



MANHATTAN/RILEY COUNTY PRESERVATION ALLIANCE NEWSLETTER

October 2011

A Message From Our President Kathy Dzewaltowski

Back on Sept. 8th, the Preservation Alliance held its annual meeting and kicked off a new membership year. We elected the board of directors and new officers, including myself to serve another year as president. Dr. Judith Major, professor in the Department of Landscape Architecture/Regional Community Planning at Kansas State University, provided the program and treated those in attendance with an illustrated lecture about the life and ideas of landscape architect Andrew Jackson Downing (1815-1852). We learned that Downing promoted the development of an American style of landscape gardening different from European standards. Downing also advocated for establishing public parks, building residences with front porches to provide a transition from outdoors to indoors, and he created pattern books for domestic architecture. According to Dr. Major, Downing's influence in Manhattan can be seen in the designs of Sunset Cemetery, the house located at 803 Pierre Street, and also the Robert Ulrich House, located at 121 N. 8th Street. Dr. Major's program provided us with a greater appreciation for Downing's design influences on Manhattan's early years. I know it's given me a different perspective on my own front porch.

Also during the annual meeting, members approved the 2011-12 operating budget, which included a new grant funding item for supporting local preservation projects. A budget and policy

committee spent several months hammering out a budget and developing an application process for individuals and organizations to request grant funding from the M/RCPA. The M/RCPA plans to consider any project as long as it promotes historic preservation. Examples of projects the M/RCPA would consider include but are not limited to: hiring a consultant to assist with a national register nomination; materials for the repair/replacement of brick sidewalks; support for a graduate student's research project; matching funds for a grant application; support for a student's internship, etc. Project funding ranges from as little as \$250 up to \$2,500, but in total no more than \$7,000 annually. Anyone interested in more information should contact the M/RCPA by e-mail at mrcpanewsletter@gmail.com or by regular mail at P.O. Box 1893, Manhattan, KS 66505. We hope this new venture will provide the M/RCPA with additional opportunities to encourage and support historic preservation in Manhattan and Riley County.

The M/RCPA's membership letter should have arrived in your mailbox around Oct. 1. I hope the letter will inspire you to think about what motivated you to become a member, why you are interested in preservation, and how you would like to be involved with the M/RCPA. The Board of Directors is always open to new ideas to keep our organization exciting and dynamic, so don't hesitate to share your thoughts!

2011-12 Officers & Board of Directors

President: Kathy Dzewaltowski
Vice President: Sara Fisher
Secretary: Nancy Holmes
Treasurer: Barbara Poresky

Terms ending in 2012:

Kathy Dzewaltowski
Gary Ellis
Dori Milldyke
Marina Pecar-Krstic
Sharlin Sargent
Bob Stamey
Alyn Pennington West

Terms ending in 2013:

Pat O'Brien
Barbara Poresky
Mary Stamey

Terms ending in 2014:

Sara Fisher
Linda Glasgow
Angie Hickel
Nancy Holmes

Community Open House Manhattan High School

West Campus

2100 Poyntz Avenue

Sunday, October 16th

1:00 – 3:00 p.m.

USD 383 invites the community to come and take a look at the new additions and renovations at MHS West Campus.

Depot Artifacts Donated to City

Many people enjoy attending auctions, estate sales, yard sales, flea markets and the like, looking for a treasure or two, but it's rare that the City of Manhattan acquires significant pieces from an auction.

Several months ago, M/RCPA board member Sharlin Sargent attended the auction of Harry Means. Another auction attendee directed her attention to several railroad items up for sale -- items that had most likely come from Manhattan's Union Pacific Depot.

Both Harry W. Means and his father Harry L. Means had worked for the Union Pacific Railroad, which was how the Means family had acquired the railroad items.

Harry W. Means was a native of Belvue, Kansas. He joined the U.S. Navy and worked the radio on an aircraft carrier during World War II. He worked for the Union Pacific Railroad for 40 years as a telegrapher, as a ticket agent in Junction City, and he was the station agent in Manhattan at the time that he retired in 1978.

When it appeared that auction bidders were primarily interested in some of the depot artifacts for their scrap value, the Means family decided to donate them to the city with the hope that they would someday be used again at the depot.

The city currently has the items in storage. At some point in the future, the city hopes to have the artifacts restored and used at the depot, and the city would appreciate any guidance regarding the appropriate way to restore the artifacts. Anyone with expertise regarding the restoration of the depot's artifacts should contact Gary Fees at 785-587-2404 or by e-mail at fees@ci.manhattan.ks.us.

The City of Manhattan would also like to take this opportunity to recognize and to thank the Means family for its generous donation.



All of the photos on this page feature artifacts once used at the depot. Starting above and continuing clockwise are a baggage wagon, a light, the lenses from a semaphore signal, and a 35-ft. light mast. All of the photos are courtesy of the City of Manhattan. The Means family also donated other artifacts in addition to the ones pictured here.



Stone Terraces on Ninth Street

Thomas and Mary Elizabeth Atwood live on a secluded wooded lot near the corner of Claflin Road and Ninth Street. Mary Elizabeth had lived in the house with her parents while growing up, and the Atwoods acquired the house from her mother's estate. The property encompasses approximately two-and-a-half acres.

The house was built in approximately 1920, and county information indicates the house was a rental. Tenants from those early days have stopped by on occasion to talk to the Atwoods and share their memories.

The family has documents that show the land the house is sited on was granted to John Flag by President Buchanan. Mary Elizabeth's parents bought the house in 1958, and her father helped build the "new" Saint Mary's hospital (currently Mercy Regional Health Center). The Atwoods believe the house was somehow connected to a house on Tenth Street and was possibly a secondary structure for the Tenth Street house. The basement and a shed feature support pillars that are solid tree trunks.

Since moving into the house, the Atwoods have discovered the outlines of where a large structure once stood and surmise it was probably a carriage house or barn structure for animals. They have also uncovered traces of concrete raised planting beds in the yard.

Without a doubt, the most stunning and dramatic feature of the property is the seven stone terraces. Three of the terraces are below the house in the front section of the property, and four more criss-cross up the slope in the back. All seven of the stone terrace walls are dry-



stack limestone, except for a few spots where repairs have been made over the years and the stones were mortared into place. The stones vary in size, and some are quite large. Mary Elizabeth said her mother loved the stone terrace walls and was quite a rock hound, and the stone walls were a significant factor for why her parents purchased the property.

One of the terrace walls at the back of the property is curved and every few feet along its expanse, there is a sort of stone box. The Atwoods have no idea what the original purpose was for the stone

boxes and can only guess that they might have been planters, but they realize that the stone boxes' true use might yet be discovered.

The Atwoods cherish their stone terrace walls and are in the process of clearing paths to make them easier to access. They would like to learn more about their stone terrace walls, why they are there, and how such

large stones came to be placed so far up a steep hillside in Manhattan's early years. County records date the house to 1920, but it's unknown whether the stone terrace walls are the same age as the house.

The Atwoods hope that someone reading this newsletter knows more about how the walls came to be and will contact them with additional information.

Pictured above are two of the stone terrace walls, and below are the four walls that rise up the slope at the rear of the property.



Demolition by Neglect Ordinance Update

For several months, Manhattan's Historic Resources Board (HRB) has been exploring the possibility of recommending to the City Commission the adoption of a "demolition by neglect" ordinance. The HRB examined what other Kansas communities have done to address "demolition by neglect" and used those ideas as models for the draft of an ordinance that could be implemented in Manhattan. The HRB had also requested a work session with the City Commission to discuss the draft of an ordinance.

As part of the process of moving forward with the development of an ordinance, Brad Claussen, Building Official, met with Katie Jackson, Assistant City Attorney. Ms. Jackson said that a property owner cannot be cited more than once for the same violation, which is what she thought would happen if Manhattan adopted a "demolition by neglect" ordinance. For example, a property owner with a broken window could not be cited for the same window under both the Property Maintenance Code and a "demolition by neglect" ordinance. As a result, the benefit of having a "demolition by neglect" ordinance seemed less clear to the HRB if property owners could not be cited additionally for neglect.

In light of this development, Mr. Claussen's recommendation to the HRB was to use an administrative process to handle issues of neglect instead of an ordinance. The HRB would make a determination of neglect and make a recommendation to the code office. Next, the code office would investigate and report back to the HRB. The administrative

process would still allow issues of neglect to be addressed while not requiring action from the City Commission to adopt an ordinance. In addition, the administrative process could be used to address *any* structure undergoing neglect and would not be limited to historic registered properties and their environs. The hope is that this process will permit the HRB to intervene and halt neglect before demolition becomes the only solution to protect public safety.

At the HRB's September meeting, the administrative process received its first test, as three properties had been submitted for the HRB's consideration. The city's code department had investigated, issued citations as appropriate, and

will provide the HRB with a follow-up report at its October meeting.

Concerned citizens who know of properties that are suffering from "demolition by neglect" are encouraged to bring their concerns to the HRB by contacting Lance Evans, Long Range Senior Planner and staff liaison to the HRB. Contact Mr. Evans by phone at 785-587-2412, or by e-mail at evansl@ci.manhattan.ks.us.

The M/RCPA has long been an advocate for creating a proactive tool for dealing with "demolition by neglect" and hopes that the administrative process proves to be effective in dealing with issues of neglect.

Depot Connection Project

One of the features included in the South Redevelopment project has been the creation of a pedestrian trail that will connect the Discovery Center with the Union Pacific Depot and connect to the Linear Trail. Because the depot is sited on the far side of the K-177 on-ramp, an underpass or tunnel has been planned to provide safe passage for pedestrians and bicyclists.

The trail connection with the underpass between the Discovery Center and the depot will provide easier access for groups using the Discovery Center or the conference

center to utilize the depot for smaller, break-out sessions. The connection will also allow larger groups using the depot or attending activities in the South Redevelopment to access additional parking.

At the City Commission meeting held on August 2nd, commissioners approved entering into an agreement with Alfred Benesch and Company to provide professional engineering services for the Depot Connection Project, and the project is expected to begin in 2012.

Bird Sanctuary Planned for Inez Alsop House's Lot

In 2010, the Northern Flint Hills Audubon Society (NFHAS) became the sole trustee for the Inez Alsop Foundation and responsible for the house formerly located at 1646 Laramie Street, which had been Ms. Alsop's residence for almost 40 years. Ms. Alsop had been a history professor at Kansas State University.

In 1968 when the University Inn was constructed (currently the Holiday Inn Manhattan at the Campus), Ms. Alsop refused to sell her house to the hotel. She established a will that prevents the trustees of the Inez Alsop Foundation from being able to sell the property and that also requires the property to stay in private hands.

Ms. Alsop passed away in 1989, and the first trust holders did not adequately care for the Laramie Street property and allowed it to fall into disrepair. When the NFHAS became the sole trustee, they became responsible for a house full of debris that had been condemned by the city as being uninhabitable. The decision was made to demolish the house with plans to create a bird sanctuary on the lot. The update that follows was featured in the April 2011 NFHAS's newsletter.

The design stage of the Alsop Bird Sanctuary is underway. Duane Kerr, our member plant specialist; Tom Morgan, our member tree enthusiast; Jim Koelliker, our member engineer; and I met to brainstorm our ideas. Then, we met with Colin Noble and his partner,

Bridget McComb, who manages the hotel [Holiday Inn Manhattan at the Campus]. Bridget stated that she does the gardening for the hotel, and she shares our respect for using native plants (meaning the eastern part of the U.S.) for the project. Mr. Noble has committed to maintaining the property as it will be viewed by the casual viewer as an extension of his own property. He is allowing Northern Flint Hills Audubon to use the hotel's water supply, which saves our chapter a bunch. However, should we need to hook up in the future, all utilities are available at this location.

Another development has

our plan is more developed. The good news is that the repair of the sidewalk would have been the NFHAS's responsibility, but since the city is going to tear it out, the city may help with putting in a new one. Further negotiations in that regard are pending the city's official notification.

The money for this project is from a gift Inez Alsop willed to NFHAS years ago. As soon as we have a drawing of the design for the sanctuary, we will let the membership know where it will be available for review.

Patricia Yeager, president NFHAS



Reprinted with permission from the NFHAS's newsletter, *The Prairie Falcon*, April 2011 edition.

At left, the vacant lot at 1646 Laramie St., where Inez Alsop's white bungalow once stood. Below, the NFHAS has planted flowers in preparation for creating a bird sanctuary.

occurred. The city plans to make a left turn lane at the corner of 17th Street and Anderson Avenue and is taking part of our property. The city does not know when they will be able to start the construction project. The earliest would be fall 2011 or perhaps next year. Carla Bishop has generously offered to plant day lilies as ground cover until



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

\$15 Student Level

Joanne Goldstein.

\$35 Historic Level

Mary Elizabeth & Tom Atwood, Marolyn Caldwell, Wayne M. (Mick) Charney, Cheryl Collins, Kenneth & Margaret Conrow, Michael & Janet Danenberg, Nancy & Clark Danner, Kerry Davis, Michael & Ann Dudek, Rev. H. Wayne & Beverly Fink, Sara Fisher, Mary Ann Fleming, Deanna & Dan Hall, Charles & Charlotte Herr, Angie Hickel, Robin Higham, Jean Bigbee Hill, Corina & Cornelius Hugo, Lance & Melanie Klein, Phillip & Camille Korenek, Marianne Korten, Professor Robert D. Linder, Bonnie Lynn-Sherow, Judith K. Major, Jan McIntosh, Bruce McMillan, Elaine & Robert Mohr, Ed & Kay Olson, Kevin G. W. Olson, Bill Pallett, Mary H. & Lawrence Pollack, Jerry & Martha Powell, Roger & Virginia Reitz, Lauren W. Ritterbush, Marcia Rozell, Sharlin Sargent, Mike & Karen Sheffield, Geri & Todd Simon, Richard & Kimberly Smith, Brenda Spencer, Stephen Stover, Joan Strickler, Erma Verhage, Walter Remodeling Inc., Ray & Patricia Weisenburger, Alvin & Edna Williams.

\$100 Preservation Level

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

\$250 Landmark 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.