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QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER - SUMMER 2019

Pat Douglas Renovates Historic Corner of Bolivar Square; DHH to Move in Early August

Douglas, Haun & Heidemann attorney and developer Pat Douglas is nearing the completion of renovating the former First National Bank building, located on the northwest corner of the Bolivar Square. Douglas began the venture in 2013 by pursuing registration of the property as an historic site. "Something needed to be done to preserve the property as well as help revitalize downtown Bolivar," says Douglas. "I think what we're accomplishing will certainly do that."

"This building has held more than just history within its walls. It's helped establish the town of Bolivar as we know it today," says Douglas. "I'm proud to have spearheaded this project, bringing life back to a piece of history



Above - Pat Douglas, with his father and attorney Kerry Douglas, discuss the plans for the First National Bank building.

on the Bolivar Square. The work has been challenging and quite rewarding. The most exciting component is that the former First National Bank building

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in early August!



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will become the home of my family's century-old law firm, Douglas, Haun and Heidemann."



Above - Pat opens the door of the original bank vault, an integral part of the building's history.

"My great-grandfather T.H. Douglas started our law firm just a half block away from the First National Bank building when it was a relatively new building," says Douglas. "I think he would be proud to know the law firm he opened in 1912 continues to serve the community to this day and will move into a building he witnessed as the cornerstone of commerce, driving

the growth and development of Bolivar."

Built in 1907, the First National Bank (FNB) building was the architectural vision of Thomas Wight and Edward T. Wilder, highly respected architects of Kansas City. Wight and Wilder's work encompassed the Nelson Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City Life Insurance building and Jackson County Court House.

At the time of its grand opening, the local newspaper reported the building was heated with steam, furnished with green and gray granite slabs and convenient

chairs, tables and desks. The namesake of the building was its primary occupant from 1907 until 1932, when the Great Depression forced the FNB to sell out to the Polk County Bank. The FNB building was then purchased and sold multiple times and held various tenants including the Bolivar Poultry Association, medical doctors, Ozarks Utilities Company, Adams-Adams Mortgage Company, Walker's Dairy Bar, Philly's Ice Cream, Pla-Mor Billiards, Empire Electric Company, Stan and Dan's Drug Store as well as various law offices, beauty shops and real estate offices.

Today, the property is registered as an historic place with the National Park Service. Under the terms of registration, a property must meet certain criteria to be selected as an historic property. The building was registered under the criteria of architecture and commerce.



Above - Offices on the south side of the upper floor enjoy a view of the Polk County Courthouse

The definition of a property meeting the criteria of architecture is, "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." The definition of a property meeting the criteria of commerce is, "Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history."

"To register a property of this magnitude with the National Park Service is quite an undertaking," says Douglas. "I am appreciative of Susan Sparks with the Polk County Genealogical Society for her work in uncovering many of the details regarding the history of the First National Bank building."

DHH plans to move its Bolivar location to the new offices in the renovated building in early August. Watch for more information on a ribbon-cutting and open house to be scheduled at a later date. For more information, please contact DHH at 417-326-5261.

Good luck, Nathan!



*Former DHH Partner
Nathan Duncan*

Nathan Duncan recently left DHH and moved away to be closer to family. The attorneys and staff at DHH would like to wish him the best of luck in his future endeavors.

DHH attorneys have already begun the transition of Nathan's cases and are working on a seamless transition for our clients.