

The Kansas City, Kansan, August 25, 1985

## Huron Park dates to 1859

**(Editor's note: This is the 20th in a series of "then and now" articles on places and things of interest in Kansas City, Kan., compiled by area historian Margaret Landis in observance of the 100th birthday of KCK in 1986. Much of the information has appeared in past editions of The Kansan.)**

**(Transcriptions are presented without changes except to improve readability.)**

Huron Park was acquired when the Wyandotte City town Company filed The Huron Place Plat Sept. 28, 1859 with the register of deeds. The property was dedicated as "public grounds."

Huron Place as you recall from this past Sunday's "then and now" article, is bounded on the east by 6th Street, on the west by 7th Street, on the North by Minnesota Avenue and on the south by Ann Avenue in downtown Kansas City, Kan.

Most of the "public grounds" was designated for a park with the center of the park, "Seminary Place," to be used for a school.

In the building of the Carnegie Library (circa 1902) an agreement was made between the board of education and the city whereby the new library would occupy the center of the square marked "Seminary Place" and the remainder would be used by the city for park purposes.

Originally, Huron Park was contained 5.56 acres. The park was north of the Carnegie Library to Minnesota Avenue, east to 6th Street and back of the library to Ann Avenue. The part of the park on Minnesota had benches and flower gardens. East to 6th Street the park is landscaped, with walks and benches. In this part of the park is the DAR monument of the James A. Ross Chapter; the bombshell is from the Battleship Maine of the Spanish-American War and the flag pole was placed by the Burnside Women's Relief Corps No. 1.

South on Ann Avenue (back of the library) is the Municipal Rose Garden. The entrance on Ann has stone piers and iron gates. The Rose Garden was started through a WPA work relief project. Henry F. Schaible was commissioner of boulevards, parks and streets.



This is how the Municipal Rose Garden appeared in the mid-1930s through the early 1960s. The rose garden is in Huron Park in downtown Kansas City, Kan. Postcard is courtesy of Joseph Firestone.

It was laid out with about 50 rose beds, with 8,000 rose plants of nearly every known variety. The landscaping included a pergola consisted of an octagonal stone gazebo with columns and trellis.

In the center of The Rose Garden are two stone benches (concrete seat and back). Inscribed on their backs:

HURON PARK  
Municipal Rose Garden  
H.F. Schaible Comm.  
1936

Dedicatory ceremonies were May 31, 1937. As reported in *The Kansan* (6/1/37), the American Legion Boys' Band, under the direction of Edwin A. Hosking, furnished the music. Claud R. McCammet of Schaible's office presided. Commissioner Schaible officially presented the Rose Garden to the city and the public.

The Rev. Carl W. Nau of St. Paul's Episcopal Church gave the invocation. Sen. Joseph S. McDonald, a rose fancier, and Mrs. Clifford Smith, president of the Kansas City, Mo., Rose Society, spoke concerning rose culture.

### **Changes in Huron Park**

When the new library building was being planned (1961), it was necessary to make some changes in the "seminary Place" and the Huron Park properties.

The new library was to be built in front of the Carnegie Library nearer Minnesota Avenue. This would take that part of Huron Park on the Minnesota Avenue side.

The Carnegie Library was to be razed and become a parking lot. Also, a driveway at the Ann Avenue entrance to be widened was proposed. The city and the board of education transferred properties in order to carry on the proposed plans.

The columns and the trellis of the pergola are gone. The gazebo remains with the peaked roof and weather vane. The base of the sun-dial and the foundation of the fountain are still in the Rose Garden.

The Park Department has made plans to improve the Rose Garden, including adding a new selection of rose. The Rose Garden will be 50 years old next year-as the city celebrates its centennial.