NPS Form 10-900
(7-81)

OMB NO. 1024-0018
EXP. 12/3 84

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only
received
date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Jairus Neal House

and/or common N/A

2. Location

street & number 301 East Fourth St. N/A not for publication

city, town Newton N/A vicinity of ~~congressional district~~

state Kansas code 20 county Harvey code 079

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
___ district	___ public	X occupied	___ agriculture	___ museum
X building(s)	X private	___ unoccupied	___ commercial	___ park
___ structure	___ both	___ work in progress	___ educational	X private residence
___ site	**Public Acquisition**	**Accessible**	___ entertainment	___ religious
___ object	___ in process	X yes: restricted	___ government	___ scientific
	___ being considered	___ yes: unrestricted	___ industrial	___ transportation
	N/A	___ no	___ military	___ other:

4. Owner of Property

name Dwight Beckham

street & number 301 East Fourth St.

city, town Newton N/A vicinity of state Kansas 67114

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Register of Deeds

street & number Harvey County Courthouse

city, town Newton state Kansas 67114

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title N/A has this property been determined eligible? ___ yes X no

date N/A ___ federal ___ state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records N/A

city, town N/A state

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
X excellent	___ deteriorated	___ unaltered	X original site
___ good	___ ruins	X altered	___ moved date N/A
___ fair	___ unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The old Neal home is situated in a residential neighborhood on Fourth Street in Newton, just east of the railroad tracks. Built in 1875 the two-story frame house underwent one major renovation around 1928. The house stands on a quarry-cut limestone foundation over a full basement. The side-hall plan consists of two rectangular units with parallel ridge lines. The front facade is three bays wide.

The wood frame residence is covered with clapboards. Asbestos shingles were added at some time but those have been removed from the east and north walls and will soon be removed from the other two walls as well. The roof is covered with asphalt roll, but since it is flat this is not visible.

The house originally had a porch that extended the entire length of the front facade and beyond to the east. There it turned the corner and ran down the east side of the house to the wing. A 1927 Sanborn map shows that this porch was still intact at that time. Neighbors remember Lizzie McDonald, who lived there from 1912-1927 and again briefly in 1928, feeding Santa Fe railroad hands on a long table on the old porch. It is generally thought that the old porch was removed around the time that C. L. and Tress Myers bought the house in 1928. The new porch stands one story tall and extends just to either side of the front door. It is supported on square posts, and brackets decorate the eaves. A simple balustrade with square corner posts sits atop the porch roof. The north door of the rear wing also has a porch, the cornice, eaves, and balustrade of which are the same as those on the front porch. This porch is supported by a large wall bracket.

The shutters are not thought to be original to the house, but it is not known when they were added. The windows are finished with simply molded architrave trim and plain sills.

The overhanging eaves of the roof are ornamented with paired brackets, more substantial and somewhat more elaborate than those on the porches, and with dentils for the entire circumference of the house.

The plan of the front portion of the Neal house follows the sidehall, double parlor pattern. Behind, and slightly offset from this main portion of the house is the two-story wing that contains the dining room and kitchen. A general description published in a local newspaper in 1876 is still accurate: "Stairs to the second story go from the front and also the rear of the building. The rooms below consist of double parlors, dining rooms and kitchen; upstairs, sitting room and four bedrooms. . .The outside doors, transoms, etc., are provided with heaviest cut glass. A good cellar extends under the ell portion of the house."

The cellar is finished only in the section beneath the kitchen, that is, at the southeast corner. A concrete floor was poured there and the stone walls whitewashed. Steps lead out of the cellar from this area, on the south wall. A shed has been built against that wall rendering the steps inaccessible from outdoors.

Most of the fine woodwork original to the house remains. The double front door has a molded, geometric panel in the lower portion of each door. The top half of each door has a tall arched window, the trim of which is molded to match the panels. The windows themselves are etched, as is the glass in the transom above.

The front hall stair rises in a straight run for most of its length, but near the top the stair and the wall behind it curve gracefully to join the second floor. The finely crafted balustrade of the open-string stair is original to the house.

The doorway at the back of the stair-hall leads into the dining room. It is surmounted by a transom. Evidence in the woodwork around the doors leading into the front and back parlors indicate that they, too, had transoms, but these doors have been altered. Both of the parlors have molded cornices and baseboards.

The remodeling of the late 1920's seems to have been responsible for most changes made to the house. The second floor was not affected, but several alterations were made on the ground floor. The doors into the parlors were replaced with multi-paned glazed doors, taller than the originals so the transoms had to be removed. The wall between the two parlors was removed and an open archway was installed slightly behind where the original wall stood. Adamesque wall cupboards were installed on the back parlor side of this wall. In the dining room corner cupboards with broken pediments were installed. Evidence indicates that these corners had always been occupied by cupboards. The double-hung, floor-length sash windows in the front parlor were not changed, but the fenestration in the back parlor and dining room was apparently altered. The back parlor is now lighted by ribbon windows. The sill of the windows in the dining room appears to have been raised.

Upstairs, the doors in the front portion of the house still have their transoms. Those in the back wing of the house never had transoms. The floor level changes from the front to the back of the house. This is accounted for by the variance in the ceiling heights downstairs where the ceilings in the kitchen and dining room are only nine feet, as opposed to the eleven foot ceilings in the parlors. The ceilings in the front bedrooms measure ten feet high, two feet higher than those in the rear bedrooms.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
___ prehistoric	___ archeology-prehistoric	___ community planning	___ landscape architecture	___ religion
___ 1400–1499	___ archeology-historic	___ conservation	___ law	___ science
___ 1500–1599	___ agriculture	___ economics	___ literature	___ sculpture
___ 1600–1699	X architecture	___ education	___ military	___ social/ humanitarian
___ 1700–1799	___ art	___ engineering	___ music	___ theater
X 1800–1899	___ commerce	X exploration/settlement	___ philosophy	___ transportation
X 1900–	___ communications	___ industry	___ politics/government	___ other (specify)
		___ invention		

Specific dates 1875, c. 1928 **Builder/Architect** Smith and Arment

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Neal residence, begun in September of 1875 and completed by the end of the year, has significant associations with the early history of Newton. Recognized as a mansion in its day, it has retained its elegant character through subsequent changes. The house that Jairus E. Neal built in 1875 is substantially intact, but cosmetic changes dating from the late 1920s make it a fine statement in the decorative tastes of that time as well.

The town of Newton had an early history that could probably compare with the better-known disreputable cowboy days of Dodge City. Newton's existence as a town was assured when the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway arrived on July 17, 1871. At that time Newton became the shipping point for enormous herds of Texas cattle which prior to that time had to be driven approximately 65 miles further north to Abilene for shipping on the Kansas Pacific Railroad. Thus began what was called in Andreas' History of Kansas, the "cow-boy reign" of Newton which "practically continued from June, 1871, to January 1, 1873" and was the "epitome of what has been and is now being enacted where that element predominates." In other words, saloons, cowboys and a general disrespect for the law prevailed in early-day Newton.

The town went into a sharp economic decline when the railroad reached Wichita and Dodge City in 1872 and the cattle trade moved to those cities. On December 8, 1873, a fire destroyed most of the business section of the city, adding to its economic woes. In the spring and summer of 1875 Newton experienced a boom. Its population rose from 769 in 1875 to 2,000 in 1878, and in 1882 it had a population of 5,000. Around 1884 the town was redesignated a division point of the Santa Fe Railroad, adding to its economic well-being.

Jairus Edward Neal built his house on Fourth Street during the boom period of 1875. Neal had moved to Newton in June, 1873, at the age of 55. On July 1, 1873, he established the Harvey County Savings Bank, the first bank in that part of Kansas. In the town booster pioneering tradition, he was active as politician, lawyer, businessman, and Mason and was a prominent socialite. His financial ventures were evidently successful, for he started construction on his house in September, 1875, which contemporary newspapers referred to as a "mansion" and as "one of the finest residences in this part of the state."

Neal and his family moved into their new residence the first week of January, 1876. A fairly detailed description of the house appeared the following week in the local newspaper. The room arrangement described therein has not been substantially altered. The article also stated that the carpenter work was "a specimen of model

workmanship, and was done by Smith and Arment of Wichita." The masonry and plastering was done by Chamberlin of Newton. The house was a remarkable accomplishment for a town that just six years earlier had not had a single building standing in it. J. E. Neal died in 1882, leaving an estate that was worth over $100,000.

Neal's family apparently resided in the house until 1884 when H.C. Ashbaugh, the editor and publisher of the Newton Kansan, bought the house. Ashbaugh was also a very prominent citizen in Newton and took an active role in community affairs. He had arrived in Newton on July, 1872, one year after the arrival of the railroad. Ashbaugh lived in the house only until 1888.

The house passed through a series of owners until 1928 when Mrs. Clarence L. Myers bought it. She lived there until 1961. It was probably Mrs. Myers who replaced the wrap-around porch with the smaller porches and remodeled the interior to bring it up to date.

Certain details of the interior give the impression that the decorator was striving for the Colonial Revival style so popular in the 1920's, while at the same time modernizing the house. The archway between the front and back parlors, the Adamesque wall cupboards and the swan's neck broken pediments of the dining room corner cupboards convey the Colonial Revival feeling. Such things as the glazed parlor doors, completely tiled kitchen and ribbon windows suggest the influence of popular taste of the 1920s.

The changes made to the Neal residence have not drastically changed its overall character or altered its significance as evidence of early financial success and settlement in Newton. Its site near the railroad tracks reminds one of the enormously important role that the railroad played in the settlement of this town and many others similar to it.

The house is still being used as a residence and is being carefully stabilized and restored by its current owners.

THIS STATEMENT REFLECTS CURRENT KNOWLEDGE AND IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

Andreas, A. T. ed. History of the State of Kansas. Chicago, Vol. 1, p772.

"H.C. Ashbaugh, Founder of the Newton Kansan." Newton Kansan. Aug. 22, 1922

Newton Kansan. Feb. 10, 1876. p1.

Peters, Judge S. R. "Memorial Address on the Life and Services of the Late Jairus E. Neal." Aug. 6, 1882.

"Some Recollections of Early Days." Newton Kansan. Aug. 22, 1922.

9. Major Bibliographical References

(see continuation sheet)

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property approx. ½ acre

Quadrangle name Newton

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

	Zone	Easting	Northing
A	14	645620	4212000
B			
C			
D			
E			
F			
G			
H			

Verbal boundary description and justification N105' of W1/2 and W15' of E1/2 of Lot 1, Block 61 on town plat. Lot on which house sits.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county code

state N/A code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Nora Pat Small, Architectural Historian

organization Ks. State Historical Society date 3-30-82

street & number 120 West Tenth telephone 931/296-3251

city or town Topeka state Kansas 66612

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

___ national ___ state X local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature [signature]

title Ex. Director, and Ks. State Historic Preservation Officer date March 24, 1982

For NPS use only

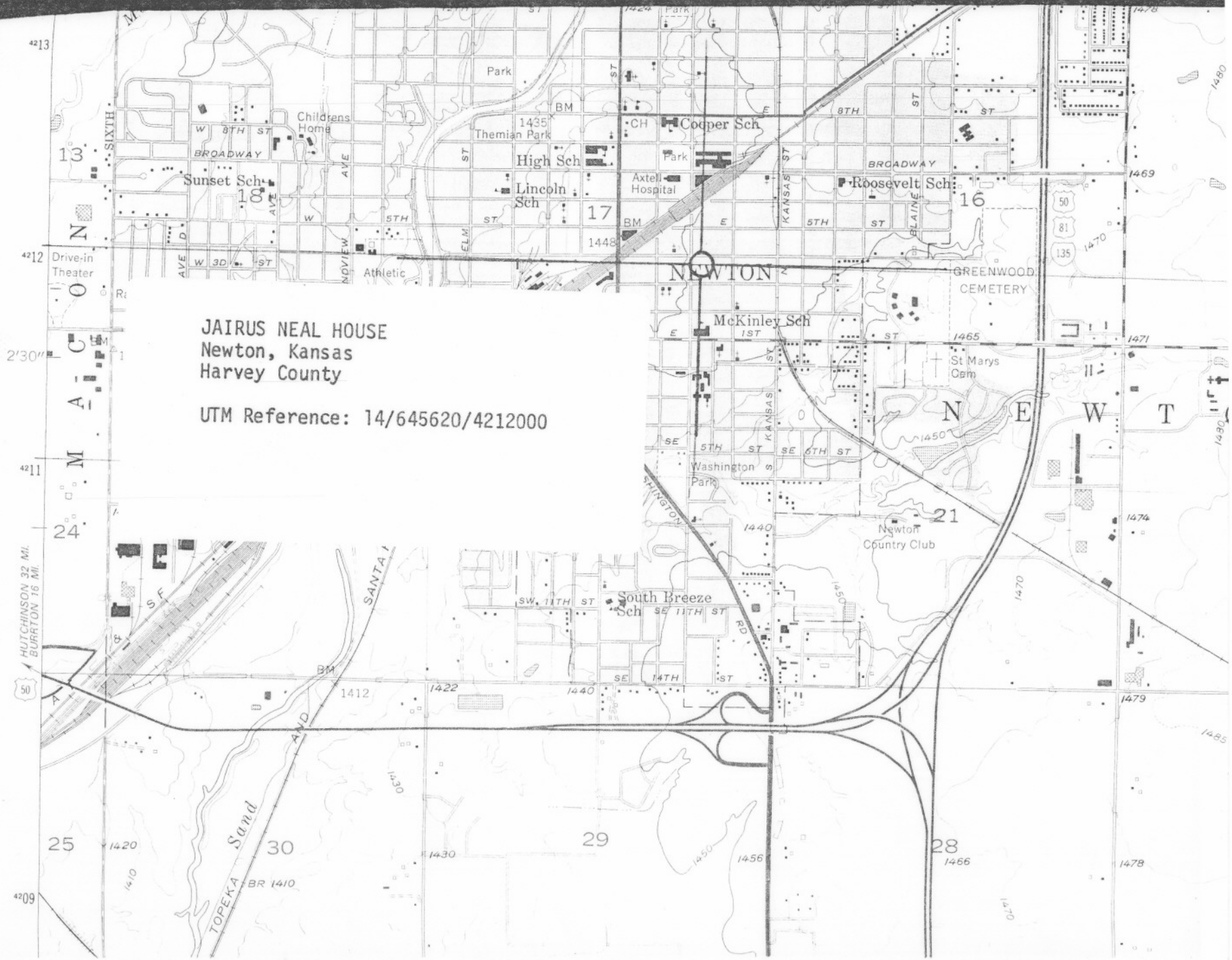
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest: date

Chief of Registration


JAIRUS NEAL HOUSE
Newton, Kansas
Harvey County
UTM Reference: 14/645620/4212000
NEWTON
Childrens Home
Themian Park
Cooper Sch
High Sch
Sunset Sch
Lincoln Sch
Axtell Hospital
Roosevelt Sch
Drive-in Theater
Athletic
GREENWOOD CEMETERY
McKinley Sch
St Marys Cem
Washington Park
Newton Country Club
South Breeze Sch
SANTA FE
TOPEKA AND
Sand
HUTCHINSON 32 MI.
BURRTON 16 MI.