



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Girl Scout Little House, Portion of Route 66 Among Listings Added to National Register of Historic Places

TOPEKA, KS—The Kansas Historical Society announced that a Girl Scout Little House and a portion of Route 66 are among the newest Kansas listings added to the National Register of Historic Places. The Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places entered eight Kansas listings into the Register on April 14. This action brings the total number of Kansas listings in the National Register to 1,394.

The National Register of Historic Places is the country's official list of historically significant properties. Authorized by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Park Service's National Register of Historic Places is part of a national program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect America's historic and archeological resources.

Eligible properties must be significant for one or more of the four criteria for evaluation. Properties can be eligible if they are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history. They can be eligible if they are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past. Distinctive construction can qualify properties for the National Register if they embody the characteristic of a type, period, or method of construction, or represent the work of a master, or possess high artistic values, or represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction. Lastly, properties may be eligible for the National Register if they have yielded or may be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history. The National Register recognizes properties of local, statewide, and national significance.

Below is a summary of the listing:

Kansas Route 66 Historic District – North Baxter Springs – SE 50th Road, Cherokee County

This segment of Route 66 north of Baxter Springs, totaling 2.1 miles, is located between the historic Brush Creek bridge on the north and Willow Creek on the south. The entire length of the historic Route 66 in Kansas totaled only 13.2 miles, entering Cherokee County near Galena and exiting south of Baxter Springs. Cherokee County opened bids for the construction of this portion of the road on March 12, 1923. This was part of a larger Federal Highway Project

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between Joplin, Missouri, and Baxter Springs. The Federal Highway Commission designated Route 66 as part of a new national highway network on November 11, 1926. This section of road remained an integral part of Kansas Route 66 until a bypass was completed in the early 1960s. As a result, the road has largely served local traffic and tourists traveling the old route. The Kansas Department of Transportation designated this road a Kansas Historic Byway in 2011. It was nominated as part of the *Historic Resources of Route 66 in Kansas* multiple property nomination in the area of transportation.

Girl Scout Little House – 448 West 6th Avenue, Ashland, Clark County

The Girl Scout Little House in Ashland was built in 1937 by laborers employed through the Works Progress Administration (WPA), with Ed Burr serving as the project supervisor. The Little House was built to serve the Ashland Girl Scout troop, which formed in about 1924 some 12 years after Juliette Gordon Low established the first American Girl Scout troop in Savannah, Georgia. It was erected in a residential neighborhood on land donated by Mr. and Mrs. W. R. Nunemacher. The local Girl Scout building committee raised funds to complete the project from individuals, businesses, churches, and community groups. The small stone building was dedicated to the community in February 1938, and it has served the Girl Scouts and the Ashland community ever since. The small building is made of locally quarried stone and exhibits the Rustic style typical of New Deal-era buildings. It was nominated as part of the *New Deal-Era Resources of Kansas* multiple property nomination for its local significance in the areas of social history, government, and architecture.

Fix Farmstead – 34554 Old K-10 Road, Volland vicinity, Wabaunsee County

The Fix Farmstead is situated in a picturesque rural setting on a terrace above the West Branch of Mill Creek, less than a mile northeast of the unincorporated hamlet of Volland. The property is accessed by a long lane that extends from the gravel road. The farmstead is comprised of an impressive Italianate-style house, a tenant house, barn and granary, storage cellar, storm cellar, and garage. The German-American Fix family migrated to Wabaunsee County in 1860. Upon his return from service during the Civil War, John R. Fix married Rebecca Larch and settled on this land in Washington Township. The majority of extant farmstead features post-date 1880, likely representing the height of prosperity on the farm. It was nominated as part of the *Historic Agriculture-Related Resources of Kansas* multiple property nomination for its local significance in the areas of early settlement, agriculture, and architecture.

St. Mary's Catholic Church – 14920 SE 232 Road, Kinsley vicinity, Hodgeman County

A group of Irish-born settlers erected St. Mary's Catholic Church in rural Hodgeman County in 1904. The parishioners had attended the German St. Joseph Catholic Church located five miles south, but in 1903 a dispute arose between the German and Irish members in regard to a proposed location for a new church building. The Irish members wished to have the new location two miles north, but an agreement could not be made. As a result, the congregation split. St. Mary's church suffered a devastating fire on January 1, 1928, leaving only the exterior walls to be salvaged. The parishioners hired builder Joseph Sebacher to rebuild the church with plans drafted by Emporia-based architects Henry W. Brinkman and Stanley Hagan. This same team

had just completed a new building for St. Joseph in nearby Offerlee. St. Mary's church closed its doors in 1997. The small church features a stone exterior, Gothic-arch windows, a red tile gable roof, and a center bell tower. It was nominated for its local significance in the area of architecture.

The Parsonian Hotel – 1725 Broadway Avenue, Parsons, Labette County

The Parsonian Hotel at 1725 Broadway Avenue sits in the heart of downtown Parsons. Constructed in 1954, the hotel was intended to provide accommodations for business travelers, to promote new commercial and industrial ventures, and to attract conventions to town. Construction of the building was financed primarily by the sale of stock to local residents who made up the ownership group. The building reflects the International architectural style, which was popular before and after World War II. The eight-story concrete-frame building has a two-story base that covers the majority of the site, and a six-story hotel room tower set back from the edges of the base. The two-story base is constructed primarily of red brick, with aluminum windows and storefront, limestone accents below the storefront, concrete window-surrounds at the second story, and horizontal projecting concrete canopies. The tower is constructed of yellow-brick, concrete, and aluminum double-hung ribbon-windows. It was nominated for its local significance in the areas of commerce and architecture.

Washington School – 300 E Myrtle Street, Independence, Montgomery County

Washington School was constructed with the assistance of the federal Public Works Administration (PWA) and officially opened January 3, 1940. The two-story building is constructed of architectural concrete and reflects the early Modern Movement in architecture, defined by its stepped rectangular massing and clean lines with contrasting forms. Entrances feature curved concrete walls and railings characteristic of the Art Moderne style. The school was designed by Thomas W. Williamson and Co., a Topeka-based firm with hundreds of public school commissions. Washington School served the community of Independence as a public grade school until 2011. It was nominated as part of the *Historic Public Schools of Kansas* and *New Deal-era Resources of Kansas* multiple property nominations for its local significance in the areas of education and architecture.

Bown-Corby School – 412 North 2nd Street, Marion, Marion County

Built in 1929, the Bown-Corby School is an excellent example of Collegiate Gothic architecture, which emerged as a popular style for schools in the period following World War I. The building has red brick walls with ashlar limestone detailing, projecting bays, buttresses, and quoined stone surrounds, all typical of the architectural style. It retains the original wood and steel windows, which is unusual for a public school building of this age. The building was designed by Wichita-based architect S. S. Voigt and served as the town's grade school for 62 years, closing in 1992. It was named in honor of Anna Bown and Jenny Corby, two long-time teachers in the Marion school district. It was nominated as part of the *Historic Public Schools of Kansas* multiple property nomination for its local significance in the areas of education and architecture.

Hermit Cave on Belfry Hill – Council Grove, Morris County

Belfry Hill is a prominent landmark in the Neosho River valley that overlooks the surrounding community of Council Grove, which began as a Santa Fe Trail-era campsite along the river. Providing scenic views of the town, Belfry Hill is a tree-lined bluff with natural stone outcroppings that functions as a local park welcoming visitors. A portion of Belfry Hill was developed in 1901 as a natural and historical park, and it was further enhanced in 1921 as part of the centennial commemoration of the opening of the Santa Fe Trail. The area within the stone outcropping has long been interpreted by local historians as the place where Italian priest Giovanni Maria de Agostini lived for five months in 1863. Still today, the town's identity and heritage tourism are rooted in these early 20th century efforts to promote the area's frontier and trail-era history. This site was not nominated for association with the community's mid-19th century history, but rather for its local significance as an early 20th century historical attraction.

Related Internet Links:

National Register of Historic Places: <http://www.nps.gov/nr/>

Nominations are available on the Kansas Historical Society website: www.kshs.org/14638