



MANHATTAN/RILEY COUNTY PRESERVATION ALLIANCE NEWSLETTER

October 2018, Vol. 24, Issue V

A Message From Our President

I recently returned from a two-day visit to Havana, Cuba. I was amazed, saddened, and hopeful all at once. We arrived by ship into the harbor, an amazing gift of nature that makes it easy to see why the city has existed since 1519.

I was apprehensive, not knowing how tourists, especially Americans, would be received. I had read up on the currency (there are two), the restaurants, the dress code, and such. Being a child of the Cold War and having traveled in Eastern Europe, I thought I was versed enough in the effects of Communism and Socialism on historical cities. But, I was not prepared for what I saw in Havana.

The people were gracious and the food delicious, but what struck me the most was the built environment. Havana is filled with one once-beautiful building after another. Baroque, Neoclassicism, Art Deco, Art Nouveau, and Modern Eclecticism are all on view, both in the old city center and stretching well into the residential areas. To think of the wealth that passed through Havana and Cuba over the centuries is astounding. The old city itself was designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1982, and today, many of the formerly glorious buildings are returning to splendor once more.

It was the 1959 Cuban Revolution that saved many of these



Above, examples of Cuba's architecture.

great buildings in Havana. This was not because of an influx of Soviet money to preserve buildings. Rather, it was quite the opposite. A lack of construction funds and supplies kept many of these edifices standing, albeit in various stages of disrepair. These buildings remain for Havanans and the world to appreciate because erecting new ones was not an option.

I am not advocating Socialism, trade embargoes, or neglect as means of preservation, but too often, we as a community rush to replace rather than rehabilitate and repurpose. In a city where repair-as-best-one-can was the only choice for the first decades under Fidel Castro's regime, one man found a way to work within the system to preserve Havana's architectural patrimony. Eusebio Leal, official historian of the city of Havana, began his quest to save Havana when he laid down in front of a steam roller about to cover a recently unearthed block of wooden street pavers. Fifty years later, Leal is a superstar, revered for his

commitment to preserving his beloved city.

A major component of Leal's vision to preserve Havana is a wide-reaching master plan, bringing together all parties involved so efforts are coordinated and efficient. Saving buildings in Havana's old town isn't just about architecture. It's about improving the lives of those who live in the buildings; it's about improving the community. You can read more about Eusebio Leal at smithsonianmag.com/travel/man-who-saved-havana.

Not long after my return from Havana, parts of our town and county were underwater when Wildcat Creek flooded. In my neighborhood, basements were hardly wet, and thanks to an attentive landlord, there were no leaks at my place of business. But just because I weathered the storm, doesn't mean I am unconcerned with what happened to others. Like you, I care about my whole community. Just these last few years we have had some amazing groups form to save the special places in Manhattan and Riley County. The efforts to preserve Peace Memorial Auditorium and Johnny Kaw come to mind. The M/RCPA assists with projects like these through grants and advocacy. Thank you for helping to preserve our heritage and better this place we call home. Eusebio Leal would be proud.

Alyn Pennington West

Manhattan at the End of World War I

On June 28, 1914, Archduke Ferdinand of Austria was assassinated, which is considered one of the events that led to the start of World War I. There were already tensions in Europe between the four European imperial dynasties (Germany, Russia, Ottoman, and Austria-Hungary). The assassination was the triggering event that led to shots being fired a month later when Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia.

Pres. Woodrow Wilson attempted to keep the U. S. neutral and out of the war. In 1915, the British nonmilitary ship, the *Lusitania*, was torpedoed by a German U-boat and sunk, which outraged many Americans. In 1917, Germany declared warfare on all commercial vessels on the high seas, and a handful of American ships were sunk. Pres. Wilson asked Congress to declare war on Germany to protect American interests, and the U. S. entered the war in April 1917. Over 4 million Americans served in the Great War, and approximately 117,000 were killed.

At the start of November 1918, Manhattan residents were being encouraged to donate to war efforts to help win the war. Seven organizations joined forces to raise funds, and the amount Riley County was expected to raise was \$37,500. The campaign was scheduled to kick off on Nov. 11, and meetings were planned for every town in the county to drum

up funds (“Are”). Teenage boys and girls were encouraged to work to earn \$1-5 to donate to the war (“Boys”).

At the same time that patriotism was high and everyone was doing their part to help the war effort, the influenza pandemic had come to Manhattan. At Camp Funston at Ft. Riley, the infection was spreading at a rate of 300 new cases per day, and a strict quarantine was established with no visitors admitted and no furloughs granted (“Strict”). The Students’ Army Training Corps (SATC) on the Kansas State Agricultural College (KSAC) campus had 72 cases of flu, and the men were quarantined and not allowed to leave campus (“72”). Manhattan averaged approximately eight new cases a day at the beginning of October, but by the end of the month, 20 new cases were reported a day (“Influenza”). At the height of the epidemic, six fraternity houses and Manhattan’s YMCA were converted to hospitals to care for the sick (*Royal Purple*).

To help stop the spread of the disease, the governor ordered that all schools, churches, theaters, and other public gathering places be closed for one week (“No”). KSAC was closed from Oct. 12 to Nov. 10, and then was closed again for the month of December (*Royal Purple*). Local public schools were also closed for the month of December, and many parents had already been keeping their children home rather than risk exposure at school (“Schools”). In the Manhattan area,

30 people died during the month of October, compared to five deaths for all causes in September (“Thirty”), and nationwide, more people died of the flu daily than were killed in the war (“Influenza worse”).

Against the backdrop of influenza and working in support of the war effort, negotiations for peace were taking place. Turkey had already surrendered, and Austria-Hungary surrendered on Nov. 4, 1918, leaving Germany with no allies. The U. S. and allied governments met in Paris to develop the terms of Germany’s surrender, but it was uncertain whether Germany would agree to the terms. A demonstration was held in Berlin in support of continuing to fight, and a German resolution was passed against accepting the peace terms, which were viewed as humiliating (“Allied”). Manhattan’s local newspapers reported on Nov. 9, 1918, that fighting continued, and the War Department didn’t halt the draft.

When word reached Manhattan at three o’clock in the morning on Nov. 11, 1918, that the armistice had been signed, the news wasn’t completely unexpected due to the ongoing peace negotiations, but it was still somewhat of a surprise. The Chamber of Commerce immediately started working to get (*continued on pg. 3*)

Below, the headline from the Nov. 11, 1918, edition of *The Manhattan Mercury* from www.newspapers.com.

**ARMISTICE SIGNED
WAR IS NOW OVER!**

(continued from pg. 2)

the word out. The Chamber put out bulletins announcing the war had ended, and soon a crowd had gathered at the Chamber's offices. People blew whistles, churches rang their bells, the city's firewagon raced up and down Poyntz with its siren blaring, citizens began driving the main streets and honking their horns, and all morning long, citizens set off firecrackers ("How").

A parade for later in the afternoon was hastily planned, and Manhattan's mayor issued a proclamation that all businesses and schools would be closed for the afternoon, and KSAC was closed as well. The newly completed Eugene Field Elementary had its first day with students the morning of Nov. 11, which was shortened to a half day due to the mayor's proclamation ("Eugene"). Employees of the telephone office called every local farmer to make them aware of the celebration planned in honor of the armistice ("All").

The parade organized at the Riley County Courthouse and was described as a "monster," with every business in town having an entry. Leading the parade was the SATC band, which was followed by three hearses, bearing effigies of the German Kaiser, the Crown Prince, and a German military leader. Other parade entries also

included effigies of the Kaiser, hanging in some manner or being dragged through the street. Children walked the parade route while other citizens drove trucks and automobiles, as everyone who could walk and everything that could run was in the parade ("All").

The parade headed down Poyntz Avenue and ended in City Park. At the park, a mock grave was dug, and local Boy Scouts buried one of the Kaiser effigies in the grave. Employees of the Spot Cash store had dressed in patriotic red, white, and blue and danced on the Kaiser's grave. The men of the SATC provided a military review, the national anthem was played, and the gathered crowd was moved to tears. After the festivities were over and people drifted back to their homes, residents continued to celebrate by firing shots into the air, which continued into the night ("All").

In the days that followed, Riley County men who had been called to Ft. Riley for training were sent home ("Riley"). Citizens were asked to continue to donate funds, but the focus shifted from supporting the war to supporting troops while they worked to rebuild Europe ("Not"). And, Nov. 11, 1918, "the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month of the stupendously historic year of 1918" was described as the "greatest day of all" because the war was finally over ("Recall").

"72 cases of 'flu' are reported in S.A.T.C." The Manhattan Mercury. 7 October 1918: 1.

"All celebrated." The Manhattan Daily Nationalist. 12 November 1918: 1.

"Allied terms will reach Germany Wed." The Manhattan Mercury. 5 November 1918: 1.

"Are preparing." The Manhattan Daily Nationalist. 7 November 1918: 4.

"Boys and girls must boost united war work campaign." The Manhattan Mercury. 9 November 1918: 4.

"Eugene Field school ready." The Manhattan Daily Nationalist. 9 November 1918: 1.

"How the town acted." The Manhattan Daily Nationalist. 11 November 1918: 1.

"Influenza situation worse." The Manhattan Daily Nationalist. 30 October 1918: 1.

"Influenza worse than Hun bullets." The Manhattan Mercury. 25 October 1918: 5.

"No more public meetings by order Governor Capper." The Manhattan Mercury. 10 October 1918: 1.

"Not responding." The Manhattan Daily Nationalist. 14 November 1918: 1.

"Parade today." The Manhattan Daily Nationalist. 11 November 1918: 1.

"Recall big days." The Manhattan Daily Nationalist. 16 November 1918: 1.

"Riley boys sent home." The Manhattan Daily Nationalist. 13 November 1918: 1.

The Royal Purple. Ed. Vera Olmstead. Manhattan, KS: Kansas State Agricultural College, 1919. Web. 19 September 1918.

"Schools to close." The Manhattan Daily Nationalist. 5 December 1918: 1.

"Strict quarantine is placed on Funston." The Manhattan Mercury. 1 October 1918: 1.

"Thirty deaths for October." The Manhattan Daily Nationalist. 1 November 1918: 1.

M/RCPA's Budget

The M/RCPA held its annual meeting and started a new membership year on Sept. 13th. The M/RCPA's only funding source is dues, and what follows is a partial list of expenses supported by membership dues during the past year.

Fall social event

Spring and summer tours of historic homes
Reimbursed members for preservation conference fees
Professional memberships (KPA, Aha! Manhattan, Kansas Museums Association)
M/RCPA grant funds supported the Peace Memorial Auditorium

renovation project
Support of preservation advocacy in Topeka
Supported operations of the Wolf House Museum
Website service, post office box rental, letterhead and newsletter printing, postage
Annual filing with Sec. of State

Pioneer Log Cabin Added to State Register

The Pioneer Log Cabin, located in City Park, was added to the Register of Historic Kansas Places in August, and the nomination was forwarded for consideration for the National Register of Historic Places. Completed in 1916, the cabin was built by the Riley County Historical Society (RCHS) and served as Riley County's first historical museum.

The Riley County Historical Society (RCHS) organized in 1914 and began collecting artifacts associated with the settlement of Riley County. A place to store and display the artifacts was needed, and the members decided to construct an "old settler's log cabin" to serve as a museum ("To erect"). The City Commission granted permission to build the cabin in City Park.

It was estimated that about 70 logs would be needed to construct the cabin, and local citizens pledged to provide the logs from trees grown in the county. The RCHS desired to find cornerstones for the cabin of local historical significance. A stone was salvaged from a pier of the Juniata Bridge, which had crossed the Big Blue River and was part of the trail connecting Ft. Riley and Ft. Leavenworth, and it was used as the southeast cornerstone of the cabin ("Logs"). The northeast cornerstone came from the original Bluemont College campus.

Manhattan was founded in 1855, and the goal was to lay the cabin's cornerstones as part of the celebration of Manhattan's 60th anniversary in 1915. On Oct. 15, 1915, a parade in honor of the 60th anniversary was held and ended in City Park, and then a tableau was presented in the park, which depicted the history of the county. Following the parade and tableau, the ceremony for laying the cabin's cornerstones was held, marking the beginning of the construction ("Lay").

Some work on the cabin took place after the placement of the cornerstones, resulting in approximately two feet of walls being set in place, but the remaining work was put on hold for the winter. Work resumed in the early spring of 1916, with "old settlers" working to hew the logs ("Work"). The cabin was to be "built of logs without the aid of a nail, a bolt, steel, iron or other contrivance" ("Log"), and the RCHS planned to do it like an old-fashioned house-raising.

According to 1916 newspaper accounts, the RCHS struggled to find anyone with the skills and experience to do the work, as might be expected 60 years after Manhattan's founding and long after log cabins were common. To construct the cabin, four people were needed to "carry up the corners." As the walls grew higher, the logs would be rolled up inclines to the "carry up" persons, who would then notch the corners so the logs would fit snugly. The "carry up" persons' job was the most difficult and required the most skill to ensure a tight fit for the logs and ensure that the corners would be perpendicular. Eventually, experienced "carry up" persons were found, whom the newspaper described as "gray-haired," reflecting that log cabin construction was a fading skill. Another 20-25 older settlers with some experience in cabin construction helped to build the cabin over the course of several weeks in the spring of 1916 ("Is fast").

The cabin was completed in time for July 4th celebrations, and the various artifacts collected by the RCHS were on display and provided residents with the first peak of the museum ("Fourth"). The cabin was formally dedicated on Oct. 5, 1916, as a "memorial to the pioneers who settled the county and laid the foundations for the city of



Top, the pioneer log cabin in City Park. Bottom, a close-up of the cabin's log construction, showing the hand-hewn ax marks.

Manhattan" ("Dedicate").

The pioneer log cabin served as the Riley County Historical Museum until 1957 when the museum moved to a larger space in the basement of Peace Memorial Auditorium, and then moved to its current location in 1976. The cabin continues to function as a museum and representation of pioneer life.

The cabin has experienced only minor changes since its construction in 1916. It was nominated for its architecture and its contribution to social history.

"Dedicate cabin." [The Manhattan Daily Nationalist](#). 5 October 1916: 1.

"To erect memorial cabin." [The Manhattan Mercury](#). 14 January 1915: 1.

"Fourth of July in the City Park." [The Manhattan Mercury](#). 30 June 1916: 1.

"Is fast fading away." [The Manhattan Daily Nationalist](#). 6 April 1916: 1.

"Lay cornerstone." [The Manhattan Daily Nationalist](#). 15 October 1915: 1.

"Log cabin which the Riley County Historical Society will build." [The Manhattan Daily Nationalist](#). 27 August 1915: 3.

"Logs are given." [The Manhattan Daily Nationalist](#). 23 September 1915: 1.

"Work is resumed on the log cabin in City Park." [The Manhattan Mercury](#). 16 February 1916: 1.

2018-19 Officers & Board of Directors

Officers and members of the Board of Directors were elected during the Annual Meeting of the membership on Sept. 13th.

President: Alyn Pennington West

Vice President: Catherine Roy-Tremblay

Treasurer: Barbara Poresky
Secretary: Linda Glasgow

Terms ending in 2019:

Marina Pecar-Krstic
Barbara Poresky
Sharlin Sargent

Terms ending in 2020:

Sara Fisher
Linda Glasgow
John Neill

Terms ending in 2021:

Kathy Dzewaltowski
Gary Ellis
Katharine Hensler
Allana Parker
Alyn Pennington West
Catherine Roy-Tremblay

The Board of Directors meets the second Thursday of the month at 7:00 p.m. The location varies between the Union Pacific Depot and the Strecker Nelson West Gallery, located at 406 ½ Poyntz Avenue. The schedule of meeting locations can be found on the M/RCPA's website: www.preservemanhattan.org. The October, November, and December meetings will all be at the gallery. Members are welcome to attend board meetings.

Annual Meeting

On Sept. 13th, the M/RCPA held its annual meeting of the membership and kicked off a new membership year.

Jed Dunham presented a program entitled, "Peace at the End of the World: The 1918 Influenza Pandemic and the Offensive that Ended the First World War."

Mr. Dunham's interest in World War I began when he started to research the 48 Kansas State men who died during the war and who are honored by Memorial Stadium.

Mr. Dunham provided information about the Battle of Saint-Mihiel, which began on Sept. 12, 1918, and was one of the last great offensives of the war. According to Mr. Dunham, a tremendous amount of deaths occurred between Sept. 12 and Nov. 11, 1918. He also shared the stories of a few of the 48 Kansas State men. Of the 48 who lost their lives, 25 of them had died in the weeks between Sept. 12 and Nov. 11, 1918, from either combat

wounds or disease.

At the same time that major battles were taking place, the influenza pandemic was occurring, and more people died of

influenza over a period of 12 weeks than had died in the four years of the war. Four out of every 100 people died of influenza. If the dramatic death rate had continued, it was predicted that the end of humankind would occur in seven weeks. The war and the pandemic made it seem like it was the end of the world.

The M/RCPA would like to thank Mr. Dunham for providing the program and sharing his wealth of knowledge.



Above, Jed Dunham provided the program for the M/RCPA's annual meeting.

Peace Memorial Auditorium Rededication

Sunday, Oct. 7, 2:30 – 4:00 p.m., 1101 Poyntz Ave.

The program will include a rededication of the "living" memorial auditorium and will feature music by the Thundering Cats Big Band with a special rendition of "Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy," the Flint Hills Children's Choir, and Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia. The rededication event is free and open to the public.

The M/RCPA and other citizens advocated for saving the auditorium and renovating it, and the M/RCPA served as the lead organization for the first year of the effort to preserve the auditorium. The M/RCPA's grant funds also helped finance refurbishing the permanent seating.

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

\$35 Historic Level

Dede Brokesh, Charlene Brownson, Sandra Chandler, Carole Chelz, Cheryl Collins, Kenneth & Margaret Conrow, Melvin & Randi Dale, Mike & Jan Danenberg, Wanda Fateley, David Fiser, Mary Ann Fleming, Nathan & Lindsay Hendricks, Jean Bigbee Hill, Kent Kellams, Dr. Robert Linder, Debra Mercer, Larry & Sandy Murphy, John Neill, Bill Pallet, Allana Parker, Jerry & Martha Powell, Gloria Juhl Raney, Linda Rice, Lauren W. Ritterbush, Tom & Karen Roberts, Catherine Roy-Tremblay, Sharlin Sargent, Jonathan Stark-Sachs, Clarence Swallow, Ken & Nina Warren, Ron & Dixie West, Edna L. Williams, Judith Willingham

\$100 Preservation Level

Phil & Dawn Anderson, Mimi Balderson, Mel & Jan Borst, Brent Bowman, Nancy Danner, Michelle Elkins, Gary & Paula Ellis, Calvin & Genie Emig, Debbie Nuss & Brad Fenwick, Beverly Fink, Troy & Sara Fisher, Joe & Janette Gelroth, Larry & Linda Glasgow, Nancy Holmes, Phillip & Camille Korenek, Ann R. Kosch, Karen McCulloh, Dori Milldyke, Linda L. Morse, Karin Westman & Phil Nel, Marina Pecar-Krstic, Barbara Peck, Mary Pollack, John & Mary Beth Reese, Richard & Kimberly Smith, Mary Stamey, George & Julie Strecker, Joan C. Strickler, Barbara Withee, Nancy B. Williams

\$125 Corporate Preservation

Bria Taddiken-Williams/Coldwell Banker Real Estate Advisors, Bruce McMillan AIA Architects PA, GJL Real Estate/Gwyn & Gina Riffel, Rick & Judy Glowiak, Griffith Lumber Co. Inc., Master Landscape, Riffel Property/Gwyn & Gina Riffel, Strecker Nelson West Gallery/Kevin West & Alyn Pennington West

\$250 Landmark Level

David & Kathy Dzewaltowski, Mark & Ann Knackendoffel, Dr. Patricia J. O'Brien, Barbara Poresky, Steve & Debbie Saroff

Honorary Lifetime Members

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