



The Rockhill Times

President's Letter

Summer 2020

Dear Rockhillians,

They don't call us that for nothing! We have been through many challenges as a neighborhood and many of us personally. With all the changes and challenges we've been through, we are "Rock Solid". (Yes, I used to work for Prudential Real Estate). I am 100% sure though that none of us have ever in our wildest dreams imagined a year like this. And I am sure the other Roaring 20's must have been a lot more fun!

We know what the pandemic has done and can take away, but let's not let it take away more memories that we can control. Let's make new and unusual ones. Ones that we would never make if it we weren't in this situation.

What have you done with your friends or family this summer that you wouldn't have done otherwise? Are you thinking of upcoming road trips, games, hobbies, activities, projects to do? What about neighborhood events that we could do safely? Please share any ideas as crazy as they might sound.

We have great memories from last year. The Walking Wall right in our own neighborhood was a great success. And the Nelson Art Course was enjoyed all summer long by many of us. Our picnic was one of the best ever with delicious food and companionship. I would be happy to share any of your ideas that you have done with your family and friends or ideas you have for all of us as a group. Let's make new yet safe memories. There are some of us that really need others right now. We should try

to make this happen especially now before winter sets in.

Speaking of the picnic. The board meets Tuesday. We will pick a date for the picnic, but please know it will only be a tentative date. As that date gets closer in September, it will be decided if it will actually happen. And if it does, whether it be either our usual pot luck with hamburgers provided and other BBQ or BYOB/food. We want to follow the safe KCMO guidelines.

Also, since we might not have the picnic and we did not have our annual meeting in May, I will give you a simplified rundown of last year's board activities in no particular order. I will not bore you with every detail, but please call or email me with any questions.

- The Board of Directors meet every second Tuesday of each month except August.
- We reviewed and approved previous minutes monthly.
- We heard at least 11 exterior changes applications to be submitted to the Preservation Commission.
- The Board approved expenses and work for the pocket parks such as mulch, roses, treatments, trees, etc. The Myers maintain the William Rockhill Nelson Memorial Park with their sprinkler system and water— Thank you!!
- Heard from our Community Officers Holly Sticken and Bryan Masterson.
- Also heard Ellis Thigpen's Security Report every month.

- Barry Nickell reported the treasurer's report monthly.
- Jim Wanser reported external affairs monthly.
- Heard from KC Outlook Project Developer Faris Farassati concerning his project on Troost.
- Supported Westport Preservation Plan.
- Welcomed several new neighbors.
- Heard from the Stewardship Committee concerning the Nelson, parking lot removal being the major one.
- KCAI's DeBruce Hall completed and is an incredible addition to the neighborhood (tour reported to the Board).
- New directory is underway.
- Discussed the dangerous intersection at Emanuel and Rockhill and formed a committee. A PIAC application was submitted for funds for improvement.
- Heard from the Streetcar Authority.

The Board has been meeting on Zoom now and believe it or not, it is quite fun! Well, at least I think so. Please let me know if you want an invitation.

I hope to see you around the block, walking in Gillham Park, the Nelson's lawn, Theis Park, Kauffman Gardens, Legacy Park.... Yes! Aren't we lucky!

Take care,

Jamie



Meet the Neighbors Part 1



Newish might describe neighbors Ed Straley and David Lingle who lived in their home in the 900 block of Emanuel Cleaver as tenants for 13 years before becoming owners in 2019.

The two boast an array of work experiences as varied as can be. David served in the Army and then worked in administration for university hospitals in South Carolina and Indiana. Ed was assistant curator of Oriental Art at the Indianapolis Museum of Art and then had a career in the travel industry. Here in Kansas City, they owned a shop in Crown Center called "Everyday's a Holiday" where they sold Christmas décor and collectibles. These days, David is retired while Ed serves as a personal assistant to a 3rd generation family of Kansas Citians.

David is a train enthusiast and enjoys history. Ed likes gardening and cooking. They both enjoy collecting antiques and fine and decorative artworks and hosting dinner parties. They love the historical aspect of Rockhill, its well-kept homes and yards, and its proximity to the Plaza and to various

cultural interests. They love seeing the diversity of people on the street and the hustle and bustle of the city. They appreciate Rockhill's friendliness and the attentiveness of the Rockhill Homes Association.

Please welcome newish neighbors Ed, David, and their Scottish Terriers, Brogan and Kalie Jo!

Meet the Neighbors Part 2



Jack Lapping and Jocelyn Diehl-Lapping can also be called newish. They spent 7 years on Pierce Avenue as tenants before purchasing their home on 47th Terrace in May. Theirs might possibly be the shortest house move in history!

Jack is a software engineer for Garmin while Jocelyn is a stay at home parent for their 2-year-old daughter, Sabine. What they like about Rockhill will sound familiar to every long-time resident. They love their neighbors, the plentiful green space, and the proximity to so many attractions. As Jocelyn says, "There's no other place like it."

The couple share a deep love of music with indie rock at the top of their list. In addition, they like to travel and enjoy good food and good wine. They are missing the Antler Room, especially, during the quarantine.

Please welcome newish neighbors Jack, Jocelyn, and Sabine!

And a Great Big Welcome To:

Asher Scott and Miles Andrew. Born May 12, 2020 to Kimberley and Tyler Ryan.



Rockhill 1909: The Sanborn Maps *by Jim Wanser*

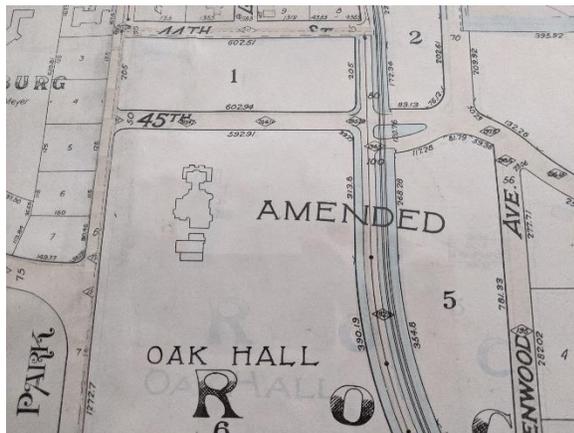
The Sanborn Fire Insurance Map Company, established in 1867, compiled and published maps of U.S. cities and towns for the fire insurance industry to assess fire risk. They provided detailed information on the type of building (residential, commercial, etc.), their size, shape and construction material. The maps show the location of water mains, fire alarms and fire hydrants. The 1283 maps are an invaluable research tool for urban historians, architectural historians and preservationists. The maps for Kansas City and Rockhill were created in 1909 and provide a great snapshot of our wonderful emerging neighborhood. The area had been plotted and the street grid was developed,

but almost all of the homes we know in Rockhill were yet to be built.



The maps help explain some of the nuances in Rockhill you may have wondered about.

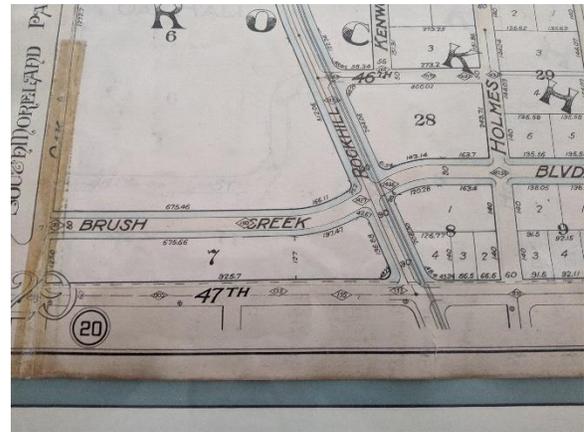
Oak Hall, the home of William Rockhill Nelson and his wife Ida, was in the northwest section of the Nelson property and faced Oak St. Many assume it would have had the same footprint of the Nelson, centered on the property, looking down the



hill. The home's proximity to Oak St. helps explain its name.

Is it 47th Street, Cleaver II Blvd or Brush Creek? Originally, there were two streets that ran in front of the Nelson, 47th Street that went West into what we now know as the Plaza and Brush Creek Blvd that started at Oak St. near the southern end of Southmoreland Park. At Rockhill Road, Brush Creek angled up into the neighborhood heading east as we know it today. In the mid 1950s, with the creation of Theis Park, the two streets were combined and widened, creating the large green

median between the Nelson and the Park. In



1999 to honor former Mayor Cleaver and current congressman, 47th was renamed. Has the odd turn at the top of Gilliam onto Rockhill Rd. (45th st.) always been there? It was there in 1909! But note in the picture, that 45th was open into the neighborhood, connecting to Kenwood and Holmes. Closed for traffic calming purposes, the land is now the pocket park with our tribute to William Rockhill Nelson.



The Sanborn maps also show that considerable development was taking place in surrounding areas such as South Hyde Park and Southmoreland, but in 1909 Mr. Nelson had not started the development in our neighborhood. It was soon to follow, resulting one of Kansas City's finest historic neighborhoods.



Stitched Together

submitted by Libby Gordon

In the summer of 1970 I joined the staff of The Studio in Brookside. At that time, the shop occupied the balcony space in the back of the iconic Dime Store on 63rd Street. The three owners, friends of mine, had contracted with the Friends of Art at the Nelson Gallery to create needlepoint kits designed from works of art at the Nelson. It was my job to paint the canvases that were included in the kits. While The Studio was on vacation in August, my assignment was to paint 100 designs taken from the Nelson's Peruvian Feather Mantle. This was the beginning of a thirty-two year career which I very much enjoyed. Later designs were Juan Miro's "Women at Sunrise", a lovely blue and white plate from the Chinese collection, Wayne Thiebaud's "Jawbreaker Machine" and my favorite, a white Peony blossom from the Chinese collection.

A later contact with The Nelson came for me in 1974 when they mounted the extensive Chinese exhibition. I was very taken with a small bronze sculpture, The Flying Horse of Kansu. Laurence Sickman, my friend and neighbor who was then the Director of the Nelson arranged for me to meet the three Chinese men who were in charge to tell them of my intention to use a design of the Horse for needlepoint. They were very gracious and wrote for me in Chinese "Kansu Flying Horse" so I could include that on my canvases. Of course, I kept, and still treasure their notes!

A little more about my time there... We were commissioned to sew through a gift from Coca Cola...sets of golf club covers for Tom Watson and Christmas stockings for his children with characters from Beatrix Potter and Winnie the Pooh.



The Fall edition of the Rockhill Times will be distributed in October. If you have information to share, or notices of recognition or events, please send them to kmoninger@gmail.com

