

Register of Historic Kansas Places Registration Form

**State Register
Listed
May 13, 2017**



This form is for use in nominating individual properties and districts. The format is similar to the National Register of Historic Places form. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an 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 entries and narrative items on continuation sheets. Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

Historic name Riley County Fair's Floral Hall

Other names/site number The Roundhouse; KHRI #161-3490-00040

Name of related Multiple Property Listing N/A

2. Location

street & number 1101 Fremont Street not for publication

city or town Manhattan vicinity

state Kansas code KS county Riley code 161 zip code 66502

3-4. Certification

I hereby certify that this property is listed in the Register of Historic Kansas Places.

Applicable State Register Criteria: x A B C D

See file.
Signature of certifying official/Title Patrick Zollner, Deputy SHPO

Date

Kansas State Historical Society
State agency

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property
(Check only **one** box)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

<input type="checkbox"/>	private
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

<u>Contributing</u>	<u>Noncontributing</u>	
1		buildings
		district
		site
		structure
		object
1	0	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the State Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Recreation & Culture: Museum (Exhibition Hall)

Health Care: Sanitarium

Government: Fire Station

Government: Government Office

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Other: Community Classroom Space

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Octagonal

Vernacular

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation: Stone: Limestone

walls: Stone: Limestone

roof: Shingle: Asphalt

other:

Narrative Description

Summary Paragraph

Floral Hall is a mid-19th century vernacular stone building, constructed in 1875 as an exhibition hall to accommodate the Riley County Fair.¹ The octagonal stone building is located in the northeast corner of Manhattan's 45-acre City Park (*Figure 1*). The areas north of the structure are fairly open and flat, though dotted with mature shade trees composing occasional areas of dense canopy. Immediately to the south and west are large asphalt parking lots skirting the structure. Central Park Road, following the route of the original racetrack (extant from approximately 1873 to 1919) is approximately 90 feet from the west façade to the eastern most edge of the road.² Approximately 175 feet south of the structure is Wefald Pavilion, built in 2009. Adjacent but not connected to the northwest façade is a freestanding wooden carport/breezeway constructed sometime after 1977 to connect Floral Hall and the old Park and Recreation Offices, about 10 feet northwest of Floral Hall (*Figure 2*). A small CMU shed is about three feet from the west façade of the structure.

Elaboration (*Provide a detailed description of the building's exterior, interior, and any associated buildings on the property. Note any historic features, materials, and changes to the building/property.*)

Floral Hall is a single story, octagonal shaped building, giving it a round appearance. Each of its eight walls is approximately twenty feet in width and nine feet in height. Each wall is approximately perpendicular to a cardinal or intercardinal direction (N, NE, E, SE, S, SW, W, NW). The exterior walls are primarily composed of the original native limestone in fair-to-good condition. The building is fifty feet in diameter and has twelve-foot high walls.³ The conical roof, which was historically covered in wooden shakes, is currently covered with modern asphalt shingles; the historic cupola was removed at an unknown date.⁴

Historically the building had opening for ingress and egress.⁵ It appears that two of these entrances were located on the east and west walls; however, it is unclear where the third opening was located. Photographs from 1977 show a square opening with swinging barn doors on the north side (*Figure 3*); although, it may not have been an original opening. The current south (main) opening also may not have had an original opening. A former opening in the east wall (now blocked with limestone) gives evidence as to what the other two entrances may have originally looked like: a rectangular opening approximately six feet wide and six and one half feet tall with a stone arch bridging the sides of the opening, adding about one foot of clearance (*Photo 2*).

The south entrance, now the only entrance into the building, was either widened or created for a bay door to accommodate vehicles (*Figure 4*). Sometime after 1977 this opening was narrowed to accommodate a pedestrian door, which is now surrounded by board-and-batten (*Photo 1*). A wooden addition built as a storage room between 1991 and 2002 covers what may have been an original opening on the north façade, adding to the original footprint of the building (*Photos 2 & 3*). Square openings on the southwest and east walls appear to have been added after original construction, possibly as window openings, but have since been permanently boarded up (*Photos 1 through 3*). A window AC unit is installed in the southwest façade with a boarded opening (*Photo 1*).

Other exterior alterations are fairly minor and are mostly associated with utilities servicing the building. An electricity pole abuts the south edge of the east wall, piercing through the soffit and jetting through the roof. A series of "I" bolts are scattered around the east and northeast wall – some drilled into mortar joints, some into stone. Many of these bolts appear visible in 1977 photographs. A gas line connected to a gas meter pierces the southeast wall, also shown in 1977 photographs. Two small vents have been added on the roof.

The original interior had a completely open floor plan (being conducive to exhibitions) and featured a center wooden pillar three feet square that supported the roof structure. The interior was extensively modified in 1987 when it was converted to a dance studio, classroom, and storage facility, complete with a bathroom (current use). All finishes on the interior are modern. A wall with a door separates the interior into two spaces, the south half into the dance studio and classroom space and the north half as storage space. A lowered ceiling creates an attic space for additional storage. The original center pillar has been removed and the floor is finished. The historic roof structure can be seen in the attic where heavy wooden beams converge at the center point. Tie rods support the roof structure now.

¹ "The District Fair," *Manhattan Nationalist* (17 Sept. 1875): 3.

² *Manhattan Nationalist* (10 Oct. 1873): 1; Dea Brokesh, "Research on City Properties older than 50 years," 20 March 2015.

³ The District Fair," 3.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ *Manhattan Nationalist* (08 Oct. 1875): 3.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for State Register listing)

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

(Enter categories from instructions)

Entertainment/Recreation

Period of Significance

1875-1887

Significant Dates

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above)

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply)

Property is:

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Period of Significance (justification)

Floral Hall's period of significance covers the years (1875-1887) the building was used as an exhibition hall for the annual Riley County Fair held in Manhattan's City Park.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

N/A

Narrative Statement of Significance

Summary Paragraph

Located at the northeastern corner of Manhattan's City Park, the 1875 Floral Hall was the second such building on the county fairgrounds, replacing an earlier structure destroyed by a storm. The stone building served as an exhibition hall for the Riley County Fair from 1875 to 1887. After 1888 the county's annual fairs were held at new fairgrounds outside of Manhattan. Although the building has been repurposed throughout the decades, Floral Hall is significant for its association with Kansas County Fair heritage during what historian Cathy Ambler calls Kansas' Traditional Era (1854-1900);⁶ it is also the only extant fair structure in City Park.

Elaboration

Kansas Territory was established in 1854, following the Kansas-Nebraska Act, and its land was opened to settlement by Euro-Americans. Riley County was the westernmost of the 33 original counties organized in 1855 by the Kansas Territorial Legislature.⁷ The county was named for Fort Riley, a US Military Reserve west of Manhattan that was established in 1853 to protect commerce and travelers along the overland trails traversing what is now the state of Kansas.⁸

During Kansas' territorial period (1854-1861) leading up to the Civil War, settlers "represented one of two factions."⁹ Historian Sally Schwenk further explains, "Missourians took advantage of the practice of absentee pre-emption claims in an effort not only to gain land cheaply, but also to create a neighboring pro-slavery territory. Emigrant societies originating in the northeastern part of the United States formed to encourage the mass migration of abolitionists to the newly opened Kansas Territory."¹⁰ One such society, the New England Emigrant Aid Society, established three towns within the territory, including what became the city of Manhattan.¹¹ Although its first residents arrived in the fall of 1854, Manhattan was formally incorporated in May 1857 and became the county seat the following September.¹²

Riley County's earliest settlers were drawn to its rich land ideal for agricultural endeavors. When established, 20 per cent of the county's acreage was bottomland due to the presence of two major rivers, the Big Blue and the Kansas, and several smaller, well-watered creeks. According to state historian William Cutler:

The composition of the soil is so varied in its chemical elements that nearly almost everything in the nature of grasses, grains, fruits and vegetables can be produced from it. The dark, easily-worked soil of the bottom-lands is very productive. Its depth, ranging from two to fifteen feet, comparatively makes its fertility inexhaustible. Sand largely predominates over the clayey element, and it very readily admits of drainage, so that it may be said there is next to nothing of stagnation in these bottom-lands of large expanse.¹³

The county's uplands were populated more rapidly after statehood (1861) and the Civil War. This land was said to be bountiful due to the infrequency of early and late frosts and despite "the occasional periods when burning drouths prevail."¹⁴ Riley County's population in 1860 was counted as 1,224; by 1870, the county contained just over 5,100 people, roughly three quarters of whom lived outside of Manhattan.¹⁵

Riley County and Manhattan's agricultural focus was cemented by the establishment in 1863 of the state's first land grant college. The Kansas State Agricultural College (now Kansas State University) was created by the donation of land near Manhattan previously belonging to the Blue Mont College Association. Blue Mont College's trustees, all early Manhattan-area settlers, agreed to donate the land to the State of Kansas, "if by so doing, it could be converted into a State institution, in accordance with [a Congressional] act entitled, An Act donating public lands to the several States and Territories which

⁶ Cathy J. Ambler, "Look at the Fair: Kansas County Fairs, 1854-1994," Ph.D. diss., University of Kansas (1996), 81 [digitized online] KU ScholarWorks <http://hdl.handle.net/1808/10930> (accessed 14 Mar. 2017).

⁷ William Cutler, "Riley County," *History of the State of Kansas* (Chicago: A.T. Andreas, 1883), 1 [transcription online] Kansas Collection Books <http://www.kancoll.org/books/cutler/riley/riley-co-p1.html> (accessed 15 Mar. 2017).

⁸ Today's Fort Riley spans the Riley-Geary county line. "Historic Resources of the Santa Fe Trail," National Register of Historic Places multiple property documentation form, revised (Topeka: Kansas Historical Society, 2012): E-91.

⁹ Sally Schwenk, "Late Nineteenth Century Vernacular Stone Houses in Manhattan, Kansas," National Register of Historic Places multiple property documentation form (Topeka: Kansas Historical Society, 2007): E-3.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, E-3&4.

¹¹ Schwenk, E-4; Cutler, 5.

¹² Cutler, 5.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 1.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ Kansas Historical Society, State Archives records indicate 5105 people were counted in the 1870 federal census; however, William Cutler's population counts 4364 people in the county, with 1173 in Manhattan alone. The difference in numbers may be attributed to the fact that the county's current physical boundaries were finally established in 1873 when new counties were organized, appropriating land formerly part of Riley County.

may provide colleges for the benefit of agriculture and mechanical arts...."¹⁶ Approximately 90,000 acres were included in this land grant, and course work focused on agricultural sciences.

Along with the agricultural college, Manhattan was a center for the county's ag-related organizations and societies. Among these were: Blue Mont Farmers Club (1872); Manhattan Grange No. 748, Patrons of Husbandry (1874); Riley County Horticultural Society (1874); and The Kansas and Blue Valley Poultry and Pet Stock Association (1879). The oldest organization was the Blue and Kansas Valley Agricultural Society, established in 1869, who held the county's annual fairs.

Agricultural societies and their fairs had been a part of Kansas history since 1855. The territorial laws from that year included provisions for these organizations.¹⁷ During the Traditional Era of Kansas' county fairs (1854-1900), "agricultural societies tended to represent gentlemen farmers who used them to demonstrate their virtue and intelligence."¹⁸ Ambler notes that a survey of society members across the state in 1872 showed only five per cent actually called themselves "farmers, breeders, fruit growers or stockmen."¹⁹ The majority of members were known more for their public leadership (mayors, county clerks, district attorneys, etc.) and public service (ministers, newspaper editors, etc.).²⁰ Manhattan's agricultural society was no different.

In order to showcase Riley County's agricultural achievements, the Blue and Kansas Valley Agricultural Society began holding fairs in 1869. In an 1882 article promoting the upcoming fair, the editor of the *Manhattan Nationalist* stated, "The first one [county fair] was held on the two lots where now stand the opera house and Kimble Pump Co.'s works, and the Presbyterian church was used for a Floral Hall."²¹ Leading up to the 1871 fair, articles appeared in the *Manhattan Nationalist* exhorting Manhattanites to support the purchase of county fairgrounds within Manhattan and not let other county towns gain the annual fair. "Manhattan started this association and her people will not be wise if they allow it [to] be captured by another place."²² The Blue and Kansas Valley Agricultural Society needed at least 30 acres, and by September 1871, the society procured a lease from the city to use Manhattan Park (*Figure 5*).²³ This 45-acre park (now known as City Park) was intentionally created within the city's 1857 town plat; Manhattan was one of a few Kansas towns that reserved centrally located blocks for parks.²⁴

Floral Halls were common elements to fairs during the Traditional Era, as they provided protected exhibition space in which to showcase produce and other goods. County fairs of this era were intended to showcase the success of farmers in order to advertise the towns and land within the county. "The agricultural elite, along with community merchants, used Kansas fairs to help market land and to sell products and goods in an increasingly industrialized and market driven economy."²⁵ The farmers took advantage of the socialization and educational opportunities offered by the fairs. This was a reciprocal event.²⁶ The first Floral Hall on City Park's fairground was constructed in 1871 in time for that year's fair.²⁷ The city council approved a special ordinance appropriating \$250 (\$5,085 in 2016) to the Blue and Kansas Valley Agricultural Society for the construction of such a building.²⁸ Although the construction material of this building is unknown, it was briefly described as a 60'x80' Greek cross shape with four entrances.²⁹

Despite the Riley County Fair's popularity, the stakeholders of the Blue and Kansas Valley Agricultural Society voted in 1873 to dissolve. Although not explicitly stated in available newspapers, previous years' fairs appear not to have raised enough money to cover expenses. On June 7 "it was resolved to transfer to a Joint Stock Company, the lease of grounds, buildings, and other property of the Society, on condition that the said Joint Stock Company pay the debt of the Society" to

¹⁶ Cutler, 6.

¹⁷ Ambler, 82.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 83.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ "The Fair Boom," *Manhattan Nationalist* (10 Aug. 1882): 1. The Moore's Opera House was where the Wareham Theater is now located, 410 Poyntz Ave; Kimble's Pump Company was located next door where the Strecker-Nelson Gallery is now (408 Poyntz Ave). The Presbyterian Church referred to was located at the southwest corner of 4th & Poyntz, now occupied by a mid-century commercial building (Source: 1885 Sanborn map).

²² "Fair Grounds," *Manhattan Nationalist* (3 Feb. 1871): 2.

²³ "Fair Grounds," *Manhattan Nationalist* (24 Feb. 1871): 2; "Our Approaching Fair," *Manhattan Nationalist* (1 Sept. 1871): 2.

²⁴ "Kansas Preservation Plan Study Unit on the Period of Exploration and Settlement (1820s-1880s)," 55.

²⁵ Ambler, 179.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ An article in the September 20, 1872 *Manhattan Nationalist* states, "Floral Hall was not packed and jammed full of articles as it was last year," indicating this building was constructed in time for the 1871 fair.

²⁸ "Ordinance No. 28," *Manhattan Nationalist* (22 Sept. 1871): 2.

²⁹ "Riley County Fair," *Manhattan Nationalist* (10 Oct. 1873): 1; "A Heavy Wind and Rain Storm," *Manhattan Beacon* (10 Jun. 1874): 3

a gentleman who lent the society \$600 (over \$12,000 in 2016).³⁰ Capital for Kansas county fairs were commonly raised through the sale of stocks, and most stockholders, like in Manhattan, were “merchants, businessmen, and landowners.”³¹ Often, however, not enough stocks were sold, virtually bankrupting the fair organizations. New agricultural organizations were then chartered to pick up the task of advertising counties through their annual fairs. This pattern of reorganization appears to have been typical during this period of county fair history.³² One week after the dissolution of the Blue and Kansas Valley Agricultural Society, the Joint Stock Company organized as the Riley County Agricultural Society, and the county's annual fair was once again held in City Park at the end of September 1873.³³

As the new purveyor of the county fair, the Riley County Agricultural Society was busy in 1874. In April they negotiated with the city to acquire a ten-year lease of City Park for continued use as the county fairgrounds.³⁴ By June the society was in need of a new Floral Hall. A heavy storm passed through Manhattan, destroying the 1871 hall and several other buildings in town.³⁵ The Saturday following the storm, the society's stockholders met at the fairgrounds “to consider the re-building of the Floral Hall.”³⁶ Secretary J.Q.A. Shelden reported, “It was decided to put the building a little farther north than the old one, and on higher ground. It was also decided to put up an octagon building, twenty feet wide on each of the eight sides, and ten feet high under the eaves [sic].”³⁷ The new building was expected to be constructed of stone and contain twice as much space as the previous building.³⁸ The octagonal exhibition hall was a common building type for floral halls; however, most were of wooden construction.³⁹ The use of stone for Manhattan's new building can be attributed mostly to the regional prevalence of the building material. The society's board of directors asked the city for funds to help with the construction of the new Floral Hall. In July 1874 funds in the amount of \$300 (roughly \$6,500 in 2016) were appropriated to the Riley County Agricultural Society to aid in the endeavor, supported by 287 city taxpayers who signed a petition in favor of the funding.⁴⁰ Due to the timeframe needed to plan and construct a new building, the Riley County Agricultural Society voted not to hold a fair in the fall of 1874.⁴¹

The stone Floral Hall was constructed in September 1875.⁴² Reporting in the September 10 issue of the *Manhattan Nationalist*, the newspaper editors reported:

Our Agricultural Fair, which is to come off on the last of this month, is bound to be a success. The new Floral Hall is being pushed forward as rapidly as possible. It is to be of stone, octagon in shape, fifty feet in diameter, with twelve foot story and cupola. The revenue necessary for its construction raised by assessment upon the shares and by subscription. Many having subscribed work. It is to be hoped such as have done so will come to time promptly, as they are needed. A large portion of the stone, we understand, has been contributed.⁴³

Ready in time for the 1875 fair, the new Floral Hall housed fine arts, household articles, and vegetables. Following the fair, the newspaper editors extolled the event's success, including a detailed description of Floral Hall's exhibits:

The arrangement of the articles displayed good taste. The flowers were in the center of the building and arranged in pyramid shape, a century plant on the apex. There were geraniums in bloom, foliage plants of all colors and variety, lemon and orange trees, cotton plants, fuchsias, China tree from Texas, oleander trees, vines, and cut flowers in abundance.⁴⁴

Other items on display included exotic plants, embroidered quilts, paintings, and even a rare coin collection.⁴⁵

Floral Hall continued to serve as the only exhibition hall on the fairgrounds throughout the 1870s-80s. In 1877, the building was remodeled to better accommodate exhibitions,⁴⁶ and the 1879 fair was deemed to be one of the best so far hosted in the county.⁴⁷ By 1880 the town's population included over 2,100 people, and the county had over 10,400 people. The

³⁰ “Preliminaries to a Fair,” *Manhattan Nationalist* (13 Jun. 1873): 2.

³¹ Ambler, 84.

³² *Ibid.*, 84-85.

³³ “Agricultural Society Meeting,” *Manhattan Nationalist* (20 Jun. 1873): 2; “Prices of Admission to Riley County Agricultural Society's Fair,” *Manhattan Nationalist* (26 Sept. 1873): 3.

³⁴ “Agricultural Society,” *Manhattan Nationalist* (17 Apr. 1874): 3.

³⁵ “A Heavy Wind and Rain Storm,” 3.

³⁶ “New Floral Hall,” *Manhattan Nationalist* (19 Jun. 1874): 3.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ Ambler, 181.

⁴⁰ City Council Minutes July 7, 1874, 11; “City Council Proceedings,” *Manhattan Nationalist* (10 Jul. 1874): 3.

⁴¹ *Manhattan Nationalist* (14 Aug. 1874): 3.

⁴² “The District Fair,” 3.

⁴³ “Our Agricultural Fair,” *Manhattan Nationalist* (10 Sept. 1875): 3.

⁴⁴ *Manhattan Nationalist* (08 Oct. 1875): 3.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ “Let everyone help make fair success,” *The Nationalist* (21 Sept. 1877): 1.

⁴⁷ “The Riley County Fair,” *Manhattan Nationalist* (17 Oct. 1879): 2.

county contained several improved farms, pastures, and orchards and was “noted for shorthorn herds and fine horses as well as its pure-blood Berkshire and Poland China swine.”⁴⁸ There were many agricultural products to be showcased at the fairs.

In April 1880 the agricultural society again reorganized, taking back the name Blue and Kansas Valley Agricultural Society. The society's new bylaws stated that they were “organized for the purpose of promoting the interests of Agriculture, Horticulture, the Mechanic Arts, and Stock Raising.”⁴⁹ The society appears to have been successful at this mission because that fall, the fair received the state's Blue Ribbon (*Figure 6*) and:

...a premium of \$1,000, from the Western National Fair Association at the Bismarck fair ground for the county in Kansas, making the fullest and best general display of its products at its fair, eight counties entering the list of competitors: Apples of 100 varieties; pears, 20; grapes, 12; peaches, 9; Irish potatoes 16; squashes, 11; beets, 8; peppers, 6; turnips and sweet potatoes, each 5; pumpkins, 4; tomatoes, 3; wheat, 26; corn, 12; oats, 6; rye, 3; native woods, 33; specimens of stuffed birds, 88; of animals, 17; fine specimens of Riley County magnesia limestone. There were 60 choice hogs, 32 head of cattle, 17 horses, 40 coops of poultry. All these and immensely more of various specimens were on exhibition.⁵⁰

The fair at Bismarck Grove, Douglas County, was sponsored by the Kansas Pacific Railroad and highlighted exhibitions from county fairs held in the eastern part of the state.⁵¹ Riley County's entry to the Western National Fair highlighted the exhibits and agricultural products that had been displayed at their 1880 county fair. The winning of the Western National Fair Blue Ribbon appears to have been the greatest achievement of the annual fairs held in City Park. In the years following 1880, the city's newspapers lamented the low attendance at and the lack of effort put into the fairs by the citizenry. Floral Hall's last use as an exhibition hall for the county fairs was in the fall of 1887.

In January 1888 the Blue and Kansas Valley Agricultural Society stockholders announced that they were no longer going to host a fair. As Ambler writes:

Fair corporations did not intend to pay dividends, but stockholders hoped that their corporations would remain solvent. Burdened by the cost of creating permanent fairgrounds and buildings, though, expenses frequently exceeded incomes. Stockholders, merchants and other members of the business sector underwrote their fairs for as long as they could, but debts still had to be paid.⁵²

The Blue and Kansas Valley Agricultural Society announcement states that “On account of the proximity of the great fairs at Topeka, Bismarck Grove, and Kansas City the fairs held by the Blue and Kansas Valley Fair Association for the past several years has not paid expenses, and each year the association [members are] becoming deeper involved....”⁵³ They further resolved to auction off all buildings – including Floral Hall – and property the society owned to reimburse their directors and to donate any additional profits to the city to improve city park; the directors also voted to cancel the lease agreement with the city that allowed them to hold the fair in the park.⁵⁴ No fair was held in 1888. In the fall of 1889, however, the town of Riley, 20 miles to the northwest of Manhattan, began hosting the annual fairs, apparently without the aid of the Blue and Kansas Valley Agricultural Society.

After the county fair left City Park, its grounds and Floral Hall were repurposed by the city. In the 1890s Floral Hall was appropriated as a station house for the Manhattan Fire Department. Fire engines were drawn by horse teams during that time, and it was likely the structure was repurposed to house them until a fire station was constructed elsewhere in town.

In 1909, Floral Hall operated as a quarantine shelter. Smallpox appeared that spring among many Kansas State Agricultural College student boarding houses and clubs in the city. There were about 2,000 students at the college at the time. The contagion spread rapidly, and when no facilities could be obtained by the Board of Health to control it with any quarantine regulations or isolation, Floral Hall was temporarily appropriated by the city to house 12 guarded patients. County attorney and State Senator John E. Hessin resided in 519 N. 11th St. at the time, just 500 feet from Floral Hall. Fearing the contagion, Hessin obtained a temporary order of injunction from the district court prohibiting further relocation of patients and requiring the removal of those housed at Floral Hall. The city appealed and the case went before the Kansas Supreme Court where Hessin's injunction was ruled improper and erroneous and was overruled.⁵⁵

⁴⁸ Schwenk, E-12.

⁴⁹ “The Agricultural Society,” *Manhattan Nationalist* (16 Apr. 1880): 2.

⁵⁰ Cutler, 6.

⁵¹ Ambler, 128.

⁵² Ambler, 140.

⁵³ “B. & K.V. Agricultural Society,” *Manhattan Nationalist* (13 Jan. 1888): 1.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ Hessin v. Manhattan 16 KS 409 (1909).

Shortly before World War One, Floral Hall became a recreational facility outfitted with a bathroom for a summer program involving school aged children. The program was run by Malcolm Aye, a prominent local rancher and owner of the Aye Ranch. It also served the equipped playground constructed in 1911 in the northeast corner of the park perhaps as a kind of shelter house through the mid-1940s.⁵⁶ In some historic maps it is labeled as "Barn/Restroom" (1918-1932) and "BARN and TOOL Ho[use]" (1937) (*Figure 7*). Later, it became part of the Manhattan City Park Department maintenance shops, certainly by 1955 when the shops were constructed adjacent to it and after the playground was removed. In approximately 1987 the interior was renovated and finished to accommodate a dance studio, classroom, and storage space for the Parks and Recreation Department as it remains today.

Since 1875 Manhattan's Floral Hall has been used for several public-oriented purposes. The most significant, and the reason it was constructed, is its use as the sole exhibition hall for the annual county fair until that function ceased in 1887. Although altered since 1887, this building stands as a testament to the history of county fairs in Riley County, being the oldest extant fair building in the county.

⁵⁶ Gibbs, Frank, City Park Historic Timeline, January 2011.

9. Major Bibliographical References

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

Ambler, Cathy J. "Look at the Fair: Kansas County Fairs, 1854-1994." Ph.D. diss., University of Kansas (1996) [digitized online] KU ScholarWorks <http://hdl.handle.net/1808/10930> (accessed 14 Mar. 2017).

Brokesh, Dea. "Research on City Properties older than 50 years." Unpublished. March 20, 2015.

City Council Minutes. July 7, 1874.

Cutler, William. "Riley County." *History of the State of Kansas*. Chicago: A.T. Andreas, 1883. [transcription online] Kansas Collection Books <http://www.kancoll.org/books/cutler/riley/riley-co-p1.html> (accessed 15 Mar. 2017).

Gibbs, Frank. "City Park Historic Timeline." January 2011.

Hessin v. Manhattan 16 KS 409 (1909).

Kansas Historical Society. "Historic Resources of the Santa Fe Trail." National Register of Historic Places multiple property documentation form, revised. Topeka: Kansas Historical Society, 2012.

"Kansas Preservation Plan Study Unit on the Period of Exploration and Settlement (1820s-1880s)," 55.

Manhattan Beacon (June 10, 1874).

The Manhattan Mercury (October 7, 1891).

Manhattan Nationalist, 1871 through 1888.

Schwenk, Sally. "Late Nineteenth Century Vernacular Stone Houses in Manhattan, Kansas." National Register of Historic Places multiple property documentation form. Topeka: Kansas Historical Society, 2007.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one

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)

1	<u>39.182879</u>	<u>-96.573743</u>	3	_____	_____
	Latitude:	Longitude:		Latitude:	Longitude:

2	_____	_____	4	_____	_____
	Latitude:	Longitude:		Latitude:	Longitude:

Verbal Boundary Description (describe the boundaries of the property)

The boundary of the property is the envelope of the Floral Hall building.

Boundary Justification (explain why the boundaries were selected)

Floral Hall's surroundings have been altered substantially since its period of significance with the addition of the maintenance shops and parking lot surrounding it. No other features near the building are contributing.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Ben Chmiel, Planner & Amanda K. Loughlin, KSHS
organization City of Manhattan (Community Development) date March 2017
street & number 1101 Poyntz Avenue telephone (785) 587-2438
city or town Manhattan state KS zip code 66502
e-mail Chmiel@cityofmhk.com

Property Owner:

name City of Manhattan
street & number 1101 Poyntz Avenue telephone (785) 587-2438
city or town Manhattan state KS zip code 66502

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: Floral Hall
City or Vicinity: Manhattan
County: Riley State: Kansas
Photographer: Amanda K. Loughlin, KSHS
Date Photographed: March 2, 2017

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

- 1 of 8:** Looking NE at the SW & S elevations
- 2 of 8:** Looking W at SE, E, & NE elevations
- 3 of 8:** Looking S at NE & N elevations
- 4 of 8:** Looking NNW from south entry door
- 5 of 8:** Looking NW at dance area in west part of hall, view from near entry
- 6 of 8:** Looking NE at rooms in NE corner of hall
- 7 of 8:** Historic support columns
- 8 of 8:** Attic structure

Figures

Include GIS maps, figures, scanned images below.

Figure 1. Aerial image showing City Park in context (Source: City of Manhattan).

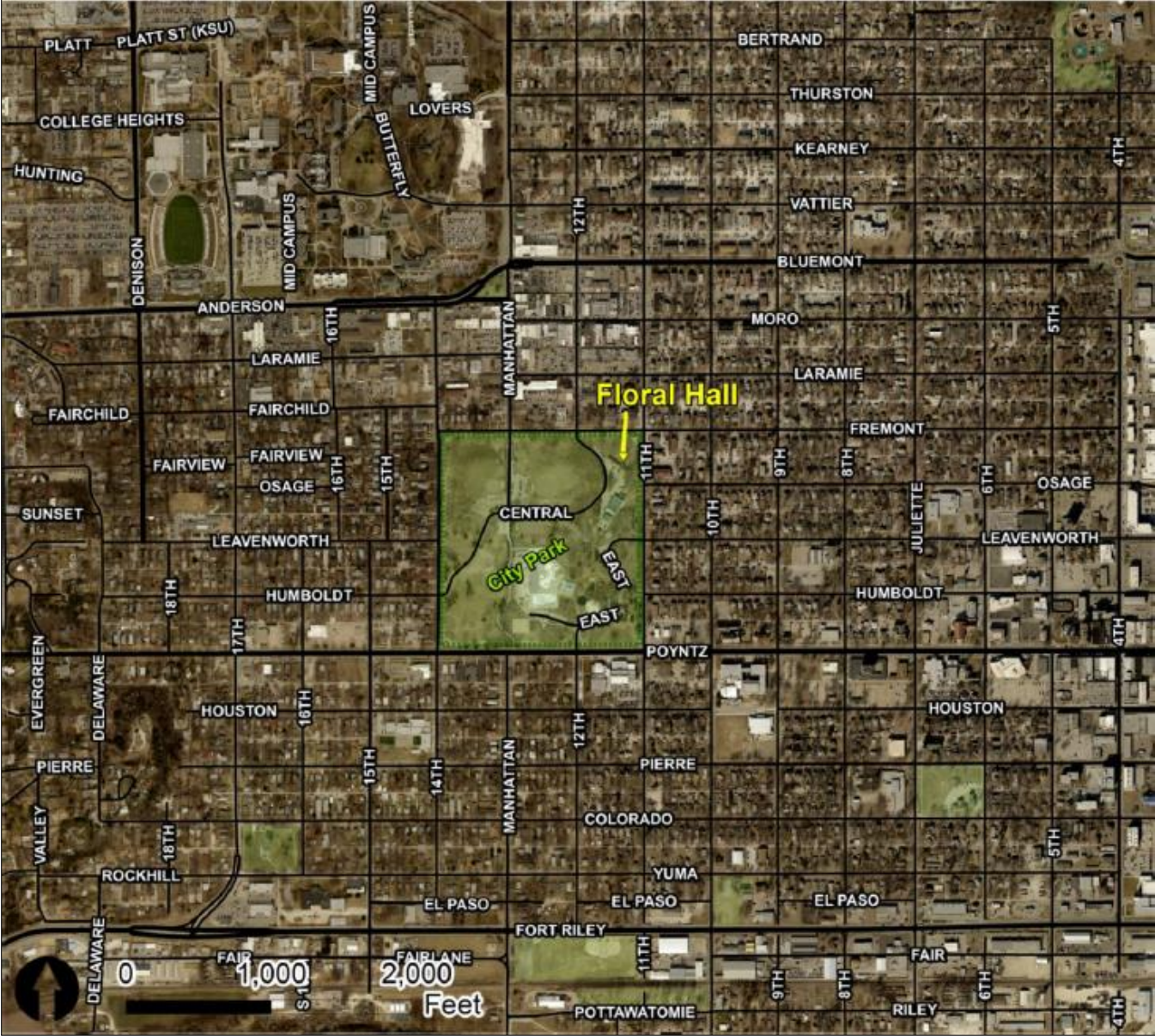


Figure 2 (Boundary Map). Aerial image showing Floral Hall (Source: City of Manhattan).



Riley County Fair's Floral Hall
Name of Property

Manhattan, Riley County
City and County

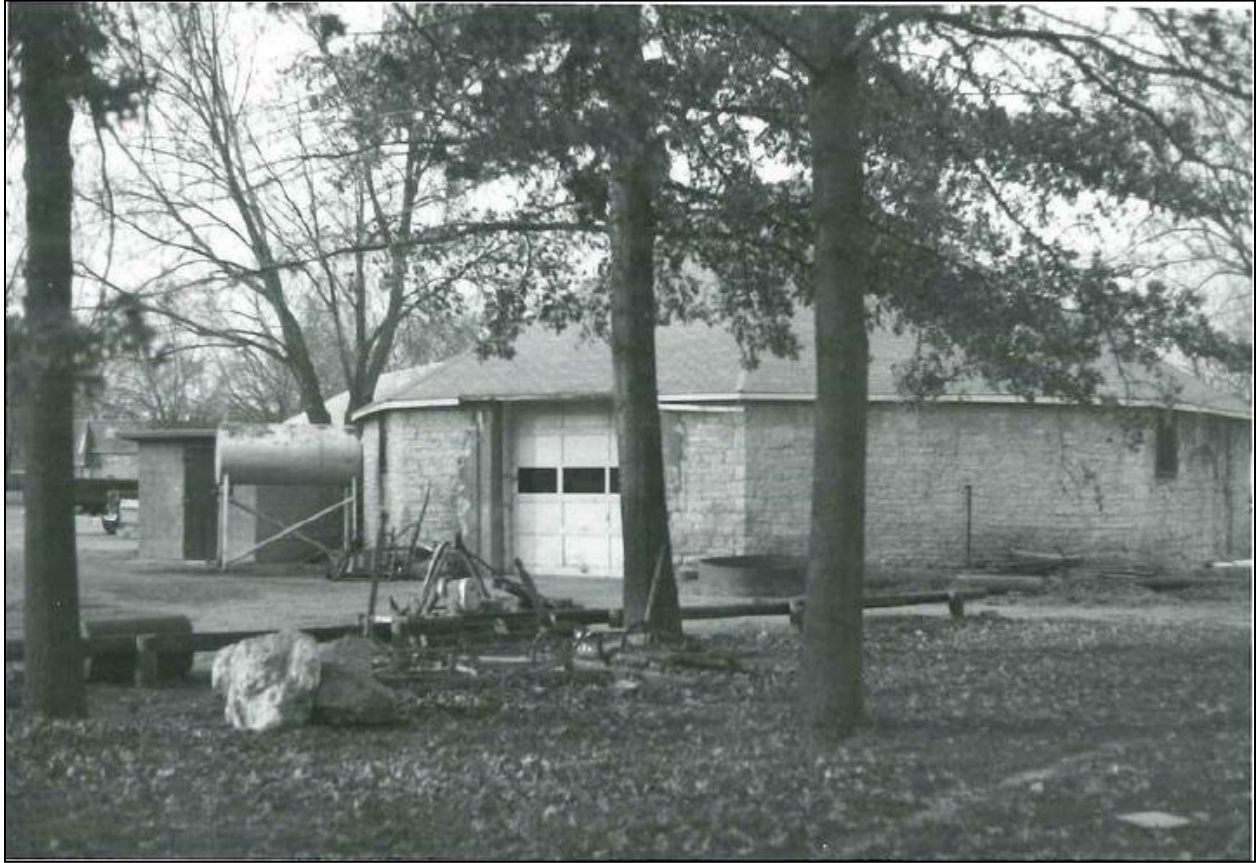
Figure 3. East (left), northeast (center), and north (right) facades, 1977 (Source: KSHS).



Riley County Fair's Floral Hall
Name of Property

Manhattan, Riley County
City and County

Figure 4. South (left) and southeast (right) facades, 1977 (Source: KSHS).



Riley County Fair's Floral Hall
Name of Property

Manhattan, Riley County
City and County

Figure 5. 1879 County Atlas (Source: O.W. Gray).

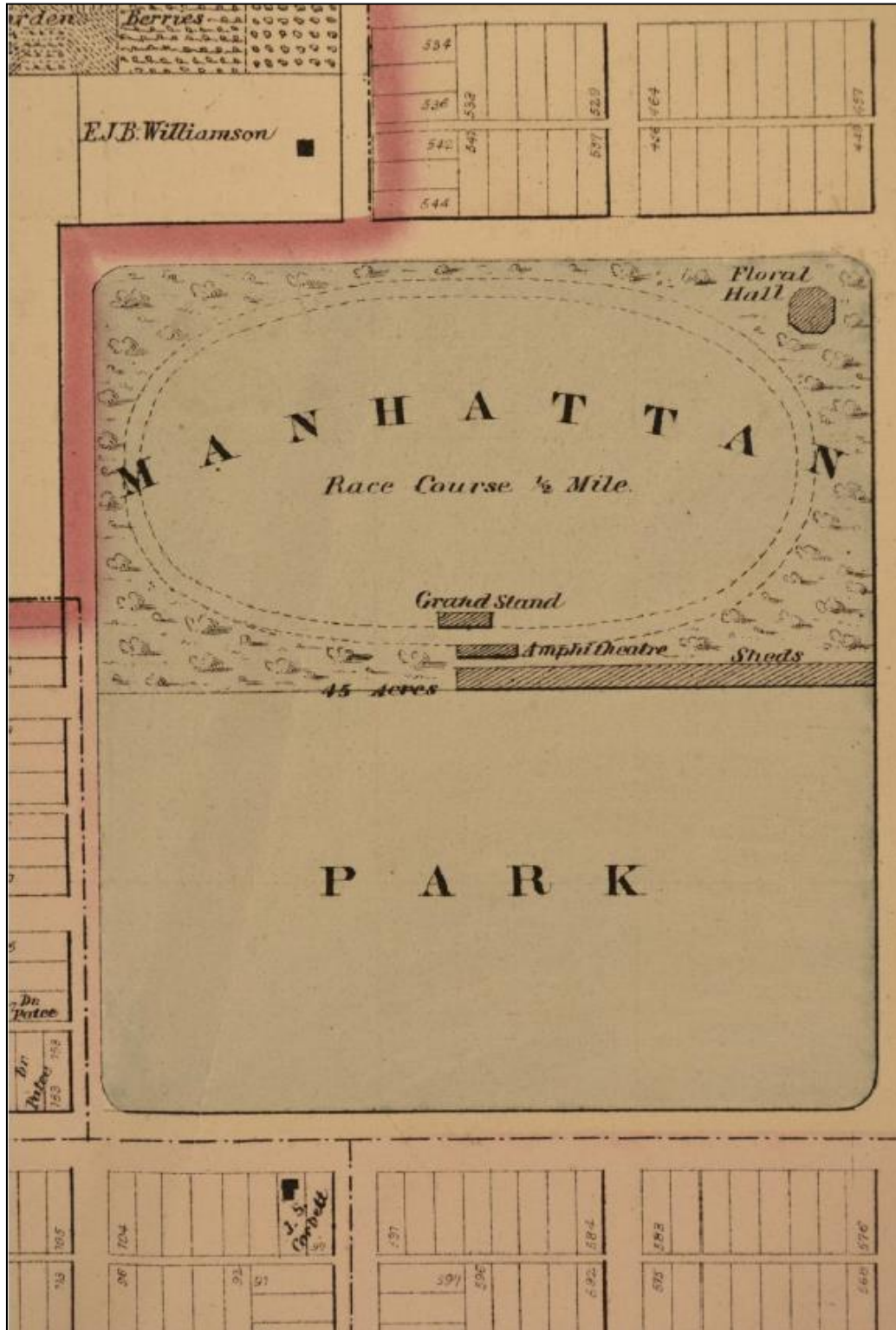


Figure 6. Riley County's exhibit in 1880 that earned the county the Blue Ribbon.
(Source: KSHS Photo Collection, reprinted in Ambler, 99).



Figure 7. Map of City Park showing Floral Hall as a "Barn and Tool [House]", 1937.
(Source: City of Manhattan).

