Kansas Preservation

Newsletter of the Cultural Resources Division • Kansas State Historical Society

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Kansas' first city on the map.

Father and son architects put Kansas' first city on the map.

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## KANSAS PRESERVATION

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Jennie Chinn, State Historic Preservation Officer
Virginia Wulfkuhle and Patrick Zollner, Editors
Christine Ewing, Graphic Designer

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**KSHS Launches Kansas Memory**

*Kansas Memory* is the Kansas State Historical Society’s newest online offering, featuring the largest collection of photographs and manuscripts from Kansas history on the Internet at kansasmemory.org. The site was developed in part with funding from the Information Network of Kansas, and the October 2007 launch coincided with American Archives Month.

*Kansas Memory* offers unprecedented online access to Kansas history and includes thousands of items from the Society’s collections of photographs, letters, diaries, and other historic items. Users can browse, search, or share images and eventually will be able to purchase high-resolution versions online. The “My Memory” section allows users to customize a personal space, save searches, and create scrapbooks of items. The multi-faceted browse feature will be especially helpful to teachers as it includes topics that help meet Kansas and U.S. history standards. Visitors to the site can listen to dramatic readings in the *Kansas Memory* podcasts and subscribe to web feeds for the latest content. Although it would be impossible to add every single item in the Society’s collection to *Kansas Memory*, KSHS staff will actively continue to add images as part of its goal to make Kansas history more accessible to everyone.

Researchers will find *Kansas Memory* another powerful tool for compiling information on historic buildings and landscapes. For more information about *Kansas Memory*, visit kansasmemory.org or call Pat Michaels, Kansas Historical Society State Archives and Library Director at 785-272-8681, ext. 270 (pmichaels@kshs.org) or Assistant Director Matt Veatch at 785-272-8681, ext. 271 (mveatch@kshs.org).

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This photograph of the Abraham Eitzen farm, Marion County, in the winter of 1904, is one image in the Built Environment section of *Kansas Memory*.

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## A note to our readers...

**Receiving duplicate issues, or wish to opt out?**

We are updating our mailing list. If you receive duplicate copies, or would rather not continue receiving *Kansas Preservation*, please contact us. Removing your name from this list does not impact other Kansas State Historical Society mailings.
Preservation in the News

This column summarizes preservation–related stories that have recently made the news in Kansas. For confirmation or more information, the media source is credited. The KSHS staff is not responsible for the content of the news items, nor have all the details been independently verified. If you know of other Kansas preservation topics in the news, please contact us at cultural_resources@kshs.org or (785) 272-8681 ext. 225.

The Lawrence-Douglas County planning commissioners voted nine to one in favor of the construction of a seven-story, 95-foot tall hotel to be constructed at the corner of 12th and Indiana Streets. The new hotel will sit adjacent to the University of Kansas campus atop Mt. Oread and will alter the skyline of the city and the university. The city’s Historic Resources Commission reviewed the project for its impact on nearby historic properties and determined that the design and mass of the building was not appropriate to the location and voted against the proposal. Despite the HRC ruling, the planning commissioners approved the project.

“Oread Inn wins planners’ approval”
The Lawrence Journal World, October 23, 2007
www.LJWorld.com

The Wichita Downtown Development Corporation and the Metropolitan Area Planning Department are forming a committee to examine the environs clause of the State Preservation Statute (K.S.A. 75-2724) that requires the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) to review proposed projects requiring a building permit within 500 feet of a state or National Register-listed property. The City of Wichita has an agreement with the SHPO to conduct these reviews in Wichita. The committee, which will include property owners and preservationists, seeks a way to minimize conflicts on the issue.

“Downtown planners re-examine ‘halo’ law”
The Wichita Eagle, October 21, 2007
www.kansas.com

The Colonial Fox Theatre in Pittsburg, Kansas, has received a string of good news lately. The foundation’s 501(c)(3) non-profit status was recently approved, and the “400 for 40K” fundraising campaign is just 31 donors away from its total goal. The theater was listed on the Kansas Preservation Alliance’s most endangered list that designates the building as an endangered historic site in Kansas. But aside from the listing, which brings awareness to the Colonial Fox’s preservation issues, KPA awarded the organization a check for $500, known as the “Roll up your sleeves award” for all the work that they have done on the building.

“Good news for Colonial Fox”
The Morning Sun, October 31, 2007
www.morningsun.net

The Shay Building, built circa 1886 in downtown Sterling, is coming back to life as a local call center. The call center was relocated from the Sterling College campus to the historic building to allow for more space and more access within the community. The move will give a new use to a downtown building and will bring employees and more activity to downtown Sterling.

“Sterling building back in business with call center”
The Hutchinson News Online, www.hsn.live.mediaspanonline.com

Written by Kristen Lonard-Johnson, state tax credit reviewer and National Register historian
Three generations of Leavenworth residents have lived in the familiar urban environment of landmark buildings designed by architects William Pratt Feth and Myron Kauffman Feth. This father and son designed more than 60 buildings in Leavenworth from 1895 to 1942. Their work included such landmarks as the Leavenworth County Courthouse, the Leavenworth City Hall, and the original Leavenworth High School. Over a period of more than 45 years, the Feths designed many of the most important institutional, commercial, and residential buildings in Leavenworth. These buildings are significant for their association with developments in architectural and urban history and as examples of significant property types and architectural styles. With these designs, the Feths improved their community and strengthened the city’s economic and social status in northeast Kansas. Through their buildings, William and Myron Feth gave Leavenworth a distinctly sophisticated and refined architectural character.

The architectural history of Feth and Feth developed in three stages. From about 1895 to 1919, William worked as an independent architect with a general practice. Myron became a partner by 1920, although he probably learned drafting in his father’s office and helped with the work earlier. From 1920 until William retired in 1930, the firm was known as Feth and Feth. After 1930, Myron carried on the practice of architecture until 1942.

Throughout their careers, the Feths interpreted national trends in the design of local commercial, institutional, and residential buildings. To sustain a general practice in architecture, they designed in the popular styles of the time. Both father and son worked in characteristic styles, but they adapted and their work evolved according to changes in popular taste.

Recognizing the significance of this father-son team and their contributions to Leavenworth’s historic built environment, the City of Leavenworth secured a Historic Preservation Fund grant through the State Historic Preservation Office to document extant buildings associated with the Feths. A multiple property National Register nomination documenting the designs of William and Myron Feth in Leavenworth is the result of a survey and historical research. This multiple property nomination is a unique product in that it is the first in Kansas recognizing the contributions of a particular architect or firm to his community. Most multiple property documents are specific to property types like theaters, schools, or bridges. Funds
from the City of Leavenworth, administered by Planning and Community Director Jerry Geis, provided a match. Also, Joan Feth Fuller, daughter of Myron Feth, contributed a generous gift. The grant application was based on information collected by Sally Hatcher and other members of the Preservation Alliance of Leavenworth and Sarah Martin of the State Historic Preservation Office.

Early in his career, William designed buildings in the Romanesque and Queen Anne styles. As other styles became popular in the early twentieth century, he designed buildings in the Classical and Colonial Revival styles. In some of the finer residences, William combined details from different styles in exuberant eclectic designs. After 1920, Feth and Feth continued to produce notable buildings in Classical, Romanesque, and Tudor Revival styles. Most of the later designs by Myron were residences in the Colonial and Tudor Revival styles, but he also designed the utilitarian Leavenworth County Jail in a simplified style influenced by the Modern movement.

William began his training with Erasmus T. Carr, one of the most influential architect-builders in the early history of Kansas. Carr served as the state architect of Kansas from 1870 to 1885. William began working for Carr during summer vacations from high school. As a young man in 1885, Feth left home to study architecture and drafting at the Armour Mission in Chicago. He then worked as a draftsman for Burnham and Root, the most prominent architectural firm in the city and one of the most influential firms in the United States during the late nineteenth century. Daniel Burnham, for example, led the architectural team that designed the Chicago World’s Fair of 1893. From 1891 to 1894, William went to Denver where he worked as Carr’s associate to prepare plans for and supervise the construction of the Dennis Sheedy mansion. William returned to Leavenworth to marry Lillian Kauffman, and their son Myron was born in Denver in 1893.

With his experience in the Chicago school of architecture, William brought an understanding of the most up-to-date styles and practices to his hometown when he returned. As Leavenworth entered a period of economic and social maturity, William became the most prominent and trusted local architect in Leavenworth from about 1895 to 1930. Reportedly, he also drew plans for buildings in Omaha, Seattle, and Kansas City. As one journalist concluded, “William P. Feth has left an imprint on Leavenworth that will not be effaced for many generations yet to come. From his German-trained father he inherited the instinct of doing whatever he undertook in a workman-like manner.”

Schools, churches, public, commercial, and residential buildings were the lasting contributions that the Feths gave to Leavenworth. Only a few of the most significant examples can be described in this brief summary. The evidence for William’s return to Leavenworth is based on his drawings, dated 1895, for the Nathaniel H. Burt House. This commission established William as an architect in Leavenworth. Influenced by his work for Burnham and Root, his earliest known designs are Romanesque in form and massing. William added ornament from the Queen Ann style to the Sheedy Mansion in Denver and features from the Colonial Revival style to the Burt House. Irregular in form with a three-bay front and a large projecting rounded center bay, the Burt House is the most intact residential building in Leavenworth representing the Richardsonian Romanesque style. It was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1987.

The Sybil Harvey House (1902), another Romanesque-eclectic composition, is one of William’s finest buildings. The house combines Romanesque brick masonry with Queen Anne and Classical Revival details. Frederick Harvey commissioned this residence for his daughter Sybil. Fred Harvey established the Harvey House chain of restaurants that were located along the line of the Santa Fe Railroad and earned a national reputation for quality food and service. Harvey died in 1901 before the house was completed. Sybil Harvey remained in the family mansion across the street with her widowed mother, even after marrying banker Sylvester Parker in the 1920s.

The Otto Lambert House (ca. 1905) is an example of the Colonial Revival style that illustrates William’s proficiency in the range of styles becoming popular in the early twentieth century. Colonial Revival details include a large ell porch supported on rectangular brick piers and wooden columns, pedimented porticoes over the front entrance and side porch bay, and a front bay window on the second floor surmounted by an elaborately detailed recessed wall dormer. Lambert established the headquarters of the Lambert Lumber Company in Leavenworth, and William also designed the downtown lumber company office (ca. 1904) with modest Classical Revival features. Just a generation later, William’s son Myron designed a Tudor Revival house (ca. 1930) for Walter and Alice Lambert.

Designing the Burt House quickly attracted other clients to William Feth. Besides the fine residences, he also designed prominent commercial and institutional buildings. The Espenscheid Building in the Leavenworth Downtown Historic District, now known as the AXA Building, has an ornate façade with eclectic stylistic details. The main façade on Fifth Street has two sections, connected on the first floor by a semicircular arched masonry opening over the main entrance. Paired bay windows with elaborate Classical Revival detailing, surmounted by a projecting segmental arched molding, accentuate the second floor. The building has an ornamental cornice with paired brackets and a dentil eave molding. Constructed in 1905 for Charles Espenscheid, a St. Louis investor, it had space for five stores and 26 offices on the second floor.
In 1908, William designed the only “skyscraper” in downtown Leavenworth, utilizing the skills in planning multi-story buildings learned in the office of Burnham and Root. The J. W. Crancer Building in the Leavenworth Downtown Historic District is a six-story brick building with a modestly ornamented three-bay Commercial style front. Early in the twentieth century, this business was the largest fabricator of metal products west of the Mississippi. Later, the company sold hardware, cutlery, and sporting goods. The Montgomery Ward department store occupied the building from 1930 to 1970.

The Leavenworth High School (constructed in 1904 and burned in 1932), the design and rebuilding of the Leavenworth County Courthouse in 1911-1912, and the 1924 City Hall were William’s most important design projects in the early twentieth century.

The Courthouse burned on March 22, 1911, due to faulty wiring. The fire gutted the three-story brick Second Empire-
There are two-story pedimented porticoes with Ionic columns accentuating the primary north and south entrances and one-story porticoes on the east and west entrances. The building is listed in the National Register as part of the “Historic County Courthouses of Kansas” multiple property listing.

The Leavenworth City Hall is the most significant building designed by Feth and Feth as an architectural team. Completed in 1925, it was described in 1927 as representing the “ultra in municipal buildings.” As a journalist described, “the architecture, perfected by Feth and Feth, a well-known Leavenworth firm, in 1924, is classical. The building itself is constructed of reinforced concrete with terrazzo corridors.” The building housed all the offices of the city administration, police and fire departments, and the offices of the municipal water plant. On the second floor was an auditorium with a seating capacity of 600 that was used for “all larger social and business meetings in Leavenworth.” The south front has a formal entrance with pilaster defining the bays. There is a central projecting bay in the west front with an entrance surmounted by a bracketed cornice and flanked by two-story Ionic columns. A wide entablature and projecting cornice accentuate the cave that has a brick parapet.

Because of the economic Depression beginning late in 1929, the demand for architectural design and planning declined sharply, and William retired in 1930. Myron continued to work on institutional buildings and residences until he joined the U.S. Army in 1942. After leaving the service, Myron worked for the Post Engineers at Fort Leavenworth. He planned building programs as a civilian employee until he retired in 1963.

One of the residences that Myron designed in 1929, the E. W. Geiger house, is a well-preserved example of the Tudor Revival style. The Geiger House has a main block with a high gable roof and a projecting hip-roofed wing to the east. The wing has half-timbering, and there is an ornamental entry and a prominent exterior chimney with a rough-cut stone base and ornamental chimney top.

Two of the main commissions that Myron carried out in the 1930s were the new Leavenworth High School and the Leavenworth County Jail. The original high school designed by his father burned on January 29, 1932. Citizens quickly approved a bond issue to replace it, and a new 800-student building was completed one year later. The firm of Felt, Dunham, and Kriehn of Kansas City was the main designer, with Feth and Hazelwood serving as associate architects. Relatively unornamented, the brick Tudor Revival building features a few Jacobethan details. The County Jail, a later project designed by Myron, showed his assimilation of the Modern style into his repertoire. The building was completed in 1939 after voters approved the construction of a new jail. The Public Works Administration contributed $59,400, and the county paid $72,600 for the total cost of the building located directly east of the County Courthouse. The brick jail has a raised basement, a flat roof, and a stepped parapet. Projecting bays articulate the main façade and outline the central entrance. Above the entrance, there is an ornamental panel with modernistic detailing.

After the Depression and World War II, American architecture entered a new period of expression. Leavenworth experienced relatively slow economic growth, and Myron chose to end his career at Fort Leavenworth rather than revive his practice as an independent architect. The end of Myron’s career as an independent architect signaled the end of an era in Leavenworth. Beginning with Myron’s grandfather Philip in the mid-nineteenth century, the Feth family contributed to the growth of Leavenworth’s built environment through the community’s key developmental years. One would be hard pressed to find another father-son architectural team that has had greater impact on a single Kansas community than William and Myron Feth of Leavenworth. They have made a significant contribution to the community and, in designing Leavenworth, to the architectural history of the state of Kansas.
Since 1977, owners of historic commercial properties throughout the United States have utilized federal rehabilitation tax credits. In 2001, the State of Kansas created a companion state rehabilitation tax credit for commercial as well as non-commercial historic properties within the state. Many readers may witness rehabilitations of historic buildings within their communities and never realize that these tax credit programs play a key role in funding the work.

As a case study, we will explore the history and rehabilitation of the Burlington Carnegie Library in Burlington, Kansas. The library was constructed circa in Burlington, the seat of Coffey County. The architectural firm George P. Washburn & Son of Ottawa designed the one-story, red brick Neo-Classical building sitting atop a basement and foundation of Cottonwood Falls limestone. The library features a hipped roof that originally sported clay tile shingles with decorative tile ridge caps. A pedimented front entry pavilion is centered on the symmetrical front façade and is accessed by limestone steps. Cast iron light posts with milk glass globes originally flanked the entry. The windows are simple double-hung wooden units. The library’s interior was originally divided into three bays, and it continues to maintain that division. Although the ceilings were covered with acoustical tiles in 1979, all woodwork was left intact.

A library association was organized in Burlington in 1884 and received a $9,656 grant from the Carnegie Corporation Library Building Program in 1911. Carnegie funded 63 such libraries in Kansas during the first three decades of the twentieth century. This was the first library for some communities, although many had book clubs or library organizations well before this program was founded.

At the time of the building’s nomination to the National Register in 1987, the Burlington Carnegie Library was still in use as a library, with the local police department working out of the basement via a rear exterior entrance. The library was nominated to the National Register of Historic Places as part of the Carnegie Libraries of Kansas thematic resources nomination, covering Carnegie Library projects from 1902-1921 throughout the state. This building, along with many other Carnegie libraries across Kansas, is significant for its association with the Carnegie Corporation Library Building Program and for its unique building type and architecture.

As with many other Carnegie libraries, space
shortages forced the local community to decide between an addition to the historic library or building a new library. The community chose a new library, and the Coffey County Library was moved to its current location in 1994. The old Carnegie Free Library in Burlington passed through several hands and various uses, including a dance studio, until 2006 when Gene Merry bought the building with plans to rehabilitate the structure into offices for his company. Merry contacted the Kansas State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) to find out what funding programs might be available to him as owner of such a historic building. Kansas SHPO staff provided information on both the federal and state rehabilitation tax credits programs and helped Merry with the appropriate application forms during the course of his project.

Merry’s plans for the building included repointing the exterior brick, re-roofing the deteriorated composition shingles that had replaced the original clay tiles at some point, reconditioning the box gutters, repairing the foundation, and updating the electrical, plumbing, and heating and air conditioning systems. Appropriate light posts were restored to the top of the exterior front steps. The rehabilitation also included repair and weather stripping of the original wooden windows and storm windows, as well as increasing the insulation in the attic space for improved energy performance. On the interior, the work included refinishing the wooden floors, remodeling basement spaces, restoring the plaster and wood trim in the spaces of the main floor as well as the main entry doors and transom. Non-historic awnings were removed from the windows, the basement vault was preserved, front steps were repaired, and all exterior trim was repainted.

The project went very smoothly except for a small misunderstanding about the roof. As mentioned above, the original tile shingles were replaced with asphalt shingles at some point in the building’s history, but the original clay tile ridge caps had been retained. When Merry’s roofing contractor replaced the roof, the clay ridge caps were beyond repair, so they were not replaced. All tax credit projects are reviewed by the SHPO and National Park Service (NPS) to ensure that all work will meet the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation. Standard #6 says, “Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials.” As part of its review of the project for purposes of the federal tax credits, the NPS requested that something resembling the original tile ridge caps be put back on the roof to preserve the character of the original roof design. Merry agreed, and once the new composition material caps were installed, the NPS readily approved his project.

When work was completed in late 2006, the project totaled $51,443 in expenses, qualifying for both state and federal rehabilitation tax credits. Because the federal tax credit is equal to 20 percent of those expenses and the state tax credit is equal to 25 percent, the project received approximately $23,149 in state and federal income tax credit to be used by the property owner. That is nearly half of the project’s qualifying costs!

These programs, along with the Heritage Trust Fund grant and the soon-to-be-implemented Partnership Historic Site contribution tax credit program, make Kansas one of the most progressive states in the nation for historic preservation incentives. For more information on any of the programs administered by the Kansas SHPO, please contact us at 785-272-8681 ext. 240 or cultural_resources@kshs.org.

Additional information:
skyways.lib.ks.us/carnegie/page31.html - The Carnegie Legacy in Kansas by Allen Gardiner
www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/tax/index.htm - Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credit website by the National Park Service
www.kshs.org/resource/grantsincentives.htm - Grants and Incentives for Historic Preservation by the Kansas Historical Society
In September, the Cultural Resources Division (CRD) staff traveled to Coronado Heights near Lindsborg to survey the site’s historic structures and assess its potential eligibility for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Until recently, CRD files lacked comprehensive documentation about this important New Deal-era site. The group met with representatives of the Smoky Valley Historical Association, including Chester Peterson, Dr. Duane Fredrickson, Lenora Lyman, and John Burger, preservation planner with the City of Salina. Lyman provided copies of historic photographs of the area that illustrate the changes over time.

The Lindsborg Historical Society established the 16½-acre park in 1920. The stone castle, 15 picnic structures, and restroom atop Coronado Heights were part of a 1936 Works Progress Administration project that also included road grading. The castle was built to resemble a Spanish fortress—an allusion to sixteenth-century explorer Francisco Vásquez de Coronado, who may have visited the vicinity during his search for the fabled Seven Cities of Gold.

CRD staff documented all extant structures and noted their physical conditions through photographs and sketch maps. All structures are made of stone and concrete. Each picnic area features a single table with benches and a grilling oven with a chimney. The castle includes an enclosed area with tables and benches and a second-story observation deck overlooking the surrounding farmland. The site is remarkably intact but is in need of repairs and stabilization. Several of the picnic redoubts that encircle the hillside have completely or partially eroded down the slope. Listing the property in the National Register would make these features eligible for rehabilitation funding through the Heritage Trust Fund program.

The survey outing was successful and yielded valuable information that will be included in CRD files for future reference.

Written by Kim Smith, grants reviewer

This picnic “redoubt” is shown in need of repair to reclaim its scenic beauty.
The view from Coronado Heights in 1948 (left) compared with 2007 (right). A notable change to the property includes the growth of trees and shrubs along the hillside.

The picnic area and view from Dugout 4A.

The south stairs of Coronado Heights.
KPA Announces

The Kansas Preservation Alliance (KPA) recently announced its 2007 list of most endangered historic places. Nominated properties represent important historic resources from around the state that are in jeopardy of being lost if action is not taken soon to save them. This list helps raise awareness about the most critical places in need of saving and the perils they are facing. By raising awareness of these places, the Endangered List has proven to be an effective tool in the fight to save our irreplaceable architectural, cultural, and natural heritage. These properties are threatened by neglect, insufficient funds, inappropriate development, or insensitive public policy. This list is compiled from nominations submitted by the public to the KPA. Selections are based on the significance of the property to the community, state, or nation, as well as the nature and immediacy of the threat to the property, such as development pressure or neglect. Summaries of the endangered places follow.

Fresh Air Baby Camp, Wichita

This Progressive-era building provided a refuge for infants whose health was at risk within the existing hospital system. Community members, principally women, rallied the Wichita community to construct the building and secured local builder George Siedoff to donate the required labor. Prominent local architect Lorenz Schmidt volunteered to design the building specifically to fit its purpose and included a crib room, isolation room, and large windows with screens for ventilation. The design reflects Craftsman and Prairie style influences. The building opened in 1921 and accommodated 20 babies in the summer months. No fees were charged for infant care, as fundraisers were held and memberships sold to cover medical costs.

When Wichita’s Wesley Hospital opened in 1926, the baby camp project was moved to the new facility, thus enabling the program to continue year round. The City leased the airy, well-constructed building to the Wichita-area Girl Scouts for a day camp and troop activity house. In 2001, the Girls Scouts moved from the building, and it now stands vacant. A group of concerned citizens is raising awareness about the building and seeking ideas for future use. The building is listed in the Register of Historic Kansas Places, and the National Park Service is currently reviewing the nomination for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.
**Historic Brick Sidewalks, Manhattan**

Manhattan’s oldest neighborhoods encompass over 100 blocks and retain over half of their original brick sidewalks. These landscape features are about 120 years old and complement and connect the area’s historic Queen Anne-, Second Empire-, Richardsonian Romanesque-, and Craftsman-style homes. Property owners must maintain the city-owned brick sidewalks; however, many people do not have the resources or technical knowledge to properly maintain them. The Manhattan-Riley County Preservation Alliance has featured the sidewalks on tours of endangered resources in the city.

**Security Benefit Association Tower Building, Topeka**

A landmark in the western Topeka skyline, the building was constructed in 1930 to house the Security Benefit Association Hospital. The building’s design was inspired by Independence Hall in Philadelphia and represents collaboration between the Chicago firm Schmidt, Garden and Martin and Topeka architect Walter E. Glover. In 1961, the Menninger Foundation purchased the building for use as a treatment and research facility. Menninger relocated in 2003, and the Tower building, along with the rest of the campus, became available for sale. In the summer of 2006, vandals broke into the vacant building and damaged the windows and interior.

In March 2007, St. Francis Hospital announced plans to purchase the property and develop it as a health park. The Tower Coalition, a group of concerned citizens and preservationists wishing to save the building, is collaborating with St. Francis to find a new use for the historic building. They are working to raise awareness about this Topeka landmark and are confident that it can be feasibly redeveloped and enjoyed by future generations. This building was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on November 30, 2005.

**Colonial Fox Theatre, Pittsburg**

Opened in 1920 as the Colonial Theatre, this Italian Renaissance Revival building features Beaux Arts details and is the only remaining theater in Crawford County from the “Movie Palace” decade of the 1920s. Prominent local builder Asa Messenger modeled the building after a theater in Kansas City, and local craftsmen produced the stone, steel, and woodwork for the building in addition to the ventilation and heating systems.

The theater changed ownership in 1958 and became the Fox Theatre. It provided entertainment for Pittsburg-area residents until it closed in the mid-1980s.

In the spring of 2007, the Colonial Fox Foundation successfully prevented the building from being sold at public auction and now owns the property. With the building safe from demolition, the Foundation is raising money to pay for the purchase and also to renovate the building. The public has responded by supporting numerous fundraising efforts that have included building tours, benefit concerts, and online auctions. The Foundation’s vision is to provide a venue for independent and classic films, as well as live performances. The Colonial Fox Theatre is listed in the Register of Historic Kansas Places and is being considered for listing in the National Register.
Kansas Homesteads, Statewide

The Homestead Act of 1862 made much of Kansas available for settlement. The Act provided farmers with 160 acres of land, provided that they lived on the land for five years and improved it. Many early settlers began in sod houses and then built more permanent frame or stone buildings, depending on available local materials. These agricultural-related properties are often located in areas of the state that have declining populations.

The Tamme Lucken Rewerts Homestead, located in Lydia in Wichita County, is an example of a rural property that began as a 160-acre homestead. In 1887, Rewerts moved his family from Illinois and established the western Kansas farm. Seven years later he gained ownership of the land, and his family continued to farm it until 1967. At that time, the farmhouse, windmill, cellar, and associated outbuildings were abandoned. The buildings exist today in a deteriorated state, and the land around them is leased for farming.

Old Abilene Town, Abilene

Old Abilene Town is an example of an early heritage tourism site founded to help promote the western heritage of the town. Following the national model of Henry Ford’s Greenfield Village, Old Abilene Town represents a collection of buildings that were moved from their original sites in the early 1960s. Though the practice of removing historic buildings from their original contexts is controversial among historic preservationists today, as an outdoor museum Old Abilene Town represents early efforts of community-supported heritage tourism.

Old Abilene Town is a collection of about 20 buildings that includes log cabins, churches, train depots, commercial buildings, and barns. In its heyday, Old Abilene Town treated thousands of visitors to old West shootouts and other lively historical adaptations. Old Abilene Town prospered in its first 20 years until it encountered financial challenges in the late 1970s. Changes in ownership and a plan to move the town closer to Interstate 70 caused community support to wane while the buildings deteriorated. In 2006, Historic Abilene, Inc. reconstituted its board and developed a business plan that includes preserving the historic buildings on site and providing living history programming. Currently the group is raising awareness about the plan and seeking funding sources.

Bethany Place Landscape, Topeka

Founded in the 1860s as the College of the Sisters of Bethany, Bethany Place was the first women’s college in Kansas. Georgia Neese Gray, the first female United States Treasurer, is one of the college’s most notable alumnae. The present-day campus still retains two of the original Gothic buildings, surrounded by a wooded setting with mature trees. As was the practice with most female colleges in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, this landscape served as the backdrop for student meetings, athletic contests, dramas, and other traditions. The Bethany Place landscape serves as a record of its time, place, and use.

Bethany Place is currently used for residences and a conference center for the Episcopal Diocese of Kansas. Bethany Place is threatened by a proposed parking lot for the nearby Grace Cathedral. After the SHPO determined that the proposed lot would “encroach upon, damage or destroy” the Bethany Place site, the owner appealed the decision to the Topeka City Council, which determined there were no “feasible and prudent alternatives” to the proposed project and approved the permit to build the parking lot. The Friends of Bethany Place is seeking to overturn this decision in district court.
Historic barns are a symbol of Kansas’ rural heritage. Among the first permanent buildings that farm families constructed, barns served a variety of functions integral to the survival and success of farms. By documenting and researching the various construction techniques and materials that were used, these vernacular buildings help to tell the agricultural history of Kansas.

Vacancy, development pressures from adjacent cities and towns, and demolition by corporate farms are contributing to the disappearance of barns from the rural landscape at an alarming rate. The State Historic Preservation Office is undertaking a statewide survey of a sample of barns to create a multiple property nomination that will aid in the listing of barns to the National Register of Historic Places. Additionally, the Kansas Barn Alliance has partnered with the Leavenworth County 4-H to pilot a comprehensive farmstead inventory utilizing handheld GPS devices. They also are promoting reuse ideas and highlighting the need for rehabilitation incentives for barns through their website, newsletter, and annual conference.

The phenomenal growth and success of historic preservation in Kansas in the last ten years can be attributed to the Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credits, both at the federal and state levels. These tax credits, administered by the State Historic Preservation Office, have changed historic preservation from something concerned only with “dead, rich white men’s homes” to historic preservation for everyone. Cities and towns across Kansas are seeing their beloved historic properties renovated and converted to new uses that will continue their lives into the next century. By reusing these beautiful buildings, communities are strengthened, and their economic vitality is increased.

Historic preservation has realized most of its successes in urban areas, but the last 20 years have seen a loss in rural population across the country. As a result, historic homesteads and barns across Kansas are threatened through deterioration and neglect. In recognition of this threat, the KPA has listed these resources on its 2007 list of most endangered places. Working with the National Trust for Historic Preservation, which launched a new Rural Heritage Collaborative that focuses on developing a strategy to engage Americans in understanding the importance of rural heritage, the KPA hopes to develop models for successful rural heritage development and rural preservation tools in Kansas.

The KPA invites you to become an advocate for historic preservation in your community. It is the ultimate form of recycling: the time, natural resources, and the craftsmanship and expertise that went into creating historic buildings already have been paid for. Historic preservation should become part of economic planning in every Kansas community. Retaining the beauty and history of our hometowns is important to our humanity, connecting us to place and heritage.

For more information about the Kansas Preservation Alliance, please visit the website at www.kpalliance.org.

Written by Janine Joslin, executive director of Kansas Preservation Alliance
Brenda Spencer of Preservation Planning and Design in Wamego recently completed the fieldwork portion of the statewide Historic Barn Survey. She has surveyed approximately 350 barns, with an average of three barns per county. One of the goals of the survey is to obtain a better understanding of the different Kansas barn types and their distribution in the state. Spencer mentioned three observations from the survey that enlightened her knowledge of Kansas barns:

“I was surprised to discover several historic concrete barns in Kansas, including one that still had the original block-making machine inside. It was also interesting to find bank barns, which are typically associated with northeast Kansas, in every part of the state except the extreme southwest. Finally, I had expected to find more barns constructed from standardized plans, especially since the Kansas State Agricultural College (now Kansas State University) was publishing plans as early as 1912. Instead, it appears that most farmers built or customized their barns to suit their own particular needs.”

Written by Laura Waggoner, survey coordinator
Spencer also remarked that the Historic Barn Survey has made for a fascinating learning experience and a memorable tour of Kansas. “Barns in Kansas convey the ingenuity and determination of our ancestors and the rich agricultural heritage on which this state was founded.”

In addition to fieldwork, Spencer is completing the historic context for the Multiple Property Submission (MPS), which will illustrate the history of barns and other agriculture-related resources, such as farmsteads and grain elevators. A multiple property documentation form streamlines the method of organizing information collected through fieldwork and research for future National Register listing and preservation planning purposes. The form also facilitates the evaluation of individual properties by comparing them with resources that share similar physical characteristics and historical associations. Information common to the group of properties is presented in the multiple property document, while information specific to each individual building is placed in an individual registration form.

In the coming weeks, Spencer will evaluate and summarize the survey data and complete the MPS by identifying property types and National Register requirements. The Kansas Historic Sites Board of Review will consider the MPS at an upcoming quarterly meeting, and a detailed report of the results of the survey will be published in *Kansas Preservation* next year.
Thomas A. Witty received the Distinguished Service Award from the Plains Anthropological Society at its annual meeting in Rapid City, South Dakota, on October 12, 2007. Witty served as Kansas State Archeologist at the Kansas State Historical Society (KSHS) for 34 years between 1960 and 1994 (see Kansas Preservation 1994 16(2):3, 9). The Distinguished Service Award recognizes lifetime achievement in Plains-related research, teaching, and scholarship, and service to the profession. Witty received a unanimous vote from the Distinguished Service Award committee because of his many accomplishments and the overwhelming support of his nomination.

Tom Witty was born in Kansas, raised in Nebraska, and received undergraduate and graduate degrees from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Tom’s first day of work as Kansas State Archeologist found him in a tent camp on Hell Creek, Lincoln County, with a crew that he met that day, his wife Mary Anne as cook, and their golden retriever Buck, who served as a goodwill ambassador. This would characterize much of the next decade as Tom went from one project to another, salvaging archeological sites that were about to be destroyed by the many large reservoirs being built in Kansas. As time permitted, he established the KSHS Archeology Office.

His archeological fieldwork led to two series of publications for the academic community that significantly contributed to knowledge of Kansas’ past. Tom also published in journals, such as Plains Anthropologist and The Kansas Anthropologist.

Mindful of the fact that much of the archeological work carried out in Kansas is supported by public funds, he worked on several fronts to provide something in return for the public. These efforts included the development of the Pawnee Indian Village Museum State Historic Site, the restoration of the ruins of El Cuarteledo in Scott State Park, and the development of the Kansas Archeology Training Program (KATP). The KATP includes a 16-day field school geared toward the general public, which features excavation, laboratory work, classes, and evening lectures and activities. He also established the position of Public Archeologist at the Society and brought an important ancestral Wichita site—the

Written by Robert Hoard, Kansas state archeologist
Tobias site in Rice County—under state ownership and protection.

Tom also was instrumental in drafting two pieces of legislation. The first is the Kansas Antiquities Commission Act of 1967 (see Kansas Preservation 2005 27(3):11), and the other is the Kansas Unmarked Burial Sites Preservation Act of 1989 (see Kansas Preservation 1989 11(6):3 and 2001 23(6):2). Both laws help to preserve Kansas’ archeological sites. The unmarked burial act deserves special attention. It arose in the 1980s when archeologists and American Indians were at odds over the issue of the excavation and study of American Indian burials. This issue raised pitched battles throughout the country, but in Kansas it led to the closing and respectful reburial of a tourist attraction, the Salina Burial Pit, which allowed tourists to see exposed American Indian burials for a fee. It also led to the passage of the unmarked burial law, which preceded a similar federal law, and led to lasting working relationships between archeologists, anthropologists, and American Indians in Kansas.

Tom Witty’s nomination for this prestigious award included many letters of support. These came from fellow archeologists, amateur archeologists, unmarked burial sites board members, and American Indians. Tom, accompanied by his wife Mary Anne, was present to receive his award before the assembled membership of the Plains Anthropological Society. Clearly the award is well deserved.
George J. Remsburg:  
Amateur Historian and Archeological Investigator during an Antiquarian Age

Ever since the first settlers began to pick up spear and arrow points and other artifacts from Kansas soil, there has been a noteworthy curiosity concerning the area’s human antiquity. However, in spite of that long-time interest on the part of the state’s citizens, Kansas did not have a resident professional archeologist until 1937, when the University of Kansas hired Loren C. Eiseley. Since at least the 1880s, the Kansas State Historical Society had been vitally interested, although intermittently, in that aspect of the state’s past, but it was not until the hiring of a state archeologist, Roscoe H. Wilmeth, in 1957 that the society’s archeological research and corresponding collections became professionally managed. In the few decades prior to the arrival of professional archeologists at various Kansas institutions, discontinuous archeological research also had been conducted by a few in-state paleontologists and historians or by archeologists from out-of-state institutions.

The interested general public was simply curious about these ancient and historic remains. Some wanted to collect artifacts for the sake of a collection, while others seriously wanted to learn about the state’s archeological remains but did not always know quite how, or were unwilling, to go about it in a scientific manner. This was the “antiquarian age” in Kansas archeology. While Kansas lagged behind some other states, in general its story reflects the development of American archeology and its steps toward professionalism.

George J. Remsburg was one of a scant handful of the more conscientious practitioners of the antiquarian movement. He was a newspaperman, a prolific writer, an amateur historian, an excavator of archeological sites, a collector of artifacts, and a person with a genuine appetite for learning. Born in Atchison County on September 22, 1871, Remsburg centered his archeological research in northeast Kansas and to a lesser extent across the Missouri River. Professionally he worked as a reporter for various local newspapers while living in the city of Atchison and later in the nearby small community of Potter. Eventually he became city editor of the Daily Champion and editor of the Missouri Valley Farmer, the area’s largest agricultural magazine at that time. His interests in history and archeology led him to write a number of newspaper and magazine articles on these subjects.

In an effort to learn more, Remsburg became a member of a number of historical, archeological, and collector societies. Among these were the Kansas State Historical Society, Oklahoma Historical Society, Western Historical Society, and International Society of Archaeologists. He served as president of the American Society of Curio Collections in 1902-1903.

Most of Remsburg’s archeological investigations were conducted from approximately 1890 to perhaps as late as 1917. The latter date is when he moved from Kansas. This was a period that also witnessed his gradually failing health. His research located a great number of prehistoric and historic Indian habitation sites (villages and campsites) and burial grounds—a few of which he excavated.

This writer’s personal interest in Remsburg was sparked by recent research concerning his excavation of two adjacent burial mounds, containing layered ossuary remains, on the John J. Ingalls farm estate in Atchison County. Each ossuary layer in both mounds represented the collective (secondary) remains of individuals that initially had been stored elsewhere. According to Remsburg, several of these layers showed evidence of intense heat, and the bones in those particular layers showed considerable evidence of burning.

John Ingalls (1833-1900), a nationally known statesman and United States senator (1873-1891) from Kansas, knew of the mounds on his farm and of Remsburg’s interest in archeology. Apparently Ingalls encouraged Remsburg to investigate the site. On May 16, 1907, seven years after the senator’s death, and at the urging of Ingalls’ son Sheffield, Remsburg and his brother Claude finally got around to the excavation.

That excavation certainly would not begin to meet the standards of a modern archeological excavation. Clearly a tremendous amount of irretrievable archeological information was lost due to the coarse excavation methods and lack of record keeping by the Remsburgs. However, lest we be too hard on the two brothers, we must remember that their antiquated archeological excavation methods may have been as good as or better than those used by many of their contemporaries. Regardless, that does not negate the loss of extremely useful information that would have greatly aided in interpreting the site.

Excavations, whether done by the blunt force of a contractor’s bulldozer, by the unrefined methods of a century ago, or by the careful work of modern archeologists, destroys the archeological information...
“written in the soil.” This loss can be mitigated by careful records (notes, maps, photographs, etc.) that are kept and the field and laboratory methods used, some of which are highly technical, by today’s archeologists and their colleagues in related disciplines. Actually, considering that the excavation was conducted over a century ago, a surprising amount of information on the Ingalls mounds excavation could be gleaned from a long newspaper account written by Remsburg.

Continuing ill health forced Remsburg to curtail his archeological fieldwork. Finally, on the advice of others to improve his health, he moved to Porterville, California, in 1917. Just prior to that move, he donated his pick to the Kansas State Historical Society. In a handwritten letter of September 30, 1917, to William E. Connelley, secretary of the Society at that time, Remsburg stated, “The pick was used by the donor for many years in opening Indian mounds along the Missouri River in Northeastern Kansas and Northwestern Missouri, including the ‘Ingalls Mounds’…” His archeologically active period over, Remsburg spent many remaining years in California until his death on March 25, 1954, at the age of 82.

Remsburg did extensive archival research, combined with some fieldwork, on the Kickapoo tribe of Kansas. He was one of the foremost authorities on that Indian tribe’s early residence in the state. He also did considerable research on the Kansa (Kaw) tribe and self-published a booklet titled, An Old Kansas Indian Town on the Missouri.

Remsburg was clearly held in good esteem by the Society. In an October 24, 1914, letter to Remsburg, Secretary William Connelley stated,

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\text{The Society at the Annual Meeting considered the establishment of an archaeological section or department of the Historical Society. They referred the matter to the Executive Committee with power to act and with instructions to formulate the proper rules and regulations. Mr. George P. Morehouse was added to the Committee for that particular purpose. Prof. Gibbons of Hiawatha, was here when we took the action. You were mentioned many times. You are the most suitable man to have charge of this section. I stated to the Society that you had written me that your health was poor and that you feared you could not do the work. Mr. Morehouse will undertake it if you cannot do so. I told Mr. Morehouse and the Society that we would have the benefit of your advice and experience in any event.}
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In a follow-up letter to Remsburg (November 9, 1914), Connelley indicated that the personnel on the Society’s “Committee of Indian History” were George P. Morehouse, Topeka; Mark E. Zimmerman, White Cloud; and George J. Remsburg, Potter. Connelley continued in this letter, “The duties of your Committee are to search out and preserve the fast vanishing Indian history of this state and to bring to the notice of the Secretary such material as needs the efforts of the Society to procure.” Later, three others were added to the committee. In 1918, Morehouse indicated that Remsburg was one of the two “…most successful recent Kansas archaeologists….”

George Remsburg certainly made a worthwhile contribution to the state’s archeology and history. The Society has on file five boxes of Remsburg’s papers. He kept up a lively correspondence with a number of institutions and fellow antiquarians. His archives suggest that many of his archeological collections from various sites were dispersed among fellow collectors and a few institutions, of which the Society might have been the major single recipient. In another letter to Remsburg, Connelley (April 17, 1916) wrote that he was pleased that Remsburg offered to the Society his collection of “… ancient Indian workshop material” and continued, “Your collection will be the foundation of our archeological work.”

Before his death in California, the “Kansas antiquarian age” was over, and today Remsburg is mostly forgotten by those in the state’s archeological community. Historians and archeologists owe him a debt of gratitude.

George J. Remsburg
State Archeologist Bob Hoard, SHPO
Archeologist Tim Weston, Public Archeologist
Virginia Wulfkuhle, Highway Archeologists
Randy Thies and Tricia Waggoner, and Records
Manager Anita Frank attended the Plains
Anthropological Conference in Rapid City, South
Dakota, October 10-13. Hoard co-authored
(with David Maki of Archaeo-Physics, LLC,
Tod Bevitt of R. C. Goodwin & Associates, and
Scott Brosowske of Courson Oil and Gas) a paper
entitled, “High Resolution Geophysical Survey
Results from the Central Plains.” Wulfkuhle led
an open discussion group on public archeology
with Mike Fosha of the South Dakota State
Historical Society.

Other Kansas presenters were:
Don Blakeslee, Wichita State University, “A
Coronado Campsite in Texas: Structure and
Contexts”
Jim Feagins, “The Burke Site, 14HO317: A
Historic Native American Burial from
Western Kansas”
Steve Holen, Denver Museum of Science and
History, Rolfe Mandel and Jack Hofman,
University of Kansas, “The Kanorado
Paleoindian Locality: New Interpretations
and Radiocarbon Ages”
Mark Latham, Burns & McDonnell, “Artifact and
Feature Variability in Three Smoky Hill Phase
Houses: Archaeology of the Forsberg Site
(14SA420)”
Brice Obermeyer, Emporia State University,
“Delaware Tribe in a Cherokee Nation: The
Case of Misacknowledged Tribes in the Self-
Determination Era”
Donna Roper, Kansas State University, “Engaging
the Question of Shell-Tempered Pottery on
the Central Plains”
Sarah Trabert, Kansas State University, “Steed-
Kisker Ceramics: Analysis of the Scott Site
(14LV1082) Assemblage”
Emily Williams and Jack Hofman, University of
Kansas, “Folsom Evidence in Nebraska”

Written by Virginia A. Wulfkuhle, public archeologist
Many participants enjoyed a pre-conference field trip to the Mammoth Site at Hot Springs, South Dakota, and the Hudson-Meng Bison Kill site near Crawford, Nebraska. Dr. Brian M. Fagan, emeritus professor of anthropology at the University of California-Santa Barbara, gave the banquet address.

KSHS Public Archaeologist Virginia Wulfkuhle participated in the Project Archaeology Coordinators Conference at Crow Canyon Archaeological Center (CCAC) in Colorado, October 29-November 2. Goals of the conference were to build and sustain the national Project Archaeology network of state and regional programs; explore informal archeology educational programming for Project Archaeology; provide a progress report for Project Archaeology: Investigating Shelter; and develop a vision and draft dissemination plan for all Project Archaeology materials. Wulfkuhle assisted in teaching an overview and sampler lesson session on Investigating Shelter. She also serves on the national steering committee.
Happenings in Kansas

Heritage Trust Fund Grant Workshop
January 8, 2008
1:00 p.m.
Kansas History Center
Museum Classrooms
6425 SW 6th Avenue
www.kshs.org

KAA Certification Seminar
February 16 & 17, 2008
8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Burnett Center
Bethany College
Lindsborg, KS
Field and Lab Photography will be taught by Craig Cooper and Timothy Weston.

Shawnee Indian Mission - Santa Fe Celebration
January 28, 2008
10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
3403 West 53rd
Fairway, KS
shawneemission@kshs.org
The event will feature activities, crafts, and speakers related to the Santa Fe Trail and the Mission.

Kaw Mission - Celebrate Kansas! Open House & Kansas Theme Quilt Show
January 29, 2008
10:00 a.m. to 5 p.m.
500 North Mission
Council Grove, KS
kawmission@kshs.org
Guests will be greeted and served refreshments by Friends of Kaw Heritage (FKH) members dressed in period clothing, while enjoying live accordion and fiddle music. The quilt show features hand-stitched quilts that were brought to Kansas by early settlers during Kansas’ territorial period.

Kansas Day Activities
January 29, 2008
Featured at several sites across Kansas including the Kansas Museum of History in Topeka, Kaw Mission in Council Grove, and Pawnee Indian Museum in Republic. See kshs.org/calendar for more information.

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Kansas Museum of History - Backward Glance: Images of Marshall County
Special Exhibit in the Special Gallery
January 11 - February 24, 2008
6425 SW 6th Avenue
Topeka, KS
information@kshs.org
Marysville photographer Omar Hawkins captured everyday images from life in the 1920s and 1930s in Marshall County. Join us to catch a glimpse of his work during this limited-run exhibit in our Special Gallery.

Pawnee Indian Museum - Winter Video Series
January 27, 2008
2:00 p.m. each Sunday
480 Pawnee Trail
Republic, KS
piv@kshs.org
The Great American West is the topic of this season’s videos.

Constitution Hall - Bleeding Kansas 2008 Programs
January 27, 2008
2:00 p.m.
Constitution Hall
319 Elmore
Lecompton, KS
consthall@kshs.org
Lecompton: A National Obsession 1858 - Professor Craig Miner, Wichita State University Department of History

State Historic Preservation Conference
April 24-26, 2008
Hutchinson, KS