



# MANHATTAN/RILEY COUNTY PRESERVATION ALLIANCE NEWSLETTER

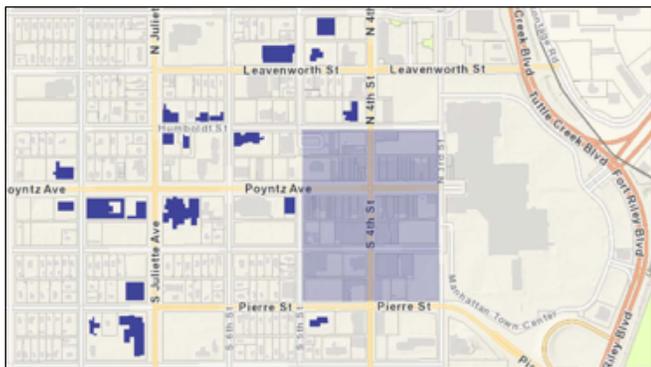
October 2022, Vol. 28, Issue V

## Manhattan Modernism: Postwar Development Downtown

*Written by Christopher Fein and Michael Grogan*

For the third in our 2022 article series focused on postwar modern architecture in Manhattan, we identify a collection of buildings, arrayed in groups around the city's Downtown Historic District that represent the modernist movement. While not attributable to coordinated "urban renewal" efforts (a common and often reviled planning device emerging in many urban districts from the late 1950s into the 1970s), these groupings of modernist structures do represent transformations in the downtown fabric after 1945. Additionally, many may be considered historic, exceeding the 50-year benchmark identified by national and state historic registers.

Recognizable through these examples is a transition from the infill building block type of the once vibrant pedestrian-oriented and, until 1928, streetcar-fed downtown, to an architecture addressing or countering the emerging suburban expansion after the Second World War. Manhattan's postwar growth, especially noticeable west of the Kansas State University campus, was fueled by increasing reliance on the automobile. Additionally, the disastrous flood of 1951 inevitably altered patterns of building within the central core. Some older structures were demolished or even relocated, many storefronts and façades downtown were "modernized," and newer construction evidenced changes in the relationship of buildings to parcels and the street, typically resulting in building patterns of less density, sited in response to a growing need for parking.



The Downtown Manhattan Historic District, the zone shown between Third and Fifth Streets, is bounded by various postwar modernist works highlighted in purple. Map overlay by Natalie Hummell. Base map from the Riley County Community GIS website.

Manhattan's Downtown Historic District, designated as such in 2007 ("Downtown"), encompasses a variety of late 19th and early 20th century commercial and residential buildings. Necessarily selective in scope, the district covers around 26 acres and is centered on a stretch of Poyntz Avenue between Third and Fifth Streets. With 68 contributing buildings, the boundaries are well-established in relation to the timeframe of the 1870s through the 1930s. Modernist work after the Second World War is limited mostly to updated façades, such as the interesting Reed & Elliott Jewelers building by Floyd O. Wolfenbarger, and a handful of larger works such as the ca. 1962 addition to the First Christian Church, which fronts Courthouse Square, and the Charlson and Wilson offices, which is a low infill building erected in two phases at 113 North Fourth Street and recently renovated by Architect One with sensitively proportioned new glazing installed into the once austere but hermetic façade.



The Commerce and Landmark Banks, as seen from their south parking lots, form a centerpiece to a collection of postwar buildings spanning the parcels between Sixth and Ninth Streets along Poyntz Ave.

Immediately to the south, west, and north of this designated historic district lay blocks that are more or less shaped by their postwar modernist building stock, potentially in such concentrations that new districts or expansions to the currently defined district may be suggested, if not necessarily an easy proposal to implement. The conception of a newly-designated district, predicated on postwar works, may especially be viable in the stretch of Poyntz Avenue between Sixth and Ninth Streets. This conspicuous group of postwar buildings east of downtown is bookended by the Manhattan Public Library and a group of office and bank buildings designed over the course of 15 years by the prolific architect Wolfenbarger and his associates ("Manhattan's Significant").

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Above, the Manhattan Public Library's original wing, designed by the Eidson office and opened in 1971, forms an eastern edge to a group of postwar buildings that may be considered worthy of a historic district designation, based on the density and high quality of the buildings. Photo by Bob Greenspan.

Right, the 1970 Commerce (formerly Union National) Bank by Wolfenbarger and McCulley looms above its neighbors with a dynamic canopy structure grounding it formally along Poyntz Ave. Photo by Bob Greenspan.



West of the library, a group of four Wolfenbarger-designed bank and insurance buildings comprise what perhaps should be considered the most important and intact group of postwar resources in the city. Spanning from the mid-1950s into the 1970s, the collection includes the current L-shaped Landmark Bank (701 Poyntz Avenue, originally the First National Bank, completed by 1967); the neighboring six-story Commerce Bank (formerly Union National Bank and Trust which opened in 1970 to a design by Wolfenbarger and McCulley); the current offices of Arthur Green, LLC (completed in 1957 for the Manhattan Mutual Life Insurance Company); and finally the 1974 Manhattan Federal Savings and Loan (currently the Trust Company of Manhattan) sited north of Poyntz Avenue.



The Arthur Green, LLC Offices (formerly Manhattan Mutual Life Insurance Company) by Wolfenbarger, 1957, is a jewel that nonetheless anchors the street corner. Photo by Bob Greenspan.



Left, the 1967 Landmark Bank at the corner of Poyntz and south Juliette Avenues extends the second-floor offices over the teller drive-through. Photo by Bob Greenspan.



Above, the 1974 Manhattan Federal Savings and Loan, now housing the Trust Company of Manhattan, offers a modernist take on the temple form.

These represent four variations on later postwar modernist styles and building forms, from the delicate, small pavilion form of the Arthur Green offices, to an inventive take on the office tower evidenced by the Commerce Bank structure, with its expanding canopy structure defining the street. These buildings evidence changing trends through these decades as well as the evolution of Wolfenbarger's practice. The current Trust Company of Manhattan building, the last of the group, offers a modernist version of the classical temple form, rendered here in precast concrete panels and topped by an emphatic, overhanging roof. Select zones of glazing and three extensions accommodating entry, automobile drive-through teller area, and sunken courtyard transform the temple type to serve postwar banking needs.

If one considers a wider east-west stretch, the blocks from Fifth to 11th Streets also include the 1966 Chamber of Commerce building (originally the Kansas Power and Light Manhattan office) at the southwest corner of Fifth Street and Poyntz Avenue. To the east, potential contributing buildings might include the soaring First Lutheran Church, completed in 1963 to a design by the Eidson firm, and the 1966 Conoco Service Station, soon to be reused for a café, which should further activate the southeast area of City Park. If a historic district designation or expansion is to be contemplated, the tightly grouped bank and office buildings would represent a logical scope, but the other mentioned buildings and many more spread beyond 11th Street to the west represent a more comprehensive array of postwar additions to the city during these decades of growth and transformation.

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Three 1950s Catholic Diocese additions to the Manhattan neighborhood south of Poyntz Ave. include two schools and the modestly-scaled Seven Dolores Parish Center. Both photos by Bob Greenspan.

In addition to the expansion of new construction along Poyntz Avenue, we also have identified significant groups of modernist buildings located to the south and north of Poyntz Avenue. Least dense in its collection, the blocks between south Fourth Street and south Juliette Avenue and between Houston and Colorado Streets nonetheless contain four excellent modernist designs. Defining a two-block zone, three red brick buildings were designed by Wolfenbarger’s firm for the Catholic Diocese. These include the Monsignor Luckey High School, dedicated in 1952 (“Will Dedicate”); the low-lying grade school across Pierre Street, which was completed in phases starting in 1955 and eventually replaced the 1908 Sacred Heart Academy building at 306 North Juliette Avenue (Miller); and the modest Church Convent (now Parish Center) building was completed in 1957 just west of the school sites. The latter T-shaped structure, with entry deftly tucked into a recessed court off Pierre Street, defers to its smaller-scaled residential neighbors through the setting back of the two-story portion with only the low gabled roof chapel portion engaging the corner.



The William and Patricia Eidson-designed Carlson Plaza housing, completed in the early 1970s, is now being considered for demolition and replacement. Photo by Bob Greenspan.



Three blocks east of this campus, the Carlson Plaza apartment building, completed by 1975, represents the sole contribution of noted local architects Patricia and William Eidson in this zone just south of downtown. The five-story building is composed of a concrete structure

with expressive projected light shelves, ribbed concrete block and glazing infill, and emphatic brick end walls, no doubt in reference to this context which transitions between many brick commercial buildings and residential dwellings. Though maintaining a quiet presence in this neighborhood, the design plays up a sophisticated contrast between mass and void, likely inspired by the work of noted U. S. architect Louis Kahn, who passed away about the time of the building’s completion. Importantly, recent plans by the Manhattan Housing Authority are favoring an option to raze and rebuild on the site (Manhattan Housing).

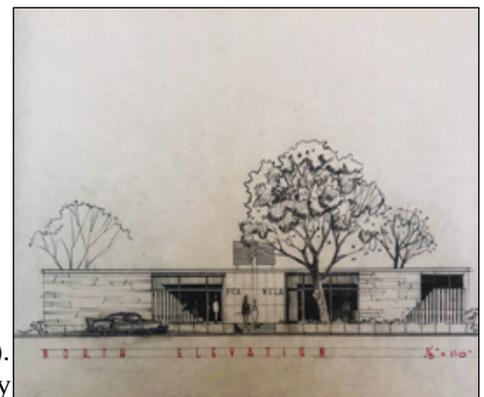
If the south zone of downtown remains primarily defined by buildings from a variety of prewar styles and building types, the stretch of Humboldt Street running between north Fourth Street and Juliette Avenue—and especially the westernmost block—is almost exclusively identifiable by its collection of postwar buildings. This strip just north of Poyntz contains nine buildings of variable design quality and integrity but, as a group, may be viewed as fairly cohesive in evidencing the changes in commercial architecture and development patterns after 1945.



Originally housing offices for PCA and NFLA, this elegant Wolfenbarger design is sited at the northwest corner of Humboldt and Sixth Streets. Top, photo by Bob Greenspan. Bottom, the drawing is from the Manuscripts’ Collection, courtesy of the Kansas Historical Society. Copy and reuse restrictions apply.

Buildings of higher architectural

merit here include the former Production Credit Association (PCA) and National Farm Loan Associates (NFLA) office building (currently housing Edward Jones and Ryan and Sons Realty offices).



An elegant one-story structure, designed by the omnipresent Wolfenbarger and Associates and completed by 1960, the two office zones appear as solid limestone end blocks, split by a central, smooth limestone-paneled mass bounded by two glazed and recessed entrances, linked together by a projecting roof with trellis-like exposed beams that cast sharp-but-pleasing shadows throughout the day.

Three commercial buildings neighbor the PCA/NFLA (continued on p. 4)

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Left, the 1971 Intrust Bank anchors the northeast corner of Humboldt St. and Juliette Ave.

building to the west, each completed after 1970 with one evidencing design trends typical for Postmodern architecture. The Intrust Bank (formerly Home Savings and Loan Association) at the corner of Juliette Avenue is the more sophisticated of those designs. The low, 1971 bank reads as a randomly-coursed limestone mass, selectively punched with entrances and glazing, and topped all around by a smooth limestone lintel and slightly projecting metal mansard roof edge.



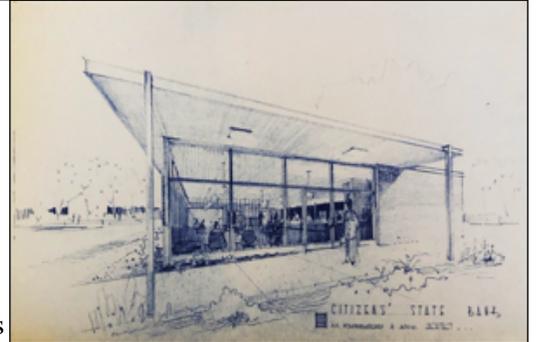
Top, the ca. 1960 Alan Lee Center and below, the mid-1950s First Methodist Church Education Building occupy the south side of Humboldt St. between Sixth St. and Juliette Ave. Both photos by Bob Greenspan.

Across Humboldt Street, one finds the Alan Lee Center (formerly the Kansas State Employment Services, completed around 1960) which offers a dynamic composition of brick, limestone, metal paneling, and glass to the context that is unfortunately otherwise defined by parking lots and driveways. East of this, two Wolfenbarger-designed buildings are of interest. The three-story concrete, steel, and glass First Methodist Church Education Building, dating from the mid-1950s, is a handsome addition to the church complex that maintains much of its original exterior integrity. Across north Sixth Street, however, one may discover only some remaining traces of a small one-story Citizens' State Bank building, designed by the architect in an elegant, minimalist brick and glass style, but now subsumed into a much larger bank structure, clad in a beige stucco system, currently owned by UMB Bank.



Top, the original 1942 Wolfenbarger design for this office building was renovated in the 1970s by Doug DeMonbrun. Bottom, a drawing of the building, courtesy of the Kansas Historical Society. Copy and reuse restrictions apply.

Rising above this grouping a block to the north, the tower at the corner of north Fifth and Leavenworth Streets



represents the other federal housing project completed in the early 1970s to a design by the Eidson husband and wife duo. A slightly pinwheeling form composed of concrete, concrete block, and limestone, the tower was recently renovated by the Manhattan Housing Authority (hopefully, presaging a similar effort for Carlson Plaza). This neighbors the minimalist, Wolfenbarger-designed *Manhattan Mercury* building from 1970 and elegant modernist U. S. Post Office building across north Sixth Street, which dates from 1962. These three buildings complete an interesting aggregation of postwar structures that mark downtown's transition to a zone of mostly residential buildings extending northward.



Top the Manhattan Mercury building with the Eidsons-designed residential tower. Below, the 1962 U. S. Post Office. The three buildings provide transition between downtown and the residential area to the north. Both photos by Bob Greenspan.



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Whereas each of these zones may not qualify as potential historic districts or as an expansion of the existing Downtown Historic District—though arguably the collection along Poyntz Avenue to the west should be considered—these groupings are important in reflecting changes in architectural and urban patterns in Manhattan after the Second World War and 1951 flood. If the best architecture of any time and place reflects and represents the era within which it was conceived, then at least the best of these works are the manifestations of an era often perceived as a high point in U. S. history—an age of general optimism with a conspicuous quest for innovation—and thus should be valued for this historical link, as well as for the architectural merit many possess. As a vehicle with which to understand downtown Manhattan’s growth and transformation after the war, this collection overall might be understood as offering a reasonably cohesive context bounding the mostly older built fabric of the selective historic district. At any rate, these modernist works, many of which should be valued for their innovative and considerate architectural designs, offer an engaging dialogue with both the prewar buildings and more recent additions to the district.

*All unattributed photographs are courtesy of the authors.*

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*Michael Grogan is an assistant professor of architecture at KSU. His current research focuses on post-World War II modernist architecture through the lens of preservation and building adaptation issues and histories. Grogan is a cofounder—and both authors are members—of Plains Modern, a new Kansas-focused modern architecture preservation advocacy and educational organization.*

- “Downtown Manhattan Historic District.” National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (approved August 24, 2007). Web. Accessed August 28, 2007.
- Fein, Christopher and Michael Grogan. Manhattan/Riley County Preservation Alliance Newsletter. June 2022. Vol 28: 3. 1-6. Please see reference for more about the library as well as the description about Brutalism (“Banham, Reyner”) in the notes on page 6.
- “Manhattan’s Significant Post-War Architect.” Manhattan/Riley County Preservation Alliance Newsletter. February 2018, vol. 24: 1. 1-3.
- “New Convent to Open to the Public.” The Manhattan Mercury. 9 August 1957.
- “Will Dedicate Luckey High School Tonight.” The Manhattan Mercury. 6 February 1952.
- Miller, Carole. “Schools Earliest of Aims.” The Manhattan Mercury. 27 April 1955.
- For the current proposal, please see the Manhattan Housing Authority. “MHA 2025: Downtown Affordable Office Campus.” Accessed 9 September 2022. <https://www.mhaks.com/206/MHA-2025>. Michael Grogan and others from the new preservation advocacy organization Plains Modern met with MHA Executive Director Aaron Estabrook and Facilities Supervisor Geoff Mamer on August 8, 2022, for a building tour and discussion. Though many issues have plagued the structure, the MHA states they’re open to potential alternative solutions to that currently proposed. The authors urge anyone interested in this work of architecture to voice their thoughts, concerns, and ideas through the webpage linked above.
- “Formal Opening For new Office Building.” The Manhattan Republic. 16 April 1942.

## Coming Soon: Parkside Station

*Written by Kathy Dzewaltowski*

In decades past, U. S. Highway 40 traveled down Poyntz Avenue, and many service stations once dotted the length of the roadway. As the years went by, a southern bypass was constructed, directing highway traffic away from Poyntz, and many of the service stations along Poyntz slowly disappeared until only a few remained.

One of the surviving service stations is the former Conoco station on the northeast corner of 11th Street and Poyntz Avenue. Originally, Conoco erected a filling station on the site in 1925, which was replaced in 1967 by the current Mid-Century Modern building (Spencer). Al-

though the former Conoco station ceased to sell gas several years ago, it continued to function as a service station until recently when its ownership changed hands. The new owner has exciting plans for the iconic station, and soon the building will embark on a new chapter.

Currently, the former Conoco station is owned by Phyllis Pease, who along with her daughter Hannah, operates the Little Batch Company next door at 1018 Poyntz Avenue. The plan for the building is to transform it into a full-service restaurant, bar, and bakery, with the Little Batch Company’s producing many of the menu items. The new restaurant will be known as “Parkside Station,” which was the name of the 1925

Conoco station and is a nod to the site’s heritage.

The Peases, who are long-time Manhattan residents, will bring their considerable combined knowledge of the restaurant industry to Parkside Station. A graduate of Manhattan High School, Hannah Pease went on to study hospitality management at Kansas State University (KSU) and then graduated from The French Pastry School in Chicago. For several years, she worked in some of the top restaurants and hotels in Charleston, SC, before returning to Manhattan in 2018. In total, she has worked in the restaurant industry for 15 years.

Phyllis Pease graduated from  
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KSU with degrees in fine arts and design and is well-known for her commissioned art pieces in local restaurants and bars, as well as public art projects, such as the recently completed mural project at Sunset Zoo (see the M/RCPA's Aug. 2022 newsletter). For a few years, Phyllis was one of the owners of The Palace, which was an Aggieville lifestyle store with an in-house café.

Together, Hannah and Phyllis started the Little Batch Company in Phyllis' kitchen, which launched in 2018, selling a variety of baked goods through online sales and at the Farmer's Market. As the fledgling business grew and developed a loyal following, it outgrew Phyllis' kitchen, and the Peases started looking for a property that would serve as the permanent storefront for the bakery. The opportunity to purchase the former Conoco station and the adjacent office building came along in 2019, and the pair of buildings were exactly what the Peases were looking for. Phyllis says, "The property owners were former Manhattanites that liked our concept. We felt the structures could be renovated and would be a perfect place for a neighborhood restaurant and bakery."

The first phase of moving from primarily online sales to a brick-and-mortar operation was to renovate the former office building to be the new home of the Little Batch Company. This phase has been completed, and the bakery has been operating from the building since January 2021. The second phase involves renovating the Conoco station, and one of the first steps towards completing this phase was to nominate the building to the state and national registers. The former filling station was nominated under the Roadside Kansas Multiple Property Document Form for its contributions to commerce and architecture, and it was added to both the state and national registers in 2021. Registry listing makes a renovation project eligible for state and federal rehabilitation

tax credits, which help with renovation expenses.

While extensive renovations are planned for the former Conoco station to become a restaurant, three of its most distinctive original features will remain: the rectangular canopies on the south and west sides of the building, the arc pole lights located on the southeast and northwest corners of the property, and the three overhead service doors. The canopies, which originally sheltered the gas pumps, will provide cover for outdoor seating. The arc pole lights, which once provided ample lighting for the fueling area, will be adapted for LED use with the ability to be programmed to display a wide range of colors. The appearance of the three glass-paneled overhead service doors will remain, with a slight alteration to their function. Two of the doors' openings will become fixed windows, and the third will stay an operable door, capable of being opened during nice weather to create an indoor-outdoor experience. The retention of these distinctive features will help to convey the building's original function as a service station.

**"We felt the structures could be renovated and would be a perfect place for a neighborhood restaurant and bakery."**

*Phyllis Pease*

A wall along the north side of the property will define a patio area for outdoor activities. The wall will double as a screen to project images, movies, sports events, etc. The surface will be covered with artificial turf and will feature games such as cornhole and Jenga and will be able to host live performances. A fire pit will be added near the corner of 11th Street and Poyntz Avenue, and drinks



Top and middle, renderings of the future Parkside Station. Both images are courtesy of BBN Architects. Bottom, the former Conoco station in 2021 prior to any renovations.

and bar snacks will be served to patrons seated in this area. A low wall featuring breeze block, a common Mid-Century Modern style element, will enclose the perimeter, providing separation between the outdoor areas and the public sidewalk.

The interior, which once was a typical gas station, will transform into a full-service restaurant. The building's south section will include a pastry display, a grab-and-go cold case, an ice cream freezer, a retail counter, and shelving that will feature the Little Batch Company's products as well as those of other local businesses. The former vehicle service area to the north will become the kitchen and the main dining (continued on p. 7)

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room. A small addition to the east will allow for the creation of modern, accessible restrooms.

Parkside Station plans to serve breakfast, lunch, dinner, and Sunday brunch, and its menu will focus on fresh foods, much of which will be provided by local farmers and ranchers. As mentioned, the Little Batch Company will provide the bread, pastries, pasta, preserves, etc., served in the restaurant. There are only a handful of restaurants in

Manhattan that prepare everything in-house, making this a somewhat unique aspect to Parkside Station.

Recently, work on the interior began, with BBN Architects providing design services and Duell Construction serving as the general contractor. Renovations are anticipated to take a few months, and the goal is to have the project completed in late spring 2023.

With Johnny Kaw for a neighbor, Phyllis says, “We love that our businesses are so close to the park,

plus they will be a great connector to both Aggieville and downtown Manhattan.”

For more information about the plans for Parkside Station, contact Phyllis and Hannah Pease at [info@littlebatchcompanynhk.com](mailto:info@littlebatchcompanynhk.com).

Spencer, Brenda and Michelle. National Register of Historic Places, Dawson’s Conoco Service Station, Manhattan, Riley County, KS.

## Mobilizing the Home Front: Recycling Scrap for Victory

Written by Kathy Dzewaltowski

In the summer of 1942, the U. S. was a few months into World War II and was ramping up the manufacture of planes, ships, tanks, trucks, etc., needed in the war effort. This increase in production meant there was an equal increase in the need for steel, but the nation was in the midst of a scrap metal shortage, which is an essential ingredient of steel production as steel is almost 50% scrap. Pres. Franklin Roosevelt established local boards across the nation to collect scrap metal with less than stellar results. The steel industry barely had a two-week supply of scrap metal, and the situation was dire if the U. S. was going to meet production goals.

Henry Doorly, owner of *The Omaha-World Herald* newspaper, was worried about the scrap metal shortage and its impact on the steel industry and expressed his concerns to his wife, Margaret. Margaret reportedly asked Henry what he was going to do about the situation, which perhaps, spurred him to develop a plan. Doorly’s idea was to capitalize on people’s patriotic spirit and competitive tendencies to turn scrap metal collection into a contest. Ten days later, *The Omaha-World Herald* announced a scrap metal contest among Nebraska’s counties to see which county could collect the most. To account for population variations,

the amounts collected would be evaluated based on the number of pounds per capita (Liewer).

In a span of three weeks, Nebraskans collected a remarkable 67,000 tons of scrap metal, which was 104 lbs. per person. The success of the Nebraska drive caught the attention of the War Production Board, which recommended a similar effort be instituted nationwide. Doorly traveled to Washington, D. C., to explain the program to government officials, who liked the idea. A national scrap metal drive would take place from Sept. 28 to Oct. 17, and states would compete against each other (Liewer).

Thus, the great scrap metal drive of 1942 came to Kansas and Riley County. Riley County selected a chairman to serve as the coordinator of salvage efforts, and the county school superintendent would lead schoolchildren in collecting scrap metal (“A war on scrap”). Nebraskans learned that involving women and children had been key as well as utilizing newspapers across the state to promote the effort, and other states followed this model.

To kick off the drive, a rally was held at the high school. A large Civil War cannon serving as a memorial in Sunset Cemetery was to be scrapped, a special dedication for the cannon would occur at the rally, and the cannon would jumpstart the drive. Many communities had been gifted with relics from the Civil War and the

Spanish-American War, and the War Department asked for these mementos to be returned to active service as scrap. Manhattan’s City Commission agreed to donate the cannon, but others in the community objected to its sacrifice. The protestors’ main reason for objecting was the amount of scrap the cannon would yield wasn’t worth losing what it stood for. City commissioners agreed to delay the cannon’s destruction, dependent upon whether the county met its goal of 200 tons. If the goal was achieved, a request would be made to the War Production Board, asking for permission to keep the cannon, and if the goal wasn’t met, then the cannon would be scrapped (“Halt”).

Other smaller cannons were donated for the scrap pile. Cannons commemorating the Civil War and the Spanish-American War adjacent to the pioneer log cabin in City Park were donated by the Riley County Historical Society, whose board noted the war calls for sacrifice (“Consider giving cannon”). In place of the cemetery’s cannon, the smaller cannons and a 5,000-pound boiler were featured in the kickoff rally as being among the first large donations (“Scrap drive”).

Kansas State College (KSC), as Kansas State University was (continued on p. 8)

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known at the time, also donated two cannons that had stood at the entrance of Nichols Gym since at least 1880 (“K-State”).

Kansas’ newspapers issued a friendly challenge to Nebraska’s newspapers to see which state would collect the most scrap, and both states’ governors accepted the challenge. The losing governor would donate a \$25 war bond to the winning governor (“State goal”).

Riley County received its own challenge from Madison County, NE, which had a similar population. The challenge was enthusiastically accepted, and all organizations, businesses, and schools were urged to get out and hunt for scrap to ensure Riley County beat Madison County (“Riley rises”). These types of challenges helped to promote community spirit.

As the drive got underway, citizens scoured their attics and basements for metal items they no longer needed. A list of suggested items for citizens to look for included wagons, bedsprings, sewing machines, irons, toasters, lamps, curtain rods, and tools, which is naming only a few possibilities. Manhattan was divided into quadrants, and Manhattan junior high students along with students from Sacred Heart Academy went house to house, collecting smaller scrap items and making note of heavier items to be picked up later by high school students (“City and county”).

Every school in Riley County was part of the effort, with donations to be piled on school grounds. High school students in Randolph pledged to collect 500 lbs. each. In Leonardville, high school freshmen were initiated by requiring boys to bring 15 lbs. of scrap metal to school and 10 lbs. for girls (“Nelson calls upon”). Students attending rural schools canvassed the surrounding countryside, taking a few hours away from their studies to walk to neighboring farms to gather scrap metal (“District school”). Garrison students collected an astonishing 4,400 lbs. per pupil. Their success was attributed to being direct with scrap owners that their scrap was needed for



Top, KSC students add a large potato peeler donated by Van Zile Hall to a scrap pile. The photo is from the 1943 *Royal Purple*. Middle, the large Civil War cannon in Sunset Cemetery was spared. Bottom, a cannon from the Spanish-American War that had been in City Park was scrapped, leaving only a plaque and the base.

bombs and bullets (“Workers bring”).

As Kansans searched for items to scrap, nothing was considered off limits. A large ornate chandelier hanging in the rotunda of the Statehouse in Topeka was added to the scrap heap. Approximately ten feet high and ten feet in diameter, the chandelier weighed nearly 800 pounds. Originally designed for gas in the days before electricity, the chandelier had been electrified but was seldom used and was viewed as

no longer needed (“Scrap Capitol chandelier”).

Today’s Kansans may look back on the fall of 1942 with sadness that the chandelier, the cannons, and other architectural and historical artifacts were melted down for the war effort, but perhaps it’s easier for today’s Kansans to question the necessity of scrapping these items from the

perspective of knowing the Allies won the war. For Kansans living in 1942, the war’s outcome was unknown, and the approaching winter looked to be a critical time for the U. S. to manufacture the necessary weapons of war. No one wanted to hang onto an old frying pan, lawnmower, tractor, or chandelier if they could be turned into a tank that would help win the war. To drive home the point that every piece of unneeded metal must be scrapped, full-page ads in local newspapers asked in large, bold print, “Whose boy will die because you failed?”

Halfway through the three-week drive, Kansas was leading the nation, having collected 65,000 tons at that point (“Kansas tops”). The state goal was 100,000 tons, and residents were urged to not slow their efforts and to keep hunting and donating. Collections in Manhattan and Riley County continued to be strong. In one Manhattan quadrant, 80,000 lbs. were collected in a single day, and 469 tons had been collected in other areas of the county at this point in the drive (“Collections soar”).

Businesses and industries were also important contributors to the scrap metal effort. Collections occurred in downtown Manhattan and Aggieville, and manufacturers scoured their warehouses for anything that could be scrapped. Larger operations also joined the effort. Across the state, the Union (continued on p. 9)

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Pacific Railroad donated nearly 2,975 tons ("U. P. collects").

In the closing hours of the intensive drive, Kansas appeared to be just short of its 100,000-ton goal, but at almost the last minute, large industrial contributions were made, pushing the state's collection total to 130,227 tons. This amounted to approximately 158 lbs. per person and meant Kansas won the national competition followed by Vermont and Washington ("Kansas collects"). Nebraska finished sixth, although Nebraskans felt they were the real winners since they had collected a total of 227 lbs. per capita during their state's two drives (Liewer).

Despite Kansas' national win, Riley County appeared to have lost to Madison County, having collected 1,096 tons, which was a respectable 109 lbs. per person ("Madison County beats out Riley"). A few days later, Riley County officials were notified by state officials of contributions by Union Pacific made near the drive's end, which included a portion attributed to Riley County ("Beat Madison!"). Union Pacific's donation added 433 tons to Riley County's total, putting Riley slightly ahead of Madison and making Riley County the winner of the challenge. In addition, any county that collected 100 lbs. per capita, which included Riley County, received a "Victory Salvage" pennant from the state office of the War Production Board.

When the drive ended, the scrap was auctioned to scrap dealers to be sorted and shipped to steel mills. The proceeds from the auction were donated to the local chapter of the Red Cross ("\$1,021 profit"). Riley County collected 152 lbs. per person, which far exceeded the county's original goal, allowing the Civil War cannon in Sunset Cemetery to stay.

*The Omaha World-Herald* was awarded the 1943 Pulitzer Prize in the category of public service for its initiative and originality in planning Nebraska's drive, which led to the successful national effort (Liewer).

Nebraska's governor admitted defeat. He attended the Kansas v. Nebraska football game in Lawrence on Oct. 31, 1942, and presented Kansas' governor with a \$25 war bond during halftime ("Governor").

The great scrap metal drive of 1942 energized the home front, created a sense of community pride and a unified purpose, and served as a model for future efforts. Nationwide, more than 5 million tons of scrap metal were collected, and one account estimated nearly 30% of the total was collected by children. The steel industry got the scrap it needed to keep mills humming and churning out steel through the winter of 1942, and most importantly, the Allies went on to win the war.

"\$1,021 profit to Red Cross." *The Manhattan Mercury*. 31 October 1942: 1.

"Beat Madison!" *The Manhattan Mercury*. 29 October 1942: 1.

"City and county pupils in drive." *The Manhattan Mercury*. 30 September 1942: 1.

"Collections soar in city." *The Manhattan Mercury*. 14 October 1942: 1.

"Consider giving cannon for war." *The Morning Chronicle*. 3 October 1942: 1.

"District school eager for scrap." *The Manhattan Republic*. 15 October 1942: 3.

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"Halt giving up cannon." *The Manhattan Mercury*. 3 October 1942: 1.

"K-State has a new anti-Nebraska battle cry." *The Manhattan Mercury*. 3 October 1942: 2.

"Kansas collects huge scrap heap." *The Manhattan Mercury*. 23 October 1942: 8.

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"Madison County beats out Riley in scrap drive." *The Morning Chronicle*. 27 October 1942: 1.

"Nelson calls upon every citizen to help scrap drive." *The Morning Chronicle*. 29 September 1942: 1, 6.

"Riley rises to Nebraska county scrap challenge." *The Manhattan Mercury*. 29 September 1942: 1.

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"Scrap Capitol chandelier." *The Manhattan Mercury*. 25 September 1942: 8.

"Scrap drive given start." *The Manhattan Mercury*. 5 October 1942: 1.

"State goal in scrap drive 65,000 tons." *Evening State Journal*. 22 September 1942: 1, 8.

"U. P. collects nearly 3,000 tons in Kansas." *The Manhattan Mercury*. 21 October 1942: 8.

"A war on scrap is declared." *The Morning Chronicle*. 15 September 1942: 1.

"Workers bring big scrap pile." *The Manhattan Mercury*. 26 October 1942: 1.

## M/RCPA's Annual Meeting

The M/RCPA's Board of Directors is currently planning to hold the Annual Meeting of the membership yet this fall. Watch for details to follow.

Would you like to be more involved with the M/RCPA? If you are interested in serving on the Board of Directors or on a committee, contact Linda Glasgow at [mrcpanewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:mrcpanewsletter@gmail.com).

## Historic Summit

The Historic Summit will be Tuesday, Nov. 15, 2022, 7:00-8:30 p.m., at the Manhattan Public Library. The Historic Summit is free and open to the public.

Presenters include Christopher Fein and Michael Grogan, who will share information about the nonresidential Mid-Century Modern survey of Manhattan buildings they conducted as part of a grant. Also, Colene Lind and Rex Fowles, who are residents of the Lee Elementary Neighborhood Historic District, will provide information about the process of establishing a local historic district.

The Historic Summit is a cooperative effort of the M/RCPA, the Riley County Historical Society and Museum, and Manhattan's Historic Resources Board.

Manhattan/Riley County  
Preservation Alliance  
Linda Glasgow, President  
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Manhattan, KS 66505

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Website:  
[www.preservemanhattan.org](http://www.preservemanhattan.org)

The Board of Directors meets the second Thursday of the month via Zoom. Members are welcome to participate in board meetings. Contact the M/RCPA if you would like to participate in a board meeting.

Newsletter editor: Kathy Dzewaltowski

M/RCPA P.O. Box 1893 MANHATTAN, KS 66505-1893
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## *2021-22 M/RCPA Membership Roster*

### **\$35 Historic Level**

Barbara G. Anderson, Steven Brewer, Dede Brokesh, Charlene Brownson, Bruce McMillan Architects, Preston & Diana Chapel, Margaret Conrow, Randi Dale, Mike & Jan Danenberg, Nancy Danner, Calvin & Genie Emig, David & Jana Fallin, Wanda Fateley, Sara Fisher, Rick & Judy Glowiak, Richard Harris, Katharine Hensler, Debra Hiatt, Jean Bigbee Hill, Phillip & Camille Korenek, Marianne Korten, Melissa Janulis, Claudia Jones, Steve Lee & Nancy Raleigh, Brad Logan & Lauren W. Ritterbush, Dawn Munger, Larry & Sandy Murphy, Philip Nel & Karin Westman, Bill Pallett, Allana Parker, Barbara Peck, Jerry & Martha Powell, Gloria Juhl Raney, Mary Beth Reese, Roger & Virginia Reitz, Linda Rice, Tom & Karen Roberts, Catherine Roy-Tremblay, Sharlin Sargent, Richard & Kimberly Smith, Brenda Spencer, Elizabeth Stevens, Alicia Stott, Ronald E. Wells, Ron & Dixie West, Nancy B. Williams, Judith Willingham

### **\$100 Preservation Level**

Phil & Dawn Anderson, Mimi Balderson, BBN Architects, Borst Restoration, Diana Caldwell, G. W. Clift, Gary & Paula Ellis, Joe & Janette Gelroth, Ann Kosch, John & Karen McCulloh, Dori Milldyke, Linda Morse, Debbie Nuss, Phyllis & Hannah Pease/Little Batch Company MHK

### **\$125 Corporate Preservation**

Colene Lind & Rex Fowles

### **\$250 Landmark Level**

David & Kathy Dzewaltowski, Larry & Linda Glasgow, Mark & Ann Knackendoffel, Barbara Poresky

### **Honorary Lifetime Members**

Mel Borst, Enell Foerster (in memory of Bernd Foerster)