

## **J. B. Mahaffie House (1865)**

### **1100 Kansas City Road - Olathe**

*National Register of Historic Places*

A part of our pioneer heritage can be found at the James Beatty Mahaffie home, located at 1100 Kansas City Road in Olathe. Recognized early as a historically significant structure, the house was listed on the National Register of Historic Places on August 29, 1977. This vernacular style native stone and wood frame home not only documents a working farmstead from the mid-1800s, but also reflects a unique aspect of transportation history, travel by stagecoach.



The James Beatty Mahaffie Home is located at 1100 Kansas City Road in Olathe, Kansas.

Opportunity and location helped shape the development of this unique farm. The James Beatty Mahaffie claim was located just north of the Santa Fe Trail. A local story reports that on the first night of his claim in 1858, Mahaffie received \$5.00 from travelers to sleep on the wood floors of his residence. From this humble beginning, his house rapidly earned the reputation for hospitality as various stagecoach lines began to stop there regularly for food, rest and fresh horses.

In 1865, Mahaffie completed the two-story stone home we recognize today. The two-foot thick limestone blocks were quarried from his land. The structure had many unique characteristics including a cellar used as a dining hall for stagecoach passengers. In 1867, the peak year for stagecoach travel in the area, the Mahaffie station is estimated to have served more than 70 passengers daily.

In 1869, the railroad reached Olathe, ending the need for stagecoach travel in our area. The Mahaffie station ceased operation the next year. The farm, however, continued to prosper. Mahaffie's stage stop and his later railroad investments, as well as his extensive land and livestock holdings, helped make him one of the most prosperous early settlers of Johnson County.

The Mahaffie Farmstead and Stagecoach Stop is now operated by the City of Olathe and remains the last of the stagecoach stations along the Santa Fe Trail still open to the public. In addition to the home, two other buildings on the site

are also on the National Register including an ice-house and barn. The two story ice-house, used to store ice gathered from Indian Creek and the Kaw River, is made of the same limestone as the home. The barn features post and beam construction using round wooden pegs instead of nails. The role of this property as the residence of an influential pioneer and as a stagecoach station along the Santa Fe Trail guarantees its spot as one of the most historically significant homes in Johnson County.

*\*Reprinted from the Johnson county Museum's ALBUM newsletter, Vol. XVII #2, Spring 2004. [www.jocomuseum.org](http://www.jocomuseum.org)*

