

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 Karnes Stone Barn
Other name/site number 139-0000-0275

2. Location

Street & number 4204 E 129th Street not for publication
City or town Carbondale vicinity
State Kansas Code KS County Osage Code 139 Zip code 66524

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.)

Richard D. Rankin DSHPO December 5, 2003
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 1/21/04

Karnes Stone Barn
Name of property

Osage County, KS
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
0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter Categories from instructions)

Agriculture/ Subsistence: animal facility

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Agriculture/ Subsistence: agricultural outbuilding

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Other: functional

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone: limestone
walls Stone: limestone

roof Metal: tin

other

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

Name of Property Karnes Stone Barn

County and State Osage County, KS

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)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1877

Significant Dates

1877

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

G. R. Bronson

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): Primary location of additional data:

- 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 #

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

Name of repository:

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

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Overview

The Karnes Barn, (c. 1877), is located 3 1/2 miles north and two miles west of Overbrook, Kansas in the SE1/4, SW1/4, SW1/4, NW1/4 of S. 13, T. 14, R. 16 E. in Elk Township, Osage County. The limestone structure stands in the center of a farmstead, surrounded by a grassy field. Punctuated with red doors, shutters, and a cupola on the roof, the barn maintains a southern facade orientation.

The three-bay, gable-roofed barn utilizes the traditional center gable as its core, two pent-roofed, single bays flank the core. A tall, arched doorway demarcates the barn's center bay. A hayloft surmounts the first level of the center bay. Stall windows fenestrate the the east and west single story bays.

Measuring eighty feet long from north to south, the barn strikes a wide girth at fifty feet from east to west, and stands thirty feet high. A gabled roof crowns the central bay, which is a large first floor room with a haymow above. Two, one-story, flanking side bays are topped with shed roofs of a shallower angle.

The limestone walls are a roughly hewn, coarse-faced ashlar. The stone was quarried nearby and brought to the site. Interior walls and the second floor framing are wood.

Stone barns are relatively unusual, though they are found in many areas that have readily available stone. One source says of the stone barns in Kansas, "Generally constructed between 1870 and 1888, they often possess arched doorways, stone quoining and tooled stone lintels, raising them from mere utilitarian structures to the level of architectural creations."¹

Exterior

The date 1877 and the initials G.R.B. are carved in a high central block on the south facade. The stone of the block is more finely dressed than the rest of the wall.

A wide door is on the left side of the south facade. A large main door is located in the center, and a narrower one is on the right. Bracketing the large main door are two high and narrow windows, covered by substantial wooden shutters. Above the main door is a third shuttered window, accessing the hayloft.

¹ Noble, Allen G. and Wilhelm, Hubert G. H. *Barns of the Midwest*, Athens OH: Ohio University Press, 1995.

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The north elevation is very similar to that on the south, though the locations of the narrower and wider doors are reversed. There is a driveway running through the entire length of the barn that connects the double doors.

The doors and windows on the north and south sides are surmounted with brick load-bearing arches. Segmental arches are visible above the windows; the windowsills are blocks of stone. Large rectangular doors mostly hide the attractive semicircular arches of the doorframes when they are closed. The sliding doors are wood and hang in overhead tracks.

The east and west elevations of the barn show slope views of the gabled roof. They each feature a row of small windows set evenly in the stone wall. There are seven windows in each row. The sills are single blocks of limestone; the headers are horizontal rows of bricks. Pairs of wooden shutters fit inside the window frames.

A ventilator sits in the center of the barn roof. It provides airflow to the barn, which aids in drying stored hay. The ventilator is square, and the base is brick. Red-painted wooden 3-panel vents are on each of the four sides. The roof of the ventilator consists of four gables that meet in the center at a small point.

Interior

The interior of the barn is divided into three sections, consistent with the shape of the roof. The east bay of the barn is used for livestock, with stalls for about twelve horses and stanchions for milking cows. The stalls have boxes for feeding grain to the horses.

The west bay is intended for grain storage, with a slatted crib for corn in the north half and three bins for small grain in the other half. These sections are separated by a stone stairway that leads to the loft. There are also stone steps that lead down to the small snake-storing basement.

The barn features an interior hay loading system, with a large opening in the middle of the haymow where hay was lifted from a wagon with a hayfork and dropped into the mow.

The barn has survived several nearby tornadoes and high winds damaged the roof, but repairs have always been made to maintain it. The roof was originally shingled, but in later years was replaced by corrugated tin. The entire building is currently in excellent condition. Curtis and Kim Stahel have spent \$5,000 fixing up the barn. Electricity was added. New doors, painting and minor haymow repairs were also undertaken. Care was taken to preserve the historic integrity of the building.

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Significance

The Karnes Barn (c. 1877) is located on the SE1/4, SW1/4, SW1/4, NW1/4 of S. 13, T. 14, R. 16 E. in Osage County, Kansas. The limestone barn was originally built to house a circus. It is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under criterion C for its architectural significance as an example of a three-bay, gable-roofed, limestone barn.

The barn utilizes the traditional center gable as its core which is flanked by two pent-roofed, single-story bays. The Karnes Barn stands as a fine example of vernacular agricultural architecture. Native limestone blocks were used in its construction. The design is functional, each stall had its own window. A tall, arched doorway demarcates the barn's center bay. A hayloft surmounts the first level of the center bay, with a cupola providing ventilation on the roof above. The barn was originally constructed to house circus animals but went on early in its history to serve the agricultural needs of an average farm.

Stone barns are relatively unusual, though they are found in many areas that have readily available stone. One source says of the stone barns in Kansas, "Generally constructed between 1870 and 1888, they often possess arched doorways, stone quoining and tooled stone lintels, raising them from mere utilitarian structures to the level of architectural creations."¹

History

George R. Bronson moved his family; including servants, fine horses, and coaches from St. Louis in 1876. They came to the Ridgeway community east of Carbondale, Kansas. George R. Bronson was also known as Colonel Bronson. He was a circus man who was born in New York State. He has been described as "a land baron of sorts, owning hundreds of acres of land in the old Ridgeway area."² The house built by the Bronson's was large and styled like a southern mansion. A grand piano was brought for the house, as well as an eight-foot mirror with a crown on top and a marble base built into the wall. The mirror came by boat from S. Louis and was met in Kansas City "by men driving a lumber wagon full of straw and transported to Ridgeway in that fashion."³

¹ Noble, Allen G. and Wilhelm, Hubert G. H. *Barns of the Midwest*, Athens OH: Ohio University Press, 1995.

² Barn Again! Page 46.

³ Lorna Tyner Harding. *Bronson Family* (a memoir). Circa 1960s.

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The barn was built in 1877 to the east of the house the Bronsons occupied. The farm was located a half mile west of a railroad stop, which was known as Swissvale. The barn was intended to house Topeka circus animals during the winter. The animals would arrive by train at Swissvale and be transported to the barn.

Under the massive front runway is a small basement originally intended to house circus snakes. However, the Bronson's "didn't stay long enough to bring them [the snakes] to Ridgeway, to the delight of the neighbors."⁴ Life in Kansas did not go as planned and the Bronson family only stayed in Kansas one year.

The Bronson house stood vacant for a number of years and deteriorated. The grand piano remained inside and was ruined. Eventually, in 1918, the house was torn down. Many of the materials from the old house were used to build a new house on the property, which is extant.

George R. Bronson died December 3, 1885. He and his wife had recently moved to Oceanside, Florida. Bronson had been causing quite a stir, purchasing property and planning to erect a number of tourist cottages.

Meanwhile, the barn he left back in Kansas went through a series of different owners and circumstances. John Eagon purchased the farm August 1 1885. He later sold it to the Tyner brothers. The Tyner brothers owned a store in Overbrook and E.E. Tyner later traded his share of the store to D.L. Tyner for his share of the farm. D.L. Tyner's daughter Aletha Clark and her husband Walter later acquired the farm. During the Great Depression, the Clark's lost the farm and it was sold at an auction at the Lyndon Court House to Mr. J.A. Kesler of the Kansas State Bank in Overbrook on October 17, 1932. Mr. George R. Allen, a Topeka lawyer, purchased the farm consisting of 388.85 acres on June 1, 1933.

Mr. and Mrs. W. F. Karnes, and sons Wilson and Marshall, rented the farm from Mr. Allen and moved onto the property in 1934. They lived there and purchased the farm in 1945. Their son Wilson and Maxine (Desque) Karnes were married in 1940 and moved to the farm in 1945. They purchased the farm on July 3, 1950 and are the current owners.

When the Karnes family acquired the farm in the 1930s they used the barn for functions such as milking cows, stabling horses, and storing hay and grain. Electricity was added to the barn in 1989. New doors, new roof, painting, and some minor haymow repairs were also undertaken. Care was taken to preserve historical accuracy during the project. The barn is now used for hay and grain storage.

⁴ Harding.

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Many admire the Karnes Barn. It has frequently been photographed and represented in works of art. Most significantly, it was chosen as runner-up in the Successful Farming “Barn Again!” Contest. “Barn Again!” was developed by the National Building Museum in collaboration with the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and was adapted as a traveling exhibition by the Smithsonian Institution. People sometimes stop to see the barn. During the past two years, an Emporia State University group interested in historic buildings has toured the barn. Curtis Stahel has given a narrative of the barn’s history to the group.

The Karnes Barn is a well-maintained and beautiful structure. Though it’s age and quality of workmanship would be enough to merit its preservation, the barn’s fascinating history makes it unique. The Karnes Barn maintains a high degree of structural and architectural integrity. “To the traditional farmer, barns are the soul of the farm. To the general public, barns represent both our rural past and our agricultural present. They are monuments in the American landscape.”⁵

⁵ Barn again article.

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Sources

Karnes, Maxine. "Draft Historic Record Nomination." 2001.

State of Kansas. Agricultural Census. Elk Township, Osage County. 1885-1935.

National Trust for Historic Preservation. Barn Again! Program. Preservation Press, Washington D.C., 2000.

Successful Farming Magazine. 2000 BARN AGAIN! Awards. Des Moines, IA, 2000.

Harding, Lorna Tyner. "Bronson Family." u.d.

Kinney, Fay. Ridgeway. u.d.

The Osage City Free Press. "Died- Geo. R. Bronson." Osage City, Osage County, Kansas, December 3, 1885.

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property is located on the SE4, SW4, SW4, NW4, S.13, T.14, R.16E in Elk Township, Osage County, Kansas. The property stands as part of a larger tract that is in agricultural use. Only the barn and a ten-foot perimeter of land around it are being nominated.

Boundary Justification

The nominated property stands on part of a larger tract of land that is in agricultural use. Only the barn and a ten-foot perimeter of land around it are being nominated.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Karnes Stone Barn

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: KANSAS, Osage

DATE RECEIVED: 12/12/03 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 1/06/04
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 1/21/04 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 1/25/04
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 03001468

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

 ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 1/21/04 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

**Entered in the
National Register**

RECOM./CRITERIA _____

REVIEWER _____ DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N