National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

1. Name of Property

Historic name  Anton Pearson House and Studio

Other names/site number  KHRI # 113-224

Name of related Multiple Property Listing  NA

2. Location

Street & number  505 S. Main

City or town  Lindsborg

State  Kansas  Code  KS  County  McPherson  Code  113  Zip code  67456

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

national  X  statewide  local  Applicable National Register Criteria:  A  X  B  C  D

Signature of certifying official/Title  Patrick Zollner, Deputy SHPO  Date

Kansas State Historical Society

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official  Date

Title  State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

_____ entered in the National Register  _____ determined eligible for the National Register

_____ determined not eligible for the National Register  _____ removed from the National Register

_____ other (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper  Date of Action
**5. Classification**

<table>
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<th>Ownership of Property</th>
<th>Category of Property</th>
<th>Number of Resources within Property</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Contributing 2 buildings</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

N/A

**6. Function or Use**

<table>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>LANDSCAPE: garden</td>
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<tr>
<td>COMMERCE/TRADE: professional</td>
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**7. Description**

<table>
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<th>Materials</th>
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<td>LATE 19TH AND EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY</td>
<td>foundation: CONCRETE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REVIVALS: Tudor Revival (Storybook)</td>
<td>walls: WOOD; STUCCO; CONCRETE; SANDSTONE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>roof: ASPHALT; CORRUGATED METAL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>other:</td>
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The Anton Pearson House and Studio is located on the south side of Lindsborg, Kansas, a small town (pop. 3300) in north-central McPherson County – situated between the cities of Salina to the north and McPherson to the south. The property is on the north end of a row of west-facing residences on the east side of South Main Street, four blocks south of the main intersection in downtown Lindsborg. To the east and south is county-owned parkland that encompasses Heritage Square, a collection of relocated buildings including the Swedish Pavilion from the 1904 World’s Fair; the McPherson County Museum and Smoky Valley Roller Mill; and a swimming pool, tennis court, picnic area, and campground. The nominated property includes three resources: a house, a studio, and a site.

The wood-framed and stucco house sits near the center of a landscaped lot approximately seventy feet east of Main Street. It is irregular in shape – with overall dimensions measuring approximately forty-five feet north to south and approximately thirty-four feet east to west. The house is frame with a stucco exterior. Excepting later additions, the house retains its historic wood doors, wood windows (3/1 and 6/1 double-hung wood sash), wood trim, stucco finish, and cross-gabled roofline. Asphalt shingles wrap the eaves, creating a false thatched roof indicative of the home’s Storybook Style.

The stone, concrete, and wood-framed studio sits on the east end of the property. Its west elevation is approximately twenty-five feet east of the house’s east wall. It measures approximately fifty-eight feet from east to west and hugs the eastern property line, which fronts an alley between the row of homes and Heritage Square. Whereas, excepting small additions noted below, the house remains little changed since its 1929 completion, the studio evolved and expanded into an increasingly irregular and eclectic building over time. According to the appraiser’s records (not always accurate), the building was constructed in 1945. Although there is little documentation related to the studio’s changes over time, it is believed that many of these changes pre-dated Anton Pearson’s death in 1967 and, therefore, contribute to the integrity of the property.

The home and studio are situated amidst a whimsically designed landscape with contributing elements including a linear sandstone wall making the property’s west boundary, a serpentine sandstone wall on the north, a pond and fountain feature south of the serpentine wall accessible via an arched opening in a low stone wall just north of the house. In the elaboration below, we have attempted to document the site to the best of our ability. Unfortunately, because the property has suffered a great deal of neglect, many of these features are overgrown and buried. NPS Bulletin 16a advises against counting landscape features “separately from the site of which they are a part unless they are particularly important or large in size and scale.” Therefore, we have classified the site as a single resource. However, we encourage further research and documentation of the objects and features found on the site.

Elaboration

Site

Although the site has not been maintained for many decades, it retains its overall form – and many features from the Period of Significance. We note that the yard was well-landscaped by the summer of 1930, the year after the house was completed because Anton Pearson received an honorable mention in Lindsborg’s best-kept yard contest. We should note here that Anton built the rock garden – but his wife Grace, who was a member of the National Orchid Society, planted and maintained the gardens. Anton Pearson’s 1967 obituary mentions that he “had formal gardens at his home.” And a 1968 article notes that tourists “saw his rock garden.” As noted above, the site includes four main contributing features: a limestone wall on the west boundary, a serpentine wall on the north, an arched opening and low stone wall north of the house, and a pond/fountain. Below are brief descriptions of these resources:

West Wall – A random uncoursed sandstone wall with cap lines the west sidewalk and stretches from the north to south end of the property. The wall is interrupted by eight extant stone piers. The first one, on the north, features an
angled concrete cap with a north/south ridgeline. The second pier, connected to the first by a wrought-iron fence, is taller than the first and has an angled concrete cap with an east/west ridgeline. The third is similar in dimensions and appearance to the first pier. The fourth pier is topped with stone that indicates it may also have had an angled cap. This pier is connected to a flat-topped fifth pier via an arched opening in the stone wall. The fifth and sixth piers are connected through another wrought-iron fence. The sixth pier has an angled cap with east/west ridgeline. The seventh pier has an angled cap with an east/west ridgeline. The wall terminates in an eighth pier with an angled cap and east/west ridgeline. Where the angled caps are extant, they bear inscriptions – some more legible than others.

One reads, “INNOCUE VIVITO, NUMEN ADEST CAROLUS LINNAEUS.” This was the motto of Swedish Botanist Carl Linnaeus (1707-1778). It means, “Live blameless; God is here.” Another inscription reads (with no punctuation) “WHAT A DESOLATE PLACE THE WORLD WOULD BE WITHOUT A FLOWER. IT WOULD BE A FACE WITHOUT A SMILE FEAST WITHOUT A WELCOME ARE NOT FLOWERS THE STARS OF EARTH AND ARE NOT STARS FLOWERS OF HEAVEN MRS. BALFOUR.” This quote likely comes from English author Clara Lucas Balfour (1808-1878).

North Wall – Stretching east to west along the north boundary of the property is another uncoursed sandstone wall. Unlike the west wall, however, this wall forms a serpentine shape. It does not feature piers like the west wall. Instead, it terminates on its west end in a vertical element that is shaped like the head of a snake. Because of the overgrown condition of this side of the property, this feature cannot be described in further detail.

Arched Opening/Low Stone Wall – An archway flanked by low stone walls provides access from the house to the gardens and pond. This rubble sandstone arch, whose opening is approximately three feet wide and nine feet tall, spans the width of a rock-lined path leading to the pond and rear garden.

Pond/Fountain – Between the house and the north wall, there is a sunken rectangular concrete pond feature with a centered fountain.

Other Features – Other features, including stone and concrete elements that resemble mushrooms, are found throughout the site. However, many of these are still being uncovered.

House - Exterior
The west elevation is divided into three principal bays. On the north is a two-story side-gabled mass that features a 3/1 single window on the first level and a centered 6/1 single window with eyebrow dormer. The center bay, which projects west from the west wall plane of the first bay, is distinctive for its steep asymmetrical gable. There is a steep sloping eave that runs from the ridgeline of the east/west gable to encompass the off-center arched entrance to the north. An arched 3/1 window is nestled in the steep gable of the center bay. Centered below is a pair of 3/1 windows. Between the two are remnants of wood brackets that historically supported a window box. The window box is extant – but is now on the ground. The third, southernmost bay features the north and west elevations of a historic one-story addition measuring fifteen by sixteen feet. There is a single fixed window on the north side and a pair of 3/1 clerestory windows under the eave of the addition’s side-gabled roof.

The north elevation of the north-projecting gable is symmetrical, with a multi-pane door flanking each side of the gable-piercing chimney on the first level and a 3/1 window flanking each side of the chimney on the second level. The east side of the north-projecting bay is interrupted only by a pair of three-pane windows. The steep sloping gable projects eastward with the sloped eave transitioning into a standing seam metal roof that protects the back door.

On the east face of the steep sloping gable, there is an arched door on the second level that opens to a balcony with a wood railing. The balcony extends off the bathroom. Centered below, on the first level, is a pair of 3/1 windows that are situated above the kitchen sink. The steeply sloped roofline continues south. Under it is the shed roof of a historic but dilapidated porch with a painted stucco base supporting an eclectic mix of glazed frames/windows. On the north side of this shed bay is a barn-type door that opens to the porch and provides access to the kitchen on the north and a south-projecting addition.

On the south end of the house, a large shallow-gabled dormer with louver and triple 3/1 window pierces the steep gable. A shed-roofed addition clad in Masonite projects from the base of the dormer. The south elevation of this addition is interrupted only with a 1/1 wood window. To the west of this addition is the south elevation of the historic one-story bedroom addition on the home’s southwest corner. The bay houses a pair of 3/1 windows – the eastern one is broken, and the one on the west is covered in plywood. Above the windows is a clipped gable roof with a louver.
House – Interior
Like the exterior, the interior of the Pearson House retains a high degree of integrity with character-defining features, including hardwood flooring, original wood door, and window trim, beaverboard, cabinets and light fixtures. Interior wood trim has an unusual cream-colored and grained antiqued finish. The interior doors are single-panel doors.

The first floor is divided into four principal spaces. The entry bay on the front elevation opens to a large living room that spans the full width of the original house. Centered on the north wall is a sandstone fireplace. The chimney above the mantel is flanked on each side with a sconce that holds two faux candles. There is a multi-pane exterior door on each side of the fireplace. The only overhead light in this large space is a historic “romantic” type chandelier. A straight-run stair rises from the east side of the room to the second floor.

On the home’s southwest corner is a 15’ x 16’ historic addition that houses a small bedroom and, in the northwest corner, a tiny water closet with toilet only. The addition pre-dates 1948, the date inscribed on the toilet. East of the water closet is a cloths and storage closet, which occupies the remainder of the north end of the addition.

A door on the south end of the east living room wall opens to the kitchen, which occupies the first floor of the original east-projecting gable. Character-defining features include wood trim, original kitchen cabinets and arch-topped china cabinet, a fold-down built-in ironing board, and farmers sink. Although extant, kitchen cabinets are in a deteriorated condition, and upper cabinets impinge on countertops. A door on the west end of the kitchen’s north wall opens to basement stairs.

Between the historic bedroom addition and the kitchen is a Masonite-sided addition that measures approximately 8’ x 18’. The construction date of this addition is unclear. Regardless, it appears to have been modified greatly over time, and no character-defining features remain on its interior or exterior. There is a master bedroom on the north end of this part of the house.

The second floor is divided up into three principal spaces. The stairs that rise from the living room open to a large library with a sandstone fireplace on the north wall flanked by windows and bookshelves. On the west end of the second floor, nestled within the steep front gable on the west and the large dormer on the south, is a bedroom. There is a full bath on the east side of the second floor – nestled in the steep back gable. Among the character-defining features in the bathroom are the following original lavender porcelain fixtures: bathtub, sink, sconce and light. Although prior owners replaced the matching lavender toilet with a white one, the original toilet remains in a storage closet on the south end of the second floor.

Studio – Exterior
Like the house, the studio evolved over time. Early on, Anton worked in the house. Then he converted a garage into a studio. Over time, the expanded building housed a painting studio, woodworking spaces, and retail area under a complex interconnected roofline. The west elevation of the studio faces the back of the house. On the north, there is a one-story bay with a north-facing 1/1 gable. This structure is constructed of smooth CMU covered in stucco. The gable is infilled with framed glazing. The west elevation of this structure is interrupted only by a small, centered clerestory window under the eave.

The front-gabled center bay is one story sandstone structure under a shallow gable with wide eaves. On its north elevation is a large picture window topped by a salvaged stained-glass window set in an eyebrow dormer. On the west elevation, the stone base and piers enframe three stained-glass windows, a pointed arch window flanked by equally sized fixed rectangular windows divided into nine sections by wood muntins. Under the south window of this center bay is a sandstone water feature – a stone-encased cast-iron bathtub designed to catch rainwater from the roof.

South of the shallow-gabled sandstone bay is a second one-story front-gabled bay designed as a retail store. A centered door is flanked by stucco walls interrupted by salvaged stained-glass windows. In the gable, the door is surrounded by glazed panels. The door is framed by turned wood posts and a decorative archway with Swedish motifs. This part of the building has a south-projecting stucco-covered CMU shed addition accessible through a centered opening on its south wall.

The roofline of the retail store collides with yet another structure whose west-facing half-timbered gable peaks out from above the retail store. Angling off this gable is a shallow sloped shed roofline that extends southward past the storage
Anton Pearson House and Studio McPherson County, Kansas
Name of Property County and State

shed addition noted above. There is a small six-pane window on the west wall of this part of the building. Except for a small window that wraps around its southeast corner, the south wall of this shed is uninterrupted stucco with exposed rafter tails in the low eaves.

The shallow roofline of the shed terminates in the south wall of a monitor roof that rises to create a steep gable that angles to the north. The monitor roof is sheathed in board and batten. There is a south-projecting centered gabled dormer with an eyebrow window.

The east elevation is divided into three main bays. The first, the east end of the south-projecting shed, has a stucco base, framed glazing where the roofline meets the taller adjacent bay, and decorative vergeboards to evoke a Swedish appearance. The center bay of the east elevation has a sandstone base and stucco upper story. In the center is a decorative multi-pane window with a wide gabled eave supported by eave brackets. Like the bay to its south, this center bay, with its monitor roofline, is topped by scrollwork vergeboards. The third bay lies on the same plane as the center bay. The base is sandstone, and the upper part is vertical siding, interrupted by a pair of six-pane windows.

On the north end, the disparate rooflines converge and terminate near ground level.

**Studio – Interior**

The main entrance on the west, in the center of the southernmost stucco bay, opens to a space that was used as a retail store. An opening on the east side of the north wall of this space opens to a large naturally amply lit workshop area with a concrete floor, stucco walls, exposed joists, and a kiln. This is the space under the south-projecting shed roof. There are two large openings in the north wall of this space. The first, the one on the west, opens to a storage room with loft above, housed in the south-facing dormer. The second opening provides access to a large workroom. A door on the west end of the workroom opens to yet another workroom housed in the sandstone-enframed center bay that faces west. The north-projecting bay houses a painting studio.

The interior is filled with innumerable whimsical details. Among these are scrollwork trim, hand-crafted shelving, benches, and trim; gravity-defying work tables; half-timbering; kilns; a pot-belly stove; exposed joists; and hand-carved hardware such as a carved wood dala horse door pull.

**Integrity**

The Anton Pearson House and Studio are located in Lindsborg, Kansas. The nominated property includes three resources: a house, a studio, and a site. The home and studio are situated amidst a whimsically designed landscape with contributing elements including a linear sandstone wall making the property’s west boundary, a serpentine sandstone wall on the north, a pond and fountain feature south of the serpentine wall accessible via an arched opening in a low stone wall just north of the house. The wood-framed and stucco house sits near the center of a landscaped lot. It is irregular in shape and constructed of frame with stucco exterior. Excepting later additions, the house retains its historic character-defining features like the original wood doors, wood windows, wood trim, stucco finish, and cross-gabled roofline. Asphalt shingles wrap the eaves, creating a false thatched roof indicative of the home’s Storybook Style. The stone, concrete, and wood-framed studio sits on the east end of the property. Except for small additions, the house remains little changed since its 1929 completion. The studio evolved and expanded into an increasingly irregular and eclectic building over time. Although there is little documentation related to the studio’s changes over time, it is believed that many of these changes pre-dated Anton Pearson’s death in 1967 and, therefore, contribute to the integrity of the property.

Overall, the Anton Pearson House & Studio retain excellent historic integrity and character-defining features. The property is in its original location and setting, part of a designed landscape from the original owner. Though some materials are deteriorated due to vacancy, the materials, workmanship, and design from Anton Pearson’s creative and original plans are still evident. Likewise, the feeling and association with Anton Pearson are clearly substantiated through his influence and position in the community, and the property being a creation of his own.
8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

X B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Areas of Significance

ART

ETHNIC HERITAGE: SWEDISH

Period of Significance

1929-1967

Significant Dates

1929

Significant Person

(Nils) Anton Pearson

Cultural Affiliation

Swedish American

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Criteria Considerations (justification)

The Period of Significance for the Anton Pearson House and Studio is 1929-1967. This period begins in 1929, which is the year Anton Pearson married Grace Lane, and the couple constructed the home. It ends with Anton Pearson’s death in 1967.

N/A
Narrative Statement of Significance

(Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

Summary

The Anton Pearson House and Studio is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places for statewide significance under Criterion B for its association with Swedish-American artist (Nils) Anton Pearson. The Period of Significance stretches from the date of the home’s construction in 1929 until Pearson’s death in 1967. The Anton Pearson House & Studio (1929) are significant under Criterion B for their association with (Nils) Anton Pearson (1892-1967), an important and leading figure in the artist community of Lindsborg, Kansas as well as the state. The House & Studio are also significant as an excellent example of the Pearson’s artworks designed and built by Pearson. Anton Pearson became known statewide and internationally for his prominence and importance to the art community in Lindsborg, and remained an important figure until his passing in 1967. During his career, he was an active student, teacher, and engaged community member. Pearson, his mentor Birger Sandzen, and their fellow artists had created an artist colony that would draw hundreds of tourists each year to Lindsborg.

Elaboration

A Brief History of Lindsborg

When Anton Pearson arrived in the United States in 1912, he was part of the second wave of Scandinavian immigrants who would make their homes in the plains states. Many would come to till the fertile fields of Minnesota and Kansas. Others, like Pearson and his mentor Birger Sandzen, would establish an artist colony in a small but enduring Swedish settlement called Lindsborg.

The following is an enhanced excerpt from the National Register nomination for Coronado Heights, prepared by Christy Davis, the author of this nomination:

The Swedish pioneers, who later established Lindsborg, first settled the area at the base of the Smoky Hill Buttes, in the rich valley of the Smoky Hill River, one of the state’s major tributaries. When European explorer Francisco Vasquez de Coronado came to the region he called “Quivira” in 1541, the place was settled by the ancestral Wichita Indians. The Wichitas lived in grass-hut villages, supplementing farming with bison hunting. By the eighteenth century, other tribes, including the Comanches, Kiowas and Kiowa Apaches, had pushed the Wichitas south and west. During the early nineteenth century, the Santa Fe Trail, which bisected what would become McPherson County, became an established trade route between American states and territories and the Spanish Southwest. In McPherson County, the Kansa Indians signed a treaty with the federal government to permit the trails to cross their land.1

When the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854 opened the Kansas Territory to permanent white settlement, new settlers poured into its eastern reaches. Although McPherson County’s first white settler, Isaac Sharp, arrived in 1860, settlement of the state’s central and western regions did not begin in earnest in the late 1860s and early 1870s, when railroads began selling trust lands.2 Railroad companies broadened the market for land through international promotional schemes.

Among the targeted immigrant groups were the Swedes. Both the Santa Fe and Kansas Pacific Railroads circulated Swedish-language pamphlets in Scandinavia and Chicago. A Kansas Pacific pamphlet included the


2 Frank Blackmar, Kansas: a cyclopaedia of state history, embracing events, institutions, industries, counties, cities, towns, prominent persons, etc ... with a supplementary volume devoted to selected personal history and reminiscence (Chicago: Standards Publishing Company, 1912).
names of nineteen Kansas Swedes who endorsed the state. In the 1860s and 1870s, Swedes formed a series of cooperative land companies, which established Swedish colonies in Kansas. Two of these companies, the First Swedish Agricultural Company and Galesburg Land Company, arranged for the purchase of land in McPherson and Saline Counties, forming the communities of New Gottland, Fremont, Marquette, Salemsborg, Assaria, Falun, Smolan, and Lindsborg.

One hundred colonists of the First Swedish Agricultural Company founded Lindsborg in 1869. Although the fledgling city was named the county seat in 1870, it lost this title to McPherson in 1873. As suggested by the company name, the new colony's economy was largely dependent upon farming. Among the community's early trials, then, was the grasshopper plague of 1874, which left 10,000 of the county's residents dependent upon government food and clothing rations.

Fortunately, the county's economy had recovered by 1885, when its farmers reported 5523 acres of the cash crop broomcorn, most of it raised by Lindsborg colonists. In that year, there were nearly 8000 first and second-generation Swedes in Saline and McPherson Counties. Although Lindsborg lost its county seat status to McPherson in 1873, the town remained a cultural and business center for the area's Swedish immigrants.

In 1879, the year of its incorporation, the city welcomed its first railroad, the Salina and McPherson branch of the Union Pacific. By 1883, the city had three grain elevators, a bank, two hotels, three newspapers, a water-powered mill, and a steam-powered mill. By 1885, the city's population had grown to 864, more than twice that of its rival McPherson.

It was in the early 1880s that Lindsborg first made its mark on the cultural life of Central Kansas. In October 1881, Dr. Carl A. Swensson, the second pastor of Lindsborg's Swedish Bethany Lutheran Church, founded Bethany College, a private Lutheran liberal arts college that was instrumental in establishing many cultural traditions. In December 1881, Swedish pioneers established the Bethany Oratorio Society, which has been performing Handel’s *Messiah* each Easter weekend since 1882. By 1883, Bethany College boasted an enrollment of 80 students.

Like that of many western towns, Lindsborg's survival required unremitting self-promotion. During the 1880s, when eastern investors gambled on the prospects of western towns, Lindsborg and many other Kansas cities boomed. During 1887 alone, the year the Missouri Pacific Railroad arrived, speculators platted nine additions to Lindsborg's Original Town Plat. In June 1887, one local paper pronounced that "with eight more two-story brick business houses, a $30,000 hotel and four railroads, we can put on metropolitan airs, not exceeded by any of our neighboring sisters. All this we can truly vouch for." Among Lindsborg's "neighboring sisters" was McPherson, which beat out Lindsborg in a contest over county-seat designation in 1873. Boom-time projects included a $30,000 hotel and a barbed-wire factory.

As a trade center for the surrounding farms, Lindsborg's fate was tied to the successes and failures of area farmers. The good times of the early to mid-1880s were followed by a period of recession. Strapped for cash to pay mortgages and buy necessities — and faced with declining crop prices, farmers fell on hard times. Many Lindsborg businesses struggled to stay open. On the contrary, Lindsborg reaped the rewards of the Golden Age of Agriculture, from 1900 to 1920, when, according to a 1900 article in the *Lindsborg News*, "it [was] no unusual

5 Blackmar.
7 Ibid, 106.
8 Blackmar.
10 Blackmar.
12 *Smoky Valley News*, 1 April 1887.
occurrence for a man to buy a farm, walk into the bank and pay for it in hard cash." Between 1907 and 1914, following the Panic of 1907, the assessed property values in Lindsborg doubled.\textsuperscript{13}

Plunging crop prices took their toll on the community in the 1920s and early 1930s when the price of land in Lindsborg depreciated more than 50 percent.\textsuperscript{14} Despite the hard times, however, Lindsborg experienced modest population growth between 1920 and 1930 when the population increased from 1847 to 2016.\textsuperscript{15} By the 1930s, Lindsborg was well-established as an artist colony that catered to auto tourists. In 1939, Lindsborg was featured in the state’s first guidebook, \textit{Kansas: A Guide to the Sunflower State} (1939), a New Deal-era project of the Federal Writers’ Project, since re-printed as \textit{The WPA Guide to 1930s Kansas}. It was one of only eighteen Kansas cities included, and only one of three with populations smaller than 10,000. All but one of Lindsborg’s six points of interest mentioned in the book relate to the community’s place as an arts center. Anton Pearson was one of only three artists mentioned by name in the book. Others were the “Dean of Kansas Artists” Birger Sandzen and wood carver John A. Altenborg, who was only in Lindsborg from 1933 to 1946.\textsuperscript{16}

Since the 1930s, the Lindsborg community has worked diligently to preserve and promote its Swedish heritage and rich culture. In the 1960s, Anton Pearson was among a group of artists and boosters who promoted the remodeling of downtown storefronts and building interiors, including the interior of Eldon’s Swedish bakery, now the Courtyard Bakery. At events like the Messiah Festival of Music and Art and Midsummer’s Day Festival, residents and visitors participate in traditional activities and celebrate the city’s rich arts and music culture. Among the community’s celebrated citizens and institutions are Birger Sandzen (1871-1954), a prolific Swedish-born artist who taught at Bethany College and the Anatoly Karpov International School of Chess, the seven-time world chess champ’s first school in the United States.

\textbf{Anton Pearson and His Art}

It was by accident, or perhaps fate, that sculptor Anton Pearson made his way to Lindsborg, Kansas. He was born on May 23, 1892, in Lund, Sweden, where he began experimenting with wood carving at the age of nine. According to one source, woodcarving was a common pastime among his classmates, who were said to be inspired by nonconformist Swedish woodcarver Axel Petersson Doderhultarn (1868-1925). Apparently, Pearson pursued an interest in art against the wishes of his father, who encouraged him to study engineering at the Technical School in Lund. Although Pearson later recalled leaving “just a few days” before his twenty-first birthday to escape three years of mandatory military service, the historical record sheds light on more nuanced motivations. He was nineteen when he left his home country – more likely to pursue dreams of an artist’s life.\textsuperscript{17}

Pearson’s journey to America had an auspicious start when he failed to book passage on the maiden voyage of the Titanic. In May 1912, the month following the infamous sinking, Pearson boarded another ship, the Cymric, which sailed from Liverpool to Boston. The ship’s manifest listed his name as “Nils Anton Persson,” with a final destination as Bavaria, Kansas (Saline County).

The timing of Pearson’s immigration neatly parallels the career of his idol Axel Petersson Doderhultarn. A 1909 exhibition of Doderhultarn’s work in Stockholm drew public acclaim and led to shows in Copenhagen, Brighton, Rome, and Turin in 1911. In 1912, the year of Pearson’s immigration, Doderhultarn shipped his work to the United States, where the Swedish Consulate toured it in New York (1913), San Francisco, and Chicago (1915).

Pearson’s timing may not have been coincidental. His original intention was to sail to New York – and, although the ship manifests identifies Bavaria, Kansas as his final destination, biographical information hints at early travels to both Chicago and a 1915 trip to San Francisco. According to his own account, Pearson made a stop in Lindsborg after visiting the San Francisco World’s Fair in 1915. In the 1915 Kansas Census, Pearson was living in Bavaria, in Saline County’s Ohio Township with PJ Alson, a fellow Swedish immigrant.\textsuperscript{18}

\textsuperscript{13} Flohr, 3.
\textsuperscript{14} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{15} U. S. Census, 1920 and 1930.
\textsuperscript{16} James Shortridge, \textit{The WPA Guide to 1930s Kansas} (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1984), 244-248.
\textsuperscript{17} \textit{Salina Journal}, 4 October 1959.
\textsuperscript{18} Kansas State Census, 1915.
Regardless of his original intentions, Nils Anton Pearson would make Lindsborg his home base in 1916. Pearson studied painting with Birger Sandzen, a printmaker and painter known as The Dean of Kansas Artists, and graduated from Bethany College in 1918. After completing his formal education, Pearson enlisted in the U. S. Army as a way to “expedite” his citizenship. During America’s brief engagement in World War I, he was stationed at Camp Cody, New Mexico, with Company G of the 135th Infantry Regiment of the Army National Guard.

During an extended bachelorhood that followed the war, Pearson supported himself by working odd jobs – from hawking magazines and newspapers to painting houses, to selling cookery. By 1920, Pearson was boarding at the home of elderly Swedish widow Wilhelmina Nelson on South Washington Street and exhibiting his paintings widely.19

In 1922, the years he turned 30, Pearson again yielded to his wandering tendencies and embarked on a life-changing 3000-mile quest through Missouri, Nebraska, Iowa, Illinois, Wisconsin, Arkansas, and Kansas. For four months, he traveled by horse, wagon, and boat; “somehow turned the buggy roof into a boat to float down the Mississippi,” and when he returned in November 1922, the prolific Pearson was carrying 175 paintings he had made along the way.20

While studying at Bethany College, Pearson met piano student Grace Lane. Born in Kansas to New York natives, Grace grew up on a farm in Ottawa County, about forty-five miles from Lindsborg. Like Pearson, Lane found creative ways to support herself and continue her artistic education well into her thirties. By the time the two finally married in August 1929, they were both thirty-seven (37) years old and had a combined fortune most newlyweds could only dream of. The same year, they completed their new home on South Main, valued at an astonishing $10,000 – and Anton was supporting them as an independent artist.21 In 1933, the Pearsons welcomed their first and only child, daughter Rosemary.

Although Pearson continued to paint, his principal focus was woodcarving. Below is an introduction to his work, as later described by his family:

Anton’s pioneer figures were mostly carved from redwood, catalpa, mahogany, cottonwood and even limestone. He did many other creative carvings, from funny figures to large animals. Anton admired pioneers of Lindsborg. He listened intently to their stories and they influenced his carvings. They show Swedish pioneers at work and at play, living their daily lives. Anton said he created the characters he carved by closing his eyes and envisioning them. It’s been suggested that perhaps Lindsborg residents crept into his mind, as many of his carvings certainly resembled Lindsborgians he encountered. His grandson Jim Malm says that Anton was a carving “opportunist.” Finding a special piece of wood, he would carve until a figure was exposed.22

For a half-century, Anton Pearson practiced his craft with a discipline that resulted in a feverish level of productivity. Each day, he woke at 5:00 a.m. to ensure hours of uninterrupted work. Early on, he worked out of his home. When Grace complained about the dust, he built a detached studio, which expanded and evolved over the decades. The studio and home were surrounded by sandstone walls, sculptures, and water features; and Grace, whose daughter Rosemary called a “gardening enthusiast,” tended to ever-expanding rock and flower gardens. In short order, Pearson, his mentor Birger Sandzen, and their fellow artists had created an artist colony that would draw hundreds of tourists each year to Lindsborg.

During this very productive period in his career, Pearson also found time to contribute to many community projects. In 1930, he and Fred Erickson constructed a new fountain at Swensson Memorial Park out of stone sourced from five area counties. In 1935, he constructed a pulpit of native stone to mark the location of the first house of worship at Salemsborg. The economic impact of a growing number of auto tourists, who made pilgrimages to see the area’s wonders – such as Coronado Heights – helped Lindsborg weather the Great Depression.

When the United States entered World War II, life was turned upside down. Like many who were unable to serve overseas, Pearson joined the ranks in the war-related industry. In 1942, he went to work as a pattern maker for Boeing’s Wichita plant, using his woodworking skills to help build B17 bombers. The patternmaking left Pearson with scraps of balsa wood and plywood, which he carved into figures.

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20 Salina Daily Union, 5 November 1922.  
21 Lindsborg News-Record, 15 April 1930; 1930 Census.  
Between the war and his death, Anton Pearson spent much of his time teaching his craft to others, including his son-in-law Norman Malm (1928-2011). It is said that Norman Malm, the great-nephew of decorative artist G. N. Malm, was a natural-born artist. Norman began painting in the early 1950s. After marrying Rosemary Pearson in 1952, Norman learned some woodcarving basics from Anton Pearson. He remained active for nearly sixty years.23

Like many in Lindsborg, Anton Pearson was greatly affected by the 1954 death of artist Birger Sandzen. But Pearson was uniquely positioned to honor his mentor. Soon thereafter, Pearson "launched a movement" to raise funds for the Birger Sandzen Memorial Art Gallery by reaching out to Sandzen's former students.24

Perhaps Sandzen's death caused Pearson to reflect on his own mortality and long for his homeland. In Spring and Summer 1960, nearly a half-century after leaving Sweden, Pearson returned home. While there, he visited family and attended his brother’s funeral. In a postcard to his daughter Rosemary and son-in-law Norman Malm, Pearson foreshadowed the final chapter of his life. While in Sweden, Anton Pearson was spending a lot of time at Skansen. Skansen, the world’s oldest open-air museum, opened in 1891 as Sweden and much of Europe were being re-shaped by the Industrial Age. Skansen was (and is) a time capsule – a tribute to rural culture and traditions in various regions of Sweden.25

Pearson returned to Lindsborg with a renewed zeal for the community’s rich heritage. Over the next few years, Pearson prepared a working model of his plans to remodel buildings downtown with a Scandinavian flair. He helped six storekeepers downtown "put up Swedish fronts" on their buildings. In 1966, he spearheaded the remodeling of Eldon’s Swedish Bakery with a new storefront and hand-carved wooden ceiling beams. Although Pearson’s dream was never fully realized, he sparked the imagination of other local artists – Lester Ramer, Carl Peterson, Malcom Esping, and Norman Malm. Following his death in 1967, these artists kept alive his dream of embracing the town’s Swedish roots. In the 1960s, they customized Dala Horses, carved and painted horses hailing from Sweden’s Dalarna Province, to hang on residents’ front porches. In 1969, the same year that the Swedish Pavilion from the 1904 World’s Fair was moved to the grounds of the Old Mill Museum behind Pearson’s house and studio, the Dala Horse was christened the official symbol of Lindsborg.26

After Pearson’s death in 1967, the pilgrims kept coming to tour his studio and gardens. His wife Grace remained in the home until her death in 1973. Pearson’s son-in-law and fellow woodcarver Norman Malm continued to use the studio – for his own projects and events sponsored by the Lindsborg Arts Council.27 He produced his own unique style of wood figures for nearly six decades until his death in 2011. Mary Hildebrand, Anton Pearson’s granddaughter, inherited the home after the death of her mother, Rosemary Pearson Malm, in 2016. James Baker purchased the home from the family in November 2019.

The Storybook Style
By the time of his death, Anton Pearson was working to make downtown Lindsborg more Swedish. But the home he built for his family in 1929 was All-American. The Revival Style homes that flourished in the years between the world wars are said to be inspired by soldiers’ experiences in medieval villages during World War I. But Storybook homes, like the Pearsons’, were a Hollywood fabrication, what Arroll Gellner, the author of *Storybook Style*, has called “fanciful monuments to the pathologically flamboyant.” The prototype was the Spadena House in Beverly Hills, designed by Hollywood set designer Harry Oliver. Once the perfectly imperfect home appeared on the cover of the March 1926 edition of *The Home Designer and Garden Beautiful*, notes Gellner, the “set designer’s quirky aberration soon became widely influential among maverick architects in search of new ideas.”28

Sometimes classified as a subtype of the Tudor Revival Style, the Storybook Style is differentiated by a number of character-defining features. These include steeply pitched roofs (usually side-gabled with a dominant front gable), eaves with sweeping curves, irregular shingles that are rolled or steamed around eaves and rakes that evoke thatched roofs, arcaded wing walls, varied eave heights, rounded-arch doors and windows, chimneys on end walls, and side

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porches under their main roofs. As described by Gellner, it was just the kind of style that an artist like Anton Pearson would embrace:

> Storybook Style houses were the product of architects and builders with a distinct flair for theater, a love of fine craftsmanship, and not least a good sense of humor – attributes that make them especially endearing to the jaded modern eye. Three attributes set classic Storybook Style homes apart from other Period Revival styles of the ’20s: their exaggeratedly plastic and often cartoonish interpretation of medieval forms; their use of artificial means to suggest great age; and last that all but indefinable quality known as ‘whimsy.’ These are houses that embody the utmost joy in creation, yet which never demand to be taken too seriously.28

But perhaps the home, with its Tudor Revival roots, was designed for more than whimsy. Maybe it was meant to impress Grace Lane’s waspy family at a time of prolific nativism. Pearson was an immigrant who had to make great financial sacrifices to come to the United States and pursue his passion for art. But Grace boasted a pedigree that included Mayflower passenger and Plymouth leader William Brewster and at least four generations of New Yorkers who lived in a town – Lanesville – named after the family. With its roots in the Picturesque architecture and landscape movement of eighteenth-century England, the Storybook Style would have been a good choice for an immigrant working to woo a highly educated woman who loved both gardening and her nuclear family.

The Storybook Style was short-lived. Most were built between the 1926 feature story on the Spadena House and the “great” stock market crash of October 1929. Since the agriculture-reliant Kansas economy was depressed from the early 1920s until World War II, few of these homes can be found in Kansas. The rare ones that survive are usually in first-ring suburbs of larger cities. There are 818 buildings in the Kansas Historic Resources Inventory that are classified as Tudor Revival. None of them have the word “Storybook” in the remarks. There are two examples of Storybook houses with stucco and false thatched roofs in Topeka’s College Hill Neighborhood – an asymmetrical one at 1308 SW MacVicar and a symmetrical one with two steep arched eyebrow dormers at 1625 SW MacVicar.

Closing
By 1920, Pearson was exhibiting his paintings widely, even traveling across the country for inspiration in his designs. Anton Pearson practiced his craft with a discipline that resulted in an intense level of productivity. During this very productive period in his career, Pearson also found time to contribute to many community projects like the fountain at Swensson Memorial Park, and the pulpit in Salemsborg. Though, he was greatly affected by the 1954 death of artist Birger Sandzen, Pearson raised money to start the Birger Sandzen Memorial Art Gallery. Over the next few years, Pearson prepared a model of his plans to remodel buildings in Lindsborg with a Scandinavian flair to connect back to their Swedish roots. He helped with creating Swedish fronts for buildings and much more. Although Pearson’s dream was never fully realized, he sparked the imagination of other local artists – Lester Ramer, Carl Peterson, Malcolm Esping, and Norman Malm. Following Pearson’s death in 1967, these artists kept alive his dream of embracing the town’s Swedish roots. In the 1960s, they customized Dala Horses, carved and painted horses hailing from Sweden’s Dalarna Province, to hang on residents’ front porches.

The Anton Pearson House & Studio (1929) are significant under Criterion B for their association with (Nils) Anton Pearson (1892-1967), an important and leading figure in the artist community of Lindsborg, Kansas as well as the state. The House & Studio are also significant as an excellent example of the Pearson’s artworks designed and built by Pearson. Anton Pearson became known statewide and internationally for his prominence and importance to the art community in Lindsborg, and remained an important figure until his passing in 1967. During his career, he was an active student, teacher, and engaged community member. Pearson, his mentor Birger Sandzen, and their fellow artists had created an artist colony that would draw hundreds of tourists each year to Lindsborg.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)


*Council Grove (Kansas) Republican.*

*Culver (Kansas) Record.*


*Frankfort (Kansas) Index.*


*Great Bend (Kansas) Tribune.*

*Hutchinson (Kansas) News.*


*Lindsborg Progress.*

*Minneapolis (Kansas) Messenger.*


*Salina (Kansas) Daily Union.*

*Salina (Kansas) Journal.*


*Tescott (Kansas) Press.*

*Topeka Capital.*

U. S. Census.

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University

14
Anton Pearson House and Studio  
Name of Property  
McPherson County, Kansas  
County and State  

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): __KHRI 113-224

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property  Less than one acre.

Provide latitude/longitude coordinates OR UTM coordinates.  
(Place additional coordinates on a continuation page.)

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: ________________
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

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Verbal Boundary Description (describe the boundaries of the property)

The Anton Pearson House and Studio (Parcel ID 0590341704025003000) is located in Lindsborg’s Riverside Addition with the following legal description: RIVERSIDE ADD (LINDSBORG), S17, T17, R03, 12122 SQUARE FEET, CA SW/C LT 46 RIVERSIDE ADDN FOR POB TH N146' SWLY212' S5' E160' TO POB SECTION 17 TOWNSHIP 17 RANGE 03.

Boundary Justification (explain why the boundaries were selected)

The above is the legal description for the lot on which the home, studio, and gardens are situated. The entire parcel, including its designed landscape and gardens, are historically associated with Anton Pearson through his productive life and career as an important artist in Lindsborg, Kansas.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title  Christy Davis  
Organization  Davis Preservation  
Date  11/21/2019; 11/2/2020  
street & number  715 First St  
telephone  785-213-1369  
city or town  Cottonwood Falls  
State  KS  
zip code  66845  
e-mail  christykdavis@gmail.com

Property Owner:  (complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO)

name  James Baker  
street & number  1349 Svensk Rd  
telephone  620-245-7469  
city or town  Lindsborg  
State  KS  
zip code  67456
Anton Pearson House and Studio
Name of Property
McPherson County, Kansas
County and State

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management. U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Additional Documentation
Submit the following items with the completed form:

Photographs
Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each digital image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to a sketch map or aerial map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn’t need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photograph Log

Name of Property: **Anton Pearson House and Studio**
City or Vicinity: **Lindsborg**
County: **McPherson** State: **Kansas**
Photographer: **Christy Davis**
Date Photographed: **November 13, 2019**

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

1 of 43: House, Exterior, Overall View of Front (West) Elevation.
2 of 43: House, Exterior, Overall View of Side (South) Elevation.
5 of 43: House, Exterior, Overall View of Side (North) and Rear (East) Elevations, Looking Southwest.
7 of 43: House, Interior, First Floor, Living Room, Looking Southwest.
8 of 43: House, Interior, First Floor, Living Room, Close-up of Fireplace, Sconces and Doors on North Wall.
9 of 43: House, Interior, First Floor, Bedroom.
10 of 43: House, Interior, First Floor, Looking East from Masonite Addition to Kitchen (Left) and Sunroom (Right).
12 of 43: House, Interior, First Floor, Masonite Addition.
17 of 43: House, Interior, Basement.
19 of 43: Studio, Exterior, South Side of West Elevation, Looking Southeast.
20 of 43: Studio, Exterior, South and East Elevations, Looking Northwest.
22 of 43: Studio, Exterior, North and West Elevations, Looking Southeast.
23 of 43: Studio, Interior, Entry on Southwest Corner, Looking East.
24 of 43: Studio, Interior, Entry, Looking West toward the House.
Anton Pearson House and Studio  McPherson County, Kansas
Name of Property  County and State

26 of 43: Studio, Interior, Looking North from Entry.
27 of 43: Studio, Interior, Looking East on South End.
30 of 43: Studio, Interior, Looking West in Workroom.
32 of 43: Studio, Interior, Looking Northwest toward West Wall of North Bay.
34 of 43: Site, West Wall, Looking Northeast.
35 of 43: Site, West Wall, Looking Northwest.
36 of 43: Site, West Wall, Close-Up of Piers, Looking East.
37 of 43: Site, West Wall, Close-Up of Arched Opening, Looking Southwest.
38 of 43: Site, West Wall, Looking West.
39 of 43: Site, Serpentine Wall, Looking North.
40 of 43: Site, Rock Archway and Path, Looking South.
41 of 43: Site, Path, North of the House, Looking East.
42 of 43: Site, Pond and Fountain North of the House, Looking Northwest.
43 of 43: Site, A Few Objects North of the House.

Figures
Include GIS maps, figures, scanned images below.
Anton Pearson House & Studio
Name of Property

McPherson County, Kansas
County and State

Photo 1

Photo 2
Anton Pearson House & Studio
McPherson County, Kansas
Name of Property
County and State
Anton Pearson House & Studio
McPherson County, Kansas
Name of Property
County and State
Anton Pearson House & Studio
McPherson County, Kansas

Name of Property
County and State
Anton Pearson House & Studio
McPherson County, Kansas

Photo 9

Photo 10
Anton Pearson House & Studio
McPherson County, Kansas

Name of Property
County and State

Photo 15

Photo 16
Anton Pearson House & Studio
McPherson County, Kansas

Name of Property

County and State

Photo 17

Photo 18
Anton Pearson House & Studio
McPherson County, Kansas

Name of Property
County and State
Anton Pearson House & Studio
McPherson County, Kansas

Name of Property
County and State

Photo 21

Photo 22
Anton Pearson House & Studio
McPherson County, Kansas

Name of Property
County and State

Photo 23

Photo 24
Anton Pearson House & Studio
Name of Property

McPherson County, Kansas
County and State

Photo 25

Photo 26
Anton Pearson House & Studio
Name of Property

McPherson County, Kansas
County and State

Photo 27

Photo 28
Anton Pearson House & Studio
Name of Property

McPherson County, Kansas
County and State

Photo 35

Photo 36
Anton Pearson House & Studio
McPherson County, Kansas

Photo 37

Photo 38
Anton Pearson House & Studio
McPherson County, Kansas
Name of Property
County and State

Photo 39

Photo 40
Anton Pearson House & Studio
McPherson County, Kansas

Photo 43
Anton Pearson House & Studio  McPherson County, Kansas

Name of Property  County and State

*Note—other contributing objects are scattered throughout the landscape

Property Sketch Map  — Not to scale

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S Main St

West stone wall

West boundary/adjacent lot

Serpentine stone wall

Stone archway

Fountain/pond

House

Studio

South boundary/adjacent lot
Anton Pearson House & Studio
McPherson County, Kansas

Name of Property
County and State

*Note—other contributing objects are scattered throughout the landscape

Property Photo Map
— Not to scale

E Lindsborg St

S Main St

Serpentine stone wall

Rock archway

Fountain/pond

House

Studio

South boundary/adjacent lot
Anton Pearson House & Studio
McPherson County, Kansas

First Floor Sketch Map
- Living room
- Bedroom
- kitchen
- Covered entry
- sunroom

Second Floor Sketch Map
- Library
- Bedroom
- bath

Studio Sketch Map
- Painting Studio
- Workroom
- entry

Interior sketch map — Not to Scale

Half or open wall
Exterior walls
Interior walls
Anton Pearson House & Studio
McPherson County, Kansas

Name of Property
County and State

First Floor Sketch Map

Second Floor Sketch Map

Studio Sketch Map

Interior Photo Map — Not to Scale

Half or open wall
Exterior walls
Interior walls

N