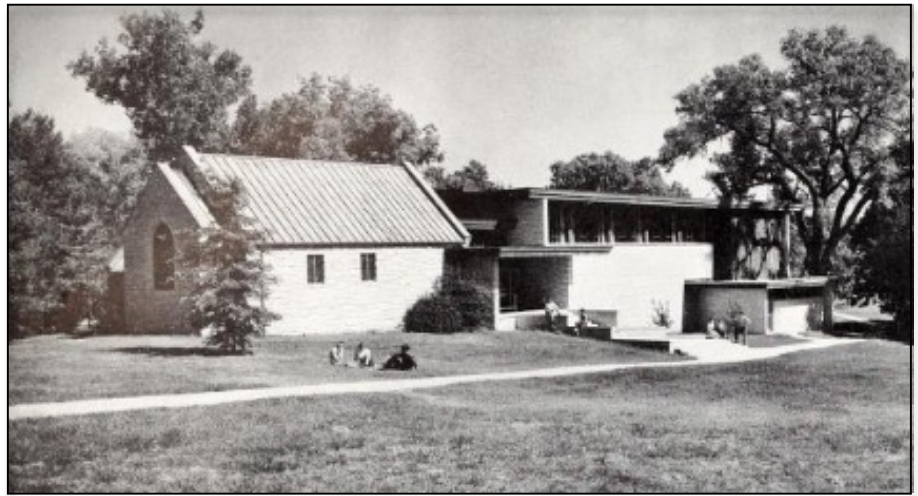


At top, the interior of All-Faith Memorial Chapel from the 1957 *Royal Purple*. Middle, Dr. L. F. Payne, Pres. Milton Eisenhower, and General Dwight D. Eisenhower break ground for Danforth Chapel, from the 1948 *Royal Purple*. Bottom, an illustration of the proposed All-Faith Memorial Chapel with the Danforth Meditation Chapel (#14) from the 1950 *Royal Purple*.

(continued from pg. 2)
Faiths (*Royal Purple*, 1950).

Then, the United States became involved in the Korean conflict, which had a dramatic effect on the construction of All Faiths. Construction plans completely stopped because construction materials were diverted to supporting the war effort ("Danforth"). The halt in plans also resulted in a complete design change for All Faiths. As shown on page 2, the original concept for All Faiths depicted a Gothic style building along the same lines as Danforth. The pause in construction provided the opportunity to re-examine the proposed design, and due to cost increases, the Gothic design was abandoned "in favor of an addition consisting of a foyer and auditorium built in a contemporary-functional style" (*Royal Purple*, 1953). The auditorium was designed to seat 470 and to be used for religious purposes and recitals. The "living" memorial auditorium proved to be a popular choice with communities after World War II, and Peace Memorial Auditorium, 1101 Poyntz Ave., is another local example of a "living" memorial auditorium.

The delay caused by the Korean conflict also impacted the memorial component of All Faiths. The original intention was to construct a "living" memorial to honor the Kansas State students who had been killed in World War II, but following the Korean conflict, students who were killed in Korea were also included in the memorial's dedication. The dedication plaque reads, "This All-Faiths Chapel is a memorial to the Kansas State men who made the supreme sacrifice in World War II and Korea. In grateful



Top, the Gothic style Danforth Chapel (left) and the contemporary All Faiths Chapel (right) from the 1958 *Royal Purple*. Lower right, All Faiths Chapel in 2015. Left, the dedication plaque, which lists the names of Kansas State students who were killed in World War II and Korea.

tribute their names are inscribed below."

The All-Faith Memorial Chapel was completed and dedicated in the spring of 1956. The 1956 *Royal Purple* noted, "Religion plays an important part in the lives of K-State students. The various church groups show an increase of members, and this growth is symbolized by the completion of the All-Faith Chapel . . ."

Sixty years later, All Faiths Chapel, along with Danforth Chapel, continues to be used for a variety of activities, including weddings and recitals, and continues to serve as a "living" memorial.

"Danforth and All Faiths Chapels." *Kansas State University*. Web 16 January 2016.

Griffiths, Lawn. "Graduates remember Danforth Chapels' origins on college campuses." *East Valley Tribune*. 20 October 2007.

"Living' Type of War Memorial Has Edge in Nation." *The Kansas City Times*. 12 September 1945.

The Royal Purple. Ed. Marcia Boyd. Manhattan, KS: Kansas State College, 1958. Web 16 January 2016.

The Royal Purple. Ed. Virginia Gingrich. Manhattan, KS: Kansas State College, 1948. Web 16 January 2016.

The Royal Purple. Ed. Samuel H. Logan. Manhattan, KS: Kansas State College, 1956. Web 16 January 2016.

The Royal Purple. Ed. Tess Montgomery. Manhattan, KS: Kansas State College, 1947. Web 16 January 2016.

The Royal Purple. Ed. Marlene Myers. Manhattan, KS: Kansas State College, 1953. Web 16 January 2016.

The Royal Purple. Ed. Ann Thackrey. Manhattan, KS: Kansas State College, 1950. Web 16 January 2016.

Headstones Vandalized in Sunset Cemetery

Sometime over the New Year's weekend, vandals cut a diagonal swath through Sunset Cemetery, intentionally knocking over 22 headstones along their path. The majority of the damaged stones are at least a century old.

The city's insurance does not cover the costs of making repairs because the headstones are considered to be the property of the families that purchased them. People often assume that the money spent to purchase the cemetery plot includes taking care of the headstone, but it only covers the ongoing maintenance of the cemetery grounds. Many homeowners' insurance policies cover grave markers, but with the

age of the headstones involved, finding a living relative with an insurance policy is unlikely. The costs to repair the headstones will be the city's responsibility.

Mike Mohler, Cemetery Sexton, commented on the damage and said, "The main point I want to emphasize is the cemetery is not a park. It's a hallowed place and is not for other activities. People don't realize when they knock over a stone, it makes chips, especially if the stone hits the base."

Fortunately, none of the headstones shattered into small pieces that would be difficult, if not impossible, to repair. When the weather warms up, all of the

damaged headstones will be repaired with resetting compound, and in the meanwhile, the cemetery's staff has set them all back in place, using temporary wood shims to prop them up.

The M/RCPA appreciates Mr. Mohler and a cemetery staff that is dedicated to the care and maintenance of Manhattan's historic Sunset Cemetery.

Top left, three headstones in a row were knocked over. Top right, heavy equipment is needed to lift the headstones back into position. Lower right, cemetery staff carefully lowers a headstone into position, using wood shims to support it. These three photos are courtesy of Mike Mohler. Lower left and middle, two headstones that have been reset, using temporary wood shims to support them.



Riley Co.'s Registered Properties

The National Historic Preservation Act was signed into law in 1966, and the M/RCPA will be featuring locally registered properties in the newsletter in 2016 in honor of the 50th anniversary.

Woman's Club House

900 Poyntz Avenue, built 1911

National Register, 1980

The Woman's Club House was a gift from the E. G. Lewis Publishing Company to the local chapter of the American Woman's League. The League's emphasis on supporting education was similar to the goals of the Carnegie Libraries. Local chapters were required to recruit 50-75 members, who then had to solicit \$52.00 each in subscriptions to the publishing company, and in return, chapters received a percentage of sales for the upkeep of the clubhouse.

Damon Runyon House

400 Osage Street, built 1880

National Register, 2004

The Damon Runyon House is significant because of its association with Damon Runyon, a prominent newspaper columnist, sportswriter, novelist, playwright, and screen writer, and known for musicals, such as "Guys and Dolls." The house was built by Damon's parents in 1880, and he was born in the house.

Samuel Houston House

3624 Anderson Avenue, built 1857

National Register, 2007

The Samuel Houston House was built in 1857, with plans drawn by John Soupine, and is constructed of locally quarried limestone. It serves as an example of the settlement of the Manhattan area prior to the Civil War. Samuel Houston was an early Kansas politician, and he served in the Kansas Legislature and Senate, where he helped to establish Kansas' borders and to write the state Constitution.



Woman's Club House



Damon Runyon House



Samuel Houston House



Lyda-Jean Apartments



Bethel A.M.E. Church

Lyda-Jean Apartments

501 Houston Street, built 1930

National Register, 2004

The Lyda-Jean Apartments were designed by prominent local architect Henry Winter. The building was built in 1930 and is an example of an early 20th century apartment building and reflects the nationwide trend toward urbanization. Apartments served residents who were either unable or uninterested in owning a home at a time when home ownership was a luxury afforded to a small percentage of families.

Bethel A.M.E. Church

401 Yuma Street, built 1927

National Register, 2012

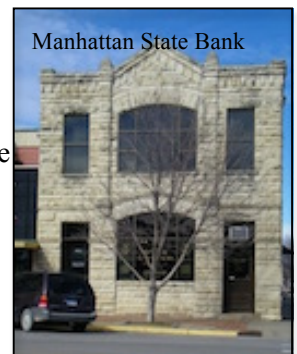
The Bethel A.M.E. Church was organized in 1879, which was at the time when a large contingent of former slaves left the South, known as the "Great Exodus," and settled in the Manhattan area to start new lives. The congregation increased over the years, necessitating the construction of the larger, current building. The Bethel A.M.E. Church is significant because churches were the only community institutions entirely controlled by African Americans in Manhattan.

Manhattan State Bank

400 Poyntz Avenue, built 1906

Register of Historic Kansas Places, 1979

The old Manhattan State Bank is a significant remnant of Manhattan's architectural past. It illustrates the quality of architectural design expertise available to



Manhattan State Bank

residents in the early 20th century, it reflects a facet of the period's tastes, and it is a prominent example of Manhattan's limestone architecture.

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2015-16 M/RCPA Membership Roster

\$35 Historic Level

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