

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



1321

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 any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable". For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

Historic name John J. and Lenora Bartlett House

Other names/site number BF05-151

2. Location

Street & number 1402 Ninth Avenue

Not for publication

City or town Kearney

Vicinity

State Nebraska

Code NE

County Buffalo

Code 019

Zip code 68845

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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.)

Michael J. [Signature]
Signature of certifying official

Nov. 7, 2007
Date

Director, Nebraska 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 certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this 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): _____

Galson W. Beall

12-27-07

[Signature]

Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

John J. and Lenora Bartlett House

Name of Property

Buffalo County, Nebraska

County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- X Private
Public-local
Public-state
Public-federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- X Building(s)
District
Site
Structure
Object

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

Table with 2 columns: Contributing, Noncontributing. Rows: Buildings, Sites, Structures, Objects, 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/single dwelling

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE VICTORIAN/Queen Anne Style

Materials (Enter categories from instructions.)

Foundation Brick

Walls Brick and Wood Frame

Roof Wood Shingle

Other

Narrative Description

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

John J. and Lenora Bartlett House

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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 a 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.)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1888

Significant Dates

1888

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

John Scott, contractor

V. V. Yost, head carpenter

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 for additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other
- Name of repository: _____

John J. and Lenora Bartlett House

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property Less than one

UTM References (place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet).

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1.	14	492036	4503991	3.			
2.				4.			

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 Jill E. Dolberg/Historic Buildings Survey Coordinator
 organization Nebraska State Historical Society date July 19, 2007
 street & number 1420 P Street/Box 82554 telephone (402) 471-4773
 city or town Lincoln state Nebraska zip code 68501-2554

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 the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name/title Marc and Roberta Loescher
 street & number 1402 Ninth Avenue telephone (308) 234-4023
 city or town Kearney state Nebraska zip code 68845

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determined 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, (15 USC 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the 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 Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

John J. and Lenora Bartlett House

Name of Property

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The John J. and Lenora Bartlett House is located in Kearney, Buffalo County, Nebraska, which is 133 miles west of Lincoln, Nebraska's state capital. The house was built in the Kenwood neighborhood, in the southwest portion of Kearney south of the railroad tracks and west of downtown. The neighborhood was a development of the Kearney Land & Investment Company, and several of the stockholders chose sites in the area for their new homes to be built in 1888, including John J. Bartlett. As a result, at one time there were at least nine exquisite Queen Anne houses contemporaneous to Bartlett's in the vicinity, all sitting on large lots. Most cost between \$3,500 and \$5,000, with the exception of Bartlett's house, for which he spent a staggering \$30,000 on imported woodwork and other materials.

This Queen Anne style residence is an irregular-shaped, two and a half story, brick veneer and wood frame structure with a cedar shingle, cross gable roof and a brick foundation.

While the Bartlett House is rather idiosyncratic among large, high-style Queen Anne houses in Nebraska, it embodies the characteristic elements of that style. In keeping with the Queen Anne manner of having differing planes and textures, each façade of the house is strongly dissimilar, to a greater extent than most of Nebraska's examples of the Queen Anne style. The eastern façade is the most dominant elevation of the house yet does not house the main entrance, and exhibits the most elaborate decorative detail. The eastern side lies under the side gable, and features two projecting gables that project off of the house at different levels. One gable provides the roofline for the massive porch but also provides living space on the second floor, while the other gable projects out of the attic story. Both are elaborately shingled with fishscale and sawtooth shingles, breaking up the woodframe planes of the second and attic stories of the house. The porch gable is supported by two massive brackets of elaborate jigsaw work. The porch gable is further graced with an enormous, whimsically arranged set of square, red colored glass windows set in a diamond shape, flanked by two square sashes set on their corners as well, in plain and red glass. The other gable has a set of tripartite doublehung windows under a slightly projecting closed gable tip, an unusual feature which is repeated on each side of this house. On the second story, arched windows enclose a second story sunroom off of a bedroom.

The southern elevation of the house is dominated by the massive one story porch. The porch runs the full width of the house and projects an additional ten feet to the east. The porch structure is brick with a wood floor. There are two enormous round arches and three smaller gothic arches in the brick masonry. The round arches have turned baluster rails to prevent falls, while the smaller gothic arches are not as deep and serve as windows, requiring no railings. The roof of the porch being gabled on one end and hipped on the other. The other feature that dominates the south elevation is the primary gable, which also features the projecting closed gable tip over a pair of double hung windows. The second story also has a canted bay with four double hung windows. Every window has a multiple divided-light upper sash with stained glass in amber, blue, violet, burgundy, and green in a random arrangement. On this elevation, each story had a different wall surface: brick on the first story, clapboard on the second, and fishscale and sawtooth shingles on the attic story.

The west elevation contains the hipped entrance to the porch, as well as a gabled dormer that resembles the projecting closed gable tip on the east and south elevations. The windows on this side of the house are more diverse than any other, and include two groupings, one of four and one of five, extremely slim, double hung windows that adorn the stairs inside. The upper sashes of these windows all have small stained glass panes. Two additional pairs of doublehung windows and one single doublehung window grace this elevation. This side also has an early addition of concrete blocks which houses an entrance to the kitchen.

The north elevation is perhaps the most austere side of the house, dominated by the principal gable which is embellished primarily with imbricated fishscale and sawtooth shingles on the second and attic stories. Again, the first story is brick.

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The gable features the same projecting closed gable tip, and there are paired and single doublehung windows on this side of the house. Once again, the upper sashes of the windows feature a multiple divided-light upper sash with stained glass in many colors.

The Bartlett House is entered from the porch. The façade contains an off center entrance with a five panel oak door, two of the panels being solid wood, three glass. The door is topped with a glass transom, and has fluted oak molding around the door with curved corners. The door opens into a vestibule entry with an elaborate tiled floor in orange, blue and beige, and beadboard wainscoting. The pattern of the exterior door is echoed by the inner glass and wood door that leads into the reception hall. The reception hall is a large room from which open the library, the parlor and the dining room, as well as provides access to the kitchen and the formal paneled stair. The most dominant feature of the room is the stair, which is built of cherry wood and accessed through a colonnade with pannels and arched plaster work, and a raised stage. The balusters are turned posts, and the paneled stair also features rosettes and pendants. The stair is completely self supporting with no braces or brackets to bolster its weight. Directly across from the stair is a marble fireplace. The reception hall is has an oak floor; many of the remaining wood floors in the house are fir. The room also has an original light fixture that features the Bartlett coat of arms.

The library is a small room on the southwest corner of the house with chamfered door panels and the original parquet floor. On the southeast corner, the parlor features a pocket door with an etched glass panel with a stork standing in water in front of the sun with stylized foliage. The room also has an elaborate fireplace with a wood mantle with an inset mirror, a tile surround and hearth. A second pocket door leads into the dining room. It also has an etched glass panel, this one in red with flowers. The dining room also features an ornate fireplace and mantle. It is similar to the parlor's in that it also is wood with an inset mirror and has a tile surround and hearth, however the decorative details and the finish are different. The doorway from the dining room to the reception hall has another pocket door with yet another etched glass panel. This one is extremely geometric in overall design, framing a picture of an amphora and a serving platter full of fruit and the motto "DUM VIVIMUS VIVAMUS"-- "Let us live while we live." An additional doorway from the dining room leads to a hallway into the kitchen. Just off the dining room, there is a small built-in china cabinet. Further down the hallway there is a modest bathroom that is a modern alteration and the kitchen, which has been modernized with new cabinets. The woodwork around the doors is still original, and there are a large kerosene chandelier and matching wall bracket lamp in the kitchen.

Upon accessing the second floor from the main stair, one finds a master bedroom, a children's room, and what was originally the aunt's bedroom and sitting room. The master bedroom is a large room with its own fireplace with a stone mantel scribed with an etched design. The woodwork matches the woodwork on the first floor with curved corners, fluted trim and broad baseboards. The sunroom is accessed from the master bedroom through French doors of colored glass. A door by the fireplace allows access to the children's bedroom, which is rather narrow, but also has access to the sun porch. The room has an extremely slender closet or play room which has a full height door that is only one foot wide, with woodwork that matches trim elsewhere in the house. The room also has two French doors to the hallway. Further down the hallway, the aunt's rooms, which are now one room, overlook the south lawn of the property from the canted bay windows of the house. This room is situated over the ceiling of the porch. There is a door from the end of this room that allows access to an unheated, uninsulated storage space that features the red and clear glass diamond window on the east façade.

The attic story has been finished for living space. Its woodwork is less imposing than the woodwork found elsewhere in the house, but it still features fir floors, wood trim on doors, and the windows also have colored glass upper sashes. A bathroom has been added in the attic story.

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The property also includes a contributing chicken coop, and a non-contributing barn. The barn, while old, was moved onto the property in 1994 and is not original to the property. It does not, however, detract in any way from the historic nature of the Bartlett House.

Overall, the historic integrity of the Bartlett House is excellent. There is an historic addition of a back porch/mud room which was used to expand the kitchen at some later date. There have been a few minor modifications such as adding bathrooms to the third floor and altering a closet near the kitchen for a bathroom on the first floor which simply make the house comfortable for modern living, and were done in such a way that they have not detracted from any of the house's original fabric. Likewise, the kitchen, while modernized with newer cabinets and appliances, does not detract from the historic nature of the house. The barn was moved on to the property to replace a barn that had previously existed, but had blown down in a storm. Meanwhile, the house itself exhibits integrity of location, setting, feeling, association, but especially of materials, workmanship and design.

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The John J. and Lenora Bartlett House is significant at the local level under Criterion C as a well-preserved example of residential Queen Anne architecture, a style that was popular from approximately 1880-1910. The style was just beginning to gain prominence in Nebraska during the period in which the house was built, and Buffalo County has several fine examples of Queen Anne residential architecture, two of which are already listed in the National Register of Historic Places, including the John Barnd House, 1892 (NRHP listed in 1983), and the Hanson-Downing House, 1886 (NRHP listed in 1980). These were both exceptional examples of Queen Anne architecture constructed for Kearney's captains of industry and commerce in the days of the city's early growth and development as Kearney was becoming a regional center. The John J. and Lenora Bartlett House is no less stunning as a work of architecture and is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C for its architectural significance.

John Bartlett was one of Kearney's early captains of industry and commerce. As with many of Kearney's notable businessmen, his business interests were varied and included banking, milling, and real estate development. Bartlett was the president of the Kearney National Bank, located at the corner of West 21st Street and Central Avenue. The bank was incorporated in 1872, and was Kearney's earliest bank. He also founded the Kearney Flour Mill and Elevator Company with R. L. Downing, whose house was also listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1980. The Flour Mill was established in 1866 and was Kearney's first major industry.¹ By 1887 a stock company was organized, and construction on a bigger milling facility was started. The building was located at Avenue A and South Railroad Street. The mill could process one hundred and fifty barrels of flour a day. In 1888, the amount of flour the mill process amounted to over \$200,000. They exported grain and flour to England and other European markets. Both Bartlett and Downing were associated with the mill, as Vice President and President respectively, throughout Kearney's boom period until the depression of 1893. They were successful enough to together build a business block downtown at 21st and Main called the Downing and Bartlett Block.²

The depression of 1893 was extremely difficult for Bartlett to weather. The bank was in dire straits, and on 14 December 1894, the *Kearney Daily Hub* reported that there were problems at the bank and that the doors had been closed.³ The next day, the paper reported that the directors had pledged "their individual property to the end that they shall not lose a dollar."⁴ Although the bank rallied for a short time, it eventually closed permanently. The mill, likewise, suffered during the depression. It was forced to close for a period of years during the depression and ended up in foreclosure, after which was purchased in 1898 by Frank H. Roby who refurbished the mill and reopened it for business.⁵

The Bartletts struggled to maintain ownership of their house until 1903. John Bartlett obtained a mortgage on the property from the City National Bank in Worcester, Massachusetts on 17 June 1895 in the amount of \$4900.⁶ Three months later, Bartlett sold the house and lots to Edward Webster for \$7,000.⁷ Sixteen days later, however, his wife Lenora repurchased the house from Webster for \$7,500.⁸ Putting the house in Lenora's name must have worked for some time, for they were able to keep the house for another eight years. Eventually, the house was seized and auctioned off for the Bartletts' failure to pay their taxes on the property.⁹

¹ Samuel Clay Basset, *History of Buffalo County, Nebraska and Its People, A Record of Settlement, Organization, Progress and Achievement*, Vol. 1, (Chicago: The S. J. Clark Publishing Company, 1916), 230.

² *Where the Buffalo Roamed, Stories of Early Days in Buffalo County, Nebraska*, Compiled by Kearney Business and Professional Women's Club (Shenandoah, IA: The World Publishing Company, 1967), 184.

³ *Kearney Daily Hub*, 14 December 1894.

⁴ *Kearney Daily Hub*, 15 December 1894.

⁵ Samuel Clay Basset, *History of Buffalo County, Nebraska and Its People, A Record of Settlement, Organization, Progress and Achievement*, Vol. 1, (Chicago: The S. J. Clark Publishing Company, 1916), 230.

⁶ Mortgage, 17 June 1895 (Book 62, Page 302).

⁷ Warranty Deed, 14 September 1895 (Book 58, Page 627)

⁸ Warranty Deed, 30 September 1895 (Book 60, Page 116)

⁹ Sheriff's Deed, 22 June 1903 (Book 68, Page 198)

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Architecture

Queen Anne houses in general feature steeply pitched roofs of an irregular shape, often with a heavy, front-facing gable. Additional elements may include patterned shingles, bay windows, spindles and other decorative elements that break up the wall plane by giving it an irregular, as opposed to smooth, appearance.¹⁰ This variation was possible through the innovation of light balloon framing; a departure from the heavy timber framing that lent itself to boxy designs.¹¹ In addition, the growing industrialization of building materials and relatively inexpensive shipping costs via the national railroad system made available a vast array of elaborately designed doors, windows and other elements that added variety to the built environment.

Most of Nebraska's residential Queen Anne architecture fits into a familiar pattern of being generally rectangular in footprint with projecting elements, typically with a hipped roof with a projecting gable, a spindled or free classic porch along the front or less commonly wrapping around the house on two sides, and with varied wall surfaces using various wood products like shingles and clapboards. The Bartlett House differs in its footprint, its form and its massing from Nebraska's more typical Queen Anne houses. Mr. Bartlett was English and perhaps took his design cues directly from his homeland. The Queen Anne style as it originated in England differed in character from the Queen Anne houses that were being built in the United States. In England, architects more often used a combination of masonry and timber work, which is certainly true of the Bartlett House in Kearney.

The scale and details of the Bartlett House required a level of expenditure that outstripped many of Kearney's other fine homes. The *Kearney New Era* in 1888 mentioned that, "The cost [of new homes in Kearney] varied from \$3500 to \$5000 with the exception of the Bartlett house, which was around \$30,000 because Mr. Bartlett imported much of the material for his home from England and other countries in Europe."¹² Bartlett procured all of his woodwork from England and it is thought that his contractor, John Scott, came to Kearney from England as well. It remains unknown whether Bartlett engaged an architect—English or American—in designing his house.

In keeping with the ideals of the Queen Anne style, the planes of the Bartlett house are broken up with masonry on the first floor, numerous gables of various sizes, and imbricated shingles with different textures, executed through the use of milled lumber. The projecting bay window on the south elevation, as well as the projecting closed gable tips provide another interesting texture, and required a high level of expertise on the part of the carpenter.

The Bartlett house is an exuberantly playful example of the Queen Anne style of architecture, particularly for Nebraska, and maintains an outstanding degree of historic integrity. The setting is intact, with the chicken coop remaining on the property, and the setting of the original six lots intact to the property. Although the original barn blew over in a storm and the replacement is not original it does lend a sympathetic feel to the property. This property is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under criterion C for its architectural significance.

¹⁰ McAlester, 263.

¹¹ McAlester, 239.

¹² *Kearney New Era*, 18 August 1888.

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Bibliography:

Bassett, Samuel Clay. *History of Buffalo County, Nebraska and Its People, A Record of Settlement, Organization, Progress and Achievement*. Vol. 1. Chicago: The S. J. Clark Publishing Company, 1916.

Harris, Cyril M., ed. *Illustrated Dictionary of Historic Architecture*. New York: Dover Publications Inc., 1977.

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McAlester, Virginia and Lee McAlester. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1997.

United States Census, 1880.

Where the Buffalo Roamed, Stories of Early Days in Buffalo County, Nebraska. Compiled by Kearney Business and Professional Women's Club. Shenandoah, IA: The World Publishing Company, 1967.

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Verbal Boundary Description:

Lots 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6, Block 24, Kearney Land & Investment Company Choice Addition, Kearney, Buffalo County, Nebraska.

Boundary Justification:

The boundaries of the John J. Bartlett House include the land historically associated with the house.