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# MANHATTAN/RILEY COUNTY PRESERVATION ALLIANCE NEWSLETTER

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## A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT KATHY DZEWALTOWSKI

MARCH, 2011

The span of just a few years can make an amazing difference in the life of an historic structure. It wasn't so very long ago that the Phillipena Strasser House, 326 Laramie Street, was in serious jeopardy.

Redevelopment plans called for its relocation or demolition, and as the months passed, the house sat vacant and unmaintained, sliding into serious decline. The fear was that the owners were going to get their wish for demolition by failing to properly maintain the house, a process known as "demolition by neglect."

Fortunately, demolition didn't happen due in large part to advocacy by the preservation community. The house is now back in use as a residence and is a tangible example of how an historic property can be saved if "demolition by neglect" is halted.

The National Trust for Historic Preservation defines "demolition by neglect" as the "process of allowing a building to deteriorate to the point where demolition is necessary to protect public health and safety" ([preservationnation.org](http://preservationnation.org)). It's a process that preservationists continually struggle against in the never-ending battle to save historic structures.

The Preservation Alliance has long been an advocate for the city's adopting a "demolition by neglect" ordinance in order to better address neglect issues.

Recently, Manhattan's Historic Resources Board (HRB) has begun to explore the possibility of recommend-

ing to the City Commission the adoption of a "demolition by neglect" ordinance and has started investigating what other communities have done.

One of the ordinances the HRB has considered for a model is the ordinance adopted by Raleigh, NC. In a nutshell, Raleigh's ordinance encourages the property owner to address the neglect by making repairs or by selling the property. If the owner refuses to make repairs or claims economic hardship, the city's historic commission can seek court permission to do the work necessary to stabilize the structure and can take out a lien against the owner to pay for the work.\*

Since enacting the ordinance in the early 1990's, the threat of action by the city has motivated most owners to address the issues of neglect without going to court.\*\*

In Kansas, properties listed on an historic register, properties in an historic district, or properties within the environs of a registered property or historic district go through a review process when the owners want to alter or demolish the structures. Plans are reviewed at the local level by the HRB and at the state level by the State Historic Preservation Office before work can begin. In cases where the demolition request has been denied, owners with the ability to wait months or years have been known to circumvent the denial by allowing the property to deteriorate, i.e. "demolition by neglect." By the time that the owner finally decides to pur-

sue an appeal to the local government for permission to demolish, the code department may have determined that the structure has deteriorated to the point of being unsafe and recommend demolition, accomplishing what the owner wanted all along.

A "demolition by neglect" ordinance could be a proactive tool for halting neglect and provide the "teeth" the HRB needs to protect Manhattan's historic properties. Having an ordinance in place similar to Raleigh's could motivate owners to address neglect with repairs or by selling the properties. If Manhattan had such an ordinance, structures currently undergoing "demolition by neglect" could be spared and put back into use like we saw with the Strasser House. Maybe historic structures that have been lost, such as the Wells-Aberle House formerly located at 2300 Claflin Road in the environs of the Goodnow House and now a sand volleyball court, could have been saved, either by motivating the owner to repair or sell the property.

The Preservation Alliance supports the HRB's efforts to investigate options for establishing a "demolition by neglect" ordinance for Manhattan and hopes a recommendation will be forthcoming.

\* Code of Ordinances, Raleigh, NC. Sec. 10 Planning and Development, Article J. 1992

\*\* Osborne, Rebecca. "Balancing Act: Preventing Demolition by Neglect." *The Historic Dimension Series*. April 2005.

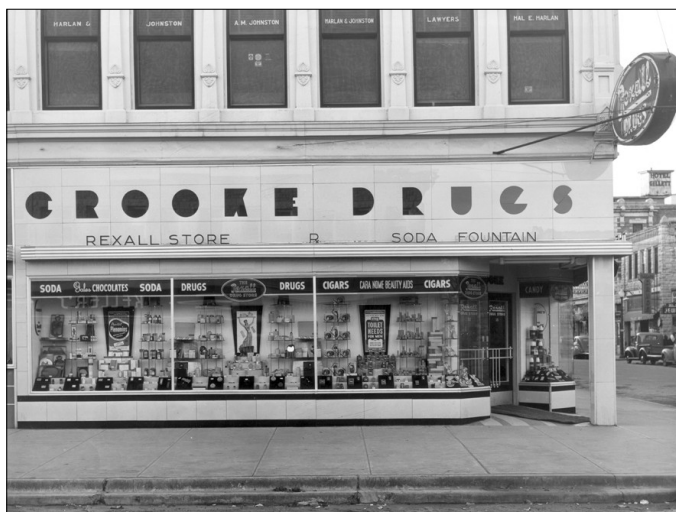


The Ulrich Brothers, 1870's  
Known all over the state as contractors and quarry men.

## Manhattan's Ulrich Block

The limestone building located on the southeast corner of Poyntz Avenue and South Fourth Street has been a prominent presence in Manhattan's downtown since 1894.

This newsletter will take a look at some of the building's history.



Crooke's Rexall Drugs, ca. 1946

The Ulrich Block, 1952 or 1953



Photos courtesy of the Riley County Historical Society

Note: Third Street became Fourth Street in 1908 when Manhattan's north-south streets were renumbered.

**Nationalist 2-16-1894**

"A two story business block, corner of Poyntz Avenue and Third Street, is among the probabilities and Ulrich Bros., who own the corner, are talking strongly of putting up such a building which would undoubtedly be a paying investment as it is a desirable location. Store and office rooms, that is, good ones, are none too numerous and there is little question but what these gentlemen would readily find good renters were the building erected."

**Nationalist 3-30-1894**

"That Ulrich Bros. will build a substantial business block, is assured. Foundation lines have been run, stakes set, and as soon as the lots are cleared excavating will be commenced."

**Nationalist 4-6-1894**

"Monday Ulrich Bros. put a force of men to work tearing down and removing the old stone building on the corner. Excavating was also begun at the back of the lots and the work of getting in the foundation of the new building is being pushed."

**Nationalist 4-13-1894**

"The lumber for Ulrich Bros. three new store rooms was purchased of Haulenbeck & White. Mr. Haulenbeck went to Kansas City Saturday and placed the order for quick shipment."

**Nationalist 4-20-1894**

"Work on Ulrich brother's [sic] new building progresses rapidly. The foundation is all ready for the first timbers."

**Nationalist 4-27-1894**

"Work on the new Ulrich block has been suspended temporarily awaiting the arrival of lumber."

**Nationalist 5-4-1894**

"Work on Ulrich Bros. new block resumed Monday, the lumber having arrived. The masons are crowding the work on the walls and the building is rapidly assuming proportions."

**Nationalist 6-8-1894**

"The Ulrich building is rapidly nearing completion. The front, the second story is in and has been painted by C.E. Hart. The windows have all been put in the upper story. Plate glass for the lower front has arrived and will be placed at once."

**Nationalist 7-27-1894**

"Ulrich Block—Built and owned by Ulrich Bros. Known all over the state as contractors and quarry men. This building is on the corner of Poyntz Avenue and Third Street with a frontage of fifty feet and is eighty one feet deep. It is two full stories, built of Manhattan stone, the front of the upper story being of iron. The first floor contains three storerooms, each 16 x 80 feet, with full plate-glass fronts. The corner, or west room, is to be occupied by the Manhattan pharmacy, Dr. Alex Hatch & Son, proprietors. The middle room has been leased by a gentleman from Wakeeny, who will put in a stock of groceries. The east room has not, as yet, been rented. The second floor is occupied by Musgrave's business college, as was mentioned in this paper last week. The block is a handsome, substantial structure, adding much to the appearance of that side of the avenue, and is a credit to its owners."

**Nationalist 7-27-1894**

"Dr. Hatch & Son are moving their drug store into their new quarters in Ulrich Block. They will have one of the prettiest stores in town."

**Nationalist 5-31-1895**

"The college boys gave a dance in the Ulrich building Wednesday evening."

**Nationalist 7-12-1895**

"A NEW BOOK Store. Beginning Sept. 1<sup>st</sup> Manhattan will have a new book store, the firm to consist of Will R. Spillman and Miss Allie Long. They have already secured an excellent location having rented one [of] the store rooms in the Ulrich block. They will put in a large book stock, and also full lines of wall paper, stationery, etc."



Article in the **Morning Chronicle**  
December 27, 1945

## *The Ulrich Block: Crooke's Rexall Drug Store, 1946*



May 1945 telephone book:  
Petrich Rexall Drug Store at 331 Poyntz and  
Crooke Rexall Drug Store located at 231 Poyntz .

January 1946 telephone book:  
Crooke's Rexall Drug Store at 331 Poyntz  
and J & S Rexall had replaced Crooke's at 231 Poyntz.

May 1947 telephone book:  
Norton Rexall Drug Store at 331 Poyntz;  
no mention of Crooke's.

Crooke's new Rexall superstore at the corner of Fourth and Poyntz will have its formal opening Wednesday, January 9, Frank M. Crooke, owner and manager of the firm, announced today.

The store is now closed except for filling prescriptions to allow workmen to complete remodeling of the store's interior and to give store employees an opportunity to arrange stock on the shelves.

The superstore has been remodeled and enlarged to include the space formerly occupied by the Miller-Jones Shoe Store, 329-1/2 Poyntz, which was the first door east of Crooke's store.

The store has been completely rebuilt and remodeled for the grand opening January 9.



Photos courtesy of the Riley County Historical Society

## A Streamlined Drug Store **Morning Chronicle** January 8, 1946

Crooke's Rexall Superstore at Fourth and Poyntz is modern in architectural design and one of the most up-to-date drug firms in the middlewest.

It has been designed by the United Rexall Drug Co., as a model drug store. Plans and specifications for the room and all fixtures were prepared by Walter, Thomas & Williams, architects of Boston, Mass.

Its streamlined effect is carried out on the exterior of the building as well as on the inside. There is plenty of color throughout the store to add charm and beauty for the customer and clerks alike.

### Glass on the Front

Structural glass has been placed on the front of the building's exterior with modernistic glass letters for identifying the store. This structural glass front is similar to fronts of other stores in the business district. Many persons have commented on the beauty of the structural glass designs which add a uniform touch to the business houses along the 300 block on Poyntz.

Outstanding in the store's interior is the fluorescent lighting system which gives a soft, even light for the customer. There are approximately 100 fluorescent lights in the store which amounts to approximately 300 feet of double strip tubes. All wall and floor show cases are also individually lighted.

All fixtures, counters, shelves and toilet display cases in the store are new as well as the large soda fountain which will be used. Furniture for the fountain also is new.

The fixtures were manufactured by the Huck Mfg. Co. of Quincey, Ill.

### Asphalt Tile Floor

The floor of the store is of new asphalt tile. A marble floor had been used in the store before remodeling. When space formerly occupied next door by the Miller-Jones Shoe store was added to the Crooke store in the remodeling the drug store increased its show window space.

The prescription counter of Crooke's is located in the rear of the store where all prescriptions will be filled. Frank M. Crooke, owner and manager of the store, maintains an office on the second floor of the Ulrich building.

## Drug Store On The Corner Of Fourth and Poyntz 52 Years **Morning Chronicle** January 8, 1946

For the past 52 years Manhattanites and people from this trade territory have been buying drugs and other drug store items at the location of the Crooke Drug Store at Fourth and Poyntz.

A drug store has been located there ever since the building was constructed way back in 1893.

Old-timers will recall that it was E.H. Ulrich, one of Manhattan's pioneers and father of Bernard Ulrich, Manhattan business man, who constructed the building in 1893. The structure, now known as the Ulrich building, was one of the earliest large buildings in the business section. It is one of the landmarks of business activity in the city.

The building, now owned by Mr. and Mrs. Bernard Ulrich, has been remodeled several times since its first construction. Among its recent improvements has been installation of a new structural glass front along with other new fronts on business houses in that block. The building has been owned by the Ulrich family since its construction.

In recalling that the corner room portion of the building had been occupied as a drug store continuously since the building was constructed, Mr. Ulrich said Dr. Hatch first operated a drug business there in the 1890's.

Later the drug store was operated by Dr. H.S. Willard, who will be remembered by the older residents of Manhattan. Many yarns are told of Dr. Willard who

was widely-known as a druggist in this vicinity.

Later the drug store was owned for many years by L. H. Combs. Mr. Combs then sold the drug store to H.H. Kinney and Herman Petrich who operated it as a partnership for a number of years.

When Mr. Petrich died in 1940 the store was operated by Frank M. Crooke and Mrs. Petrich, and three years after Mr. Petrich's death Mr. Crooke became sole owner of the drug store. Previously Mr. Crooke had operated a drug store at the corner of Third and Poyntz.



Photo courtesy of the Riley County Historical Society  
Crooke photos date from the evening before the grand opening.

Frank Crooke received many congratulatory telegrams and more than 30 bouquets of flowers for opening day, January 9, 1946.

Dozens of druggists from nearby towns and cities came for the event.

A big crowd assembled a half-hour before the 9 a.m. opening time.





Photo courtesy of Kathy Dzewaltowski

## Character-Defining Remnant

A partial list of  
Manhattan's historic  
neighborhood grocery  
store addresses:

601 Bluemont

811 Colorado

1030 Colorado

610 North Fifth Street

321 South Fourth

927 Fremont

610 North Fifth

618 Kearney

922 Kearney

1601 Laramie

1701 Leavenworth

1001 Pierre

1331 Pierre

831 Poyntz

1631 Poyntz

314 North Sixth

314 South Third Street

300 Thurston

214 South Twelfth Street

331 Yuma Street

407 Yuma Street

The corner grocery building, 1001 Pierre, sporting a fresh coat of paint.

Before the advent of supermarkets, small grocery stores anchored neighborhood corners and were a common fixture. Parents regularly sent their children on the short walk to the corner store to pick up staples such as loaves of bread.

Neighborhood groceries offered services that supermarket stores didn't, such as speedier service, extended hours, free delivery, and store credit.

By the late 1950's several factors had combined to reduce the economic viability of neighborhood grocery stores, including wholesale grocery suppliers requiring minimum purchases that were beyond the capacity of smaller stores and increased utility prices that cut into profits.

Manhattan still has a few remnants from the days of corner groceries. Yi's Oriental Market is an example of a corner store still in operation. Another former corner grocery has been repurposed into an artist's studio.

The Owl Grocery, located at 1001 Pierre Street, in later years became the Payton Barber Shop, the Church of Christ Christian Service Center, a private residence, and the C and C Up-

holstery shop before becoming vacant.

The building fell into disrepair and was repeatedly vandalized with graffiti. The city's code department eventually recommended that it be demolished due to a deteriorated interior and the presence of black mold.

Because the store is located within the environs of the Houston and Pierre Streets Residential Historic District, the request to demolish the structure was reviewed by Manhattan's Historic Resources Board (HRB) in 2010. Because members of the HRB felt that the structure's architecture and historic use as a corner grocery could be considered character-defining for the historic district, demolition was denied.

Following the HRB's denial of demolition of 1001 Pierre Street, the owner of the building developed a plan to repair the building and to make it into a residence. The building has been recently repainted and work was done to the roof.

The Preservation Alliance is glad to see the corner store is getting a second chance.

# *M/RCPA Membership Roster*

## **2010—2011**

### **\$15 Student Level**

Joanne Goldstein.

### **\$35 Maintenance Level**

Barbara Anderson, Marolyn Caldwell, Wayne M. (Mick) Charney, Cheryl Collins, Kenneth & Margaret Conrow, Michael & Janet Danenberg, Nancy Danner, Kerry Davis, Michael & Ann Dudek, Rev. H. Wayne & Beverly Fink, Sara Fisher, Mary Ann Fleming, Deanna & Dan Hall, Charles & Charlotte Herr, Marjorie Heyne, Robin Higham, Jean Bigbee Hill, Corina & Cornelius Hugo, Lance & Melanie Klein, Marianne Korten, Professor Robert D. Linder, Bonnie Lynn-Sherow, Jan McIntosh, Bruce McMillan, Elaine & Robert Mohr, Bill Pallett, Jerry & Martha Powell, Roger & Virginia Reitz, Lauren W. Ritterbush, Mike & Karen Sheffield, Geri & Todd Simon, Richard & Kimberly Smith, Brenda Spencer, Stephen Stover, Joan Strickler, Erma Verhage, Ray & Patricia Weisenburger, Alvin & Edna Williams.

### **\$100 Historic Level**

John & Sheri Adams, Mimi Balderson, Bowman Bowman Novick, Frances Ellis, Gary & Paula Ellis, Tom Giller-Commerce Bank, Bert & Val Harrop, Nancy Holmes, Roger & Linda Johnson, Mark & Ann Knackendoffel, John & Cindy LaBarge, Eugene J. Laughlin, Karen & John McCulloh, Michael & Judine Mecseri, Dori Milldyke, Jayme Morris-Hardeman & Brain Hardeman, Marina Pecar-Krstic, Barbara & Ernie Peck, Virginia Quiring, John and Barbara Rees, Dan & Mitzi Richards, Tom & Karen Roberts, Le Juan Shrimplin, Bob & Mary Stamey, Chuck & Marsha Tannehill, Barbara Withee.

### **\$250 Preservation Level**

Mary Dean Apel, Burke & Margery Bayer, David & Kathy Dzewaltowski, Ralph Fontenot, Larry & Linda Glasgow, Hittle Landscape Architects, Master Landscape, Inc., Debbie Nuss & Brad Fenwick, Pat O'Brien, Perry Peine, Barbara Poresky, Gwyn & Gina Riffel, Steve & Debbie Saroff, Steve & Whitney Short, Kevin West & Alyn Pennington West.

### **Honorary Lifetime Members**

Rose M. Bissey (in memory of Charles Bissey), Enell Foerster (in memory of Bernd Foerster), Pat O'Brien.

PLEASE DETACH HERE TO RETURN YOUR MEMBERSHIP ACCEPTANCE

MANHATTAN/RILEY COUNTY PRESERVATION ALLIANCE

### **ANNUAL (2010-2011) MEMBERSHIP ACCEPTANCE**

THE M/RCPA IS A TAX EXEMPT 501(C)(3) ORGANIZATION.

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☐ \$ 35+ MAINTENANCE  
☐ \$100+ HISTORIC  
☐ \$250+ PRESERVATION

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## *Winter Social*

The promise of a relaxing, stress-free post-holiday social event for all members was fulfilled the evening of January 28th at Mr. K's in Grand Mere. About twenty members were in attendance.

Social events provide important opportunities for Alliance members to become better acquainted with one another. Because member feedback was positive, it is likely more events of this kind will be organized.

