

---

---

# P Manhattan/Riley County PRESERVATION ALLIANCE NEWSLETTER

---

---

NOVEMBER 2004

FROM THE PRESIDENT—DIXIE WEST

I've just returned from a business trip in Washington, DC. When I travel, I seek out a city's character in its variety—its stewardship of the quaint, avant garde, small-shop-just-around-the corner feel. I can't gain an impression of a community based on the number of chain restaurants or "you've seen one, you've seen 'em all" retail outlets it possesses. While in DC, I stayed in a 19th century hotel that I had found on the web. My room hosted a 15' ceiling, bullseye molding woodwork, a transom above the door, and an aging radiator system that made the space altogether a bit too cozy. Although my residence did not host all the conveniences of more modern accommodations, I came away with an impression of the daily lives of my neighbors living around Dupont Circle.

Some readers will undoubtedly call me a romantic in love with an earlier, simpler time—that I lack a "head" for business and economics—that old buildings are just not worth it. But I have visited other communities where preservation is a booming business. Here is a case in point—that town just down the river, Lawrence, Kansas. Lawrence hosts a glorious historic district containing charming cottages and grand Victorian beauties. Many of my colleagues at "that other Kansas university" have pointed out that they would dearly love to live in a house in this early section of the city, but these charmers are in such high in demand, it becomes almost impossible to nab one when it becomes available. This is clearly a case where old house living has paid off as house hunters seek structures with a character they cannot find in more recent construction.

In Manhattan and Riley County, we have the same base. A recent historic survey conducted by Historic Preservation Services for the city of

Manhattan shows that in Wards 1 and 2 there are hundreds of buildings that are historic and many worthy of National Register nomination. Some are small, others large. Styles include: Greek and Gothic Revival, Romanesque, Art Deco/Moderne, High Style Queen Anne, Victorian Stick style, Vernacular, Arts and Crafts and many others. This survey encompassed a relatively small section of Manhattan. However, the survey indicated that many other buildings outside of Wards 1 and 2 are historically significant and well worth keeping. In other words, this city is teeming with a multifaceted housing and commercial building stock that tells the story of who we are and how we came to be. It's part of what makes us interesting!

During the spring the Preservation Alliance will begin a series of program meetings which we hope the community will attend. One of these meetings will be about the buildings described in the recent survey. You might be living in one of these buildings and not even realize its character, historical significance, and contribution to your neighborhood and the city as a whole. Once we have figured out the program schedule, we will be sure to keep you informed. We hope you will join us at these meetings as we discover the rich cultural heritage represented by our built environment.

*Dixie West*

## MANHATTAN/RILEY CONTY PRESERVATION ALLIANCE

**Meetings:** Second Thursday of each month, 7:30 p.m.

**Location:** First Congregational Church, Juliette and Poyntz unless noted

**President:** Dixie West

**Vice-President:** Michael Mecseri

**Secretary:** Linda Glasgow

**Treasurer:** Barbara Poresky

**Newsletter Editor:** Marolyn Caldwell



The 1970s survey included the following information: [Original date of the photograph: 1911.] “The American Woman’s League Chapter in Manhattan, Kansas qualified for this arts and crafts style Class III Chapter House built for them by the League on a lot provided by the Chapter. Financial difficulties caused the League to be short of funds before the Chapter House was complete, but the ladies rose to the occasion and raised the funds to complete it. Chapter officers were President, Mrs. A. S. Porter; Vice President, Mrs. F. E. Marsh; Treasurer, Mrs. Estelle G. Lowery; and Secretary, Mrs. S. A. Baldwin. The Chapter reported 110 members.” A further note of explanation: “Photograph, mounted on scrapbook stock, overexposed or faded, background blocked right and left on negative . . . .”

### **HISTORIC 1911 PHOTOGRAPH OF 900 POYNTZ**

This picture and the accompanying information was forwarded to us by Ockert Fourie of the Manhattan city planning staff, after he was contacted by Sue Rehkopf, Volunteer Archivist of the Historical Society of University City, Missouri. She is trying to update a 1970s survey of American Woman’s League Chapter Houses. The Chapter Houses were built for local chapters by University City’s City Founder (and League Founder) Edward Gardner Lewis. Manhattan was one of the communities that qualified and was awarded a Class III arts and crafts/mission style bungalow.

According to Ms. Rehkopf, the 1970s survey indicated that the house was then owned and/or used by the Women’s Club, that it was in good condition and that it still had the original stained glass with the AWL initial in the front door. We, of course, now know the building as Robert Littrell’s law office at 900 Poyntz.

Anyone who is interested in seeing what the other Women’s League Chapter Houses looked like can pull up the Historical Society’s web site: [www.ucpl.lib.mo.us](http://www.ucpl.lib.mo.us) and click on History in Photographs. To find Manhattan’s Chapter House, search on “Manhattan.”

### **THE FIGHT TO SAVE THEODORE ROOSEVELT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

by Contributing Writer Kathy Dzewaltowski

Last February, the Board of Education discussed closing an elementary school as a means of reducing the budget, and TR was targeted. Roosevelt parents became active in researching the budget, enrollment, and conditions of the building to demonstrate to the board that closing TR was not a logical choice. During this process, TR parents and neighbors were joined by parents from Wilson, Lee, and Ogden, schools also considered for closure. As a result of these efforts, the Board of Education voted in April to not close any schools for the 2004-05 school year.

District enrollment has continued to decline, so closure was again considered by the school board this fall as a means to reduce the budget. This time, TR was formally named for closure and went through the public hearing process required by Kansas law. Again, TR par-

ents and neighbors, parents from several other elementary schools, and community members worked to demonstrate to the board that closing TR was not a good choice because of the possibility of new incoming students associated with new troops arriving at Ft. Riley, the possibility of a quarter-cent sales tax, and the fact that the remaining elementary schools will be 92-100% full, allowing little room for new students. Community efforts are the only reason that the board is considering the quarter-cent sales tax. The board voted on November 3 to close TR, but voted also to delay the closure until May 2006, until more is known about new students and the sales tax.

Parent and community efforts, both in the spring and fall, have included writing to school board members, calling them, attending board meetings and speaking before the board, writing

letters to the Mercury, and protesting (i.e. picketing) TR's closure.

This fall, parents organized a forum, called "The Good Apple Symposium," that included a speaker from the National Trust, an education expert on the K-8 configuration, and an urban planner.

Also, the Kansas State Historical Society is conducting a historic schools project in which schools in Kansas will be nominated to the National Register of Historic Places. Bluemont, Eugene Field, and Roosevelt were identified by a state representative as being eligible for nomination. Parents and community members wrote to the Board of Education asking it to give its approval for the state to nominate these schools. The board voted against pursuing the nominations, but the board was ill-informed about what National Register status means. The state still has at least one opening for the historic schools project, so we hope that the board will revisit this issue, learn more about it, change its vote, and give its approval for the nominations.

Preservation Alliance members can write to the board as well, to encourage members to give their approval. The board's mail address is Robinson Education Center, 2031 Poyntz Ave., and e-mail addresses of board members are:

[boe@manhattan.k12.ks.us](mailto:boe@manhattan.k12.ks.us)

[sharoll@manhattan.k12.ks.us](mailto:sharoll@manhattan.k12.ks.us)

[dsoldan@ksu.edu](mailto:dsoldan@ksu.edu)

[MrPsPartyOutlet@aol.com](mailto:MrPsPartyOutlet@aol.com)

[rbrannan@kansas.net](mailto:rbrannan@kansas.net)

[nelsoncolburn@yahoo.com](mailto:nelsoncolburn@yahoo.com)

[Nancy\\_Knopp@mercyregional.org](mailto:Nancy_Knopp@mercyregional.org)

[randymartin@kansas.net](mailto:randymartin@kansas.net)

[jshroyer@oznet.ksu.edu](mailto:jshroyer@oznet.ksu.edu)

#### **MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION**

Dues date from the Annual Meeting in September. Dues paid mid-year confer membership status until the next Annual Meeting. Dues are \$15 for an individual, \$20 for a family, and \$60 for a sponsor. Checks should be made out to the Manhattan/Riley County Preservation Alliance, Inc. c/o P.O. Box 1893, Manhattan, Kansas 66505. Questions? Call Linda Glasgow at 785-565-6490.

If anyone has contributions for future M/RCPA newsletters, please contact Editor, Marolyn Caldwell (776-4862) or email [marolync@flintheills.com](mailto:marolync@flintheills.com).

The group of concerned parents also has formed a list serv, now with 117 members. Preservation Alliance members are welcome to join the list serv. You can contact Kathy at [dzewk@yahoo.com](mailto:dzewk@yahoo.com).

*This from another member of the Good Apple group, Phyllis Pease:*

We will be selling coffee beginning in December at Radina's and the profit will go to the elementary schools. We are also working on "Old School" t-shirts for the four historic elementary schools and those profits will also go towards the schools. We hope to work with Cheryl Collins at the Museum and come up with a program that can tour the elementary schools in celebration of our 150th year. We would like to build a sense of pride in our historic neighborhood schools and share with everyone how they came to be and how they were named, who designed and built them etc. We will keep in touch as these plans materialize.

#### **MYSTERY TOURISTS**

See the article on the last page to find out what these people are doing.



**Jean Hill**  
REALTOR®

#### **ERA Ann Christian Linda Conderman Real Estate**

1430 Poyntz Ave.  
Manhattan, KS 66502

Office: (785) 539-3737 ext. 117

Fax: (785) 539-7238

Home: (785) 776-6360

Cell: (785) 770-7228

E-Mail: [jbhill@interkan.net](mailto:jbhill@interkan.net)



Each ERA® Office is Independently Owned and Operated



## PA'S FIRST "MYSTERY TOUR" RAISES \$1500

Our first Historic Homes Mystery Tour was held on Saturday, November 6<sup>th</sup> in the Historic Landmark Water Tower Neighborhood of Manhattan. Eleven tour patrons met with Cheryl Collins and Linda Glasgow at the base of the water tower at 9:45 a.m.

We learned about the development of Sunset Cemetery, the building of the sexton's house, the beginning of Manhattan's waterworks, and the lives of some early residents of the neighborhood.

The next four hours were spent visiting four terrific houses. In addition to touring the houses, we were offered a splendid buffet at every stop along the tour. We welcomed the chance to sit down and to get to know one another better. Our group included area residents as well as two visitors from Japan. In age we ranged from twenty to well over eighty.

The weather was brilliantly sunny, giving us the best possible views of shaded, secluded gardens and bright vistas of autumn foliage set

against the blue sky. We took full advantage of the million dollar views from hilltop balconies.

We thank our tour patrons for their willingness to participate in a mystery. We thank our homeowners who were so much fun to work with. Thanks also go to the friends of the homeowners who helped serve the food. And finally we offer special thanks to our distinguished mystery driver who provided golf cart rides between houses. It all made for a lovely and memorable day.

We all worked together and in doing so we raised a total of \$1,500 to benefit Manhattan's Union Pacific Depot. That money will be matched four to one by KDOT. We hope that others will consider either placing a house on a future mystery tour or purchasing a mystery tour ticket. If you are interested, please contact Linda Glasgow at 785-565-6490 so your name can go on our list. There are plenty of mysteries yet to explore in Riley County!



*Claflin*  
*Books and Copies*

1814 Claflin Road  
Manhattan, KS 66502  
(785) 776-3771  
Fax: (785) 776-1009

E-mail: [claflin@interkan.net](mailto:claflin@interkan.net)  
[www.claflinbooks.com](http://www.claflinbooks.com)

### **BORST RESTORATION**

Residential Preservation, Renovation & Improvement  
Structural Repair Services

*Serving Our Community For Over 20 Years*

Mel and Jan Borst                      1918 Humboldt  
(785) 776-1460                      Manhattan, KS 66502

Member of the National Trust for Historic Preservation

**PLEASE JOIN US ON THURSDAY EVENING, NOVEMBER 11, 2004  
AT THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, JULIETTE AND POYNTZ, 7:30 P.M.**

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