

McLean County Museum of History

McLean County Courthouse Collection

Processed by
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Collection Information

VOLUME OF COLLECTION:	1 Box
COLLECTION DATES:	
RESTRICTIONS:	None
REPRODUCTION RIGHTS:	Permission to reproduce or publish material in this collection must be obtained in writing from the McLean County Museum of History
ALTERNATIVE FORMATS:	None
OTHER FINDING AIDS:	None
LOCATION:	Archives
NOTES:	See also

Brief History

The McLean County Courthouse was built between 1900 and 1903 after the Great Fire of June 1900. In the 1960s the courthouse was not large enough to support all the court, government offices and employees that were based there. A debate began as to whether the courthouse should be razed and replaced with a new building, or whether the building should be preserved. The courthouse was finally replaced in the 1970s by the McLean County Law and Justice Center. The McLean County Historical Society entered into an agreement with the County to be a tenant of the Courthouse building in 1991.

Scope

The collection includes documents regarding the transition of the McLean County Courthouse from its role as the County Courthouse to its role as the home of the McLean County Historical Society and McLean County Museum of History.

Box and Folder Inventory

Folder 1: Preservation materials

- 1.1 Booklet (for Preservation of the Third McLean County Courthouse), c. 1965, written by Rupert Kilgore, Barbara and William Brokaw Price. (3 copies)
- 1.2 Proposal to the McLean County Board for a McLean County History Center, McLean County Historical Society, February 20, 1987.
- 1.3 Nomination for registration as a historic place, Nov. 8, 1972, by William Brokaw Price, Committee to Save the Courthouse
- 1.4 Certificate of Historic Place Register.
- 1.5 Conservation Report, Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associate, Inc. Chicago, Illinois, May 14, 1992.
- 1.6 Conservation Report (Draft), Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associate, Inc. Chicago, Illinois, April 21, 1992.

Folder 2: Courthouse Building Committee minutes

- 2.1 Typewritten transcription of minutes for board or committee for maintenance of the physical courthouse, from 1900 to 1973.
- 2.2 Handwritten transcription of board or committee for maintenance of the physical courthouse, from 1900 to 1973.

Folder 3: Newspaper articles, 1900 – 1905

- 3.1 “To be rebuilt at once,” *Pantagraph*, June 21, 1900.
- 3.2 Transcription of *Daily Bulletin* article describing plans for new courthouse, 1900.
- 3.3 “Court house problem,” transcribed from *Weekly Pantagraph*, November 9, 1900.
- 3.4 “To tear out foundations,” transcribed from *Weekly Pantagraph*, November 30, 1900.
- 3.5 “New Court House,” recreated from *The Daily Pantagraph*, June 19, 1901.
- 3.6 “The court house clock,” *Pantagraph*, July 11, 1902.

- 3.7 “Frescoing contract let,” *Pantagraph*, July 9, 1902.
- 3.8 “Shake up contractors,” *Daily Bulletin*, December 18, 1902.

Folder 4: Correspondence

- 4.1 Letter of recommendation for Architect firm, Reeves and Baillie, from John Reed of John Reed and Co. of Bloomington, to J. M. Ricks of Taylorville, Illinois, November 29, 1900.
- 4.2 Letter from W.A. Matheson, Bloomington Association of Commerce, to Members, regarding the Association’s opinion that the new courthouse should be built on the square.
- 4.3 Letter from Judge James A. Knecht to Nancy Froelich, County Board Chairman, July 15 1986, regarding use of the law library and enclosing memo to the County judges regarding a merger of the County Law Library and the Bar Association Library.
- 4.4 Letter from John D. Wenum, Courthouse Committee, Chair, to Sally Rudolph, January 12, 1987 regarding meetings. Handwritten notes on back.
- 4.5 Memo from John D. Wenum to Courthouse Committee regarding interpretation of the committee’s responsibility, January 26, 1987.
- 4.6 Memo from Nancy Froelich to Sally Rudolph, apologizing for inability to attend meeting, January 26, 1987.
- 4.7 Minutes, Ad Hoc Courthouse Committee, January 26, 1987 and Memo delivering those minutes.
- 4.8 Letter from John E. Wenum to Sally Rudolph with proposals for space in the old courthouse, February 27, 1987.
- 4.9 Agenda, March 9, 1987, Meeting of the Ad Hoc Courthouse committee.
- 4.10 Minutes, Ad Hoc Courthouse Committee, March 9, 1987
- 4.11 Letter from Barbara Dunbar, Executive Director of MCHS to John D. Wenum, regarding questions from Ad Hoc Courthouse Committee, March 19, 1987.
- 4.12 Memo, From James Knecht (MCBA) to Ad Hoc Committee regarding questions from Ad Hoc Courthouse Committee, March, 1987.
- 4.13 Memo, from John Wenum to Members of the Ad Hoc Courthouse Committee, April 1, 1987 enclosing responses from MCBA and MCHS.
- 4.14 Minutes, Ad Hoc Courthouse Committee, April 6, 1987.
- 4.15 Letter from John D. Wenum to Sally Rudolph, with proposed draft of the final report and recommendations of the AdHoc Courthouse Committee, April 27, 1987.
- 4.16 List, Ad Hoc Courthouse committee members, 1987.

Folder 5: Manuscripts

- 5.1 McLean County Courthouse, Facts and opinions, January 3, 1966.
- 5.2 “On the Preservation of the McLean County Courthouse,” Manuscript of speech by Harold Gregor, c. 1970.
- 5.3 “The Old Courthouse,” Manuscript draft, Greg Koos, January 8, 1997.
- 5.4 “The Bloomington Court House, A Stylistic Analysis” Lynn Landes for American Art 381, for Dr. Gregor, May 15, 1972.
- 5.5 Photos of Courthouse (5), possibly taken by Lynn Landes in 1972.

Folder 6: Inventories and building plans

- 6.1 Inventory with photographs of furniture and miscellaneous moveable items, 2017.
- 6.2 Architecture, list of original purpose and current purpose of rooms in the courthouse, no date.
- 6.3 Courthouse Office and Activity Descriptions, prepared by Edward B. McLenna Jr., May 8, 1990.
- 6.4 Undated floor plan.
- 6.5 Undated floor plan by Hilfinger, Asbury, Cufaude and Abels.

Folder 7: Miscellaneous

- 7.1 Program, Dedication of the New McLean County Court House, September 24, 1903.
- 7.2 “Henry McShane, Baltimore Bell Maker,” by Mollie McShane Fenger, *Timepiece Journal of the American Clock and Watch Museum, Inc.*, Vol. 6 No. 3, Winter/Spring 2000.
- 7.3 Email from Andy Streenz to Bill Kemp re doorknobs and locks with catalog pages, April 30, 2019.