



MANHATTAN/RILEY COUNTY PRESERVATION ALLIANCE NEWSLETTER

February 2017, Vol. 23, Issue I

A Mid-Century Office Gets Refreshed

Tucked into a row of office buildings along Poyntz Avenue is a building that once looked like it belonged more on a snowy mountainside than on a main street. The building, located at 1623 Poyntz Ave., has shed part of its lodge look due to recent renovations. Built in 1956, the building's style is referred to as mid-century chalet, which is similar to the classic atomic ranch. The building featured a broad, asymmetrical shallow-pitched roof with deep eaves and scalloped trim along the roofline, evoking the style of a cozy ski resort. The building is owned by Fristad LLC, which in turn is owned by Tim and Tina Steffensmeier and Michael and Heather Brighton. They selected the name "Fristad," which means "sanctuary" in Swedish, to reflect that Heather and Tina are licensed therapists and also to honor the chalet roots of the building.

The owners purchased the building in May 2016 and say they were drawn to the Poyntz location. They felt the size of the building would suit their needs and would allow them to create a comfortable environment for therapy services. Once they owned the building, they



began making plans to renovate both the interior and the exterior.

Very little updating had occurred over the 60-year life of the building, which presented challenges for a modern office, such as the need for handicapped accessibility. The motivation behind renovating the building was due both to necessity and to Heather's and Tina's desires to create a fresh and inviting space for their clients.

Working with Timber and Stone and Duell Construction, the interior transformation involved removing shag carpet, wood paneling, and changing the layout in order to add a fifth office. Former restrooms were converted into a waiting area, and new additions to the space included a handicapped accessible restroom, break room, and storage room. Nadine Banks performed the interior design work with the goal of creating comfortable and functional surroundings that harmonize with the building's style.

The building's exterior was also updated. Window
(continued on pg. 2)

Top, the updated exterior of 1623 Poyntz Ave. Middle two photos, the renovated interior of the building. These three photos are courtesy of Dave Geldart Photography. Bottom, Heather and Tina on the day they purchased the building. The photo is courtesy of Heather Brighton.

(continued from pg. 1)

openings were widened to bring in more natural light. The brick and vertical siding exterior was updated with the addition of Cumaru hardwood siding. Insulation was added to improve temperature control. Exterior doors were replaced, and the new doors are in keeping with the mid-century style. A ramp was constructed to the front entrance for handicapped access. The scalloped trim along the roofline was removed, allowing the heavy beams that support the roof to stand out. Updated exterior paint and lighting completed the transformation. The result is a renovated building that maintains its mid-century style, meets modern office needs, and provides a comfortable and inviting environment for clients.

Heather and Tina say the renovation went smoothly, which

they credit to Duell Construction. Heather said, "Our favorite thing about the renovation is the feeling of pride and accomplishment we have each day when we step into the building to begin our day. We're so proud of the space we have created for our therapists and clients. We also love the look of the exterior and the use of the Cumaru wood to create a warm, yet modern feel."

The owners like that their office is located on an easy-to-find main street, close to both downtown and Aggieville, and close to the Kansas State campus, making access by Kansas State students and employees convenient. They also enjoy the close proximity to two city parks, which the therapists take advantage of to decompress from a busy workday and to enjoy nature.



Above, another view of the building's renovated interior, courtesy of Dave Geldart Photography.

Heather and Tina say renovating the building was a labor of love and a positive experience. In the future, they would like to create a relaxing outdoor area in the rear for both therapists and clients to enjoy. For now, they are enjoying the fruits of their labors and appreciating all that has been accomplished with the renovation of their mid-century chalet.

Former Jail Receives Spruce-Up

As part of the Colorado Park Master Plan, the historic public square surrounding the former jail, located at 600 Colorado Street, has been undergoing improvements. Last fall, the brick sidewalks around the square were restored and benches installed.

Another aspect of the plan was to improve the exterior appearance

of the former jail. The jail has been vacant for a number of years, and its windows have been boarded up and the space used for storage. Unused electrical wiring, conduits, and two inactive radio antennae were removed from the exterior, and the appearance of the window openings has been improved. The plywood coverings

were rotting and were replaced with metal panels. The new panels include decals that create the appearance of multi-paned windows with sashes. The resulting effect is the former jail no longer looks like an abandoned building.

Until a plan for an alternate use for the jail is identified, the enhanced windows make the jail a more attractive building for the surrounding public square and neighborhood.



Left, the former jail with new window coverings and decals. Center, close-up of the window decals. Right, the jail with its windows covered with plywood.



Ashland and the Ebenezer Huse Farmstead

In the spring of 1855, a group of colonists with the Kentucky Kansas Association left their homes in Kentucky and Ohio and headed west for Kansas. An Ohio newspaper described the colonists as mechanics, some were educated, some were professionals, and all were antislavery (Collections). Of this company, 35 colonists arrived in southern Riley County and settled along McDowell Creek. The colonists were admirers of the statesman Henry Clay and named their new settlement “Ashland” in honor of Mr. Clay’s hometown in Kentucky. The colonists started out living in tents and dugouts, and as they became more established, the colonists who settled along the creek constructed log cabins for shelter, and those who selected home sites on the bluffs constructed cabins of stone (Slagg).

When the Kansas Territory was organized, Ashland Township was part of Geary County, which was originally known as Davis County in honor of Jefferson Davis. (In 1888, the county was renamed in honor of Gov. John W. Geary.) The colonists laid out a town site for Ashland, began constructing buildings, held high hopes that the railroad would come through Ashland, and it became the Davis County seat in 1857 (Slagg).

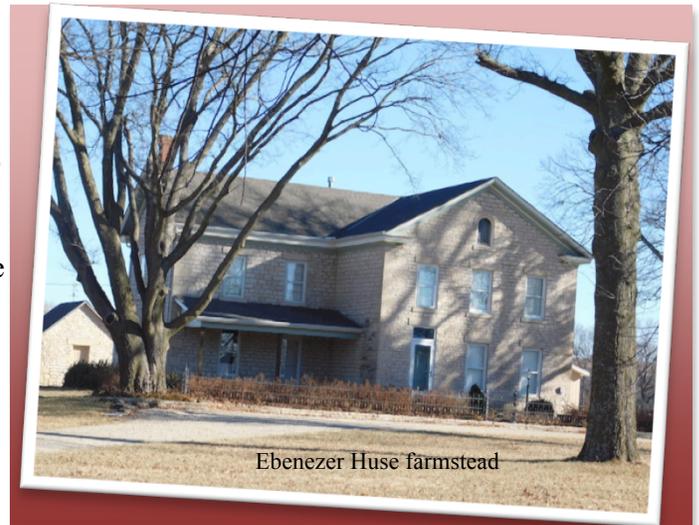
While not part of the first group of colonists, an early settler to the Ashland area was Ebenezer Huse, who moved to Davis County in 1875. He was born in Vermont and traveled west to a farmstead in Illinois in 1847. While living in Illinois, Ebenezer served as the Justice of the Peace and was the township clerk. He was also an ordained minister. His children were all born in Illinois, and his first wife died in 1865. Ebenezer

remarried, and in 1875, the family headed west again and settled in Ashland Township (Pioneers). Some accounts list 1860 or 1865 as possible dates for when the Huse family arrived in Ashland Township. The 1870 U.S. Census shows the Huse family living in Illinois, and the 1880 U.S. Census places the family in Ashland Township, so the 1875 date seems more likely to be accurate.

Ashland’s bustling years were short-lived, and by the time the Huse family arrived in Ashland Township, Ashland had already declined. In 1860, Junction City was made the county seat, and the railroad didn’t come to Ashland. In 1873, an act passed by the Kansas Legislature called for the vacation of Ashland; gave its streets, parks, and public areas to neighboring property owners; and transferred Ashland Township to Riley County. The legislative act meant the end of Ashland (Slagg).

Despite all this, Ashland residents had established a school, constructing a log building first and then a frame building in 1870. They also established a church in 1860, meeting in a private home until the log school was built, and then church gatherings were held in the school after that (Slagg). When the Huse family arrived, they found an Ashland community that was still hanging on in spite of setbacks.

Ebenezer Huse had served in the Civil War, and he was given land in Ashland Bottoms as a government



Ebenezer Huse farmstead

bonus. At one point, he owned 1,100 acres of farmland. In Ashland, he constructed a farmstead of stone buildings, including a house, barn, water tower, and several stone out-buildings (Pioneers). *The Nationalist* noted, “We understand that Mr. Huse is about to erect a stone house on his splendid farm at Ashland. The stone work, which amounts to \$1,000, is let to Messrs. Antoline, Allen and Sandel. The carpenter work is to be done by Wm. Smith. They are all excellent workmen and will undoubtedly do a good job.” The two-story limestone house has a gable front and a wing to the north. It features distinctive stone lintels and sills, and prominent stone quoining defines the corners of the house. Ebenezer also planted many fruit and shade trees on his property (Pioneers).

The stone barn is a bank style barn with a simple gable roof and eave-side entrances. Ramps were constructed to both major entries to provide ease of access. Like the house, the barn features prominent stone quoining at the
(continued on pg. 4)

(continued from pg. 3)
corners.

The Huses quickly became involved in the Ashland community. When residents became interested in constructing a frame building to serve as the church, Ebenezer offered to build the church if someone else would donate the land for it. The church became a community project with residents donating the land, land for a cemetery, a cemetery gate, a fence, and furnishings. When the building was completed in 1906, Ebenezer's sons, Ansel and Alden, served on the Board of Directors. Decades later when the church was organized with a constitution, church members selected the name "Ashland Community Church" and designated the building as the "Huse Chapel" in honor of the Huse family (Slagg).

Ebenezer's son, Alden, graduated from Kansas State Agricultural College and then relocated to Arkansas City to start a coal and ice business. He later expanded his coal and ice business to Oklahoma. After the death of his stepmother, Alden returned to Ashland in 1901 to take over operation of the farm and to care for his aging father (Pioneers). In 1908, he started a coal and ice business in Manhattan and continued to run the farm until his death in 1945 ("A. F. Huse").

Ebenezer Huse's farm had a farm bell, which Ebenezer had on his Illinois farm and brought with him to his Ashland farm. It was rung to alert hired farm hands when it was mealtime (Pioneers). In Pioneers of the Bluestem Prairie, Alden's granddaughter shared that she had the old farm bell, had cleaned it up, and rings it after a significant Kansas State football or basketball win.

Today, the Ebenezer Huse farmstead still stands on 32nd Avenue and is directly across the road from the Ashland church and school. The house, water tower, and other outbuildings are privately owned and well maintained. At some point in the past, ownership of the barn was separated from the rest of the farmstead. The barn is owned by Kansas State University and is part of the Ashland Bottoms Research Farm. The barn is in need of repairs, as it shows signs of roof damage and large cracks in the stone work. A donor is willing to contribute to the restoration of the barn because he would like to see this piece of Ashland Township's early history preserved. The M/RCPA hopes that Kansas State will take the donor up on his offer.

Riley County residents are fortunate to have an intact Ebenezer Huse farmstead to help residents appreciate and interpret life in early Riley County. The well-maintained house, water tower, and outbuildings are positioned to continue to provide a connection to our past for many years to come, and if provided with some care and attention, the barn will be as well.



Top, the east side of the Ebenezer Huse barn. Middle, the west side of the barn, which shows roof issues and cracks. Bottom, the Huse family's water tower.

1870 U. S. Census, Hancock County, Illinois, Warsaw, page 27, dwelling 199, Ebenezer Huse household, digital image (www.ancestry.com: accessed 19 January 2017).

1880 U. S. Census, Riley County, Kansas, Ashland, page 4, Ebenezer Huse household, digital image (www.ancestry.com: accessed 19 January 2017).

"A. F. Huse dies this morning." Manhattan Republic. 22 March 1945.

(continued on pg. 5)

Preservation Advocacy

As the Kansas legislative session progresses and should issues arise that concern historic preservation, you can help by contacting area legislators and sharing your thoughts. You can also help by contributing to advocacy efforts. The Friends of Historic Preservation is a coalition of preservation advocates and has a paid advocate. Contributions should be made payable to Terry Humphrey Public Affairs Group and sent to the address below.

Terry Humphrey Public
Affairs Group
P. O. Box 4953
Topeka, KS 66604

The Kansas Preservation Alliance (KPA), which is a statewide organization, also advocates for historic preservation, and you may be interested in joining KPA.

Kansas Preservation Alliance
P. O. Box 2506
Topeka, KS 66601
www.kpalliance.org

Manhattan/Riley County
Preservation Alliance
Sara Fisher, President
P. O. Box 1893
Manhattan, KS 66505

E-mail:
mrpanewsletter@gmail.com
Web site:
www.preservemanhattan.org

The Board of Directors meets the second Thursday of the month at the Union Pacific Depot at 7:00 p.m., and members are welcomed to attend.

(continued from pg. 4)

Collections of the Kansas State Historical Society 1919-1922. Ed. William E. Connelley, vol. 15. Topeka, Kansas: Kansas State Printing Plant, 1923.

The Nationalist. 14 May 1875:3.

Pioneers of the Bluestem Prairie Manhattan, Kansas: Riley County Genealogical Society, 1976.

Slagg, Winifred N. Riley County, Kansas. Manhattan, KS: Ted Varney's University Book Store, 1968.

Rocking Yuma Street

The Manhattan Area Habitat for Humanity (MAHFH) will construct its 27th home at 1026 Yuma Street, and MAHFH isn't stopping there. The organization plans to spruce up the surrounding neighborhood of the build site with a project called "Rock the Block."

Qualifying homeowners who live 2-4 blocks in each direction of the build site on Yuma Street will receive assistance with home repairs, maintenance, weatherization, safety, accessibility, and beautification.

This area of Manhattan has a rich history. In 2011, the survey "African American Resources of Manhattan, Kansas" was conducted to establish a multiple property listing that would aid in historic registry listing for properties associated with Manhattan's African American culture. Both Bethel A.M.E. Church and Pilgrim Baptist Church were added to the National Register of Historic Places as a result of the 2011 survey.

In addition to these churches, the south side of Manhattan was home to George Giles, who played baseball with the

Kansas City Monarchs; Minnie Howell Champe, who was the first African American woman to graduate from Kansas State Agricultural College; Harold Robinson, who was the first African American scholarship athlete to compete in the Big Seven conference; Earl Woods, who was the first African American baseball player in the Big Seven; and it was home to the first African American fraternity associated with an integrated campus west of the Mississippi River.

To help MAHFH volunteers and sponsors appreciate the significant history of the neighborhood where they will be working, walking tours with Richard Pitts, director of the Wonder Workshop, are planned.

The Rock the Block project is scheduled to start mid-March.

Below, Yuma Street near the future MAHFH build site.



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

2016-17 M/RCPA Membership Roster

\$35 Historic Level

Dede Brokesh, Charlene Brownson, Sandra Chandler, Preston & Diana Chapel, Cheryl Collins, Kenneth & Margaret Conrow, Mike & Jan Danenberg, Clark & Nancy Danner, Dean Denner, David Fiser, Mary Ann Fleming, Tom & Angie Fryer, Corina Hugo, Jean Hulbert, Pat & Rita Keating, Phillip & Camille Korenek, Manhattan Area Chamber of Commerce, Master Landscape Inc., Debra Mercer, Larry & Sandy Murphy, Bill Pallet, Allana Parker, Jerry & Martha Powell, Gloria Juhl Raney, Linda Rice, Lauren W. Ritterbush, Tom & Karen Roberts, Catherine Roy-Tremblay, Sharlin Sargent, Richard & Kimberly Smith, Jonathan Stark-Sachs, Bria Taddiken-Williams, Ron & Dixie West, Nancy B. Williams

\$100 Preservation Level

Barbara Anderson, Phil & Dawn Anderson/Anderson Bed & Breakfast, Mimi Balderson, Mel & Jan Borst/Borst Restoration, BBN Architects Inc., BHS Construction, Melvin & Randi Dale, John & Bonnie Devore, Kevin & Sue Donnelly, Gary & Paula Ellis, Calvin & Genie Emig, Wanda Fateley, Beverly Fink, Troy & Sara Fisher, Joe & Janette Gelroth, Larry & Linda Glasgow, Judy Glowiak, Jean Bigbee Hill, Nancy Holmes, Claudia Jones, Mark & Ann Knackendoffel, Ann R. Kosch, Dr. Bob Linder, McCullough Development Inc., Dori Milldyke, Linda L. Morse, Karin Westman & Phil Nel, Marina Pecar-Krstic, Lawrence & Mary Pollack, John & Mary Beth Reese, Steve & Deborah Saroff, Steve & Whitney Short, Brenda Spencer/Spencer Preservation, George & Julie Strecker, Joan C. Strickler, Charles & Marsha Tannehill, Ray & Patricia Weisenburger, Ronald E. Wells, Barbara Withee

\$250 Landmark Level

David & Kathy Dzewaltowski, Debbie Nuss & Brad Fenwick, Andy & Erica Larson, Dr. Patricia J. O'Brien, Barbara Poresky, Kevin S. & Alyn Pennington West

Honorary Lifetime Members

Rose M. Bissey (in memory of Charles Bissey), Enell Foerster (in memory of Bernd Foerster), Dr. Patricia J. O'Brien, Edna L. Williams