

I-70 — Off the beaten path

City architecture worth a walk, drive to see, tour

By Pat Schiefen

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If you need to stretch your legs and want something interesting there are some interesting homes to look at and several that a person can go into.

In the town of Goodland is the Ennis Handy House, a Queen Anne Victorian built in 1907 by Mary Seaman Ennis. The house was built shortly after her husband's death. It is located on the corner of 13th and Center.

The Sherman County Historical Society bought the house in 2000 and have renovated the exterior with gingerbread trim and period paint, said the society's president Dave Branda. The inside has original woodwork and period furniture. The house was built with electric lights and indoor plumbing. At the time Goodland only had electricity at night.

In the dining room the table is set with the gold trimmed dishes of Dr. A.C. Gulick. Up an ornate curving staircase is a setting room leading to a porch and several bedrooms. One bedroom is for a child with toys and even an child sized commode.

The house is open from 1 to 5 p.m. Wednesday through Monday.

Another home of the Victorian Era is the home of Dr. A. C. Gulick at 11th and Grand. The exterior is beautiful with a gazebo, bird cages, pond and the stables.

When the house was built it had ten rooms with electric lights, bath, hot water heat and sleeping porch.

Dr. A. C. Gulick had a general medical and surgical practice after he graduated from college in 1900. He served as the county health officer, Sherman County coroner, member and examiner of the local exemption board and local surgeon for the Rock Island Railroad.

The house is not open to visitors and is owned by local businessman Rod Cooper.

The town of Goodland also is home to two over one-hundred-year-old standpipes. The first and oldest one is on Kyle Railroad Property at the southern end of Main Avenue. It was built around 1903 by the Rock Island Railroad to hold water used for their steam locomotives. It's still in use to hold diesel.

The other standpipe is located at 9th and Center in Memory Park. The foundation for the water tower was started on June 23, 1905, and finished on the Saturday before Dec.

15, 1905. It is 20 foot in diameter and 90 foot tall costing \$4,500. The standpipe was steel that was riveted with heavy duty riveting. Standpipes were riveted until the 1930s.

The construction crew would assemble one circle of steel, fill it with water and the workers worked on a floating platform that would raise high enough for them to work on the next level.

The standpipe was renovated as a part of a city water project in 1999. It still supplies water to the surrounding area, though Goodland has built three water towers over the last century.

If you are interested in castles Northwest Kansas has its own version the "Prairie Castle" or Kuhrt Ranch which is now a bed and breakfast. To get there get off on the Edson Exit 27 on I-70, go 1/2 mile north to U.S. Hwy 24, 1 mile west to County Road 28, 12 miles north to County Road 76 and 1/2 mile west to the ranch.

The ranch began as a one-room sod house, known as Shermanville, in the 1880s. Pauline Kuhrt bought the property in 1891 and built the original stone house in 1907 and remodeling the house in 1934 facing it with native limestone to look like a German castle. The castle has white oak wooden floors, antique furnishings and original woodwork. The home is still heated with the original steam heat radiators.

The ranch is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. In April of 2007, they started the historic restoration of the barn including a new foundation. The barn was built in 1916. The ranch is still owned and operated by third, fourth and fifth generation family.

Wallace County has its own example of Gothic revival style house in the the 1880 Clark-Robidoux House. H.A. Clark built the home which was later owned by Peter Robidoux, an early merchant in Wallace. There was a boom at this time due to the location of the railroad and Ft. Wallace. Robidoux amassed a small fortune from his merchantile. The house has been restored and can be used for events with food catered. For information call (785)891-3789 or (785) 821-1845.

To get to Wallace from I-70 go south on K-27 to Sharon Springs and go east on U.S. Hwy 40 until you reach Wallace.

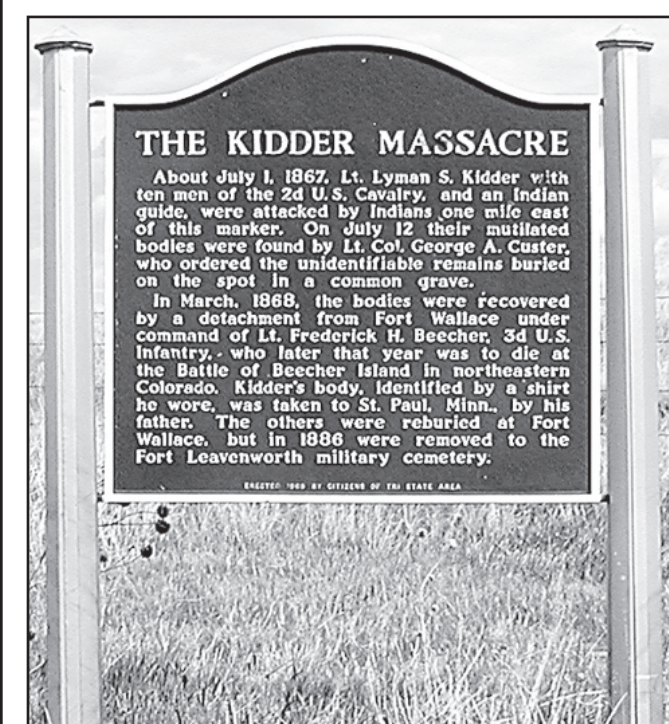


A look at the Victorian Gulick House in Goodland, built in the early 1900s. The grounds and the house have been restored by Goodland businessman Rod Cooper, owner of Crazy R's. The interior has not been refinished, he said, but the yard has been used for a few outdoor weddings.



A view from the back yard shows the gazebo and fountain at the A.C. Gulick House in Goodland. The outside has been restored with the gazebo, fountain, fish pond, bird cages and stable by owner Rod Cooper.

Photos by Pat Schiefen
The Goodland Star-News



A memorial marker flags drivers at the corner of County Roads 28 and 77 about 12 miles north of Edson. The site of the Kidder Massacre, about 1 1/2 miles east of the marker (above) on the north side, is marked by metal silhouettes (right) of a cavalryman with a gun and an Indian on a horse, best viewed with binoculars since they are over 100 yards from the road.

Photos by Sharon Corcoran/The Goodland Star-News



Marker, silhouettes at massacre site shadow of violent past

By Sharon Corcoran

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Many kids play "Cowboys and Indians," but a true cowboys and Indians fight ended in a tragic and bloody massacre nearly 141 years ago in Sherman County.

The Kidder Massacre site northeast of Goodland is marked with silhouettes of a cavalryman with a gun and an Indian on a horse, shadows of the battle that prevented Lt. Lyman S. Kidder and his men from delivering messages from Gen. William T. Sherman to Lt. Col. George Custer in July 1867.

A Goodland man fashioned the life-sized silhouettes out of metal for the Historic Preservation Alliance, a group that has wanted to add a visual element to the site for the last 10 years.

Lloyd Harden of rural Sherman County finished the silhouettes in spring 2003, said Marilyn Cooper, a member of the alliance and a Kidder historian, but they were not

put up until a committee chose just the right spot in August.

The site is north of Edson on County Road 28, where a memorial marker flags drivers at the corner of road 77. The silhouettes, 1 1/2 miles east of the marker on the north side, are best viewed with binoculars, since they are over 100 yards from the road.

To reach the site from I-70, take exit 27 at Edson to old U.S. 24 and go west about one mile to County Road 28 and turn right (north) and go about 12 miles. The marker is on the east side of the gravel road just south of Beaver Creek.

There are no services at Edson. To stop for food, gas or lodging, take Exit 17 at Goodland. Services at Exit 17 are along K-27, which intersects with U.S. Business 24 north of the Interstate. To get to the site, take U.S. Business 24 east to the edge of Goodland, where it curves to go back south to the Interstate. At the curve, turn onto

old U.S. 24 heading east and continue for about eight miles and turn left (north) on County Road 28.

A detail including Lt. Kidder, his guide, a Sioux scout named Red Beard, and 10 soldiers died along Beaver Creek after being attacked by nearly 500 Indians and trying to flee, fighting all the way.

The site was dedicated in their memory in 1967, Cooper said, and has seen its share of attention in the years since. The Sherman County Convention and Visitors Bureau conducted tours in 2002, and in 1997, a pageant was held at the site to commemorate the 130th anniversary of the massacre. "Infantry" from Fort Larned came for the event.

Cooper said she wants to change the name from Kidder Massacre to Kidder Battle, since both sides were armed.

Kidder and his men set out from Fort Sedgewick near Julesburg, Colo., with dispatches from Gen. William T. Sherman to

be delivered to Col. G.A. Custer, according to the book "A Dispatch to Custer — The Tragedy of Lieutenant Kidder" by Randy Johnson and Nancy Allan.

Not finding Custer at his camp on the Republican River, the book said, authorities concluded that Kidder assumed Custer had moved his force to Fort Wallace and headed in that direction.

Kidder, his men and his guide encountered Indians along the Beaver Creek in the northeast corner of Sherman County. Historical evidence presented in the book indicates the men were attacked by about 500 Indians and tried to flee, fighting all the way.

The men ended up in a ravine, surrounded by Indians, trying to shoot their way out. When Kidder and his men did not show up, Custer set out to look for them.

In his official report, Custer described a "most horrible stench observable, at the same time numerous vultures or buzzards"

seen flying in the air and said these circumstances along with the carcasses of three or four horses told him that a fight with Indians had recently taken place on that site near the Beaver.

Custer found the bodies of the men nearby, many of them scalped and in other ways disfigured. The Indians had removed most of their clothes. That and the disfigurement made identification difficult, but there was no doubt it was Kidder and his men.

Besides Kidder and Red Beard, the men included Sgt. Oscar Close, Cpl. Charles Haines and Pvs. Roger Curry, Michael Cornell, William Floyd, Michael Gorman, Michael Haley, N.J. Humphries, Michael Lawler and Charles Taltin.

Kidder, the son of a judge, was a Civil War veteran. He had been discharged from the military and re-enlisted twice, though he was just 25 years old at his death.