

Fountain Tour June 22, 2008

20 mile guided tour narrative

Kansas City rightfully claims the title "City of Fountains." Only one other city has more fountains. Rome, Italy.

After turning onto Delaware from the River Market, point out The Pacific House: During the Civil War this is where General Ewing had his office (left side of street). He signed Order #11 here. Order No. 11 and the Civil War on the Border" Order No. 11 was the most drastic and repressive military measure directed against civilians by the Union Army during the Civil War. In fact, with the exception of the hysteria-motivated herding of Japanese-Americans into concentration camps during World War II, it stands as the harshest treatment ever imposed on United States citizens under the plea of military necessity in our nation's history.

Order No. 11 required all the inhabitants of the Western Missouri counties of Jackson, Cass, and Bates not living within one mile of specified military posts to vacate their homes by September 9. Those who by that date established their loyalty to the United States government with the commanding officer of the military station nearest their place of residence would be permitted to remove to any military station in the District of the Border or to any part of Kansas except the counties on the eastern border of that state. Persons failing to establish their loyalty were to move out of the district completely or be subject to military punishment.

The territorial conflict of the 1850s left a legacy of hatred between Kansas and Missouri. Kansans resented the invasions of the Missouri "Border Ruffians" and the Missourians bitterly recalled the incursions of John Brown, James Montgomery, and other Kansas "jayhawkers." The outbreak of the Civil War intensified this mutual animosity. Kansas jayhawkers and Red Legs made devastating raids into Missouri during which they plundered and murdered, burned farmhouses and crops, and liberated hundreds of slaves. These forays in turn caused pro-Southern guerrilla bands to retaliate against Kansas. Led by Quantrill, the Missouri bushwhackers sacked Kansas border settlements and shot down unarmed civilians "like so many hogs." At the same time they waged a deadly partisan warfare against Federal troops and Union adherents in Missouri itself.

On to the first Fountain; The Muse The first fountain in KC was actually a watering hole for dogs, then it was raised so that horses could benefit as well. In 1900, the horse population of Kansas City was estimated at 70,000! Later, the "outlet" was raised again so the people could drink from it. The Muse replaced this old watering hole.

1960's THE MUSE OF MISSOURI – Main between 8th and 9th

The Muse was donated by Mr. and Mrs. James M. Kemper (Commerce Bank) in memory their son, Lt. David Woods Kemper who was killed in Italy during WWII. The sculptor is Wheeler Williams of New York who also did the original Pegasus on the Plaza. The bronze Muse is 30 feet high, weighs 2,500 lbs and sits on a marble base. She is the Greek Goddess of arts and literature, a source of inspiration. Here she personifies the spirit of the Missouri River. Note her net - a special machine wove the bronze wire for the net. The 9 water spouting fish represent the 9 Greek Muses. The sculptor was to use native Missouri River fish but he thought that the catfish was too ugly and the carp had too small a mouth so he crossed the body of the carp with the head of a bluegill to make the bronze fish. The water flows down into a series of 3 pools.

South on Main to Pershing:

Fountain on the right; located in Quality Hill, this fountain does not really have a name or reason, however, this section of town was highly populated by the Irish. In the 1890's, there was an Irish drunk, loving up on an Irish woman, who was married to an Irish Pub owner who got into a fight. An Irish cop was called to the scene and he was killed. So, this is the place where the first cop in KC was killed.

To 18th & Main:

Old TWA building/show rocket.

Western Auto sign; Western Auto no longer exists but the people who own the building are determined to leave the light burning as a historical marker.

Biking up the hill on Gilliam;

To the right is the Union Cemetery. Union Hill. With expanding boundaries, increasing populations, and the cholera outbreak of 1849, early city leaders found themselves in a quandary. Existing cemeteries were nearly full. A new cemetery was badly needed. One that would hopefully serve Kansas City for all time. The search for a proper piece of land ended in 1857 when James W. Hunter deeded 49 acres of land to the Union Cemetery Association, a private corporation. The new cemetery was located between Westport and the town of Kansas and was to be used by both towns, becoming a "union" between the two. This is how Union Cemetery got its name. Fifty-five thousand people have been buried in Union Cemetery. People of all races, the poor and the rich, entrepreneurs, entertainers, farmers and soldiers lie side by side. These men and women not only influenced the future of Kansas City but also helped forge the western expansion of the United States. After many years of neglect, Union Cemetery was deeded to Kansas City, Missouri in 1937. Since that time it has been well cared for by the Board of Parks and Recreation.

The Historical society has tours of the cemetery, people will dress up as the “dead” and stand next to their grave and “mimic” them, giving a bio of that person. You have to watch the paper for the dates of this tour. There is a website too, if you want to learn more.

Continuing down Gilliam, on the Left is the Boy Scout Fountain;

Kansas City has more Eagle Scouts than any other metropolitan city in the US. The steps off to the side of the fountain represent the steps to becoming an Eagle Scout. The Eagle Scout Memorial Fountain at 39th and Gillham Road features a laurel wreath flanked by two female figures and a pair of eagles. It was on the exterior of New York City's Pennsylvania Station before that railroad depot was torn down.

The seven-foot wreath on the Eagle Scout Memorial Fountain at 39th and Gillham Road now frames an Eagle Scout badge. The original purpose was that it held a huge clock.

Continue down Gilliam..DO NOT GO UP ROCKHILL

RIGHT on Cleaver Blvd.

Wm T Nelson, of Nelson Adkins Museum, founder of the Kansas City Star, had all the house along here built for his editors, his house was where the museum is now. He hated to go downtown every day to work, so he brought his editors to him. They would have their morning meetings, then he would send them off to the KC Star to do their work, and he would stay home.

Right on Volker; Ewing Gardens;

Right on Volker

William Volker was born in Hanover Germany 1859. At age 12 his family moved to Chicago where he worked for a picture frame manufacturer. At age 20, in 1882 he moved to Kansas City and opened his own frame manufacture and sales company at 3rd & Main. He later expanded to linoleum and the window shades for which he became nationally known and led to his fortune. He married in 1911 at the age of 52, gave his wife \$1 million to live on and take care of him in his old age and spent the rest of his life giving his other \$10 million away. He funded Kansas City College (later called UMKC) and Research Hospital among many other things. He died in 1947 at age 88. Volker Boulevard, Volker Park and Fountain and UMKC Volker campus are named for St. Martin of Tours was sculpted by Swedish artist, Carl Milles. He supervised the casting and laid out plans for the placement of it in Volker Park before he died in 1955. The fountain was dedicated in 1958. Martin of Tours was a soldier who on a wintry day, gave half of his cloak to a beggar and later had a dream in which Jesus appeared to

him saying that He had been the beggar who received Martin's cloak. Martin symbolizes the generosity of William Volker. The statue, astride a horse, is the center figure. Three other figures include a seated centaur, an angel who is seated (and is wearing a wrist watch) and another angel playing a flute who is on a pedestal above Martin. All figures were above a large reflecting pond in the park directly south of the Nelson Gallery. This fountain was removed to allow for the renovation of Brush Creek and has been replaced next to Volker Boulevard.him.

The other fountain is referred to as the Volker Fountain. The central figure of the Volker Memorial Fountain in honor of Kansas City philanthropist William Volker. Look closely at the angels; An angel wearing a wristwatch and scratching his leg is a humorous touch, this showed that the artist, a Swedish sculptor had a sense of humor.

There are actually two fountains here, the wall is the Breast Cancer Fountain.

To the Left, the Russell Stover fountain,

1959 Russell Stover Candies, 4900 Oak Street
This free standing wall fountain was designed by the architects of the former Old American Insurance Company building in 1959. The 30 foot long upright granite wall now holds the name of the new owners, Russell Stover. A row of water outlets placed perpendicular to the wall issues a gentle cascade of water that falls down into a rectangular retaining pool where it is recirculated.

SAG #1

PLAZA FOUNTAINS
Left on Cleaver Blvd;

Notice the Indian on the right? He is an Iriqoi Chief, no real reason for him to be there, he just is. He was not even a local Indian.

To the Horse Fountain:

1910 sculpture by Henry Gerber of Paris, France. 10 1/2 foot high figures weighing 1 1/2 tons each in a pool, 80' in circumference. The 4 equestrian figures and small figures of children riding dolphins were commissioned for the formal gardens of the Clarence Mackay estate on Long Island, New York. After Mr. Mackay's death in 1938 the estate was destroyed by fire and the figures vandalized. In 1952 the Nichols family bought the pieces from the Mackay estate and brought them to Kansas City. In 1957, the Park Department donated land, landscaping and sidewalks for the fountain in honor of Jesse Clyde Nichols, developer of the Country Club Plaza. Donations were made by the Nichols family and friends for repair of the figures. It was dedicated in 1960.

There is no known explanation of the figures but they are thought to represent the artist's concept of 4 major world rivers: Rhine, Seine, Mississippi and Volga. The Indian on horseback facing south is the Mississippi. He is aiming a spear at an open-mouthed alligator. The small children on dolphins provide relief from the drama of the 4 horsemen (1 is a woman).

1928 BOY and FROG, Nichols Road

Bought by the Nichols Company in Florence, Italy in 1928, the bronze figure of a boy is above that of a frog who is shooting water up at him. On the base is a faun on a dolphin. The bowl and pedestal are rose colored Verona Marble. The sculpture was made at the Raffaello Romanelli Studio in Florence, a favorite of Mr. Nichols.

1953 NEPTUNE FOUNTAIN, 47th & Wornall

This 8,000 pound, lead god of the sea was made in 1911 at the Bromsgrove Guild Studio in Worcestershire, England for the estate of Alba Johnson in Philadelphia. In 1946 it was sold to the New Sharon Convent in Rosemont, PA. When the convent closed, it passed through the hands of several art dealers and finally, in 1952, was to be sold for scrap by a local scrap metal dealer. Someone alerted Mr. Nichols who went to see it and bought the sculpture for the price of the scrap. Neptune is the Greek god of the sea and is usually seen with his trident, dolphins and horse, all included in the sculpture. While the fountain was being installed on the Plaza in 1953, workers noticed the signature of the Bronsgrove Build on its base.

Little boy at McDonald's—he is reading a book, if you look over the boy's shoulder to read the book, it says "There's no such thing as a free lunch"
47th & J.C. Nichols Parkway

A marble, shaft supports a bronze chandelier 40 feet above the street. Water flows from 4 masks on the sides of the shaft and into the pool below. This reproduction of the original light across from the Giralda Tower in Seville Spain was a gift from the J.C. Nichols Company. It was made in Carrara, Italy at the studios of Bernard Zucherman using 3 kinds of marble from Italy and Pakistan. The mayor of Seville was present at its dedication in 1967.

Going up Broadway that turns in to Wornall, there is a statue of Winston Churchill. During his time, he visited all over the US. And he loved Missouri so much, not necessarily KC, but MO, the people of KC had a statue erected in his honor.

LOOSE PARK

Loose Park is the grande dame of all Kansas City greenways. The 80-acre park was given to the city in 1929 by Ella Loose to honor her husband Jacob, a businessman and philanthropist. Self-made millionaire Jacob Loose did it the hard way. Leaving school in Illinois at 16, he took a job earning \$5 a week. Four years later, he and a brother opened a store in Chetopa, Kansas.

In 1878 he married Ella Clark of Carthage, Missouri, and they moved to Kansas City in 1882, where he entered the cracker business. Eventually he founded [Loose-Wiles Biscuit Company](#), gigantic producer of cookies and famous Sunshine Crackers.

Loose, a generous benefactor, started the Children's Mercy Hospital's endowment fund with \$25,000 in 1913. After a serious illness, he semi-retired in 1919 and died at their summer home in Massachusetts in 1923. His will created the Million Dollar Charity Fund Association.

Mrs. Loose supported many causes but, having lost two children as infants, enjoyed providing for children's needs. Among other donations, for over thirty years she bought shoes for youngsters at her favorite orphanage. A compassionate woman with a sense of humor, she once assembled the 90 orphans, saying she would give a present to each—a sound spanking! With calm restored, she handed every child \$1, a generous amount then, telling them to spend it on "foolishness."

At age 60, "Kansas City's No. 1 society dowager" activated an actual plan to conquer Washington, D. C. society. For years she was a popular party hostess and donor there. When she died in Kansas City, most of her estate went to the Million Dollar Charity Fund. Coupled with several other trusts, it helped launch today's Greater Kansas City Community Foundation and Affiliated Trusts. Loose gifts still benefit Kansas City.

Their most visible legacy, however, is [Loose Park](#) at 52nd and Wornall Road, once the Kansas City Country Club. Mrs. Loose bought the land for \$500,000 and gave it to the city in 1927 as a memorial to her husband. His statue stands near the Wornall Road driveway of the park that she intended as "a restful place...particularly for children."

The Loose gardens is near where the Battle of Westport was fought. In September of [1864](#), General [Sterling Price](#) led his [Army of Missouri](#) into Missouri. The Battle of Westport, sometimes referred to as the "Gettysburg of Missouri," was fought on [October 23, 1864](#).

The Battle of Westport was one of the largest battles west of the [Mississippi River](#), with over 30,000 troops involved and roughly 1,500 casualties on each side. The Union victory put an end to Price's threat to Missouri. The greatly contested border state of [Missouri](#) was now firmly in [Union](#) control. Price continued to fight mostly rear guard actions on his retreat to [Arkansas](#), where his expedition officially ended [November 1, 1864](#). This was the last campaign in the [Trans-Mississippi Theater](#) and the last major Confederate threat to any northern state. In [Loose Park](#);, Price was said to have watched the battle from a grove of trees here. The "General Tree" long since gone was a landmark for many years.

Westport prospered as the eastern portal of the western trails. The population probably peaked in 1858 at about 2,000. After the Civil War, Kansas City, which was platted in 1839 by McCoy, became the dominant community and Westport declined. It was annexed to Kansas City in 1897, but a court challenge to the annexation was not settled by the Missouri Supreme Court until 1899. You can learn more by visiting www.kansascityhistory.com

Turn right on 55th street to Ward Parkway, turn left.

1938 LOOSE PARK ROSE GARDEN FOUNTAIN, 52nd & Summit

This award winning rose garden was dedicated in 1938 to enhance Loose Park that had been given to the city in 1927 by Mrs. Jacob Loose in honor of her husband. He was the founder of the Loose-Wiles Biscuit Company that made Sunshine cookies and crackers. The Loose family lived in a mansion on Armour Boulevard. The land had formerly been the Kansas City Country Club-hence, Country Club District and Country Club Plaza. Two fountains have been built on this site. The first, a statue, was destroyed in the 1950's. The second fountain was built in 1979, but has now deteriorated to the point that fundraising and construction are currently underway for a third fountain that will be dedicated in late summer 2002.

Eagle Statue is from a Buddhist temple in Japan.

1924 MIRROR POOL, 62nd & Ward Parkway

Built in 1924 by the J.C. Nichols Company, this 250 foot by 65 foot pool features 3 water jets down the center of the pool and 4 stone flower baskets at the corners. The city lets the water freeze in the pool for winter ice skating. During the 1920's and 30's it was a popular place for miniature yacht racing by neighborhood boys just as the Northeast Concourse was.

1925 MEYER CIRCLE FOUNTAIN

Meyer Boulevard & Ward Parkway

The Seahorse Fountain was donated to the city by J.C. Nichols and installed in 1925. The center sculpture stood in a square in Venice, Italy for about 300 years before Mr. Nichols bought it. The bowls, made of Carrara marble (quarried in Carrara, Italy) are held up by 3 seahorses, 3 cherubs and a dolphin. With limestone pedestal, it is 16 feet high. With the redesigning of the traffic circle in 1994, it was found that the figures had deteriorated beyond repair and so were recast in sandstone.

1969 PAMONA COURTYARD, Wornall & Ward Parkway

Pamona is the Roman goddess and protectress of vineyards, gardens and orchards. The marble original of this statue is at the king's palace in Bangkok, Thailand. This bronze replica was sculpted in 1900 by Italian artist Donatello Gabriellini in Florence, Italy. It was erected here in 1969.

1970 DIANA, Wornall & Ward Parkway

Diana is the Roman goddess of the hunt, portrayed here with cherubs. In 1970, artist, Bernard Zuckerman was commissioned by the J.C. Nichols Company to create a copy of the 1912 original statue made by the Bronsgrove Guild for an English estate. The waterfall behind Diana is 17 feet high and 56 feet long. Water flows over it at the rate of 2,000 gallons per minute.

1985 VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL, 43rd & Broadway

A design competition in 1982 was won by David Baker, a local artist and Viet Nam veteran. It features a series of rectangular interconnected pools going from smaller at the top of the hill (south) to larger at the lower end of the hill. These represent the growing US involvement in the war. The water spills into 2 distinct pools at the lower end, symbolizing the split opinions of the US citizens over US involvement in the war. \$1.3 million was raised by private donation. The main feature of the memorial is a 10' x 155' wall inscribed with 385 names of those killed or missing in action from the 7 county metro area. The land was donated by the Park Department. The \$1.3 million needed for building was given by private donations. The fountain was dedicated in May, 1985.

Fountain at the Kansas City Life Building—interesting, marble ball suspended by water.

VFW Fountain: Citizen Soldier. Look at the faces, they are the same face, but one is a younger version.

1926 LIBERTY MEMORIAL – Pershing Road and Main

Liberty Memorial was conceived as a memorial to peace and was built with citizen contributions of \$2.5 million that was pledged within 2 weeks. The land was dedicated in 1921 and the memorial finished and dedicated in 1926. This north facing fountain, steps and frieze were finished in 1935. The main wall is 488 feet in length with a 2 level fountain. The water sprays upward from the top fountain and flows into the lower level through notches cut in the granite wall. The inscription reads "who more than self their country loved"; "the glory dies not Pershing Fountain

The Henry Wollman Bloch Fountain comes to life as graceful geysers soar 120 feet high, linger in mid-air and then swiftly descend. All that's missing is the music as this fountain performs its unique water "dance."

Dedicated in 2001, the fountain, located directly in front of the Station, honors the founder of the H&R Block Foundation. The fountain was a gift to the City of Kansas City and is maintained by Union Station Kansas City.

Pumps 10,000 gallons of water per minute (enough to fill a typical home swimming pool).

Features 232 nozzles, illuminated by 232 lights.

Propels 500 gallons (2 tons of water) - the equivalent of lifting an SUV or baby elephant - in a single gush.

Designed by WET Design of Los Angeles, the same company responsible for creating the famous dancing waters at the Bellagio Hotel in Las Vegas.

About Union Station

Built in 1914, Union Station encompasses 850,000 square feet and originally featured 900 rooms. In its prime as a working train station, accommodated tens of thousands of passengers every year. At its peak during WWII, an estimated one million travelers passed through the Station. The North Waiting Room (now the Sprint Festival Plaza) could hold 10,000 people and the complex included restaurants, a cigar store, barber shop, railroad offices, the nation's largest Railway Express Building (used for shipping freight and mail) as well as a powerhouse providing steam and power.

Closed in the 1980s, the Station sat empty and neglected, escaping demolition on several occasions. In 1996, a historic bi-state initiative was passed to fund the Station's renovation, which was completed in 1999.

1964 KANSAS CITY STAR OFFICES, 18th & Grand Avenue

This 1964 fountain was prompted by the city emphasis on landscaping. Originally a paved courtyard was the entry for the 1910 Italianate Star building. The effort removed the paving, added grass, flowers and a fountain directly in front of the main entrance for the symmetry of a formal garden with trimmed hedges. It looks as if it had been planned into the building's original design.