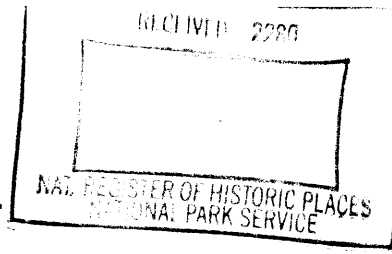


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service



National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *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 (NPS Form 10-9000a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

Historic name Community House  
Other name/site number Community Building / 161-3490-0161

2. Location

Street & number 120 N. 4th Street  not for publication  
City or town Manhattan  vicinity  
State Kansas Code KS County Riley Code 161 Zip code 66502

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Patrick Selmer DSHPO 10/11/06  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
Kansas State Historical Society

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See continuation sheet for additional Comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting official /Title Date  
\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is

- entered in the National Register.  See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register  See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other, (explain:)

for  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action  
Edson H. Beall 11.21.06

Community House  
Name of Property

Riley Co., Kansas  
County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

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

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	total	

**Name of related multiple property listing**  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

N/A

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter Categories from instructions)

Domestic: Institutional Housing

Recreation and Culture: Music Facility

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Recreation and Culture: Auditorium

Government: Government Office

Recreation and Culture: Sport Facility

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19<sup>th</sup> & Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century Revivals:

Commercial Style

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Foundation: Limestone

Walls: Brick

Roof: Asphalt

Other: Concrete

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Community House  
Name of Property

Riley Co., Kansas  
County and State

### 8. Statement of Significance

#### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "X" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register)

- 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 likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

#### 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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years

#### Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

#### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Entertainment/Recreation

#### Period of Significance

1917-1955

#### Significant Dates

1917

#### Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

#### Cultural Affiliation

N/A

#### Architect/Builder

Winter, Henry B.

### 9. Major Bibliographical References

#### Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

#### Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

#### Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository:

Riley County Historical Society

Community House  
Name of Property

Riley Co., Kansas  
County and State

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** less than one

**UTM References**  
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1

1	4	7	1	0	6	2	0	4	3	3	9	5	8	0
Zone		Easting						Northing						

2

Zone		Easting						Northing						

3

Zone		Easting						Northing						

4

Zone		Easting						Northing						

See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**  
(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

**Boundary Justification**  
(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

**11. Form Prepared By**

Name/title Leslie M. Tangeman  
Organization \_\_\_\_\_ Date July 13, 2005  
Street & number 1403 McCain Lane Telephone 785-493-1284  
City or town Manhattan State KS Zip code 66502

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets**

**Maps**

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.  
A **sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs**

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

**Additional items**

(Check with SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

**Property Owner**

Name City of Manhattan  
Street & number 1101 Poyntz Ave. Telephone 785-587-2489  
City or town Manhattan State KS Zip code 66502

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16) U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503

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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Community House  
Riley Co., Kansas

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## Description

### Summary

The Community House is a three-story building built in the 20th century Commercial Style with a rectangular layout and flat roof. The building is located in downtown Manhattan, Kansas on the corner of 4th and Humboldt streets. The front of the building faces west. The building is on a northwest corner lot with the east and south sides surrounded by a commercial parking lot. The lower façade on each side is limestone, with a concrete decorative separation on the west and north sides only, and the rest of the façade on the entire building is red tapestry brick set in red and white mortar. The first floor/basement is split-level with a second floor on top. The Community House was designed by prominent local architect Henry B. Winter.

### Elaboration

The outside of the front entrance has two sets of full-glazed, metal-framed doors set in a recessed entranceway. The recess is topped by a segmental stone arch and a large single-pane transom. Above the arch and transom is an engraved sign block that says "Community House." Originally, the doors were two half-glazed doors that appear to be made of wood with two side-by-side panes of glass on the top. The alteration is assumed to have been made sometime between the 1920s and the 1970s. On both sides of the entranceway there are three levels of windows. On the basement level, there are two small windows one on each side, topped with decorative concrete stones. The first level windows are larger rectangular windows, also one on each side, with concrete decorative slabs on the top and bottom. On the second level, there are two small windows with concrete slabs on the bottom. In the recessed area, there are four windows, also with a concrete slab along the bottom. The windows, style-wise, appear to be the same as originally, except that the panes on at least the basement level are more than likely new.

The north façade has limestone, much like the west façade, along the bottom portion up to the basement windows and the rest is red brick, except for decorative limestone elements along the top. There are eight small windows on the basement level, eight larger rectangular windows on the first floor level, and for the upper level of windows, there are six large windows and two small windows towards the west end. The decorative concrete slabs on the top two levels of windows are identical to the west façade with the middle level having a top and bottom, and the top level having just a bottom slab. It appears that originally, there were nine large windows on the middle level, but the third window from the west was quickly filled in after the building was built and sometime between the 1920s and 1970s, another window was put in to the west of the original third window, which has now been filled in as well. To the east end, there is an entrance door that is still in use today, although the door has probably been changed from the original.

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Community House  
Riley Co., Kansas

The east façade contains a back entrance to the building that can lead either downstairs to the basement or up to the first level on the south end. The entrance door is a full-glazed, metal-framed door next to a full-glazed of glass. Above the entrance, there is a metal-mesh awning. It is difficult to tell what the back originally looked like due to a lack of evidence. The lower portion of the east is limestone and is about a foot taller than the limestone on the west and north façades. Like the other sides of the Community House, the rest of the façade is made up of red brick that appears to have been painted sometime in the past. There are only two windows that appear to be new. They are on the first floor level. There is also a brick column that appears to be original on the north end of the east façade.

The south façade is identical to the east façade in the way that the limestone is taller than the north and west façades, and the rest is red brick that also appears to have been painted at some point. Today, there are only five windows on the basement level, though in the past there were nine total. The rest were filled in sometime between the 1970s and today. Along the basement level, there is also a walk-out entrance that leads directly to the basement. The first floor level windows are six large rectangular windows. Originally, there appears to have been a total of eight windows, two of which have been filled in since the 1970s. Along the top, there are six large windows and two smaller windows towards the west, much like the north façade. The first and second floor windows on this side have concrete slabs along the bottom, though the color is red, instead of white like all the other façades. The second window from the east (today, the first actual window) used to be an entrance, at least in the 1970s, with the level lowered to the top of the limestone, which has been reverted to a window and the brick filled in up to the bottom of the window.

The front entrance leads to a split-level foyer with double wide stairs leading up to the main floor and two separated sets of stairs leading to the basement. As you go into the basement, there is a small foyer with one room with a small kitchenette off to the south and a women's bathroom on the north side. Also in the foyer is a distribution window that now has been closed up and serves as a display box. Leading into the main room, there is a double set of wood doors (surrounded by walls with panes of glass). The main basement room is where the soldiers played and ate. On the northwest corner of the main room there are two rooms, one with a non-permanent wall. The room furthest back appears to have, in the past, been a distribution room perhaps where soldiers picked up their cots, sheets, etc due to its cutout space in the wall leading out into the main room/non-permanent room. Along the north wall there is an all brick fireplace that remains in excellent condition. The south side of the basement's main room has a southwest room that now serves as the kiln-room for the ceramics classes that are currently held in the basement. The walls used to be red brick and have been covered up at some point in the past. To the east of this room is the kitchen with a small closet in between. The kitchen has newer appliances than original. Further east there is a small locker-room with wooden lockers as well as an entrance with stairs up to ground level in between the kitchen and locker-room. The current main room plan includes a Burgess-Mills lunch/buffet counter that was installed in 1925 when the Manhattan Chamber of Commerce did some redecoration and updating. The counter runs along the length of the locker-room

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Community House  
Riley Co., Kansas

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and kitchen on the south end about eight feet out in an L-shape. The east end of the basement holds two large rooms and a janitor's closet. To the far southeast of the basement there are a few steps up to the back entrance as well as a handicap lift to make the building ADA compliant.

The first floor consists mostly of a large two level auditorium/gym. At the west entrance, as you walk up the stairs, there are two separate sets of stairs on the north and south end that lead up to the second floor. The floor plan for the first floor is symmetrical with three rooms/offices on the northwest corner and the southwest corner. The main auditorium is large and on the east end of the room there is an elevated room which used to be a stage for performances and concerts. The stage was enclosed as part of the 1986-87 Quality of Life bond projects. There are exit doors on each side of the stage that lead down to ground floor exits as well as having door access to the stage/room which now houses a daycare center.

The second floor stairs lead to another level with double-wide stairs that go up to a medium size room. The second floor is only about a third of the length of the building, as the first floor auditorium/gym is a two-level room. The second floor originally served as an observation balcony that ran nearly the full width of the second floor. To each side of the main room there are two rooms that serve as offices, classrooms, or storage rooms. The rooms on the northeast and southeast are not original, as they used to be the observation balcony, which was enclosed as part of the 1986-87 Quality of Life bond projects.

Overall, the Community House is an example of a mostly brick building amidst the standard buildings in Manhattan, Kansas, nearly all of which were constructed of native limestone. Although it has undergone many changes, the Community House still stands as a testament to historical architecture and building use. In fact, the Hartford Building next door to the north was built to be sympathetic to the Community House.

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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Community House  
Riley Co., Kansas

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## Statement of Significance

The Community House in Manhattan, Kansas has integral role in the history of Manhattan and the United States due to its relationship with major military events in America during the 20th Century and the community involvement it inspired. Besides serving as a center of military-community relations, the Community House served a larger purpose as a community cornerstone since its construction whether for events or just reminding someone of memories from their childhood. The Community House meets Criterion A of the National Register guidelines because of its close relation with the local community during the World Wars, particularly World War I. It has served as an essential community building during both world wars and inspired the Federal government to encourage other cities to build similar community buildings.

## History

The construction of the Community House began in 1917 as a joint project between the Rotarians of Kansas, Missouri, and Oklahoma and the City of Manhattan in order to provide a suitable place for the soldiers of America's Army to sleep and be entertained so that they can keep their minds off of the current war, as well as to give the community a chance to give a little back to their country. The Community House was an important project, not only for the City of Manhattan, but for the country as well. According to *The American City* magazine, which featured the nominated property on its cover, the Community House was the first permanent community building built in the United States. Its creation encouraged the Federal government to budget over four million dollars so that other cities could establish community buildings much like the Community House. Its design is somewhat unique to this area of Kansas, especially because it is primarily brick while most prominent buildings were limestone, a stone native to Kansas. The design of the Community House is based on that of *The Kansas City Star* Building in Kansas City which housed the newspaper offices of *The Kansas City Star*.

The grand opening was held in June 1918 and was attended by General Leonard Wood, who was the commander of Camp Funston at the time. General Wood is also a famous military figure in United States history. During the war, the Community House was run by the War Camp Community Service.

During World War I, North Central Kansas gained an influx of soldiers due to the training facilities at nearby Fort Riley and Camp Funston, which is in Fort Riley, and therefore needed an establishment for soldiers to stay in and hold functions at. Several community and military events were held at the Community House such as dances three times a week and music concerts. Down in the basement, soldiers could rent a cot, read magazines, play billiards, write letters with provided stationary, or just relax. The Community House also served as an information center for the soldiers and their families. There, a soldier could find a place to stay for his visiting relatives, or relatives could find out where their



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Community House  
Riley Co., Kansas

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soldier was. The upper floor served as an observation balcony as well as committee rooms and offices for community workers.

Between the two World Wars, the Community House ownership reverted back to the City of Manhattan and served as an American Legion post and the Manhattan Chamber of Commerce headquarters. The Federal Government bought the Community House back during World War II to function as a USO with several community events being held there.

After World War II was over, the Community House experienced a period where it was used as a recreation center rather than a community center where mostly sporting events were held, unlike its previous use. Still today the Community House serves primarily as a recreation facility although the basement houses facilities for craft and ceramic classes. Also a few city employees have offices within the building's few office rooms on the first floor.

Overall, the Community House has served the citizens of Manhattan primarily by providing a connection point between the people and the soldiers, giving both an opportunity to keep their mind off of the war abroad as well as allowing the community to give back to those who serve it well. When not in military-related use, the building has housed government offices and recreation facilities for the city of Manhattan and surrounding communities.

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Community House  
Riley Co., Kansas

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### Bibliography

Chase, Frank M. "Manhattan Community House". Topeka Capital Journal. April 28, 1919.

"History of Fort Riley"

Lowell, Jack. History of Manhattan.

Maddock, Mrs. J.M. "Manhattan and the War" Source: Kansas State Historical Society

Murtagh, William J. Keeping Time. Revised Edition. Preservation Press. John Wiley & Sons, Inc, New York, New York. 1997

Riley County Historical Society. Visited 13 May 2005. Historical photographs, newspaper clippings, and documents

Sanborn maps. Manhattan Public Library Digital Reference.

### Verbal Boundary Description

Ward 2, Lots 181 through 188 in the City of Manhattan.

### Boundary Justification

This boundary includes all of the property historically associated with the Community House.

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Community House  
Riley Co., Kansas

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Additional Documentation – Photographs

Property: Community House  
County and State: Manhattan, Riley County, Kansas

All photographs unless otherwise stated have the following:  
Photographer: Kristen Lonard  
Digital Photographs on file at the Kansas State Historical Society  
Date of Photograph: July 21, 2006

- Photo #1: West (front) elevation, Close-up of plaque, view from the West
- Photo #2: West (front) elevation, view from the West
- Photo #3: North elevation, view from the Northwest
- Photo #4: East (rear) elevation, view from the East
- Photo #5: South elevation, view from the Southeast
- Photo #6: Interior, basement main room, view from the West
- Photo #7: Interior, main floor, main room, view from the East
- Photo #8: Interior, second floor windows, view from the East
- Photo #9: Interior, second floor stairwell, view from the East
- Photo #10: Interior, basement main room doors and trim, view from the West